

2011

More than a window dressing?: A critical race institutional ethnography of a multicultural student services administrator at a PWI

Jessica Janet Ranero
Iowa State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/etd>

 Part of the [Educational Administration and Supervision Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ranero, Jessica Janet, "More than a window dressing?: A critical race institutional ethnography of a multicultural student services administrator at a PWI" (2011). *Graduate Theses and Dissertations*. 11964.
<https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/etd/11964>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Iowa State University Capstones, Theses and Dissertations at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.

More than a window dressing?: A critical race institutional ethnography of a multicultural
student services administrator at a PWI

by

Jessica Janet Ranero

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Education (Higher Education)

Program of Study Committee:
Lori D. Patton, Co-major Professor
Nancy J. Evans, Co-major Professor
Ryan Evely Gildersleeve
Tyson Marsh
Eugenio Matibag

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2011

Copyright © Jessica Janet Ranero, 2011. All rights reserved.

DEDICATION

Para todas las mujeres de mi familia.

Ustedes que han luchado contra la pobreza, violencia, y los desamores para que yo pudiera estar aqui hoy en dia recibiendo mi doctorado. Por medio de sus sacrificios, su motivacion y carino, yo he podido luchar para que nuestras voces sean escuchadas y para que el mundo sepa la fuerza que tenemos por dentro. Ustedes son mi inspiracion y mi fuerza. Gracias.

I also dedicate this dissertation to Joshua and all of the multicultural student services administrators that go to work each day with the hope of opening the door to successful collegiate experiences for students of color. The hours are long, the challenges are many, but the experience of witnessing students of color cross the stage at graduation is irreplaceable.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ix
ABSTRACT	xiv
DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS.....	xv
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Introduction	1
Statement of Problem	7
Statement of Purpose	7
Research Questions.....	8
Theoretical Frameworks	9
Significance of Study.....	13
Summary.....	14
CHAPTER 2. Literature Review	17
Introduction	17
The Depoliticization of MSS: A Historical Overview	17
The Political Origins of MSS	18
Redefining the Role of MSS at PWIs.....	21
Supreme Court Decisions: Re-shaping Racial Equity in Higher Education	23
Implications of Supreme Court Decisions for MSS	26
Where Have the Political Roots of MSS Gone?: Diversity as a Window Dressing.....	30
Theoretical Frameworks	34

Critical Race Theory.....	35
Racial Realism.....	37
Interest Convergence.....	40
Colorblindness.....	43
Master and Counternarratives.....	46
Institutional Ethnography.....	47
The Foundations of Institutional Ethnography.....	47
Social Relations and Institutional Ethnography.....	50
Summary.....	51
CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY.....	53
Philosophical Assumptions & Positionality.....	53
Institutional Ethnography as a Research Method.....	57
Research Site.....	60
Research Participant.....	62
Research Problematic: The MSS Administrator as an Institutional Agent of Racial Equity (initial map).....	64
Data Collection.....	66
Data Analysis.....	76
Trustworthiness.....	79
Research Ethics.....	82
Delimitations.....	83
Limitations.....	83
Summary.....	85

CHAPTER 4. THE STATUS OF MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY AND MSS

ADMINISTRATORS IN 2010.....	87
Midwestern State	87
Midwestern University	87
College of Innovation	97
Joshua, MSS Administrator for the College of Innovation	100
Summary.....	104
CHAPTER 5. FINDINGS	105
Ruling Relations Mediating Joshua’s Work.....	107
Midwestern State	109
Master Narrative for Midwestern State	110
Counternarrative for Midwestern State	112
Midwestern University	115
Master Narratives at MU	116
Counternarratives at MU	135
College of Innovation	149
Master Narratives at College of Innovation	150
Counternarratives at College of Innovation.....	156
Joshua, MSS Administrator, College of Innovation.....	164
Master Narratives for Joshua	165
Counternarratives for Joshua	166
Joshua’s Day-to-Day Experiences.....	176
Summary.....	184

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS	185
Summary of Findings	186
Overview of Findings in Relation to CRT Tenets	187
Colorblindness	188
Interest Convergence	191
Racial Realism	192
Overview of Findings in Relation to MSS Literature.....	198
Implications for Research and Practice	201
Implications for Research.....	201
Implications for Practice.....	205
Conclusion and Personal Reflections	213
REFERENCES	215
APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL	239
APPENDIX B. INFORMED CONSENT	240

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Initial Map.....	65
Figure 2. Ruling Relations.....	108
Figure 3. Midwestern State.....	110
Figure 4. Midwestern University.....	116
Figure 5. College of Innovation.....	150
Figure 6. Joshua, MSS administrator, College of Innovation	165

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. List of Interviews/Meetings.....74

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Growing up my mother would always tell me, “Dime con quien andas y te dire quien eres.” She used this “dicho” to teach me to choose my friends and the people I surrounded myself with wisely because they were all a reflection of me. As I pause and think about all the friends and family that surround me both near and far, I can say with much conviction that I am truly blessed!

My foundation has always been my family. I was fortunate to grow up in a home filled with love given to me by my parents, Ita, and my brother Joshua. They have always been my rock and without them I could not be the person I am today. I cannot thank them enough for standing by me in the joys and the tears. There were many phone calls, cards, flowers, care packages, hugs, and kisses that kept me going as I pursued this degree. We all earned this doctorate together and they are represented in every word, page, and citation. Their compassion, commitment to justice, and joy for life inspired me in countless ways and I am because they are!

I was also blessed to have other family members that cheered me on from afar. Facebook messages, phone calls, and hearing encourage words helped me know that I was not alone in this journey. I especially want to thank my brother Jose, my sister-in-law Angel, and niece Camden. I also want to thank my Tias and cousins for their on-going support.

Although my “biological family” served as the foundation of my support, I was fortunate to have many extensions of family that supported me as I pursued my doctorate. It was often difficult for me because I felt like I was not present with friends as much as I wanted to be, but I hope they all know that they were always in heart and mind. Although I hesitate to list my friends and loved ones because I know I will inevitably leave someone out,

I want to make sure to give special shout outs to my crews. I must start by thanking my MWC crew for being the rock of friendship that has always been there. I can't believe that we have known each other for over half of our lives already. It fills me with love to know that we have cheered each other on during our triumphs and also comforted one another in times of hardship. I look forward to sharing many more celebrations with all of you as we continue to grow older and wiser over the years!

I also must acknowledge my W&M crew. You all taught me about sisterhood and what it meant to have a support network that would hold strong despite distance and changes in all of our lives. Although we do not get to see each other as often, the ties that bind us continues to be strong and powerful. We have also shared many celebrations and troubles and I feel blessed to have you all in my life.

When I moved back up to Northern Virginia to work at GMU, I was once again blessed to meet some amazing women that continued to teach me about what it meant to be a woman of service. The experiences I had at Mason and at W&M really served as the impetus for me going back to school to gain the tools that would allow me to advocate for increasing opportunity and success for students of color in education. Thank you for the lessons and the support!!

I never thought that I would continue to be given the treasure of friendship as I moved to a far away land called Iowa. Fortunately, I was blessed to find a source of support both in Ames and beyond that became my family of scholars. I first want to thank my Latina/o scholars that supported me from afar. Unexpected friendships developed at conferences that quickly turned into new extensions of my familia. In particular, I want to thank David Perez and my Nuevas Latinas for being sounding boards and sources of unwavering support. I

learned so much from each of you and I look forward to seeing how you all continue to make your work on the world as we continue to make sure our gente's voices are heard! I also want to thank Fernando Ramirez for unexpectedly coming into my life and filling my life with new dreams, laughter, and love.

I also need to thank my ISU family that was there on the front line with me every day. I can't even imagine what my life would have been like without my line brothers and sisters. My first Ames buddy was José Cabrales (Phoolish). José and I started this journey together and man did we have some good times and some rough ones too. We laughed a lot, cried a bit, and created our own traditions. Thank you for being a great friend and I look forward to sharing chismes for many more years. I was so excited when Natasha Croom (Phightin') arrived in Ames. I finally had a female friend to do all of the girly things I was not able to do with José the previous year. Natasha, I have learned so much from you and am a stronger and prouder woman because of it. I can't wait to see what your future holds Professora! Phil Vasquez (Philosopher) was my calming spirit and always made me feel reassured in everything I did. It was always great to know that I could share all of my fears and freak out moments with Phil and that he would not tell me I was crazy and validate the way I was feeling. Phil, I will always remember how you welcomed me into your family during my first trip to L.A. Last, but most certainly not least, I must thank my dear friend Kim Everett (Phruition). Kim was the calm in all of the storms. Kim, you are an inspiring woman and amazing mother. I feel honored to have shared this experience with you. Even though I was in a far and strange land, I was able to create a new branch of my family. We shared meals, celebrations, heartbreaks, insecurities, laughter, and lots of love as we made our way through this process. You have touched my life and my heart in countless ways!!

I would also be remiss if I did not thank the faculty that opened my mind and expanded my way of seeing and understanding the world. Dr. Patton, you were the first faculty person to ask me to collaborate on a project. You invited me to write a book review with you even though I had no clue what that was or meant. You guided me through the process, while also letting me find my own way and in the end we had a publication; my very first one. You continued to be that source of support for me throughout my doctoral program. You always led me in the right direction, but always let me engage in my own process of self-discovery. Thank you! I was also fortunate to work with Dr. Evans for over four years as her graduate assistant. I will never forget my first semester and sitting in the classroom feeling like a complete imposter and waiting for the moment that the Masters students would discover that I knew nothing about student development or campus environments. Dr. Evans, through witnessing your passion for teaching, I developed my own love for creating learning environments where I could challenge students to think critically about their role as future student affairs professionals. Thank you for believing in me and always supporting me. I also want to thank Dr. Rendón for being patient with me as I was naively eager to learn it all quickly. Thank you for expanding my network, learning, and self-awareness. I also want to thank Dr. Gildersleeve for always pushing me to be the critical scholar I wanted to be even when I did not want to be pushed anymore.

As I stated in the beginning my mother always told me that I was a reflection of the people that surrounded me. If I am just a small portion of what the people that have touched my life are, then I know that I will continue to be blessed in my life.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that the faith my family instilled in me is a source of peace. My agua bendita and tarjetas protect my loved ones and me every day, so gracias a La Virgen de Guadalupe por iluminar mi camino.

ABSTRACT

Multicultural student services (MSS) emerged on predominantly white institutions (PWIs) as a result of student of color movements demanding equitable access, representation, and culturally relevant support systems. Over time, the goal and purpose of MSS has shifted away from its political roots and these offices are now expected to provide diversity education for all students thus limiting their ability to serve as advocates for racial equity. The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of institutions of higher education shape the work of MSS and influence the overall access and success of students of color in American higher education. Through the use of institutional ethnography and critical race theory, this study mapped out how organizations, policies, unwritten rules, and practices shape the everyday work life of a MSS administrator at a public, land-grant, Midwestern university. The organizations that emerged were Midwestern State, Midwestern University, the College of Innovation, and Joshua as the MSS administrator for the College of Innovation. A series of master and counternarratives bring forth how racism shapes the policies, practices, and unwritten rules in each organization that mediate Joshua's work as a MSS administrator. Implications for practice and research aim to challenge institutions to examine how they define and practice racial equity and encourage colleges and universities to do more than simply decorate their windows with diversity.

DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

This section provides definitions of key terms that will be used throughout the study.

1. **Depoliticization:** The process of removing the political intentions of MSS.
2. **Deracialization:** The process of removing race as the primary focus of MSS.
3. **Policy:** A high-level plan that encompasses the general goals and procedures of a governing body (Iverson, 2007).
4. **Problematic:** The point of entry and inquiry in institutional ethnography (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004).
5. **Practice:** the action of or process of performing or doing something (Practice, 2010).
6. **Racial equity:** Equitable outcomes for students of color in higher education that include access, retention, and graduation. Racial equity also encompasses the social transformation of predominantly white institutions, where equity for all students is an integral part of the institution.
7. **Ruling relations:** The sites such as legislation, governing boards, and administration, where power is produced and enabled throughout society (Wright, 2003). Ruling relations are also mediated by dominant cultural ideologies and serve the interests of the dominant society (D. E. Smith, 2005).
8. **Social relations:** “Sequences of action in which people are involved at different stages but not necessarily directly engaged in a shared work process” (D. E. Smith, 2007, p. 412).
9. **Students of color:** Racially and ethnically underrepresented student populations. In the case of the research site, these populations include African American,

Latina/o, Asian American, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Multi-racial students.

10. Translocal relations: Trans-local settings are situated outside the boundaries of a person's everyday experiences and they are what make up social organization (D. E. Smith, 2007).

11. Unwritten rules: Unlike policy, unwritten rules are codes of conduct that are not formally written down nor formalized, but understood. These unwritten rules can inform practice. For example, at a PWI, it is an unwritten rule that English is the primary language spoken at the institution.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“Multiculturalism, although grounded in an era of change and a vision of equality has seen its goals diluted (E. Taylor, 2000, p. 540).

Race, racism, diversity, and multiculturalism are all terms and concepts that are highly politicized and elicit strong emotions throughout American society. Like American society, American higher education’s history is filled with on-going debates regarding the implications of racial equity. According to Altbach, Lomotey, and Rivers (2002), “Race remains one of the most volatile and divisive issues in U.S. higher education and has been a flashpoint of crisis since the civil rights movement of the 1960s” (p. 23). Similar to U.S. history, the history of higher education is tainted with racism (Altbach, et al., 2002; Chang, Altbach, & Lomotey, 2005; W. A. Smith, Altbach, & Lomotey, 2002; Williamson, 1999). While some progress has been made over the decades, higher education still faces many challenges with regard to racism, such as the contentious balance between a more conservative political environment and an increased demand for college access and retention of underrepresented and underserved populations. Such challenges are further exacerbated given the push for them to be addressed through race-neutral policies and programs.

Highly politicized movements, like the Black, Chicano, Native American, and Asian American students’ movements of the 1960s and 1970s demanded the creation of political spaces at predominantly white institutions (PWIs), such as cultural centers and minority students services (MSS) offices, that were charged with recruiting, retaining, and advocating for underrepresented students, faculty, and staff (Cobham & Parker, 2007; Patton, 2006b; Sutton, 1998; C. A. Taylor, 1986; Williamson, 1999; Wolf-Wendel, Twombly, Tuttle, Ward, & Gaston-Gayles, 2004; Yamane, 2001). These demands grew out of the inability and at

times unwillingness of PWIs to provide safe spaces and support for students of color (Hord, 2005; Patton, 2005, 2010; Princes, 2005; Williamson, 1999; Young, 1986). Cultural centers and offices of multicultural affairs were often established at PWIs as quick solutions to student demands thus limiting their ability to create long-standing and campus-wide change (Brayboy, 2003; Hu-DeHart, 2000; Patton, 2005, 2010; Princes, 2005; Stennis-Williams, Terrell, & Haynes, 1988). Given that these race-based initiatives were never ingrained into the campus-wide culture of PWIs, they are often vulnerable to ideological and financial challenges (Hefner, 2002; Schmidt, 2006; D. A. Williams, 2003).

As previously stated, initiatives such as Black culture centers and MSS were established because PWIs were not prepared to meet the needs of the increased number of students of color on their campuses (CAS, 2006; Hord, 2005; Patton, 2006a). Despite having a wide variety of structures across various campuses, MSS have some overarching goals. According to the Council for Advancement of Standards (CAS) professional standards for higher education (2006), the four main goals of multicultural student programs are: 1) to promote academic and personal growth of underserved students; 2) to work with the entire campus to create an inclusive climate; 3) to promote access and equity; and 4) to offer diversity education programs for the entire campus. As is evidenced in the CAS standards, MSS is charged with being its own student affairs division focused on multicultural students and racial equity because it is entrusted with meeting a wide array of needs (Shuford & Palmer, 2004). Furthermore, the standards set by CAS are rather broad and could exist in tension with one another. For example, MSS are responsible for promoting academic and personal growth for underserved students, while simultaneously being charged with creating campus-wide diversity education initiatives, which makes it difficult for MSS administrators

to be fully engaged or successful with any one thing because of their extensive responsibilities.

There is currently limited research that examines the work of MSS administrators and the implications of their work for achieving racial equity at PWIs. For example, Stage and Hamrick (1994) pointed out that the presence of multicultural student services “absolves other institutional agents of responsibility for even basic individual awareness of diversity or change” (p. 331). As a result, other members of the campus community are relinquished of any responsibility to promote diversity education and advocacy for students of color. By expecting MSS administrators at PWIs to serve as the primary, if not sole, advocates for all things regarding race and diversity, their ability to challenge the status quo is stifled. MSS administrators often find themselves overwhelmed with managing and/or avoiding racial conflicts such that they are often unable to devote time and thought to initiating transformational change across campus (Cobham & Parker, 2007; Sutton, 1998; Sutton & McCluskey-Titus, 2010; D. A. Williams, 2003).

By placing the responsibility for racial equity solely on MSS, institutions are inherently limiting the ability of MSS to serve as agents of change. MSS administrators are often too consumed with their roles as mentors, advocates, educators, programmers, community liaisons, student organization advisors, and campus-wide committee members to have time to create long-standing and campus-wide racial equity initiatives (Benitez, 2010). Furthermore, MSS’s ability to challenge the status quo is limited by their placement in their respective institution’s organizational structures (Brayboy, 2003; Kezar, Glenn, Lester, & Nakamoto, 2008). For example, most MSS offices do not have direct access to institutional leaders such as presidents and provosts who have the power to effect institutional policies

and practices. A quick examination of the organizational arrangement of MSS offices at two different types of PWIs provides evidence of the limited access MSS administrators have to presidents of their respective universities. At the University of Southern California (USC), a private PWI, the directors of the various cultural centers report to the Associate Vice President for Students Affairs who reports to the Vice President of Student Affairs who reports to the President of USC (University of Southern California, 2009). The directors of the cultural centers must at minimum go through two other layers of the organizational hierarchy before gaining access to the president. Similarly, the directors of the three cultural centers at Rutgers University, a land-grant PWI, are also two steps removed from the president of the university (Rutgers The State University of New Jersey, 2010).

Brayboy (2003) argued that PWIs ghettoize diversity by relegating its responsibility to MSS offices instead of changing the entire structure of the institution to reflect its campus-wide commitment to diversity. Evidenced in the cases of USC and Rutgers, MSS administrators have to go through several layers of administrative ranks before attaining the direct attention of senior campus administrators, including the president. As a result, MSS administrators are left in powerless and voiceless positions and are often unaware of the policies and decisions being made that directly influence their day-to-day work.

Recent examples of the limited power of MSS can be found on the campuses of Temple University and the University of Maryland (de Vise, 2009; Hernandez, 2009b). Both of these universities pride themselves for having “diverse” campuses. Despite having both high enrollment numbers and campus-wide diversity initiatives, the leaders of both institutions cut funding for diversity programs and services on the campuses due to financial constraints. In the case of Temple University, the Office of Multicultural Affairs’ staff was

literally cut in half and even more troubling was the fact that the budget decisions were made without consulting the MSS staff (Hernandez, 2009). At the University of Maryland, the Associate Provost for Equity and Diversity's position was cut in order to create budget savings during the current budget crisis (de Vise, 2009). The university planned to replace the Associate Provost position with a lower costing part-time administrative position. At both universities, financially challenging times served as the impetus to challenge the purpose and mission of their diversity initiatives.

These instances of MSS budgetary cuts are troubling for multiple reasons. First, it is evident that MSS administrators were voiceless in institutional decision-making processes that affected the role, purpose, staffing, and existence of their offices. Second, racial equity initiatives were not prioritized during a time of tough budget constraints. Gose (2009) stated that budget constraints are forcing institutions to decipher between the "core functions" of the university and those that are "expendable" and in the case of the previously mentioned institutions it is clear that MSS falls under the expendable category. Kezar (2008) also noted, "Resource constraints can result in disagreements over developing support programs for students of color that may not have occurred in flush financial times" (p. 411). These instances lead to questions regarding how integral MSS and racial equity initiatives are to PWIs. Budgetary constraints coupled with a climate that favors race neutrality are limiting racial equity efforts, such as MSS, on college campuses.

Overall, a broader question lingers about the current role and purpose of MSS at PWIs. During the last 30 years, political shifts towards race neutrality and colorblind practices have affected the status and purpose of MSS administrators. Colorblind and race neutral ideologies argue that race is no longer an important factor to consider in processes

such as college admissions decisions because the rights of all people are protected by our current legal system. Furthermore, these ideological perspectives assert that our society no longer practices blatant racism such as that experienced during the Jim Crow era and therefore the need for race-based initiatives such as affirmative action programs no longer exist (Bonilla-Silva, Lewis, & Embrick, 2004; Cross, 2000, Autumn; Forman, 2004).

Although these ideologies present an idealized world, there is evidence that equity has still not been achieved in regards to distribution of wealth nor of educational opportunities across all racial groups (Ancheta, 2005; Gandara, Orfield, & Horn, 2006; Rendon, Novack, & Dowell, 2005). For example, according to the 2010 U. S. Census (2010a), 83% of all bachelor's degree holders over the age of 18 were white. In contrast, 7.7% of bachelor's degrees were earned by African-Americans, 6.8% by Latinos, and 7.6% by Asians. Since educational attainment is one marker of income, the gaps in educational attainment can be translated to gaps in the distribution of wealth. The use of race neutrality and colorblindness allows for the dismissal of the influence of race and racism on degree attainment. This type of disregard subsequently limits our society's ability to achieve racial equity.

This is particularly pertinent in the context of higher education as most institutions struggle to balance their desire to achieve racial equity in a climate that favors race neutrality. Reconfigurations of admissions standards and debates as to whether or not to consider race in the decision-making process or the removal of race as a prerequisite for participation in summer bridge programs for entering freshmen students are examples of ways that PWIs have engaged in the negotiation between equity and race neutrality. As it stands, it appears that the organizational structures of PWIs, the politicized nature of racism in higher education, and a move toward colorblind practice constrain the ability of MSS administrators

to create transformational change regarding racial equity in higher education. As such, this study aims to examine the policies, unwritten rules, and practices that shape the work of MSS administrators at PWIs.

Statement of Problem

Currently public colleges and universities must attempt to achieve racial equity within budgetary constraints and a political climate that favors race neutrality (Chang, et al., 2005; Lopez, 2003; Morfin, Perez, Parker, Lynn, & Arrona, 2006). These challenges directly affect the work of MSS as these units are often held responsible for campus-wide racial equity initiatives. In this particular study, I used the experiences of a MSS administrator to examine the ways in which the institutional policies, unwritten rules, and practices of a Midwestern university mediate the achievement of racial equity. My goal was to use methodologies that allowed for a critical examination of the role of MSS that empowers MSS administrators to contribute to the shaping of their own positions as well as have a sense of agency within the institutional processes and policies that define the role of MSS at PWIs.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine how challenges to racial equity initiatives influence the day-to-day responsibilities of MSS administrators who are charged with creating, maintaining, and enhancing racial equity on campus. Although scholars have examined areas of study often affiliated with the work of MSS, such as access (Bowen & Bok, 1998; Orfield, Marin, & Horn, 2005; Perna, 2006), retention (Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Terrell & Wright, 1998), campus racial climate (Hurtado, 2000; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000), and multicultural education (Banks, 1993; Seltzer, Frazier, & Ricks, 1995) in the past, the work of MSS administrators as institutional agents of racial equity has not been explored.

In addition, research has focused on initiating and advancing diversity agendas (Kezar, 2008; Kezar, et al., 2008), but little has focused on the day-to-day work of MSS administrators. Specifically, there is a lack of literature that explores how institutional policies and practices structure the work of MSS administrators. Through the use of institutional ethnography and critical race theory, this study mapped out how institutional policies, unwritten rules, and practices shape the everyday work life of a MSS administrator at a public land-grant university. The overall goal of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of institutions of higher education shape the work of MSS and thus influence the overall access and success of students of color in American higher education.

For the purpose of this study, I conducted an institutional ethnography that began with the day-to-day work experiences of a MSS administrator in the College of Innovation. The College of Innovation was chosen because it has the lowest enrollment of students of color of all the colleges at the participating university, hereafter referred to as Midwestern University. In 2009, 181 out of 3,082 students enrolled in the College of Innovation were undergraduate students of color. In 2009, the College of Humanities had the largest percentage of undergraduate students of color enrolled at 12% versus 5.9% in the College of Innovation. Overall, in the fall of 2009, Midwestern University's undergraduate student of color enrollment across all colleges was 9.5%.

Research Questions

Given that there is a lack of scholarship examining the affect of institutional policies and practices on the work of MSS administrators, this study was designed to answer questions that examined the work of MSS administrators through the use of institutional

ethnography and critical race theory. Critical race theory allowed me to argue the racism is permanent and exists throughout all segments of our society to include higher education. As such, I was able to examine how racism is inherent in the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of a PWI. Furthermore, through the use of institutional ethnography, I began by examining the lived experiences of an MSS administrator in order to understand how the social and ruling relations at a PWI shape the administrator's work experiences. Overall, the following research questions were intended to garner a deeper understanding of how the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of institutions of higher education shape the work of MSS and thus affect the overall access and success of students of color in American higher education:

1. What are the social relations and organizations that shape the work of a MSS administrator at Midwestern University?
2. How do the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of Midwestern University mediate the everyday work experiences of a MSS administrator?
3. How do MSS administrators serve as institutional agents of racial equity?

Cumulatively, these research questions address one of the fundamental challenges faced in higher education: striving to achieve racial equity.

Theoretical Frameworks

In this study, I used both institutional ethnography and critical race theory as conceptual and methodological frameworks to map the policies, unwritten rules, and practices that influence the work of a MSS administrator at a PWI. Both frameworks contributed to the critical and liberatory goals of this research by centering the influence of race and racism in higher education and providing a mechanism to understand how dominant

political interests shape racial equity initiatives. In this section, I provide a brief overview of institutional ethnography as a theoretical perspective. I review institutional ethnography as a methodological approach in the methods section of the proposal since it is the methodology I used for this study. I also provide a brief introduction to critical race theory (CRT) and offer a more in-depth examination of CRT as a theoretical framework in chapter two as part of the literature review.

Institutional Ethnography

Institutional ethnography is a methodological approach that was first developed by Dorothy Smith in the 1980s as she saw the need for a feminist-centered methodology that focused on the lived experiences of women (DeVault & McCoy, 2006). She believed that research should be consciousness raising, treat people as the subjects of knowledge rather than the objects of the study, and that researchers must learn from people's lived experiences (D. E. Smith, 2005, 2007). As described by Smith (2007), institutional ethnography

explores the social world as it is known experientially, and it explores it as people's activities or doings in the actual local situations and conditions of our lives. The idea is to discover and map that world so that now it is being put together and can be made observable from the point of view of those caught up in it. (p. 411)

Through the use of institutional ethnography, researchers are able to map out the social relations and organizations that shape the lived experiences of people. The social relations are "sequences of action in which people are involved at different stages but not necessarily directly engaged in a shared work process" (D. E. Smith, 2007, p. 412). The organizations are functionally specialized systems such as education, health care, and government that also shape the day-to-day experiences of individuals. As a result, "institutional ethnography goes

to work at the point where people’s everyday experience is joined to and shaped by relations and organizations that coordinate what we do with others’ work elsewhere and else when” (D. E. Smith, 2007, p. 413). Overall, the goal of institutional ethnography is to empower people with the knowledge of what shapes their day-to-day lived experiences. DeVault and McCoy (2006) stated, “Institutional ethnographers generally have critical or liberatory goals; they undertake research in order to reveal the ideological and social processes that produce experiences of subordination” (p. 19).

This study benefited from the use of institutional ethnography because it allowed for the examination of how a PWI coordinates the activities and day-to-day work life of a MSS administrator through its policies, unwritten rules, and practices. The visible and invisible forces that affect the work of MSS administrators are mapped out by investigating the social relations and organization of a PWI. Such mapping was especially beneficial in trying to understand the current role and purpose of MSS at a PWI. Furthermore, the maps of the forces shaping the work of MSS administrators shed some light on the reasons why racial equity initiatives are susceptible to budget cuts and ideological challenges to their existence.

Critical Race Theory

CRT was developed over 40 years ago by legal scholars who called into question the slow pace of civil rights legislation (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006b; E. Taylor, 2009; Yosso, 2006a). As E. Taylor (2009) explained, “CRT comes from a long tradition of resistance to the unequal and unjust distribution of power and resources along political, economic, racial, and gendered lines in America, and across the globe, with the support and legitimacy of the legal system which makes possible the perpetuation of the established power relationships of society” (p. 1). Legal scholars such as Derrick Bell, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Richard Delgado,

Mari Matsuda, and Patricia Williams were key leaders in the establishment of CRT (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). They created a movement that is defined by Delgado and Stefancic as “a collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power” (p. 2). A key component to the CRT movement is a call to activism that aims to transform society for the better. The foundation for CRT stems from the works of critical legal scholars and radical feminists. Like CRT, these areas of study critiqued the power structures that shaped the law and its interpretations (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

The work of CRT scholars is framed by six tenets or themes: 1) CRT recognizes that racism is normal and a permanent part of American society; 2) CRT challenges dominant ideologies of merit, objectivity, neutrality, and colorblindness; 3) CRT challenges ahistoricism by accounting for the contextual and historical factors that affect the law; 4) CRT recognizes the importance of experiential knowledge and the voice of people of color; 5) CRT is interdisciplinary; and 6) CRT works towards eliminating racial oppression (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Dixson & Rousseau, 2006b; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Parker, Deyhle, & Villenas, 1999; E. Taylor, 2009). These six themes inform and shape the work of CRT legal scholars. In addition, the work of CRT legal scholars has served as a foundation for the work of CRT scholars in other disciplines such as cultural studies, English, sociology, political science, history, anthropology, and education to name a few (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

Institutional Ethnography and CRT

Through the combined use of institutional ethnography and CRT, I was able to map the social relations and organizations that shape the work life of a MSS administrator at a

PWI. By bringing forward the policies, unwritten rules, and practices shaping the day-to-day work within MSS and analyzing them through a critical race theory lens, the MSS administrator has a clearer understanding of the forces that shape his daily work and is therefore better equipped to challenge the status quo. Institutional ethnography and critical race theory were of value to this study because they both acknowledged that research is political. Given the history of race in the United States and American higher education, the questions I posed in this study are also political thus making this study a political form of research that aims to bring forward how race and racism enable and constrain racial equity initiatives at PWIs and center the lived experiences of MSS administrators to give them a voice within the complex bureaucracy of PWIs.

Significance of the Study

As is evidenced in the literature, many researchers agree that racial equity in higher education has not yet been achieved (Ancheta, 2005; Dixson & Rousseau, 2006b; Gandara, et al., 2006; Orfield, et al., 2005; Rendon, et al., 2005). Furthermore, critical race scholars argue that racism is endemic and reveal evidence of racism and its affect on higher education practices toward racial equity (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Solorzano, et al., 2000; Villalpando, 2003). Most importantly, it is important to understand that racism is practiced in covert ways, such as race-neutral and colorblind policies regarding the use of affirmative action, that influence the recruitment and retention of students of color and the work of administrators charged with achieving racial equity (Lopez, 2003; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Yosso, Parker, Solorzano, & Lynn, 2004). In particular, institutions of higher education have begun to rely on practices of race-neutrality and colorblindness in reaction to recent anti-affirmative action legislation and budgetary constraints (Morfin, et al., 2006;

Rendon, et al., 2005). As a result, public PWIs may be inadvertently or purposefully limiting racial equity. Furthermore, it is important to understand how institutional and societal ideologies shape the day-to-day work of MSS administrators, as these individuals are charged with designing and executing racial equity initiatives, such as race-based scholarships.

The audience for this study consists of leaders at PWIs ranging from boards of regents, presidents, provosts, chief diversity officers, MSS and other administrators who are expected to address issues of racial equity. It will also be important for policymakers to learn about the influence their decisions have on higher education's ability to achieve racial equity. Most importantly, MSS administrators will be able to use the findings of this study to begin to understand how through their empowerment, they can contribute to the development of policies, practices, and processes that shape their work as institutional agents of racial equity.

Summary

The purpose of this institutional ethnography was to discover the ruling relations that shape racial equity initiatives at a public land-grant Midwestern university. Through the use of institutional ethnography and critical race theory, this study mapped out how institutional and social ideologies, such as colorblindness and race neutrality, shape the everyday life of a MSS administrator at a public land-grant university. The overall goal of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of institutions of higher education shape the work of MSS and thus affect the overall access and success of racially minoritized students in American higher education.

Chapter two provides an overview of pertinent literature related to the history and current status of MSS at PWIs. I begin by providing the history of the political roots of MSS.

I then provide evidence of the deracialization and depoliticization of MSS over its 60-year history as a result of the changing political and legal climate around the issue of race in higher education. Next, I raise the argument that diversity initiatives at PWIs have been framed as window dressings, rather than as integral parts of the organization, thus limiting the possibility of achieving racial equity in higher education. Finally, I provide an in-depth review of both institutional ethnography and CRT as conceptual and theoretical frameworks for this study.

Chapter three includes a review of the philosophical assumptions, research approach, participants, data collection and analysis procedures, and the limitations of the study. For the purposes of this study, institutional ethnography allowed for an in-depth examination of social relations that shape racial equity initiatives at Midwestern University.

Chapter 4 provides a context for what was happening in the multiple organizations during the period of time of data collection. It was important to understand what was going on during the time data were collected in order to serve as a foundation for engaging with the findings. Examples are given of the policies and practices that were newly implemented and developed during the summer and fall of 2010.

In chapter five, I review the findings of the study. The findings are organized around the organizations that emerged as mediating Joshua's work as a MSS administrator. Furthermore, each organization is examined in order to bring forth both dominant and reframed ways of understanding the policies, practices, and unwritten rules that influence Joshua's day-to-day lived experiences. Evidence from field notes, interviews, and document analysis are brought forth to support the both the dominant and reframed ways of

understanding the multiple organizations and social relations that shape the work of the MSS administrator in the College of Innovation.

Finally, in chapter 6, I discuss the findings relating them back to pertinent literature and the theoretical frameworks. In addition, I discuss implications for practice and research and conclude with personal reflections.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

“Although I applaud the desire of institutions to address the underrepresentation of diverse students as well as faculty and staff at their institutions, I remain hesitant about the idea of implementing diversity” (Brayboy, 2003, p. 72).

The purpose of the literature review is to provide an overview of the scholarship associated with the history, purpose, and evolving role of MSS on PWIs. First I provide a historical overview of MSS that begins with the creation of MSS positions in the 1950s and 1960s and extends to the current status of MSS on college campuses. This summary of literature will provide evidence of the depoliticization over time of diversity at PWIs. This section of the literature review also includes a discussion of the political climate and legal decisions that affected the role of MSS at PWIs. Next, I make the argument that diversity initiatives, such as MSS, have been framed as window dressings at PWIs, thus limiting their ability to serve as agents of transformational change. Finally, I provide an in-depth review of both institutional ethnography and CRT as conceptual and theoretical frameworks for this study.

The Depoliticization of MSS: A Historical Overview

In order to understand how the role of MSS has changed over time, it is important to review the history and origins of MSS. By examining the history and evolution of MSS, it becomes evident that the role, purpose, and mission of MSS have shifted over its 60-year history. Furthermore, the alterations to the work of MSS are a reflection of the changes in the politics and values of American society regarding racial equity in higher education. As argued by several scholars (Altbach, Berdahl, & Gumpert, 2005; Altbach, et al., 2002; Green & Trent, 2005; W. A. Smith, et al., 2002), higher education is a microcosm of broader society and as such, the debates over shifting ideologies are often played out on college

campuses to include the debate over race-based initiatives. The historical overview of MSS will also include evidence of the shifts in societal ideologies regarding racial equity as evidenced in court cases and federal and state policies regarding the use of affirmative action.

The political origins of MSS. The early history of American higher education overtly excluded people of color from gaining access to higher education (Orum, 1972; D. A. Williams & Clowney, 2007; Williamson, 1999; Wolf-Wendel, et al., 2004). Changes in legislation in the 1950s and 1960s had a significant affect on college access. The Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ended the segregation of public education (Redd, 1998, Summer; Williamson, 1999). The following year, the Higher Education Act of 1965 was passed with the intention of increasing access to postsecondary education for people of color, individuals of lower socio-economic status, first-generation college students, and people with disabilities (Arendale, 2004; Thelin, 2004; J. B. Williams, 1997). The Higher Education Act enhanced previous financial assistance efforts by adding a focus on providing information, counseling, support, and other services (Wallace, Ropers-Huilman, & Abel, 2004). Changes in regulations that increased access to higher education for people of color served as the foundation for the political roots of MSS.

The court decisions and changes in legislation created opportunities for Blacks to have increased access to higher education. As a result, more Black students began to enroll in PWIs. Despite the demands by legislation to end segregation, the integration of PWIs was a long and difficult process. As the bodies of law changed and legally demanded access to all institutions of higher education for all students, Black students had to confront a new set of challenges. Despite their legal right to attend PWIs, the colleges and universities were not adequately meeting the needs of the Black students (Orum, 1972; Patton, 2006a, 2010; Patton

& Hannon, 2008; Williamson, 1999; Wolf-Wendel, et al., 2004). As Black students began to enter institutions that were previously only accessible to white students, a national movement for overall equality began to develop.

Inspired by the Civil Rights Movement, Black students began to formulate a student movement in order to ensure their success and survival at PWIs. As stated by Williamson (1999), “Many Black college students felt alienated and disaffected from their new academic settings and experienced overt or veiled hostility from white classmates, faculty, and administrators” (p. 92). The Black student movements of the 1960s and 1970s were the impetus for many changes that took place as a result of student demands.

One example of student activism sparked by the Civil Rights Movement occurred in North Carolina. Motivated by Rosa Parks, on February 1, 1960, four Black students at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College went to the F. W. Woolworth store in town and sat at the Whites-only lunch counter in protest of the store’s segregation policy (Orum, 1972; Wolf-Wendel, et al., 2004). This particular act of peaceful protest sparked Black student activism all across the country. Black students, along with allies, went on to lead other peaceful protests such as the Freedom Rides (Orum, 1972).

After the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968, there was a significant increase in the number of campus protests led by Black students (Wolf-Wendel, et al., 2004). The Black power protests of the late 1960s and early 1970s focused on the institutional racism students experienced on their campuses. The students began to demand changes in admissions policies, additional monetary resources to support Black student groups, the hiring of more Black faculty, culturally based programming, and the establishment of ethnic

studies programs (Hord, 2005; Patton, 2005, 2010; Williamson, 1999; Wolf-Wendel, et al., 2004; Yamane, 2001).

Institutions such as Denison and Florida State University were challenged by Black student leaders to create a campus environment that was inclusive of them and supported their needs as Black students (Wolf-Wendel, et al., 2004). The demands of students at Denison University in Ohio included the admission of 50 more Black students, a residence hall for Black students, and more Black professors. In addition to similar requests, students at Florida State University also demanded the naming of a university building after a prominent Black leader, stocking Black-oriented products in the campus book store, and banning all textbooks that contained racist material (Wolf-Wendel, et al., 2004).

Although the Black student movement is the most widely recognized period of student of color activism, other communities of color also challenged the lack of educational equity across the country. For example, in March of 1968, over ten thousand Chicano students walked out of their East Los Angeles schools to protest the lack of resources given to the mostly Chicano schools. This event became known as the East Los Angeles School Blowouts and served as the impetus for the Chicano community to actively challenge inequities throughout the educational pipeline to include higher education (Delgado Bernal, 1998; Munoz, 1989). Similar types of activism were taking place in other regions of the country to include the Midwest. As a result of the Chicano movement and the demands for access and representation, several Chicano and Latino Cultural Centers emerged throughout the West coast and Midwest in the late 1960s and 1970s (Lozano, 2010; Patton, 2010)

As previously mentioned, the Black student movement, as well as the activism of other communities of color, was the force behind the creation of academic and social support

services. The primary goal of these various mechanisms of support and advocacy was to appease student demands and end campus upheavals (Palmer & Shuford, 1996; Sutton, 1998; Young, 1986). Overall, Williamson (1999) argued that “many demands spoke directly to the need to alleviate the alienation, experienced by Black students at PWIs, provide them with alternative social outlets, and make their postsecondary education more relevant to their situation as Blacks in the United States” (p. 95).

Redefining the role of MSS at PWIs. The shifts in the demographic make-up of PWIs were the grounds for the student of color movements that demanded changes to the campus environment to include the development of culture centers and MSS on many campuses (Patton, 2005, 2010; C. A. Taylor, 1986; Williamson, 1999; Young, 1986). Motivated by the Black student movement, as well as feelings of isolation and marginalization, other racially underrepresented student populations began to make demands for support and advocacy services at PWIs. Latina/o, Asian, and Native American students began to request that PWIs expand their services and curriculum to reflect their experiences and heritage (Cobham & Parker, 2007; Liu, Cuyjet, & Lee, 2010; Lozano, 2010; Shotton, Yellowfish, & Cintron, 2010). The movements initiated by racially underrepresented students were representative of the political nature of racial equity at PWIs. As stated by Cobham and Parker (2007), “Students from all racial/ethnic backgrounds protested and fought for these programs in the name of democracy and social justice” (p. 88).

The politically-based demands by students of color for increased recruitment of faculty, staff, and students, as well as culturally relevant programs and services, often resulted in the expansion of the services of many cultural centers and MSS offices.

Furthermore, the missions of the centers and offices began to include mention of increasing

and enhancing cross-cultural understandings of similarities and differences (CAS, 2006; Patton, 2006a; Shuford & Palmer, 2004). In addition to meeting the needs of students of color beyond Black students, many MSS offices expanded to include women, LGBTQ students, and international students (Robinson, Butler, & Glennen, 1996; Stennis-Williams, et al., 1988; Sutton, 1998; D. A. Williams, 2003; Young, 1986).

As has been noted, the demands from students were initiated by a need for academic and social support at PWIs. As a result, academic and social programs focused on retention were developed that targeted racially underrepresented students (Robinson, et al., 1996; Stennis-Williams, et al., 1988). Furthermore, MSS was also charged with confronting campus racial issues, advising multicultural organizations, and educating faculty about diversity (Sutton, 1998; Sutton & McCluskey-Titus, 2010). These services and outreach efforts were a part of the political foundations of MSS. Despite the political foundations that aimed to ensure social justice and racial equity at PWIs, the shifts in how PWIs defined multiculturalism and diversity began to transform the work of MSS in the 1980s.

Due to the expansion of constituent groups being served by MSS, the day-to-day activities and responsibilities of MSS also began to shift. MSS were no longer asked to focus solely on the retention, advocacy, and advising of racially underrepresented groups, but were also responsible for providing similar types of support for LGBTQ, women, and international students (Princes, 2005; Sutton & McCluskey-Titus, 2010; Urciuoli, 1999). In addition, as the definitions of diversity and multiculturalism began to expand, it meant that MSS were responsible for campus-wide education around issues of diversity. These new duties and responsibilities were further complicated by the fact that MSS were being asked to provide services for a broader range of students without having access to additional fiscal support.

This situation was particularly challenging for those MSS offices that already worked with limited budgets and smaller staffs (Hefner, 2002; Shotton, et al., 2010; Sutton & McCluskey-Titus, 2010)

Supreme Court decisions: Re-shaping racial equity in higher education. The changes in the role and purpose of MSS at PWIs were taking shape as the Supreme Court engaged in a debate over the use of affirmative action in the college admissions process. The premise for the debate over affirmative action crystallized in the 1978 Supreme Court decision, *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*.

Bakke, a white male, accused the University of California at Davis Medical School of using discriminatory admissions practices after he was denied admissions. He accused the University of violating the Fourteenth Amendment by denying him admissions because of his race, therefore charging the University with practicing reverse discrimination. The University of California, Davis had a special admissions program that set aside a certain number of positions for minority candidates. Bakke argued that he was better qualified than the minority students admitted into the special program. In this case, the Supreme Court ruled that race could be used as “one” factor in admissions decisions, but that race could not be used as a quota system that set aside positions for minority candidates (Anderson, 2004; Baez, 2002; Horn & Marin, 2006; Howard, 1997; Lipson, 2006; Newman, 1989; Rhoads, Saenz, & Carducci, 2005; Teddlie & Freeman, 2002; Yosso, et al., 2004).

The *Bakke* case and decision affected higher education broadly, and MSS in particular, by creating a platform for the creation of race neutral initiatives. By challenging affirmative action, the *Bakke* case served as an impetus for PWIs to slow down the progress made by race-based initiatives and the case simultaneously increased resistance to

affirmative action programs (Cobham & Parker, 2007). For example, race-based programs and scholarships administered by MSS offices were challenged and in some cases these programs were either terminated or changed to exclude race as a prerequisite for selection (Cross, 2000, Autumn; Schmidt, 2006; D. A. Williams, 2003).

The next case to challenge the use of affirmative action in higher education was the *Hopwood v. University of Texas Law School* in 1996. The Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against the University of Texas and stated that the law school was not to use race as a factor in admissions (Anderson, 2004; Horn & Marin, 2006; Kauffman & Gonzalez, 1997; Rhoads, et al., 2005; Tierney & Chung, 2002). The University of Texas Law School appealed the decision, but the Supreme Court refused to hear the case, thus upholding the Fifth Circuit Court's decision. As a consequence, this decision left higher education administrators confused about how to handle race-based initiative and programs. This outcome was particularly confusing because the *Bakke* decision had allowed for the use of race as one factor in college admissions while the *Hopwood* case banned the use of race as a factor. In essence the court decisions left higher education in limbo because administrators did not know how to proceed with racial equity efforts (Anderson, 2004; Baez, 2002; Cross, 2000, Autumn; Kauffman & Gonzalez, 1997; Long & Tienda, 2008; Rhoads, et al., 2005).

The movement to challenge affirmative action strengthened after *Hopwood*. For example, several state-based initiatives successfully banned the use of affirmative action between 1997 and 2000. In 1996, the state of California enacted Proposition 209 banning the use of affirmative action, thus forbidding the consideration of race, sex, or ethnicity by public institutions (Anderson, 2004; Contreras, 2005; Horn & Marin, 2006; Rhoads, et al., 2005; Tierney & Chung, 2002). The state of Washington followed California's lead two years later

when it passed Initiative 200 and in 2000 Florida made the use of race as a factor in college admissions illegal (Brown & Hirschmann, 2006, April; E. Taylor, 2000; Tierney & Chung, 2002). Cumulatively, these state-initiated bans on affirmative action created additional pressures on PWIs to redefine and restructure their race-based initiatives to include MSS.

After *Bakke* and *Hopwood*, the role of race-based efforts at PWIs remained ambiguous. However, the *Grutter* and *Gratz* cases, more commonly referred to as the Michigan cases, provided a new precedent regarding race-based efforts in higher education. Barbara Grutter was denied admission to the University of Michigan law school in 1997 and Jennifer Gratz was placed on a waiting list for undergraduate admission to the University of Michigan in 1995 (Anderson, 2004). Both women, along with other plaintiffs, charged the University of Michigan with violating the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (Anderson, 2004). On June 23, 2003, the Supreme Court made their decisions for both the *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger* cases (Rhoads, et al., 2005). Although the decisions were delivered on the same day, the verdict for each case was different. In the *Grutter* case, the Justices agreed that the University of Michigan law school had a right to consider an applicant's race in the admissions process as a flexible plus factor. They used the diversity rationale to confirm that ensuring a diverse student body served as a compelling interest because it enhanced the learning environment at PWIs by providing opportunities for students to learn from diverse experiences and perspectives (Ancheta, 2005; Anderson, 2004; Horn & Marin, 2006; Lipson, 2006; Moses & Chang, 2006; Rhoads, et al., 2005).

In contrast, in the *Gratz* case the Justices did not uphold the University of Michigan's College of Literature, Science, and the Arts' practice of automatically assigning 20 points to

racially underrepresented applicants (Anderson, 2004; Rhoads, et al., 2005). The practice of assigning 20 points to the student of color applicants signified that race was treated as more than a plus factor. Instead, the undergraduate college treated race as a decisive factor in the admissions process (Ancheta, 2005; Lipson, 2006). Together, the *Grutter* and *Gratz* cases left affirmative action intact and allowed higher education to consider race, but only in a manner that treats race as a flexible factor and still allows for an individualized consideration of all applicants (Ancheta, 2005; Elliott & Ewoh, 2005; Horn & Marin, 2006). The decisions in the Michigan cases left many colleges and universities relieved that affirmative action was still viable, but simultaneously confused about the parameters around which race could be a consideration in higher education. As stated by Rhoads et al. (2005), “Far from providing a definitive ruling on the Constitutional legitimacy of considering race in higher education admissions decisions, the opinions delivered in the *Gratz* and *Grutter* cases left much room for interpretation” (p. 210).

Implications of Supreme Court decisions for MSS. Although the Supreme Court upheld the use of affirmative action, the confusion regarding the boundaries around the consideration of race in higher education opened the door for the use of race-neutral practices at PWIs (Lopez, 2003; Rhoads, et al., 2005). As a result of PWIs’ hesitations regarding the rulings in the Michigan cases, many campuses began to behave cautiously with reference to race-based initiatives. This cautionary behavior and attitude began to infiltrate the purpose, mission, and names of MSS offices (Schmidt, 2006). PWIs began to open up race-based programs and initiatives to students of any race (Schmidt, 2004). The word “minority” began to disappear from program brochures for scholarships and fellowships. Alternative social identities such as class and place of geographical origin became new factors that were taken

into consideration in the selection processes for participation in programs that were previously designed to increase access for racially underrepresented students (Elliott & Ewoh, 2005; Jaschik, 2006; Schmidt, 2004, 2006).

Some have argued that the move towards race neutral terminology in MSS began the process of the deracialization and depoliticization of MSS programs, services, and offices (Cobham & Parker, 2007; Urciuoli, 1999). In addition to shifting once race-based programs to race-neutral, MSS were also charged with ensuring that the compelling interest of diversity, as defined by the Supreme Court, extended into all aspects of the university. As such, the work of MSS began to include the development of diversity as an academic learning tool. By defining diversity as a learning tool, the constituents for which MSS was traditionally responsible were extended to include White students (Palmer & Shuford, 1996; D. A. Williams & Clowney, 2007). MSS administrators were now expected to provide expertise regarding a broader array of social identities and to serve as consultants about multicultural education in the classroom (Schmidt, 2006; D. Williams, 2006; D. A. Williams, 2003). In addition, MSS administrators were entrusted with developing out of class experiences that enhanced *all* students' abilities to communicate cross culturally (D. A. Williams & Clowney, 2007). Overall, the scope of responsibilities for MSS increased as a result of the diversity rationale and resulting broader definitions of diversity.

There were many implications for the work of MSS and the role it played at a PWI as a result of its deracialization and depoliticization. As the mission and purpose of MSS underwent significant changes, confusion ensued about the function of MSS within the structure of PWIs. The original purpose of MSS was to advocate and provide support for students of color in order to ensure their success. As the purpose of MSS transformed to

became a one-stop shop for anything involving diversity, the offices' abilities to serve as strong political advocates for equity were diminished (Sutton, 1998; Sutton & McCluskey-Titus, 2010). This confusion contributed to MSS's vulnerability to critiques and challenges about the work they were charged to do. Hefner (2002) argued that the deracialization of MSS through the expansion of their services was one step closer to the eradication of MSS at PWIs. Patton, Ranero, and Everett (in press) contended that the depoliticization of MSS is also evident in the fact that many MSS offices are relegated to providing campus-wide programming that can be touted as a form of cultural tourism, where students are able to "tour" the cultural practices and history of different racial/ethnic groups without any substantive educational value. The practice of cultural tourism is far removed from the political roots of MSS aimed at creating a counterspace where racially minoritized students could feel empowered, have a sense of community, and receive academic and social support services. By being held responsible for educating the entire campus about diverse populations, MSS administrators were taken away from providing support and advocacy for racially underrepresented student populations. As stated by Patton et al., "Despite well-conceived intentions of creating campus environments that promote inclusiveness, these expanded services often threaten the ability of MSS to effectively carry out its original mission of providing support to students of color, particularly when such efforts lack intentionality."

The influence of the changing definitions of diversity was not only evidenced in the evolving responsibilities of MSS, but also in the changes of the titles given to these offices. As previously stated, many MSS offices were created as a result of the Black student movement. These offices were often originally given titles such as minority student services

and primarily served Black students (Patton & Hannon, 2008; C. A. Taylor, 1986). As the definition of diversity shifted to be more inclusive of other racially minoritized groups, the title of minority student services was replaced with multicultural affairs. This change in title represented an attempt to expand services beyond solely serving Black students. In some cases this change meant collapsing Black culture centers and minority student services offices into multicultural centers or offices (Patton & Hannon, 2008). Most recently, multicultural affairs offices have moved to expanding their services beyond racially underrepresented populations to include women and LGBTQ students. As such, some multicultural affairs offices have changed their titles once again to “more inclusive” terminology such as intercultural centers and offices of diversity (Patton & Hannon, 2008; Schmidt, 2006). These changes in titles are powerful reflections of how PWIs have transformed the objectives of MSS offices over time in a way that has shifted these offices away from being spaces of resistance and empowerment for racially minoritized students.

Questions that were posed in 1986 by Lawrence Young regarding the role of MSS on predominantly white campuses are still viable today. Young (1986) posed the following questions:

Do minority cultural centers have a permanent role to play on predominantly white campuses, or is this simply another fad of the academy soon to be forgotten and discarded? What role will these centers play if minority enrollment shrinks? Or if it increases drastically? These are issues that everyone in higher education will and should face head-on with a rational, just, and humane plan for managing change. (p. 14)

Over 20 years later, these questions are currently being posed at many campuses that are renegotiating the role that MSS and racial equity plays at PWIs. As was evidenced in the review of literature, MSS have experienced modifications to their role on PWIs that is shaped by factors such as demographic changes, Supreme Court rulings, and ideological revisions regarding the definition and value of diversity. These changes have contributed to tensions experienced by MSS administrators as they encounter and navigate their ever-shifting purpose. These tensions are evidenced in editorials, news articles, and magazine articles in publications such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, and *Inside Higher Ed*. The articles highlight the challenges faced on campuses as they try to define and redefine what diversity means for their campuses (Chubin, 2009; Hamilton, 2006; Lum, 2009). Overall, MSS administrators are left to wonder if their duties are still related to the political roots of MSS or if they are now simply managing diversity for PWIs.

Where have the political roots of MSS gone?: Diversity as a window dressing.

Homeowners and business owners often use window dressings to make their homes and businesses more appealing and attractive. Window dressings can also signify actions or statements that are used to make something appear more desirable than it really is. A few scholars (Brayboy, 2003; Green & Trent, 2005; Hu-DeHart, 2000; Iverson, 2007, 2010) have argued that colleges and universities use diversity initiatives, such as diversity policies, MSS, and culture centers, as window dressings in order to make their institutions appear to be more committed to racial equity than they really are.

As institutions of higher education sought how to dress their windows with diversity, organizations such as the Association of American Colleges and Universities responded by

publishing reports such as *Making Excellence Inclusive* (J. F. Milem, Chang, & Antonio, 2005; D. A. Williams, Berger, & McClendon, 2005). These reports discussed the benefits and challenges of diversity and offered tools for how to enhance institutional diversity practices. This series of reports is significant because it called for PWIs to expand their notions of diversity beyond increasing the enrollments and representation of people of color on campus. The new diversity initiative called for implementing diversity into every aspect of the university.

As a result, two major trends began to occur at PWIs across the country: the development of diversity policies and the creation of chief diversity officer positions. Many campuses began to develop and implement diversity policies and action plans (Iverson, 2010). Iverson defined diversity action plans as “official university policy documents that serve as a primary means by which postsecondary institutions formally advance and influence policy for building diverse, inclusive campus communities” (p. 193). In her analysis of 21 diversity action plans at 20 land-grant universities, Iverson (2007, 2010) uncovered how racial inequality is reproduced by diversity policies. Despite having goals of increasing racial equity, the diversity action plans reified images of people of color as “outsiders, at-risk victims, commodities, and change agents” (Iverson, 2007, p. 586). Iverson’s examination of diversity policies affirms the argument that even attempts to institutionalize diversity as being more than a window dressing contributed to the reproduction of racist policies and practices.

As asserted by Brayboy (2003), the notion of implementing diversity at PWIs is problematic because it frames diversity as a stand-alone policy that can be added easily and simply to a complex organization, such as higher education, in order to provide an efficient

solution to a problem. The issue of diversity is complex and cannot be resolved with one simple and efficient policy. It requires a long-term commitment, in-depth analysis, and different perspectives to begin to understand how diversity can become a part of the entire system of higher education. Brayboy's reasoning regarding institutional change resonates with theories of organizational change in higher education that state that in order for overall change to occur, all aspects of the organization must undergo change and not just segments of the administrative structure (Birnbaum, 1990; Kezar, et al., 2008; Kuh, 2003; Weick, 2000; D. A. Williams & Clowney, 2007). Unfortunately, due to a lack of organizational restructuring, higher education has "ghettoized" diversity by only framing it as a window dressing to the organization and in many cases situating all responsibility for diversity with MSS (Brayboy, 2003).

Similar to the purpose of diversity policies, the creation of chief diversity officer positions was in response to a need to create campus-wide diversity initiatives. These positions have emerged at PWIs over the last 20 years and they are charged with overseeing campus-wide diversity initiatives to include faculty of color retention and diversification of the curriculum (Banjeri, 2005; D. A. Williams, 2005). According to Banjeri (2005), there are three kinds of diversity officers including chief diversity officers who report directly to the president or provost, senior diversity officers reporting to those above the dean, and diversity officers who report to all senior-level administrators.

Due to the recent rise in appointments of chief diversity officers, the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE) was established in 2006 (NADOHE, 2006a). Currently, NADOHE has over 100 member institutions all over the United States (NADOHE, 2006b). The purpose of NADOHE is to establish a network among

chief diversity officers who are committed to creating transformational change regarding diversity at their institutions. Despite the intention to use these newly created positions at higher levels in the organization to create campus-wide change regarding diversity, these positions only serve to further relinquish other high-level administrators from advocating for diversity and racial equity.

Both diversity plans and the chief diversity officers fall short of creating transformational change at PWIs. According to Hu-DeHart (2000), diversity in higher education is currently framed in a manner that disempowers the original political goals of diversity. She stated, “They [higher education administrators] have moved it [diversity] away from its original liberatory goals toward a corporate model for ‘managing diversity,’ under which diversity becomes merely the recognition of differences” (p. 1). Similar to Iverson (2010), Hu-DeHart agreed that diversity statements serve as examples of the depoliticization of diversity in higher education because they are filled with a discourse that lacks depth and serves to affirm the status quo. This outcome is a far cry from the origins of the diversity movement in higher education that stemmed from the civil rights movement and subsequent student movements. Hu-DeHart argued that the original goal of diversity within higher education was to ensure the redistribution of resources to underserved populations, thus making it a political project.

Overall, the work of MSS has undergone many changes in its short 60-year history. MSS administrators are currently left to navigate a challenging climate that is moving towards deracializing the initial purpose of MSS. Cobham and Parker (2007) stated,

Hosting cultural dinners and ethnic dances and hiring multicultural affairs professionals symbolizes a supposed commitment to diversity. Many of these efforts

however, fail to address the deeply layered issue of institutional racism and often dilute race-focused initiatives that are regularly touted under the guise of multiculturalism. (p. 86)

Furthermore, if scholars (Brayboy, 2003; Cobham & Parker, 2007; Hu-DeHart, 2000; Iverson, 2007, 2010) have shown that racism permeates campus-wide strategies, such as diversity policies, it can be inferred that racism also shapes the work of MSS administrators at PWIs. As such, the purpose of this study is to begin to understand and name the forces, visible and invisible, that shape the work of MSS administrators. Through the use of institutional ethnography and critical race theory, I explored the ways that institutional policies, practices, and unwritten rules shape the work of MSS administrators at a land-grant, predominantly white, Midwestern university.

Theoretical Frameworks

Limited research examines the work of MSS administrators. In this study I investigated how the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of a PWI shape the work of a MSS administrator. Because I sought to analyze the ways that a PWI, as an organization, defines the day-to-day work of a MSS administrator, I used institutional ethnography as a theoretical framework since its purpose is to explain how organizations mold the lived experiences of individuals. In addition, because the focus of this study is the work of MSS administrators as institutional agents of racial equity, CRT was also an appropriate theoretical framework since it informs how race and racism influence the ways that a PWI enacts its racial equity initiatives. In addition to serving as a theoretical framework, I also used CRT as an analytical framework in this study. I will discuss the use of CRT as an analytical framework in chapter three. Together, institutional ethnography and CRT serve as

the foundation that allowed me to examine the ways in which PWIs mediate the work of MSS administrators as institutional agents of racial equity. In the following sections I will review both theoretical frameworks that inform this study.

Critical Race Theory

CRT has informed the work of legal scholars over the last 40 years and in the last 20 years education scholars have used CRT's concepts, tenets, and epistemological assumptions to inform their scholarship (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006b). CRT offers a theoretical and analytical framework that is designed to explain how educational structures, practices, and opportunities are shaped by race, racism, and power (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Parker, 1998; Solorzano, 1997, 1998). Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) first introduced the use of CRT in education because they believed it provided a framework to understand the racial inequalities that exist in education. They also stated that race in education was under-theorized. By using CRT as a theoretical and analytical framework, education scholars are able to conduct anti-oppressive research that explores the contextual history of race and racism. CRT also recognizes the intersectionality of racism, sexism, and poverty (Crenshaw, 1995, 2003).

As education research began to use CRT more frequently, a set of CRT tenets specific to education was developed (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano, 1998; Solorzano, et al., 2000). CRT in education begins with the premise that race and racism are endemic and permeate all aspects of society to include educational structures and policies (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano & Yosso, 2009; Yosso, 2006b). CRT also aims to challenge the dominant ideology that is bedrocked by white supremacy and white privilege. According to Yosso

(2006b), “CRT challenges White privilege and refutes the claims of educational institutions to objectivity, meritocracy, colorblindness, race neutrality, and equal opportunity” (p. 171). In addition, adherents of CRT in education are committed to social justice and putting an end to racism and racial oppression. Through the elimination of racism, CRT can contribute to the eradication of other forms of oppression such as sexism, classism, and homophobia (Solorzano, 1998; Solorzano & Yosso, 2009). In CRT, the centrality of experiential knowledge acknowledges that the lived experiences and knowledge of people of color are legitimate and imperative in the process of understanding racial oppression (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006a; Yosso, 2006b). Thus CRT scholars use personal narratives and counternarratives to challenge the dominant stories that provide incomplete and incorrect accounts regarding the influence of race and racism (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Finally, CRT values an interdisciplinary perspective (Solórzano, 1997). As Yosso (2006b) noted, “CRT goes beyond disciplinary boundaries to analyze race and racism within both historical and contemporary contexts, drawing on scholarship from ethnic studies, women’s studies, sociology, history, law, psychology, film, theater, and other fields” (p. 172). Engrained in this final tenet is a challenge to ahistoricism, as CRT recognizes that most historical accounts are based on dominant narratives that exclude the voices of people of color and provide incomplete accounts of their histories (E. Taylor, 2009). Overall, these tenets serve as themes that CRT education scholars can use to guide their scholarship.

In this study, I used the tenets of CRT to examine the ways in which race and racism affect the work of a MSS administrator. Three constructs of CRT in particular were used as theoretical and analytical frameworks in this study. The three constructs were racial realism, interest convergence, and colorblindness. While it is important to acknowledge that other

constructs of CRT could have emerged during the analysis as I used CRT as an analytical framework. I provide a foundational review and highlight the literature regarding the three specific constructs of CRT that appear to be most relevant to this study. In addition, I provide an overview of master and counternarratives as I use both types of accounts to frame the findings in this study.

Racial realism. CRT begins with the premise that race and racism are real, normal, and engrained in all parts of our society. As a result, the ideology of racism is unrecognizable in political and legal structures (Crenshaw, et al., 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). In several of his writings, Bell (1992; 2005a) presented the concept of racial realism as a mechanism to challenge the notion of racial equity. Bell believed it was important for Black people to accept the reality and permanence of racism so that they could use their imaginations to develop strategies to end it. Although his concept of racial realism is contradictory to the ideals of democracy and meritocracy in America, Bell felt it was more powerful for the Black community to accept the realities of racism than to live under the false hope of slow progress. It is important to note that although Bell framed his discussion about racial realism in terms of the Black community, racial realism expands beyond Blacks to include other racially minoritized groups.

Bell (1992) presented four points to support the concept of racial realism: 1) historical point of view; 2) economic evidence; 3) salvation through struggle; and 4) imperatives implicit in racial realism. With regard to the historical point of view, Bell argued that “there has been no linear progress in civil rights” (p. 98). Throughout American history, and in the particular case of American law, Blacks have experienced a history that is filled with instances of legal progress and regression. For example, *Brown vs. Board of Education* ended

legal school segregation, but equity in education is still being challenged by legal cases opposing the use of affirmative action in higher education admissions decisions. These challenges to affirmative action are attempts to end mechanisms that were put into place to guarantee opportunities for racially underrepresented students to gain access to higher education. Now that students of color have acquired the legal right to higher education, legal cases are threatening to take these rights away.

The economic overrepresentation of Blacks at lower socioeconomic statuses in American society also offers evidence of the permanence of racism. Bell explained that economics are “the real indicator of power in this country” (p. 98). A cursory analysis of race and class in the United States provides ample evidence of the racial divide that exists within the American class structure. The longstanding and unequal distribution of material wealth serves as an indicator of the systemic inequities that are in place that keep people of color in powerless positions and at the lowest class ranks of American society. Similarly, it can be argued that MSS professionals are not in positions of power at PWIs. As such, the systemic racism in higher education keeps MSS administrators in powerless positions and at the lowest ranks of the organizational structures of institutions thus limiting their ability to create effective and long standing changes designed to ensure racial equity.

Despite the perception that racial realism is a fatalistic concept, Bell (1992) believed that salvation could be achieved through struggle. By engaging in the battle, Black people can gain fulfillment and empowerment. Simply participating in the struggle is evidence of liberation from racism. Black people will be in positions of power because they will no longer be passive victims of racism, but will instead be warriors for equity.

Finally, Bell (1992) purported that in order for racial realism to be effective in its goal of emancipation from the notion of racial equity, Black people must accept the reality of racism despite its pessimistic outlook and that the struggle must center on justice and truth. When people choose to live in a fantasy of achieved equality, progress is not possible. Therefore, the realities of race must be acknowledged in order to end racism.

In this study, I used racial realism as the point of entry that allowed me to begin with the understanding that because racism is permanent and institutionalized in all segments of American society, it exists within and throughout institutions of higher education. Furthermore by using the concept of racial realism I was able to focus on how the organization of PWIs, as determined by political and social ideologies, shaped the work of MSS administrators. The examination of the systemic forces at play at a PWI challenges the notion that race and racism are acts of individualized behaviors. As Bell (2005b) argued,

While we must continue to work hard on individual issues of racial discrimination, we must address the reality that we live in a society in which racism has been internalized and institutionalized to the point of being an essential and inherently functioning component of that society--a culture from whose inception racial discrimination has been a regulating force for maintaining stability and growth for maximizing other cultural values. (p. 89)

By centering racism as a systemic problem, CRT and the concept of racial realism allowed me to examine how institutions of higher education mediate racial equity through the work of MSS administrators. For example, instead of framing the lack of progress made in achieving racial equity at PWIs as a result of the wrongdoing of the MSS administrator as an individual, racial realism allowed me to examine how the MSS administrator is unable to

achieve racial equity because of the systemic forms of racism at play at a PWI. Overall, I was able to examine how racism is entrenched in the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of PWIs.

Interest convergence. Bell (2005) presented the concept of interest convergence to explain how changes in policies and practices that benefit people of color only occur when their interests coincide with the interests of whites. Morfin, Perez, Parker, Lynn, and Arrona (2006) explained, “Interest convergence in CRT demonstrates how White European Americans will only support policies that will result in a clear political or social advantage for them along with a lesser benefit for persons of color” (p. 252). Bell’s (2005) analysis of several historic court cases, including the *Brown v. Board of Education*, provides evidence of instances of interest convergence.

Bell’s (2004) reexamination of the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling ending school segregation questioned the altruistic representation of the motivations behind the Supreme Court decision. Through his analysis, Bell discovered that several factors contributed to the ruling to end school segregation. Bell (2004) argued that the Brown case was an anticommunist decision because the United States was competing with communist countries during the time of the Brown case. In order for the United States to gain international legitimacy, it could no longer uphold racist practices such as legalized school segregation. Despite promises of educational equity implied by the Brown ruling, Bell stated that today most Black children are still attending substandard segregated schools. He believed that school desegregation failed because there are “millions of children who have not experienced the decision’s promise of equal educational opportunity” (D. Bell, 2005, p. 20).

The construct of interest convergence has been used by educational researchers to examine educational policies and practices (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Dixson & Rousseau, 2006b; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Lopez, 2003). Several scholars (Chang, Witt, Jones, & Hakuta, 2003; J. Milem, 2003; Morfin, et al., 2006) have argued that examples of interest convergence exist throughout higher education. In particular, the argument for diversity on college campuses serving as a compelling interest in the *Grutter* case framed diversity as an important learning tool for all students. It was argued that having diverse perspectives in the classroom helped prepare all students to compete in an increasingly global economy. An interest convergence analysis of the *Grutter* decision would argue that diversity is only a compelling interest when it benefits White people. In the context of higher education, diversity only becomes important when it helps prepare White students to be successful in an increasingly diverse economy.

Similarly, affirmative action initiatives are challenged when the interests of Whites no longer converge with the interests of people of color. Tennessee State University (TSU), a historically black college located in Nashville, was caught in the middle of the state's mandated efforts to end desegregation in its system of higher education. Although TSU was created because Black students were historically denied access to PWIs in Tennessee, it became the target of litigation calling for the desegregation of higher education in the state. The federal district court in the case of *Geier v. Alexander*, outlined desegregation goals for TSU to include increasing the numbers of white faculty and administrators to 50 percent within a five-year time frame and increasing white student enrollment to 50 percent within nine years (E. Taylor, 1999). What was most ironic about the ruling in this case was that the PWIs in Tennessee were not given any specific demands other than recruiting 75 qualified

Black students for the professional schools. As a result of the federal district court's demands, TSU received long awaited additional funding to support the development of campus facilities and academic programs. In addition, TSU received funding to provide full academic scholarships to White students with a 2.5 GPA as an incentive to increase white student enrollment. Meanwhile, PWIs were not required to change any structures, demographic make-up, nor policies other than loosely defined directives to increase their outreach efforts to Black students. Taylor (1999) argued that TSU only received the additional funding and support from the state when the interests of whites converged with those of the historically Black institution. The additional funding also placed TSU in a precarious situation where it could not dispute the colorblind policies and court decisions because it could jeopardize its newly acquired state funding. Overall, access for Black students and support for a historically Black institution only occurred when whites reaped additional benefits.

The concept of interest convergence can also be applied to the history and purpose of MSS at PWIs. As previously stated, scholars (Liu, et al., 2010; Lozano, 2010; Patton, 2005; Williamson, 1999) argued that many MSS offices were created to appease the protests and demands of students of color at PWIs. Patton, Ranero, and Everett (in press) contended that “the concessions that many PWIs offered during the student protests resulted more from their desire to re-establish normalcy and silence dissent rather than a sincere desire to ensure that students of color felt welcomed and supported.” Although the notion of interest convergence accounts for the creation of MSS at PWIs, it can also be used to understand why the role of MSS is currently being challenged. The challenges to the role and purpose of MSS may speak to how the interests of whites and people of color are no longer converging. By using

interest convergence as a construct, I was able to examine how the work of MSS is structured to benefit whites over the needs of students of color.

Colorblindness. The final concept I will highlight, colorblindness, allows for the general dismissal of the affect of race and racism. The use of colorblindness has allowed for the creation of many race-neutral initiatives in higher education that were designed to counter race-based programs.

There are various definitions of colorblindness that are either grounded in psychological or sociological foundations. This study is grounded in a sociological perspective as my aim is to understand the broader societal implications of practicing colorblindness. According to Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000), “The notion of colorblindness is the global justification Whites use to defend the racial status quo” (p. 69). Other scholars have defined colorblindness simply as the belief that race does not matter (Neville, Spanierman, & Doan, 2006; Spanierman, Neville, Liao, Hammer, & Wang, 2008; Worthington, Navarro, Lowey, & Hart, 2008). This less overt form of racism allows Whites to blame people of color for their status in American society without expressing their prejudices overtly (Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000; Worthington, et al., 2008).

Bonilla-Silva’s (2006) frames of colorblindness are an appropriate framework for this study because they represent a newer ideology from which to understand the insidious nature of how racism is presently expressed (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Forman, 2004). According to Bonilla-Silva (2006), colorblind racism is subtle, institutionally affirmed and practiced, and often appears to be non-racial. Colorblind racism preserves racial inequities, allowing Whites to deny race through the language of race-neutrality and merit and in turn receive material

benefits and privileges through its maintenance (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000; Forman, 2004; Lewis, 2001).

Colorblind racism consists of four interpretive, overlapping frames offered by Bonilla-Silva (2006): 1) abstract liberalism, 2) naturalization, 3) cultural racism, and 4) minimization of racism. Individuals who use abstract liberalism present ideas associated with political and economic liberalism to explain away racism. This frame allows White people to appear reasonable and moral when dealing with racial inequities. Examples of abstract liberalism include the belief that affirmative action is not useful because it contradicts the principles of equal opportunity by giving women and people of color an advantage over White men, while ostensibly ignoring the systemic forces that contribute to racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2006).

The naturalization frame allows Whites to claim that racial phenomena are natural occurrences. For example, segregation occurs naturally because people are drawn to people who share similar characteristics, such as race. Because of natural connections, White people claim that it is natural for people to choose partners or spouses in their same racial group (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). The cultural racism frame relies on culturally based arguments to explain the position of minoritized groups in society. Examples of culturally based arguments include the belief that Mexicans do not emphasize education and that Blacks have too many children because of their respective cultures (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). Those who no longer believe race is a key factor that affects the lives of people of color use the minimization of race frame. Assumptions undergirding this frame are that racism is outdated and things are much better now for people of color. White people who use this frame accuse people of color of being hypersensitive about race or “pulling the race card” (Bonilla-Silva, 2006).

Overall, the frames of colorblindness provide a lens to understand contemporary forms of racism. Although Bonilla-Silva's (2006) frames of colorblindness focus on how individuals make sense of race and racism, these frames are also applicable to the use of colorblindness in policy development in higher education. The construct of colorblindness has been used to understand how once race-based policies and programs have recently moved to race neutrality. The emergence of race neutral policies and practices has affected several components of higher education to include admissions and recruitment practices, scholarships and financial aid opportunities, and the work of MSS administrators (Lopez, 2003; Morfin, et al., 2006; Rendon, et al., 2005; Robinson, et al., 1996). Colorblind interpretations of civil-rights laws are allowing conservative groups to challenge race-based initiatives such as affirmative action (Morfin, et al., 2006). For example, conservative leaders use the colorblindness frame of cultural racism to blame people of color for the long-standing gaps in academic achievement (D. G. Williams & Land, 2006). By blaming people of color for their own status in society, the ideology of meritocracy is affirmed. Williams and Land argued that, "non-recognition of race reinforces and reproduces the flawed structure of society because it does not allow for the analysis of social inequality at the core of the problem" (p. 580).

As previously discussed, the work of MSS has undergone many modifications throughout its 60-year history. Most recently, the affect of colorblind ideology is evident in the changes made in the work of MSS administrators on some college campuses such as the modifications made to the titles of MSS offices (Schmidt, 2006). By using the concept of colorblindness, I was able to examine if and how race neutrality shaped the role and responsibilities of a MSS administrator. Furthermore, by using colorblindness, I was able to

examine how meritocracy and other colorblind ideologies shaped policies aimed at ensuring racial equity that are enacted within MSS.

Master and counternarratives. As previously stated, CRT scholars use counternarratives to challenge the dominant stories that provide incomplete and incorrect accounts regarding the impact of racism (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). The dominant stories, also known as master narratives, are tools of white privilege that serve to protect racial and social privilege by making racial privilege seem natural (Solorzano & Yosso, 2009; Yosso, 2006a). As stated by Solórzano and Yosso (2009), “A majoritarian story is one that privileges Whites, men, the middle and/or upper class, and heterosexuals by naming these social locations as natural or normative points of reference” (p. 135). An example of a master narrative, as related to higher education, is that students of color are admitted to colleges and universities as a result of affirmative action and not based on their own merits.

Counternarratives, also known as counter-stories, challenge the master narratives by disrupting assumptions that protect white privilege. Solórzano and Yosso (2009) argued that, “The counter-story is also a tool for exposing, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege. Counter-stories can shatter complacency, challenge the dominant discourse on race, and further the struggle for racial reform” (p. 138). In this study I present the master narrative to highlight how the various organizations normalize white privilege. I then present the counternarrative for each organization in order to analyze and expose how racism is intertwined in the policies, practices, and unwritten rules of each organization. For example, the counternarrative exposes how MU utilizes culturally irrelevant tools of evaluation to assess the work of diversity programs and initiatives. Although the master

narrative expounds that practices of evaluation and assessment are applied equally across all units and programs, the master narrative does not account for how these tools are based on dominant notions of success that do not account for how the needs of students of color are often not aligned with dominant or white notions of support and advocacy. Therefore, assessing programs and initiatives designed to support students of color with dominant tools of evaluation is counterproductive and endangers the longevity of diversity programs as they are often found to be ineffective and inefficient.

Institutional Ethnography

CRT as a theoretical framework allows me to examine how race, racism, and power affect the work of MSS administrators. I plan to use the theoretical foundations of institutional ethnography along with CRT in order to examine how race and racism are inherent in the policies, practices, and unwritten rules that define the work life of MSS administrators. I will now discuss the theoretical foundations for institutional ethnography. Although I plan to use institutional ethnography as the primary methodology for this study, I will discuss the components of institutional ethnography's research methods in chapter three.

The foundations of institutional ethnography. As previously mentioned, institutional ethnography was developed by Dorothy Smith (2005) as a research methodology in response to a lack of feminist methodologies in sociological research. She felt that methodological approaches in sociology in the 1980s were not accounting for the ways in which people understood their own experiences. Instead, researchers were taking people's lived experiences as data and making that data fit into theoretical frameworks. As a result, the actual lived experiences of the people were lost (D. E. Smith, 2007). Smith used the work of Marx and Engels relating to materialism in order to formulate institutional ethnography as

a feminist methodology (D. E. Smith, 1990). As Smith (2007) explained, “They wrote of making a social science grounded not in theory, concepts, speculation, or imagination, but in actual people’s activities and conditions of those activities” (p. 411). Marx and Engels’s work focused on the activities of individuals and the “material conditions of those activities” (D. E. Smith, 1990, p. 6). Smith extended the concepts presented by Marx and Engels to her work by developing a sociology that began with people’s lived experiences instead of beginning with theoretical foundations. Furthermore, Smith acknowledged that although Marx and Engels identified how capitalism shaped the labor activities of people, they did not account for how texts, serve as mediators of organizational and institutional values and goals in our current society. Through extrapolating the work of Marx and Engels, Smith (1990) developed institutional ethnography as a feminist methodology that started with people’s lived experiences and examined how their daily activities are coordinated and co-ordered by organizations and texts. Texts in institutional ethnography are defined as “words, images, or sounds that are set into a material form of some kind from which they can be read, seen, heard, watched, and so on” (D. E. Smith, 2006a, p. 66). Texts connect the local with the translocal ruling relations and serve as coordinators of individuals’ work and lived experiences because they formulate a process.

The feminist movement and feminism also had a significant influence on how Smith formulated institutional ethnography. Prior to the women’s movement there was no space for the voices of women and their lived experiences. As previously mentioned, Smith was also frustrated at her own discipline’s inability to recognize the actualities of people’s lives without trying to fit them into theoretical frameworks that often did not account for the influence of patriarchy. In response, Smith (2007) explained, “I began to examine sociology

from a standpoint in my experience as a woman, in my body, with my children, at work in my home, in the local particularities of my life” (p. 410). By focusing on people’s embodied experiences and mapping the forces that shape those lived experiences, Smith was able to design a feminist methodology. Smith (2007) contended that institutional ethnography is a feminist methodology in three ways:

1. Institutional ethnography originated in and was developed from the logic of the politics of consciousness-raising that was so central to the women’s movement in its early day.
2. Its design problematizes the conceptual strategies and methods of sociologies that alienate people from their experience and proposes as an alternative an inquiry that works from and learns from people’s experiences of the actualities of our everyday lives.
3. People are the knowers, the subjects of knowledge rather than the objects of study. (p. 409)

Smith’s motivation to develop a feminist methodology stemmed from her own experiences as a single parent interacting with her child’s school (D. E. Smith, 2006b). Through the use of institutional ethnography she and Alison Griffith sought to understand how the teachers and school administrators related to them and their children as single-parent families. Smith and Griffith discovered that there was a single parent discourse that included ideologies regarding parenting, mothering, and schooling that were practiced by teachers and school administrators. Furthermore, single parent discourses were informed by state and government policies that were often tied back to class. The texts, written and unwritten, in the school served to recreate systems of inequality based on class. Although the original goal

of the study was to examine the relationship between education institutions and single parenthood, it became evident that issues of class were conflated with how the school related to single parents (D. E. Smith, 2006b).

Social relations and institutional ethnography. One of the basic premises of institutional ethnography is that the world is social and that we are social beings. In particular, the social consists of people's activities and interactions with each other and the meanings that are placed on those interactions. Social relations are the invisible forces that shape the meaning that is placed on the social and these social relations direct people's decisions and actions in purposeful ways (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004). The goal of institutional ethnography is to understand what larger institutional and societal ideologies affect a person's day-to-day life and in order to do so, institutional ethnography starts with a particular experience and maps the social relations that shape that specific experience (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004). As a methodology that seeks to empower individuals to create their own change, the maps of the social relations empower research participants by making visible the invisible forces that shape their daily experiences (D. E. Smith, 2007).

In order to understand social relations it is important to understand that they occur in multiple sites. Smith (2007) stated that the two primary sites for social relations were local and trans-local. Local settings are located where life is lived and experienced by people. On the other hand, the trans-local settings are situated outside the boundaries of a person's everyday experiences. The trans-local relations are what make up social organization. Institutional ethnography is used to explain how the organization of social institutions "organize and shape what we do and experience and what we participate in without knowing those strands that come within our scope" (D. E. Smith, 2007, p. 412). It is important to

distinguish the use of “institution” in institutional ethnography because it does not refer to a particular type of organization. In institutional ethnography, institution “is meant to inform a project of empirical inquiry, directing the researcher’s attention to coordinated and intersecting work processes taking place in multiple sites” (DeVault & McCoy, 2006, p. 17). Different from traditional sociological studies that begin with the institutional organizations, institutional ethnography begins with an individual’s daily experiences and examines how the ruling forces mold the lives of people (D. E. Smith, 2007).

According to Smith (2005), the social organization or institutional power structures are the ruling relations. In other words, ruling relations are the sites such as legislation, governing boards, and administration, where power is produced and enabled throughout society (Wright, 2003). The ruling relations are also mediated by dominant cultural ideologies and serve the interests of the dominant society (D. E. Smith, 2005). By examining how the everyday lives of people are shaped by the ruling relations, institutional ethnography connects the micro and macro levels of social organization and provides a mechanism to map out how these two levels are linked (Wright, 2003). Institutional ethnography informed this study by allowing the researcher to examine the ruling relations that shaped the lived work experiences of a MSS administrator. Through this examination, I illuminated the ways in which the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of a PWI mediated the work of a MSS administrator. Overall, institutional ethnography allowed for an in-depth understanding of the current role and purpose of MSS at a PWI.

Summary

The review of literature provides evidence of how the role of MSS at PWIs has evolved from a political function to one that is depoliticized, deracialized, and manages

diversity. The changes in MSS over its 60-year history occurred with a backdrop of political and legislative debate regarding the role of racial equity initiatives in higher education. Given that racism is endemic and that political, legislative, and ideological forces influence higher education, it is important to understand the current status of MSS at PWIs. As such, the goal of this study was to use CRT and institutional ethnography to examine how the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of a PWI shaped the work life of a MSS administrator.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

“Institutional ethnography is distinctive among sociologists in its commitment to discovering ‘how things are actually put together,’ ‘how it works’” (D. E. Smith, 2006b, p. 1).

As previously stated, the purpose of this institutional ethnography is to discover the social and ruling relations that shape the work of a MSS administrator as an institutional agent of racial equity initiatives at a public land-grant Midwestern university. Through the application of institutional ethnography as a methodological framework, this study mapped out the social relations that shape the everyday life of a MSS administrator at Midwestern University. The overall goal of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of institutions of higher education shape the work of MSS administrators and their ability to sustain and cultivate racial equity initiatives. I begin this chapter with a review of my philosophical assumptions as a researcher, provide an overview of institutional ethnography as a research method, give insight to my positionality as the researcher, present details about the research site and participant, review the research problematic to include an initial site map, give details about both the data collection and analysis processes, and finally discuss issues of trustworthiness and limitations.

Philosophical Assumptions and Positionality

I used qualitative methodologies in this study to understand the experiences of individuals and how they are affected by their interactions with the world around them (Merriam & Associates, 2002). Qualitative research is used extensively in disciplines such as education, sociology, and anthropology. In addition, there are a wide variety of methodologies used in qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam & Associates, 2002). Furthermore, placing my research within my own epistemological, theoretical, and

methodological perspectives is an innate part of qualitative research (Crotty, 2003). Finally, the practice of reflexivity is a critical component of all scholars engaging in qualitative research.

Epistemology serves as the philosophical foundation for the theoretical perspective, which informs the methodology and methods (Crotty, 2003). Therefore understanding one's own epistemological perspective is a key step in designing a research project. My epistemological standpoint is aligned with constructionism because my own theory of knowledge is based on the belief that there is no one objective truth and that instead there are multiple truths. In essence, I believe that meaning is constructed based on how people interact with the world around them (Crotty, 2003).

My constructionist epistemology informs my theoretical perspectives of institutional ethnography and critical race theory. According to Crotty (2003), it is important to understand a researcher's theoretical perspective because researchers must be transparent about the assumptions they bring to their research methodology. As previously stated, my theoretical perspectives are institutional ethnography and critical race theory. Both of these theoretical perspectives fall under a broad umbrella of critical inquiry. Critical theory and research are complex and ever-evolving, but they both attempt to theorize and understand the effects of power, agency, and identity (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005). Although institutional ethnography and critical race theory use different points of entry for research, they both account for the influence of power, agency, and identity. Furthermore, just as critical inquiry is broadly defined as research that seeks to empower and create transformative change as its praxis (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005), both institutional ethnography and critical race theory aim to create opportunities for contributing to the struggle to create a better world and ending

multiple forms of oppression (Ladson-Billings, 1998; D. E. Smith, 2006b). Overall, both my epistemological and theoretical perspectives inform my methodology and methods of data collection, analysis, and (re)presentation.

As a feminist methodology, institutional ethnography allows me to legitimize peoples' lived experiences. Furthermore, the feminist foundations of institutional ethnography legitimize the rejection of objectivity (D. E. Smith, 2005). Feminist researchers reject positivist notions that only objectivity leads to "truly" scientific research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) and instead feminist scholars such as Dorothy Smith believe that researchers also participate as subjects because they are mutually shaping the study along with the participant (Olesen, 2005). Just as institutional ethnography challenges the status quo of positivist research, CRT also aims to challenge the dominant ideology by critiquing societal structures that maintain racial inequities. Furthermore, CRT scholars such as Derrick Bell (as cited in Ladson-Billings & Donnor, 2005) argue that integrating one's soul into scholarship is key to ensuring integrity and dignity. Both CRT and institutional ethnography are aligned with my epistemological standpoint as they both challenge dominant ways of knowing and value the notion that multiple truths can exist simultaneously.

As a qualitative researcher it is important to understand my own positionality and how I molded and shaped this study (Tisdell, 2002). As a former MSS administrator I have a vested interest in studying how institutional policies, unwritten rules, and practices affect the day-to-day work life of MSS administrators. Furthermore, as a Latina woman, a first-generation college student, and as someone who used the services provided by MSS offices at a PWI, I bring multiple identities and sensibilities to this study. I know firsthand how PWIs influenced my experiences as a student and as an administrator committed to racial

equity. I also experienced a change in attitude regarding the role of race-based programs at PWIs between the time I was a student beneficiary of such programs and the time that I was in charge of administering similar programs. I was a college student attending a public liberal arts college during the early 1990s when funding and support was still available to race-based scholarship and access programs. As I transitioned to working as a MSS administrator at the change of the century, the impact of the Michigan cases was felt across the nation at many PWIs including my own place of employment. These experiences have shaped my research agenda and purpose in conducting this study.

Although some may argue that my multiple consciousness could bias the study, critical race scholars such as Ladson-Billings and Donnor (2005) contended that these various modes of awareness contribute to a researcher's ability to bring multifarious understandings to the study. My experiences as not only a consumer of MSS services, but also as an organizer of these services, inherently shaped my approach to this study. My role as a researcher was to practice reflexivity throughout the time of this study so that I could "reflect critically on [my] self as researcher" (Merriam & Associates, 2002, p. 26). Through my reflective practice, I revealed how my own values and assumptions affected data collection and analysis. For example, there were instances where I was able to account for how my previous experience as a MSS administrator influenced my fieldwork and analysis. One specific instance where this occurred was during a fieldwork observation where I attended a faculty diversity committee meeting. I witnessed Joshua negotiating his role as a student services administrator that was asked to chair a faculty committee because there were no faculty volunteers to serve in the role. I was able to observe the tensions Joshua experienced as he was asked to serve in a post where he did not have the adequate credentials

to earn the respect of other faculty. I also observed how faculty negotiated their desires to support diversity initiatives while ensuring that their own interests and work demands were being met. My former experience as a MSS administrator allowed me to pay close attention to how Joshua was positioned in this meeting. In addition, given my doctoral studies and new understanding of the demands placed on faculty, I paid close attention to how faculty negotiated their work demands along with their interests in advancing diversity within the College of Innovation. My multiple experiences and levels of awareness contributed to both my data collection and analysis.

Epistemological beliefs, theoretical perspective, methodology, methods, and positionality are all interconnected and designed to challenge the status quo by examining how race and racism shape the work of MSS administrators at PWIs. Furthermore, the use of institutional ethnography informed the methods that allowed for the in-depth examination of the policies, unwritten rules, and practices that mold the work of a MSS administrator at Midwestern University.

Institutional Ethnography as a Research Method

The previous discussion of institutional ethnography in chapter two provided an overview of the theoretical foundations that inform this methodology. This section provides a summary of the various components that make up institutional ethnography as a research method. Each component of the research methodology will be discussed in more detail in the appropriate subsection.

Unlike traditional research studies, this study aims to challenge the status quo, beginning with the use of institutional ethnography as a methodological framework.

Institutional ethnography challenges the status quo because it does not follow a traditional

research design process, but instead it begins with a general idea and plan that is put into place and the process of inquiry builds on itself (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004). Institutional ethnographers do not plan interview questions, select interviewees in advance, or select texts to analyze. Instead they begin with the problematic and decide through the research process what the methodology will be. This type of research often encounters resistance because it does not fit traditional models of research design (D. E. Smith, 2006b).

The methodology of institutional ethnography is unique because it begins with an examination of the disjunctures occurring in a social situation and the development of the research problematic, also understood to be the focus of inquiry (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004; D. E. Smith, 2006b). In addition, the researcher must take the time to reflect on her own positionality and point of entry with regard to the study. These steps are particularly important since institutional ethnography is a feminist methodology through which the researcher recognizes not only the value of lived experiences but also her own power and influence on the research setting (D. E. Smith, 2007).

Data collection and analysis are also different in institutional ethnography because they involve multiple approaches. Data are collected through various methods of research including interviews, observation, participation, and document analysis. In addition, there are two steps involved in data collection in institutional ethnography (D. E. Smith, 2006b). The first step allows the researcher to fully understand and develop the research problematic. In addition, as the researcher begins to develop the problematic, she will draw an initial map that sketches out her initial thoughts regarding the forces that shape the day-to-day life of her research participant (D. E. Smith, 2006b). During the second stage, the researcher is able to examine the forces that shape the lived experiences of the individuals in the study.

The second step in data collection for institutional ethnography allows the researcher to move beyond the individual and into understanding the institutional forces that shape the participant's lived experiences. As explained by DeVault and McCoy (2006), "Institutional ethnographic researchers are always interested in moving beyond the interchanges of frontline settings in order to track the macroinstitutional policies and practices that organize those local settings" (p. 29). The second step in data collection requires that the researcher expand her data collection beyond focusing on her primary participant. This step involves "interviews with institutional functionaries, observation of institutional work processes, or examination of key institutional texts" (D. E. Smith, 2006b, p. 124).

Following data collection, the researcher begins to draw more intricate maps of the social relations that shape the day-to-day experiences of the research participant during data analysis. These maps provide visual understandings of how various forces are interconnected and how these social relations structure what happens to people (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004). As explained by Turner (2006), "Mapping actual sequences of work and texts extends ethnography from people's experience and accounts of their experience into the work processes of institutions and institutional action" (p. 139).

Overall, institutional ethnography is a feminist methodology that starts with people's lived experiences and looks "out beyond the everyday to discover how it came to happen as it does" (D. E. Smith, 2006b, p. 3). Through the development of maps that depict the institutional processes that mold the lived experiences of people, these individuals are empowered with new knowledge about their daily lives. As such, institutional ethnography is a methodology that challenges the status quo by recognizing both the complexities and fluidity of the world as a social entity.

Research Site

For the purpose of this study, I conducted an institutional ethnography that began with the day-to-day work experiences of a MSS administrator at Midwestern University (MU). Midwestern University is a public land-grant university that enrolls approximately 28,000 students. According to the Carnegie Classifications, Midwestern University is a very high research activity university with 100 academic majors that are housed in seven colleges. In 2009, 9.1% of the entire student population self-identified as students of color. In the same year, the college of liberal studies enrolled the highest number of students of color (12%). In contrast, the colleges housing the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) majors had the lowest numbers of students of color enrollments. For the purpose of this study, the college with the lowest enrollment of students of color (5.9%), hereafter known as College of Innovation, was chosen as the site to begin the examination of the work of MSS administrators at Midwestern University.

Midwestern University adopted a unique model of MSS in the early 1990s. An ad hoc committee was convened in 1992 to review the services provided to ethnic minority students. The committee's investigations resulted in two themes: 1) ethnic minority students were disproportionately disconnected to support networks, mentoring opportunities, and study groups; and 2) students were more satisfied when they had strong connections to their college and academic department (Davis & Mitchell, 1999). Based on the findings, Midwestern University decided to adopt a model where MSS administrators are housed in each of the seven academic colleges and supervised by the college deans. Midwestern University still has an Office of Multicultural Student Affairs (MSA), but through this model, the work of support services and advocacy for students of color is no longer the sole responsibility of

MSA. Instead, the faculty, dean, and MSS administrator for each college designed a model of diversity and support that best suited each individual college. Each college was given the autonomy to establish policies and procedures specific to their college that would “enhance diversity, faculty participation, and student achievement” (Davis & Mitchell, 1999, p. 1).

The college-specific MSS administrator’s primary responsibilities include providing leadership to faculty and staff in his/her respective college in order to enhance student of color participation and achievement. This college-specific model was designed to be more fluid and less rigid than traditional MSS initiatives that depend on one office to provide these types of services. As stated by Davis and Mitchell (1999), the purpose of this new model was to “push the college and its departments beyond the ‘safe’ objectives to more challenging objectives with respect to minority student participation and achievement” (p. 2).

As previously mentioned, this study used the College of Innovation as the research site because it had the lowest enrollment of students of color. The College of Innovation has 15 departments, 29 centers and institutes, 26 majors, 3 secondary majors, and 3 professional programs. In 2009, the college had 280 tenured and tenure-eligible faculty and a student enrollment of 3,788. During the same year, 181 (5.9%) students of color were enrolled in the College of Innovation.

The decision to select the College of Innovation as the research site was twofold. First, this college is one of two colleges with the widest array and most established set of race-based initiatives. This college sponsors programs including summer internship programs and support for race-based professional organizations; it also has a faculty diversity committee. The second reason for choosing this specific college was that I had a previously well-developed collegial relationship with the MSS administrator in this college. Our already

established relationship allowed me to have increased access to various forms of data. Furthermore, our established level of trust allowed the participant to share more openly and honestly about his work experiences without the types of hesitation that would exist with an unknown participant. As previously stated, my goal, as a qualitative researcher, was not to be an objective observer of the participant's daily work-life. Institutional ethnography as a methodology allowed me, the researcher, to not only be an observer, but also a subject, as I mutually shaped the investigation along with the participant (Olesen, 2005; D. E. Smith, 2006b).

Research Participant

For purposes of this study, I requested participation from the MSS administrator at Midwestern University who works in the College of Innovation. The process of designing my study was aligned with the goals and objectives of institutional ethnography. As I stated previously, institutional ethnography begins with the lived experiences of either an individual or a group of individuals with shared backgrounds. As stated by DeVault and McCoy (2006), the early stage of institutional ethnography “begins with the identification of an experience or area of everyday practice that is taken as the experience whose determinants are to be explored” (p. 20). In order to formulate the study, I spent time dialoguing with my potential participant about his work in his college as a MSS administrator. We had several casual meetings over lunch or coffee where we had a mutual exchange regarding both of our experiences as MSS administrators at PWIs. As I listened to him discuss his daily responsibilities and the challenges he encountered, I began to formulate my ideas around the study. After formulating preliminary questions used to frame the study, I asked my colleague if he would be willing to be the primary participant for the study.

The participant, from now on known as Joshua, is a self-identified Latino male from the island of Puerto Rico. He is 37 years old and an alumnus of Midwestern University, where he earned both his undergraduate and master's degrees. Both his undergraduate and masters degrees were in agricultural education. Upon completion of his master's degree he was asked to serve as the interim MSS administrator of the College of Innovation. Joshua acknowledged that he was chosen for this position because he was an active student leader in the College of Innovation. He was seen as an advocate for students of color while he was a student and he often went to the college's administration to ask for additional support for events that focused on students of color in the College of Innovation. Before taking on the interim position, he was able to spend a few months shadowing the outgoing MSS administrator. Despite the opportunity to shadow the outgoing person in the position, Joshua did not feel that he was adequately trained to serve as a MSS administrator. He acknowledged that the job was more complex than he originally anticipated and spent the first year becoming familiar with the policies and procedures associated with the position. After serving as the interim for a year, he was invited to stay in the position on a full-time basis. He served as the MSS administrator for the College of Innovation for three years. Based on his experiences as the MSS administrator for the college, Joshua decided to pursue a doctorate in higher education part-time. Joshua's ultimate ambition is to combine his previous experiences with agricultural education and his degree in higher education to work with agricultural universities in Latin America.

Research Problematic: The MSS Administrator as an Institutional Agent of Racial Equity (preliminary map)

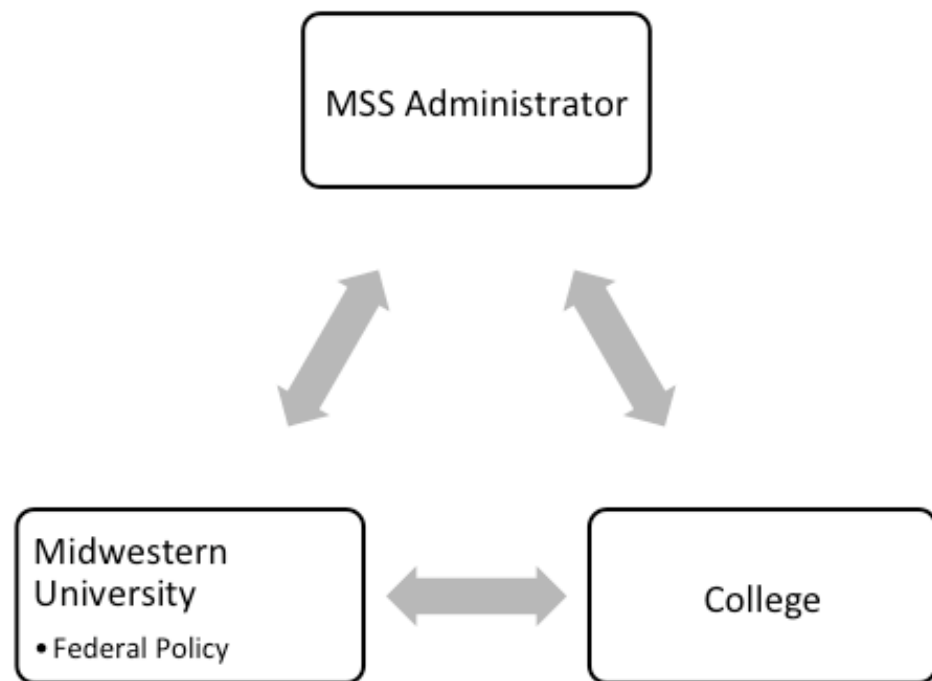
As discussed earlier, the research problematic is the point of inquiry and entry in institutional ethnography. From this point of entry and inquiry, a set of questions often develops that aims to explain the social relations that shape the lived experiences of the participants (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004; Diamond, 2006). Discovering and developing the research problematic is also one of the initial steps in conducting an institutional ethnography. The problematic is developed after the researcher spends some time completing exploratory and preliminary fieldwork (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004). In addition, in most institutional ethnographies, the researcher's own experiences serve as a basis for the research problematic.

Such is the case in this particular study, where I, as the researcher, have previous experiences as a MSS administrator that served as the basis for my curiosity regarding the social relations that impact the work of fellow MSS administrators. After spending some time with my colleague, Joshua, a MSS administrator, I began to develop preliminary questions regarding the policies, unwritten rules, and practices that shaped Joshua's day-to-day work-life experiences. After processing our initial conversations, along with a review of literature, and reflecting on my own professional experiences, I was able to develop an initial map of the social relations that shape Joshua's daily work. Institutional ethnographers often create a preliminary map highlighting the connections that exist between the various organizations and the participant's lived experiences (D. E. Smith, 2006b).

The initial map (see Figure 1) is situated within the broader context of higher education as a system. Furthermore, the use of CRT and the concept of racial realism, allow

me to assert that because racism and meritocracy are inherent in our society (Bell, 1992; D. Bell, 2005a; DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), they are also innate characteristics of higher education. By situating the other components of the model within the context of higher education as a meritocratic and racist system, I recognize that Midwestern University, the College of Innovation, and the work of the MSS administrator are all embedded in a racist and meritocratic system.

Figure 1. Preliminary Map



Higher education as a meritocratic and inherently racist system

The preliminary map also charts the organizations that shape the work of the MSS administrator. The two primary organizations, outside of the role of MSS administrator, that impact Joshua's work are Midwestern University and the college. It can be argued that

Midwestern University structures the work of the college and that based on that configuration, the college shapes the work of the MSS administrator. This explanation paints an incomplete picture for two reasons. First, each component of the model has a sphere of influence on the other. For example, the MSS administrator has agency to influence the parameters the college places on his work and he is also able to influence Midwestern University to some degree. Secondly, the map recognizes that Midwestern University enacts the federal policy regarding higher education and the parameters around race-based initiatives. Although the boundary of this study does not extend beyond Midwestern University, the map recognizes the significant role that forces outside of Midwestern University, such as federal policy, play on the social relations that mediate and constrain the work of the university in general, and the work of the MSS administrator in particular.

Overall, the preliminary map served as a starting point to begin to understand the social relations that structure the work of the MSS administrator. The map represents a very basic understanding of the three major entities that impact Joshua's day-to-day work life experiences. The purpose of this study was to uncover the complexities that exist within each of the components included in this initial map and to potentially discover other ways that the work of the MSS administrator is connected to Midwestern University.

Data Collection

Institutional ethnography is a method that builds upon itself and is fluid. The process of data collection is also characteristic of the overall traits of this method. Data collection takes place in two phases and data are collected through interviews, text analysis, and observations (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004; D. E. Smith, 2006b). In this section, I will provide a general overview of the principles and practices that guide data collection in

institutional ethnography. I will then delve into the specific examples of how I used institutional ethnography as my primary methodology in this study. Specifically, I will organize the review of my data collection into the two separate stages of data collection typically used in institutional ethnography.

Interviewing as a part of institutional ethnography is open-ended and is driven by a desire to examine how things work (DeVault & McCoy, 2006). According to DeVault and McCoy,

Given that the purpose of interviewing is to build up an understanding of the coordination of activity in multiple sites, the interviews need not be standardized. Rather, each interview provides an opportunity for the researcher to learn about a particular piece of the extended relational chain, to check the developing picture of the coordinative process, and to become aware of additional questions that need attention. (p. 23)

As evidenced in this quote, interviewing is flexible and builds upon itself throughout the data collection process. Despite its fluid nature, interviewing in institutional ethnography is typically organized around the idea of work (DeVault & McCoy). The loosely structured interview protocols for this study were organized around the idea of work for the MSS administrator (see Appendix A). It is important to note that the idea of work in institutional ethnography encompasses work that is classified as uncompensated, unacknowledged, and even designated as a personality trait, such as women being caring (DeVault & McCoy). Overall, the method of interviewing was used throughout the various stages of data collection as a mechanism to examine social relations that formulate the work of the MSS administrator.

Observation is another key method of collecting data in institutional ethnography. During observation the researcher is “searching for traces of how the participants’ actions and talk are conditioned” (M. L. Campbell, 1998, p. 60). Observation is also an open-ended method that is guided by the research problematic. As the researcher is observing she is constantly looking for the ruling relations in the work life experiences she is observing. As explained by Diamond (2006), “The method lends itself to figuring out how to locate the institutional *in* the local, at the point of contact with the actual” (p. 61). As the researcher observes how the translocal shapes the local, she begins to see how texts shape the lived experiences of the participants.

According to Smith (2006a), “Incorporating texts into ethnographic practice is essential to institutional ethnography” (p. 65). Texts in institutional ethnography are defined as “words, images, or sounds that are set into a material form of some kind from which they can be read, seen, heard, watched, and so on” (D. E. Smith, 2006a, p. 66). Texts connect the local with the translocal ruling relations. Overall texts serve as coordinators of the work and lived experiences of the participant because they formulate a process. Texts can also exist in various forms to include emails, books, memos, brochures, advertisements, and more. In this particular study texts included memos, annual reports, job descriptions, program brochures, and grant proposals to name a few. Overall, examining texts is important because they play a key role in organizing social relations and therefore shape the lived experiences of the participants.

First Stage of Data Collection

In addition to refining the research problematic, the goal of the first stage of data collection is to gain insights into the various components that make up the lived experiences

of the primary participant (DeVault & McCoy, 2006). In order to gain a fuller understanding of the work life of Joshua, I collected data through interviews, observations, and text analysis as a part of the initial stage of the study. This initial stage involved the exploration of the local relations, also known as people's lived experiences. As part of the initial stage of data collection, I conducted three semi-structured audio-recorded interviews with Joshua. Each interview focused on one of the three research questions. For example, the first interview focused primarily on Joshua's daily job duties, while the second and third interviews emphasized the ruling relations and his work as an advocate for racial equity. After each interview, I used research memos as place for me to reflect on my reactions and initial thoughts regarding the content of the interview. During the final formal interview of the initial stage of data collection, I asked Joshua to help me generate a list of possible people to meet with for the second stage of data collection. In addition, I asked Joshua to share with me the list of committee meetings he attended and asked him if he felt comfortable with me asking for permission to attend upcoming committee meetings. Joshua agreed and gave the names and contact information for each of the chairs of the committees.

In addition to conducting interviews with Joshua during the initial stage of data collection, I also spent three months over the summer doing intensive fieldwork observations of Joshua's work. Unlike most college administrators, Joshua had a busy summer because he served as the director of the College of Innovation's summer residential outreach program. The program was a research internship program for both high school and undergraduate students. The purpose of the program was to provide students with an opportunity to work with faculty on research projects, help them to gain an appreciation for research, and encourage them to continue their education as undergraduates and graduate students. The

students lived on campus for eight weeks, participated in professional development seminars, and worked in the research labs for 20 hours a week. In addition, the students participated in cultural activities such as trips to local zoos and museums.

During my fieldwork observations of the summer program, I attended the opening program, weekly professional seminars, and weekly residence hall meetings; visited the various work sites for the interns; and attended staff meetings. In addition, I also attended lunch with Joshua and the other summer program staff during the regular lunch hours for the program. I used the observations as an opportunity to familiarize myself with Joshua's work. The observations also gave me an opportunity to begin to understand how Joshua's work fit into the College of Innovation. In addition to spending time observing Joshua's work with the summer program, I was able to observe how students make use of him as a resource, how he interacts and works with his colleagues within the College of Innovation, and how he plans and prepares for the start of an academic year. All of these observations were key to gaining a broader understanding of Joshua's work as a MSS administrator.

In order to keep track of my fieldwork observations I made tremendous use of field notes and memos. During each observation I would take notes if appropriate of any interactions and behaviors that provided insights related to my research questions. After each observation, I would make sure to write up my notes with as much detail as possible. In addition, I made sure to include a space in each note for my own reflections of my experiences as a researcher as I practiced my own reflexivity. Furthermore, I used the field notes as a space to engage in ongoing data analysis. This process was particularly important because institutional ethnography is fluid and constantly building on itself.

In addition to the interviews and fieldwork observations, I also gathered texts throughout the initial stage of data collection. In most cases texts were collected as a result of either my interviews or observations. As Joshua and I met for the interviews, he would share documents with me that he felt were closely related to the topic at hand. Our interviews also prompted me to ask Joshua for certain documents that would help me clarify points he shared during the interview. Samples of texts collected during the initial stage of data collection included but were not limited to Joshua's job description, recruitment brochures for the College of Innovation, yearly diversity reports, enrollment data for the College of Innovation, and committee agendas and minutes. I also collected calendars, seminar handouts, and flyers given out to the students participating in the summer outreach program. Similar to the interviews and observations, the texts gathered during the initial stage helped me gain a broader understanding of Joshua's work as a MSS administrator in the College of Innovation. As I gathered and engaged in preliminary analysis of the first level of data, the social and ruling relations that mediated Joshua's work began to come forward.

Overall, true to institutional ethnography, these entry level data provided information about the everyday work-life experiences of the participant (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004). During this stage of data collection, Joshua was treated as the knower and expert regarding his day-to-day lived experiences. As a result of the data collection in the first stage, I was able to sketch out the institutional sites that were shaping Joshua's work as a MSS administrator.

Second Stage of Data Collection

After collecting data from Joshua in the initial stage, I was able to design my approach to the second phase of data collection. According to DeVault and McCoy (2006),

the second phase of data collection involves “examining those institutional processes that he or she [the researcher] has discovered to be shaping the experience but that are not wholly known to the original informants” (p. 21). The second stage of data collection involved a change in research site and this change directed me, as the researcher, to spend time examining the professional and organizational sites that affect Joshua’s work. Data collection in the second stage included informal interviews, observations, and text analysis in order to explore and uncover the processes that determined Joshua’s lived experiences. The goal of the second stage of data collection in institutional ethnography is to investigate institutional work processes. Through examining the complex ways in which the everyday experiences of the participant are shaped, I, as the researcher was able to map the trans-local relations that mediated Joshua’s lived experiences as a MSS administrator (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004; D. E. Smith, 2007, 2006b).

As previously mentioned, during our third formal interview, Joshua and I generated a list of people, events, meetings, and documents that I needed to either meet with, attend, or collect. It was important for me to co-construct the second stage of data collection with Joshua because I wanted to hold true to my theoretical perspectives of institutional ethnography and critical race theory that value the lived experiences of the research participants and hold researchers accountable for working alongside the participants as they engage in research.

As a result of our collaborative work sessions, I was able to compile a list of committee meetings to attend and individuals to meet during the second stage of data collection. Joshua was a member of several committees on campus that were based in the college, student services, and university levels. In addition, Joshua recommended that I speak

with other MSS administrators based in the other colleges, his supervisor in the College of Innovation, students he works with closely, and the chairs of the committees on which he serves. I began the second level of data collection by asking for permission to attend upcoming committee meetings. In addition, I reviewed texts given to me by Joshua that were related to the work of the committees. Furthermore, I spent time collecting additional texts related to each of the committees via university websites. I attended a total of three committee meetings and collected data via observations. I collected meeting agendas during the meetings and also took notes of my observations. After each meeting, I wrote up detailed field notes of each committee meeting and reflected on my own experiences as a researcher during the observations in addition to writing notes regarding my ongoing analysis of the ruling and social relations.

In addition to attending the committee meetings, I met with a total of 19 different individuals including committee chairs, MSS administrators, College of Innovation administrators, student services administrators, and students (see Table 1). As commonly practiced in institutional ethnography, the list of people with whom I met grew as I learned more about the ruling and social relations that mediated Joshua's work as a MSS administrator. For example, as I attended committee meetings, I met other individuals who had pertinent information related to the history and role of MSS administrators at Midwestern University. For example, during a student services team meeting I met Marcos, a student services enrollment advisor, who had compiled records of the history and job descriptions of the MSS administrators at MU. I requested a meeting with him because I knew that he would provide additional information that would help me map out the ruling

and social relations present in Joshua's work and the work of other MSS administrators at MU.

Table 1. List of Interviews/Meetings

Pseudonym	Date of Interview	Job Title	Affiliation with Joshua	Type of Interview/Meeting
Joshua	6/29/10	MSS, College of Innovation	N/A	Audio recorded
Joshua	7/12/10	MSS, College of Innovation	N/A	Audio recorded
Isabel	7/14/10	Coordinator of Diversity Programs, College of Innovation	Co-director of summer program	Meeting
Joshua	8/24/10	MSS, College of Innovation	N/A	Audio recorded
Rosario	8/31/10	Graduate Assistant, Multicultural Student Affairs	N/A	Meeting
Maria	10/5/10	Director of Multicultural Student Affairs	Funds 10% of Joshua's salary Student in the College of Innovation; Student leader	Meeting
Fernando	10/14/10	Undergraduate Student	Student in the College of Innovation; Student leader	Audio Recorded
Heather	10/14/10	Undergraduate Student	Student in the College of Innovation; Student leader	Audio Recorded
Tito	10/14/10	Recent Graduate	Student in the College of Innovation; Student leader	Audio Recorded
Lorena	10/18/10	Associate Dean of Students	Supervises Director of MSA	Meeting
Norma	10/19/10	MSS, College of Mechanics	Fellow MSS administrator	Meeting
Jennifer	10/20/10	MSS, College of Industrial Arts	Fellow MSS administrator	Meeting
Diane	10/21/10	MSS, College of Entrepreneurship	Fellow MSS administrator	Meeting
Frank	10/26/10	Associate Dean, College of Innovation	Supervisor Fellow Member of Student Services Committee	Meeting
Marcos	10/26/10	Enrollment Services Advisor for MU	Fellow MSS administrator	Meeting
Lily	10/27/10	MSS, College of Human Ecology	Chair of Provost Diversity Committee	Meeting
Sophie	10/28/10	Associate Provost for Personnel and Chief Diversity Officer	Chair of Student Services Committee	Meeting
Hector	11/4/10	Counselor, MU Counseling Services	Chair of Latino Heritage Month Committee; Student in the College of Innovation	Meeting
Vanessa	11/16/10	Graduate Student	Student in the College of Humanities; Student leader	Audio Recorded
Danilo	11/16/10	Undergraduate Student	Student in the College of Innovation; Student leader	Audio Recorded
Ingrid	11/18/10	Undergraduate Student	Student in the College of Innovation; Student leader	Audio Recorded
Arthur	12/4/10	Graduate Student	Innovation; Student leader	Audio Recorded
Joshua	12/16/10	MSS, College of Innovation	N/A	Audio recorded

As I met with individuals during the second stage of data collection I had to negotiate multiple interests. These interests included protecting Joshua in his role as a MSS administrator, my desire to gather rich data, and protecting the interests of other university employees who were willing to meet with me to discuss the highly politicized topic of racial equity initiatives at a PWI. In order to protect Joshua, I consulted with him throughout the

second stage of data collection as I met with other university employees and administrators. I asked whether or not he felt comfortable that I disclose to other administrators that I was working closely with him as my primary participant. For example, he cautioned me not to disclose my direct work with him when I met with two particular student services administrators because of tension that existed between him and these particular individuals. As such, I approached these two administrators by introducing my research in more general terms and asking them for general insights about how the work of MSS administrators was organized at MU. I also selected to use a strategy of describing my research in broader terms because I did not want to create discomfort during the interview that could potentially prevent the administrators from sharing rich information.

As a result of negotiating my own interests and those of other university employees, I made a decision not to audio record the meetings. Although I did not audio record the meetings, I did ask for their consent to take detailed notes during the meetings. My decision to not audio record the meetings with university administrators and employees was affirmed when a few individuals expressed concerns about what they did and did not feel comfortable sharing with me because it could have negative repercussions for their jobs and work relationships. On the other hand, other individuals I met with expressed their desire to be transparent about their work and stated that they had no hesitations about sharing their insights with me. As previously mentioned, I took very detailed notes during the meetings and promptly compiled my notes into detailed field notes. The field notes included reflections of how I negotiated my role as a researcher during each meeting and also included notes regarding my on-going analysis.

Finally, as I met with individuals and attended meetings, I was directed to new texts that informed the ruling and social relations associated with Joshua's work as a MSS administrator. For example, Joshua's supervisor, Frank, recommended that I look up the state generated strategic plan that included specific targets regarding student enrollment and graduation rates for the next five years. In addition, as I reviewed my field notes I was prompted to spend time finding documents that supported points shared during the observations. Overall, my search and examination of texts were guided by my research questions and desire to bring forward the ruling and social relations that shape the work of MSS administrators.

As previously stated, institutional ethnography is a fluid method that is guided by the goal of examining work and the lived experiences of the participant in order to understand the social relations that shape the participant's lived experiences. Through the use of interviews, observations, and text analysis, I was able to explore the multiple ways the translocal forces shape the local realities so I could map the connections that mediated Joshua's day-to-day work experiences.

Data Analysis

DeVault and McCoy (2006) described institutional ethnography as fundamentally an "analytic project" (p. 38). This methodology requires that the researcher constantly engage in analysis throughout the data collection process. The constant analysis allows researchers to constantly look for the connections that exist between and within the multiple social relations that shape the lived experiences of the participant. During this study, I engaged in on-going data analysis through my practice of writing field notes and memos. In addition, I met with Joshua twice during data collection to share with him my preliminary analysis of the ruling

and social relations and had one final meeting with him after all data were collected to engage him in the data analysis process.

Analysis in institutional ethnography is guided by the goal of the methodology, which is to understand the social relations that shape the participant's lived experiences. Analysis is often done through "writing, thinking, and discussion with collaborators and colleagues" (DeVault & McCoy, 2006, p. 39). The goal of analysis for this particular study was to both map out the complex chains of action within Midwestern University and to explain how Joshua's lived experiences as a MSS administrator for the College of Innovation take shape within institutional relations. As DeVault and McCoy explained, analysis of the data requires researchers to move back and forth between the various forms of data to find the connections between the lived experiences of the participant and the texts that coordinate his work. The basic premise of analysis is to examine the processes and coordination evidenced in the data. I provided a few examples in the data collection section of how I engaged in analysis throughout the process of interviewing, observations, and examining texts.

I also want to note again that as previously mentioned, I used CRT as an analytical framework throughout the process of data collection and analysis. The various tenets of CRT functioned as the lens through which I examined the social and ruling relations that mediated Joshua's work as a MSS administrator. As such, I intertwined the data analysis strategies linked to institutional ethnography with the tenets of CRT to inform my meaning making process as I worked with the data.

After completing data collection, I engaged in an analysis process across all of the data. Guided by institutional ethnography, I examined the data for connections between Joshua's daily work experiences as a MSS administrator and the policies, unwritten rules,

and practices of Midwestern University. After creating initial maps, I reviewed the maps with Joshua as my primary participant. In addition, I engaged in several peer-debriefing sessions during which my peers and I worked with my findings and challenged each other to ensure an in-depth analysis was taking place.

In addition to analyzing the data for connections, institutional ethnography calls for researchers to not limit their analysis to the connections between the social relations, but to also be cognizant of the fractures that exist (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004). Identifying fractures is a particular challenge for institutional ethnographers because the focus of the research is framed around finding points of coordination and connection. It is important to also account for the points of disconnection in order to fully understand the social relations that shape the work of the participant. There is particular wealth in the data where the organizational disjunctures exist between the work of the participant and the institutional organization as evidenced in its texts (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004). The peer debriefing process was critical for me as I pushed myself as a researcher to make sure that I was also taking into account where tensions existed and disconnections mediated Joshua's work as a MSS administrator.

As a result of data analysis, findings are often represented in a series of maps that explain the social relations that coordinate the work of the participant. These maps represent the participant's work and the texts and organizations that constrain his lived experiences (Turner, 2006). As explained by Turner, "Mapping actual sequences of work and texts extends ethnography from people's experience and accounts of their experience into the work processes of institutions and institutional action" (p. 139). Overall, maps in institutional ethnography increase accessibility of the research and empower the participant by making the

invisible social relations that shape his daily experiences visible. The maps generated from this study are included in the findings section.

In summary, data analysis in institutional ethnography is constant and evolves as the research builds on itself. The main goals in analysis are to bring forth the social relations that impact the participant's daily occurrences. Furthermore, the analysis aims to map both the connections and disjunctures that exist between the lived experiences of the participant and the institutional processes and actions. Finally, accessibility of the findings is achieved through creating visible representations of the social relations through the use of maps.

Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness is defined as the accuracy and strength of the findings (Creswell, 2003; Merriam & Associates, 2002). Maxwell (2005) extended the definition of trustworthiness by stating that by ensuring trustworthiness a researcher rules out "specific plausible alternatives and threats to interpretations and explanations" (p. 107). In order to do so, Maxwell suggested that researchers should actively and intentionally look for evidence that challenges their conclusions.

In order to ensure trustworthiness in this study, it was important to tie the mechanisms to ensure rigor back to the theoretical and methodological perspectives used in this study. As such both institutional ethnography and critical race theory provided methods for making certain that trustworthiness was achieved. The goal of data collection in institutional ethnography is recursivity. Recursivity is achieved when the researcher is able to show patterns in the way that work is organized (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004; D. E. Smith, 2006b). The methods used in institutional ethnography contribute to attainment of recursivity because the various forms of data collection contribute to the researcher's ability to discover

how work is organized and what policies, unwritten rules, and practices trigger particular actions or events. For example, gathering and analyzing various types of data including interviews, documents, and fieldwork observations, serves to corroborate the patterns across all forms of data. In addition, the two-stage approach to data collection in institutional ethnography ensures that the researcher is able to affirm the patterns from the first stage of data collection with the patterns from the second stage. Overall, the methods used in institutional ethnography ensure trustworthiness by attempting to “explicate how the local settings, including the local understandings and explanations, are brought into being--so that informants can talk about their experiences as they do” (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004, p. 90). In other words, the very practices of institutional ethnography serve to ensure trustworthiness because the maps of the social relations serve to confirm and explain the data gathered from the participant about his lived experiences.

In addition to asking researchers to achieve recursivity, institutional ethnography also asks researchers to engage in reflexive practices throughout the research process. As a feminist methodology, it is imperative that the researcher practice self-reflexivity throughout the research process, including the data collection and writing of the report (Lather, 1993; D. E. Smith, 2007, 2006b). Gildersleeve (2010) argued that reflexivity needs to extend beyond researchers reflecting about their participants to reflecting with them. In this study I engaged in reflexive practices through the use of my field notes, research memos, peer debriefing sessions, and a series of both informal and formal “processing” sessions with Joshua to discuss both of our experiences with the research study. Guillemin and Gillam (as cited in Gildersleeve, 2010) stated that the goal of the various reflective practices is to reflect critically about the knowledge produced and generated as a result of the research. As such, I

loosely structured the processing sessions Joshua and I had so that we could both reflect on the data collection process and analysis of findings. It was important that I honor Joshua as the expert of his lived experiences and therefore I was intentional about including him as a part of the reflexive and analysis processes. This procedure also guaranteed that the findings reflected his actual lived experiences.

Just as institutional ethnography offers methods for ensuring rigor and trustworthiness, so does critical race theory. In particular, critical race theory recognizes the centrality of the experiential knowledge of people of color. This particular tenet acknowledges that the lived experiences and knowledge of people of color is legitimate and imperative in the process of understanding racial oppression (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Dixson & Rousseau, 2006b; Yosso, 2006a). As it relates to validity, CRT extends the definition of trustworthiness by allowing for the lived experiences of individuals to stand on their own merit, sans more traditional validation methods, such as triangulation (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001, 2002).

Finally this study aimed to achieve catalytic validity. Lather (as cited in Lenzo, 1995) stated that catalytic validity is “concerned with the documentation of the degree to which the research process re-orient, focuses, and energizes participants so that respondents gain self-understanding and ideally, self-determination through research participation” (p. 18).

Catalytic validity is closely tied to the goals of both institutional ethnography and critical race to achieve emancipation through research by providing the research participant with information that can create a sense of empowerment as he works to achieve transformational change. In this study I aimed to achieve catalytic validity by engaging with Joshua throughout the data collection and analysis processes. My attempts at achieving catalytic

validity culminated in the last meeting I had with Joshua to review my analysis. During this meeting I reviewed my findings with Joshua and asked for his feedback. In addition, I asked him to share with me if he felt that the experience of participating in this study had contributed to his own understanding of what forces shape his lived worked experiences. He enthusiastically responded that the whole experience was eye-opening for him and that he felt that he was better equipped to ask questions and examine his work with a more critical understanding of how race and racism mediate his lived work experiences. He was eager to share my findings with his supervisor and even suggested that I share my findings with the President of MU and other key administrators in the university. It was clear to me during our conversation that Joshua had already thought of plausible ways that he could use this new knowledge to transform his work.

Researcher Ethics

Integrity was maintained in this study through human subjects approval, protecting the confidentiality of the data, and acknowledgement of the researcher's role. I submitted a proposal outlining this study for human subjects approval at Midwestern University since it is the research site. Upon approval from Midwestern University, I reviewed the informed consent document with each participant. This process was particularly important because I could not guarantee any participants full confidentiality due to the nature and context of this study. The informed consent (see Appendix B) disclosed the various types of consent that I sought as a researcher to include access to memos, calendars, recording of interviews, observations, and other important documents related to purpose of study. In order to protect Joshua's employment and other interests, I constantly checked in with him regarding his comfort level around the information that he shared with me. Furthermore, I shared

transcripts of our interviews and allowed him to redact any names or information that he did not feel comfortable including as part of the study. My duty as a researcher was to behave ethically and not cause harm to any of the participants while also maintaining the integrity of the study. As previously evidenced in examples given in the data collection section of this chapter, I was very intentional about how I constantly negotiated the multiple interests at play in this study. Achieving this balance was particularly challenging given the sensitive nature of this study, but I believe that this study will make significant contributions to scholarship in higher education and therefore it was worth engaging with the constant negotiation and renegotiation of informed consent.

Delimitations

There are two primary delimitations to this study. One, this study takes place on one particular land-grant PWI located in the Midwest. Secondly, the study began with the experiences of one particular MSS administrator from one particular college at Midwestern University. Midwestern University has a total of seven different colleges that each has its own MSS administrator. As previously stated, the College of Innovation was chosen because it currently enrolls the smallest number of students of color and houses a wide variety of race-based initiatives. Despite these limitations, the findings could be relevant to other MSS administrators at PWIs because it maps out the social relations within a university that shape their work.

Limitations

The very nature of institutional ethnography does not lend itself to generalizability. Institutional ethnography begins with the lived experiences of either an individual or a group of individuals who share a particular experience. From the lived experiences, institutional

ethnography uncovers the social relations that shape the day-to-day experiences of the participants. This particular study focuses on the experience of a MSS administrator within the College of Innovation at Midwestern University. These lived experiences cannot be generalized to other MSS administrators within Midwestern University nor outside of this particular institution.

A second limitation to this study was the timeline for the study. Due to budget and time constraints I was only able to capture Joshua's work as a MSS administrator for two-thirds of the academic year. I had to work within the parameters of my graduate student funding which was scheduled to end in May of 2011. As a consequence I had to ensure that I was able to collect rich data during the summer and fall semesters of 2010. Although the data do not represent a complete academic year's worth of work of an MSS administrator, the study did attempt to understand the ruling and social relations that mediated Joshua's work during the period of time data were collected. As such, this study cannot make claims to understand the ways policies, practices, and unwritten rules of MU mediate the work of a MSS administrator beyond the time frame of the research. In order to counter the impact of this particular limitation, I made sure that I accounted for the limitation of the study as I collected data through my use of field notes and reflective research memos. In addition, I recognize that engaging in this study for an extended period of time would reveal even richer data.

A final limitation pertains to some of the challenges encountered gaining access to texts and spaces because of issues of confidentiality. As mentioned in the researcher ethics section, complete anonymity could not be guaranteed in this study because of the nature and context of the research. As such, this limited guarantee limited my ability to audio record my

meetings with university administrators and also limited my ability to attend certain committee meetings. For example, upon my initial request to attend the student services team meeting, the committee chair barred my attendance from two particular meetings because he said that the content of the meeting was confidential and he did not feel comfortable allowing me to attend. As a result, there may be information that I was not able to gather that may have provided additional insights as I examined the connections between the social relations and ruling relations that inform the work of the MSS administrator in the College of Innovation.

Despite the limitations listed in this section, this study contributed to higher education scholarship by providing an examination of the social and ruling relations that shape the work of a MSS administrator at a PWI. Furthermore, this study investigated the work of a MSS administrator through the use of institutional ethnography and critical race theory in order to complicate and bring forth how race and racism influence the on-going search for racial equity in American higher education. The contributions provided by this study are worthy in spite of its limitations and delimitations.

Summary

The purpose of this institutional ethnography was to discover the ruling relations that shape racial equity initiatives at a public land-grant PWI. Through the use of institutional ethnography and critical race theory, this study led to a deeper understanding of how the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of Midwestern University shape the work of a MSS administrator and thus impact the overall access and success of students of color in American higher education. This chapter provides an overview of the methodological framework that was used in this study. In particular, this chapter described the philosophical assumptions,

research approach, participants, data collection, data analysis, delimitations, and limitations. The next chapter provides an overview of the broader historical context of Midwestern state, MU, the College of Innovation, and Joshua's work as a MSS administrator in order to set a foundation for the study's findings.

CHAPTER 4: THE STATUS OF MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY AND MSS ADMINISTRATORS IN 2010

“[MU] defines diversity as that quality of its physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment which embraces the rich difference within the multiplicity of human expression and characteristics including: Age, cultural, ethnicity, gender identification and presentation, language and linguistic ability, physical ability and quality, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.” (Diversity Equity and Community: About Us, 2010)

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a broad and general summary of the context of this study. In order to understand the findings from this study, it is important to spend time describing the events that were taking place at MU during the time data were collected. This chapter highlights the various events and historical factors that were taking place in the state, Midwestern University, the College of Innovation, and in Joshua’s day-to-day work experiences as the MSS administrator for the College of Innovation during the time this study was completed. Providing an overview of the context of this study is important as it sets the foundation for understanding the social and ruling relations that mediate Joshua’s lived work experiences as a MSS administrator at MU.

Midwestern State

In 2009, Midwestern state had a population of approximately 3 million people and 10.2% of the state’s population was non-White (U. S. Census Bureau, 2010b). In addition, 21.2% of the state’s residents have a bachelor’s degree or higher and the median household income is \$49,000 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2010b). Midwestern state’s economy is based in agriculture and industries related to the food industry. In addition, Midwestern is one of the states in the country with the lowest population growth, partly due to the out-migration of young Midwestern residents. The low population growth and out-migration of young residents, in addition to an increasingly aging population, all contribute to a shortfall of

workforce employees (Rendon et al., 2006). It is important to acknowledge the demographic make-up of the state during the time of the study because the demographic shifts and economic interests of the state influence the state's legislature and budget structures which in turn shape the policies implemented at the state's public institutions of higher education.

Midwestern state has three public institutions of higher education that are regulated by a state governing board. The governing board is made up of nine citizens of Midwestern state who are responsible for the policymaking, oversight, and coordination of the three state universities. In 2010, the governing board for Midwestern state universities published a strategic plan for 2010-2016 (Members of Board of Regents, 2010). The strategic plan is guided by three priorities: access, affordability, and student success; educational excellence and impact; and economic development and vitality. The governing board used the three principles to set eight goals, which included accountability measures and targets to accomplish the goals. The goals focused on issues such as increasing affordability, increasing degree attainment for minority students, and increasing distance education learning opportunities. Each state institution was held responsible to respond to the state's strategic plan through the development of their own strategic plans, which include responses to the governing board's mandates. It was clear throughout my data collection process that the governing board's strategic plan was weighing heavily on the various units across Midwestern University's campus. In particular, the goal focusing on increasing degree attainment for underrepresented minority students was a point of tension and discussion across the various units and administrators with whom I met. The various colleges and departments were developing strategies for how to increase retention and graduation rates for minority students.

Midwestern University was not only in the process of responding to the governing board's strategic plan during the time I collected data, but it had also recently adopted a new budget model motivated by cuts in state supported funding. Over the last five years, Midwestern state's legislature has reduced the funding given to the public universities due to falling state revenues. In 2009, Midwestern University was ordered by the governor to reduce its budget by 1.5 % mid-year resulting in larger class sections, holds on search processes, and cuts in professional development funds (Krapfl, 2009a). The budget cuts and financial challenges continued to affect the 2011 fiscal year budget with \$24.5 million less in state appropriations. Each college and administrative unit across campus was required to reduce its annual budget. For example, the College of Innovation's budget was reduced by three million dollars in the 2011 fiscal year. In addition, the student services unit's budget was cut by almost one million dollars (Krapfl, 2010a). Given the continued cuts in state budget allocations, Midwestern University adopted new budget strategies in order to successfully function in fiscally challenging times.

Midwestern University

There were several key factors that I discovered during my data collection that provided an understanding of the context of Midwestern University during this time period. For example, I learned more about the history and current status of MSS administrators at MU. In addition, I became aware of how the on-going decreases in the state's budget allocations to MU motivated the university's development of the Resource Management Model (RMM).

Since the 1980s, multicultural student services at MU has undergone several changes that inform and shape the current status of MSS administrators at the university. In the early

1980s, the director of Minority Student Affairs was also in charge of Student Support Services Programs, a federally funded program for first-generation, low-income, and disabled students. The director's office was located in the university's primary administrative building along with all the high-level university administrators including the provost and president. In 1990, the two offices were separated and moved out of the primary administrative building into the student services building. In 1994, the director of Minority Student Affairs developed and implemented a decentralized model of minority student services (Marcos, personal communication, October 26, 2010; Hector, personal communication, November 4, 2010). The goal of the new model was to create a sense of responsibility and ownership for minority student success beyond the scope of the minority student affairs office to include the academic colleges (Jackson, 2003). Under this new model, MSS administrators were to serve as liaisons between the Multicultural Student Affairs office and each academic college. As such, the liaison officers worked closely with the deans of their respective colleges to ensure that faculty became integral partners in the work of enhancing minority student success. In addition, each liaison officer, along with the dean's leadership and support, could mold his/her work to best suit the needs of the individual academic colleges. As stated by Jackson (2003), the primary responsibility of the liaison officer is "to provide leadership to faculty as they work to create an environment in which an increased emphasis on African American student participation is matched by comprehensive and systemic strategies to help students achieve" (p. 47). Although each liaison officer was based out of the academic colleges, they were all linked together through the office of Multicultural Student Affairs. According to Marcos (personal communication,

October 26, 2010), an enrollment services administrator at MU, the liaison officers were created to serve as the “arms of MSA that reached into each academic college.”

Currently, the liaison officer model is still in place at MU. Each academic college has at least one liaison officer who is charged with overseeing retention efforts for minority students. Since its inception, the model and work of each liaison officer has undergone a few changes. As originally designed, each liaison officer had the flexibility to design programs and initiatives that met the needs of his/her own particular college. For example, the College of Innovation’s liaison officer’s work responsibilities included both recruitment and retention. In the College of Entrepreneurship, the liaison officer focused on retention efforts and accomplished her goals through her work as an academic advisor. As I met with different liaison officers in the various colleges, it was clear that each MSS administrator had unique job duties and that each college defined diversity differently in order to meet the particular needs of the college. In addition, throughout my interviews with the liaison officers, it was clear that a transition was taking place regarding their roles in the colleges and their job duties. According to the liaison officers, the transition and changes were due to budget cuts and new pressures experienced due to the state’s new strategic plan. Several of the liaison officers had to take on new job responsibilities in addition to the duties assigned to them as MSS administrators.

As I gathered data, it was evident that the relationship between the Multicultural Student Affairs (MSA) office and the liaison officers had also undergone a few changes. The role of director of the office of MSA was both vacant and filled by an interim director for a span of over three years. During that time the office lacked steady leadership and therefore the close tie between the liaison officers and the MSA office was affected. Several of the

liaison officers felt that their allegiance was to their individual colleges and that their work was loosely tied to the MSA office. MSA on the other hand felt that the work of the liaison officers was still tied to the office because MSA paid for ten percent of the liaison officer's salaries. As such, MSA called on the liaison officers to participate in various events including recruitment trips and scholarship interviews. Overall, the history and current status of multicultural student services at MU provide a foundation that sheds understanding on the social and ruling relations that shape Joshua's experiences as a MSS administrator.

Diversity programs beyond those offered by MSA and the liaison officers were also in transition. Both the Office of Equity and Diversity (EOD), charged with overseeing federal, state, and university compliance guidelines, and the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, responsible for the MU's educational mission and the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty, staff, and students, have undergone changes in structure and mission as related to diversity programs and initiatives. In the fall of 2010, during the Provost's diversity committee meeting, the director of EOD along with the Associate Provost for Personnel announced that both offices were going to restructure their responsibilities regarding diversity programs and compliance. With the hiring of a new Associate Provost for Personnel, there was an opportunity to create a clearer structure of responsibility for institutional efforts regarding diversity. The new structure included a change in the title for the EOD office to the Office of Equity (EO) in addition to narrowing the scope of EO to only focus on compliance and relinquish its responsibilities for programming. The Associate Provost for Personnel added the title of Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) to her job description and was now responsible for overseeing university-level diversity programming such as the annual MLK commemoration program and work/life faculty programs. Sophie, the Associate

Provost and CDO, acknowledged that she did not have any prior training related to her newly acquired responsibilities as the CDO, but she planned to attend a national conference of CDO officers to learn how other universities were structuring the work associated with CDOs (personal communication, October 28, 2010).

Transitions were also taking place within the context of the Provost's diversity committee. Sophie, as the newly appointed Associate Provost and CDO, was transitioning into her role as the chair of the university level diversity committee. As a result of the new leadership, the committee was in the process of reevaluating its purpose and mission. The mission of the committee was to "assess the effectiveness of diversity efforts on campus, identify gaps in university diversity policies and efforts, develop new policies and initiatives as necessary, and ensure that units across the university are meeting diversity objectives" (Advisory Committee on Diversity Program Planning and Coordination, 2010). In addition to reevaluating the mission of the committee, a subcommittee was in the process of developing a new institutional definition of diversity. Sophie shared with me that the last definition of diversity was developed for the 2004-2005 institutional strategic plan. The committee felt that it was important to update the definition of diversity to be more about inclusiveness versus tolerance. The subcommittee was still in the process of collecting input campus-wide regarding a new university level definition of diversity. Overall, it was clear to me as I attended the provost's diversity committee meeting as well as when I met with Sophie, that the university was also undergoing several transitions regarding its diversity programs and efforts.

In addition to understanding the history and current status of multicultural student services and diversity programs at MU, it is important to comprehend how the current budget

crisis has affected fiscal management at MU. As previously mentioned, MU developed and implemented the Resource Management Model (RMM) in 2007 (Resource Management Model: Background, 2007). The process of developing the model took place over a two-year time span and involved the work of several university committees that provided feedback on the model. As stated in the policies, procedures and processes manual for the RMM (Resource Management Model: Policies Procedures and Processes, 2010), “The model is intended to provide incentives for both revenue generation and cost reduction that will ultimately provide the resources necessary to support the mission of the institution” (p. 2). One of the key components of the RMM is that each unit is responsible for generating its own revenue through enrollment. Funding is distributed to each unit through a series of complex formulas. For example, the RMM manual stated,

Twenty-five percent of the tuition revenue is distributed to the college based on the student’s college of enrollment. The remaining seventy-five percent of the tuition revenue is pooled and distributed proportionately to each college based on the college’s share of the total undergraduate student credit hours generated for the term. (Resource Management Model: Policies Procedures and Processes, 2010, p. 5)

In addition to formulas, the manual includes sample calculations, timelines, and information about unique cases. Overall, it is clear that the RMM places increased pressure on colleges and units to focus on the enrollment and retention of students since their revenue relies heavily on student registration.

The development of the RMM along with the state’s cuts in budget allocations to public higher education motivated MU to design new strategies for the development of the 2011 fiscal year budget. Appointed by the executive vice president and provost, five teams

were put together to review the functions and programs of both administrative and academic units on campus (FY 11 budget development: Cross-unit planning teams, 2009). The five areas the teams reviewed were: student success and academic support programs; all graduate programs; international activities; diversity, multicultural and women's issues programs; and undergraduate student recruiting efforts.

The cross-unit report that was most pertinent to this study was the assessment of the diversity, multicultural and women's issues programs in central units and the colleges. The assignment for this particular review team was to "review programming efforts and administrative support for diversity, multicultural and women's issues in central administrative units and colleges. Gain an understanding of individual units' involvement and support" (FY 11 budget development: Cross-unit planning teams, 2009). The final document presented the results of a questionnaire that was distributed to the appropriate units and included information regarding the populations served, funding allocations, outcomes, scholarly output, compliance to federal agencies, staffing allocations, current collaborative efforts, and mission statements. The results of the questionnaire were organized to highlight the number/location of the programs, collaborations, overlaps, and gaps in services (Report of the Cross-Unit Planning Team on Multicultural Diversity and Women's Activities Programs and Services (MDWAPS), 2010). In addition, the report offered recommendations for how the various units could form additional collaborations, eliminate overlaps, enhance services, fill gaps, and increase accountability.

Joshua, and several of the other administrators with whom I met, mentioned the cross-unit report as a source of tension that caused strong reactions. In particular, the report caused tension between some of the academic colleges and the office of multicultural student

affairs because the findings in the document called into question the need for duplication of services for minority students. The following sentence from the report highlights the stated concerns regarding duplication of services:

There is no clarity if the specialized services in the College of Innovation, the college of humanities, and the college of mechanics are needed or if stronger collaborations among the colleges and other units, such as multicultural student services in student affairs, could more effectively accomplish their programs' goals. The current system - which centralizes efforts and resources in these three colleges - appears to result in unequal distribution of MU funded programs to serve students in other colleges.

Further, the vast majority of services, even at the college level, are specialized toward undergraduate students. (Report of the Cross-Unit Planning Team on Multicultural Diversity and Women's Activities Programs and Services (MDWAPS), 2010, p. 8)

In addition to stating concerns regarding the replication of services, the report also acknowledged that units were limited in their efforts to enhance diversity services because of the decentralized nature of MU, the impact of the new budget model, lack of communication between units and programs, and the lack of central oversight. Joshua and other administrators to include Hector, Marcos, and Lorena acknowledged that the report caused tension because it left various units included in the report feeling unsure about the future of the diversity programs, funding allocations, and job security.

The history of multicultural student services at MU, the development and implementation of the RMM, and the cross-unit reports contribute to an understanding of the institutional policies and practices that mediated Joshua's work as an MSS administrator during the summer and fall of 2010. These brief, but insightful, highlights serve as a

foundation for understanding the institutional context during my data collection process. Together, the state and institutional policies and practices inform the College of Innovation's current status regarding diversity initiatives.

College of Innovation

The history of the College of Innovation is closely intertwined with the history of MU. MU was chartered in 1858 as a land-grant institution and college of agriculture, currently known as the College of Innovation. The College of Innovation also housed the first extension programs sponsored by the university. The College of Innovation also prides itself on having a long-standing legacy of commitment to diversity and often cites the fact that George Washington Carver, a world-renowned scientist, was the first African-American to graduate from MU and from the college (Celebrating 150 Years of Excellence in Agriculture at Midwestern University: A Rich Heritage - An Exciting Future, 2011).

Currently, the College of Innovation has several initiatives and programs in place that are focused on diversity. They include the diversity programs office, the multicultural programs office, the college diversity committee, an equity advisor, and participation in a campus-wide diversity grant (College of Innovation: Diversity Report to the Provost April 2008 to April 2010, 2010; de Baca, Colletti, & Acker, 2008). As stated in the college's bi-annual diversity report to the Provost's office, "Diversity is a core value, one that we strive to make continual advancements in through leadership, committee activities, and engagement of our students, staff and faculty" (College of Innovation: Diversity Report to the Provost April 2008 to April 2010, 2010, p. 1). The three diversity goals for the college are: (a) prepare students for working and living in a diverse and global world; (b) enhance the visibility of faculty and staff, research accomplishments, and graduate and research programs; and (c) to

expand the diversity of people, ideas, and cultures (College of Innovation: Diversity Report to the Provost April 2008 to April 2010, 2010).

As previously mentioned, the College of Innovation has several programs in place to support their commitment to diversity. Joshua, as the MSS administrator for the College of Innovation, oversees the multicultural programs office that focuses primarily on the recruitment and retention of undergraduate students of color. He reports to the Associate Dean for the College of Innovation. He also worked closely with Isabel, the Coordinator of Diversity Programs, before her retirement in the summer of 2010. Her position focused primarily on the recruitment and retention of minority graduate students. The college's diversity committee is:

Responsible for developing innovative strategies to increase and maintain diversity in the College; disseminating diversity-related information and policies to departmental faculty; facilitating diversity-related activities in the departments; and participating in the execution of plans for integrating diversity into the basic functions of the College.

(College Committees 2010-2011: Diversity Committee, 2010)

The committee has a representative from each department in the college and includes one student member as well as the MSS administrator and diversity coordinator. In addition to the diversity committee, the college has an equity advisor. This position was developed as a result of funding from a campus-wide grant focused on increasing the presence of female faculty on campus. The equity advisor is a member of the dean's cabinet and works to further diversity goals related to faculty (College of Innovation: Diversity Report to the Provost April 2008 to April 2010, 2010).

During the fall of 2010, Joshua shared with me that the College of Innovation was developing new strategies for enhancing their diversity initiatives. The development of the new strategies was motivated partly by Isabel's retirement. Isabel's retirement provided the college with an opportunity to think about restructuring its diversity programs by collapsing some of Isabel and Joshua's job responsibilities and creating a new Assistant Dean for Diversity and Graduate Programs position that would increase the college's visibility regarding its diversity efforts. The college was seeking internal candidates that were tenured faculty to fill this position. The tentative job description stated,

The Assistant Dean will play a key leadership role in ensuring excellence in the college's diversity programs for undergraduate and graduate students. The Assistant Dean will be the primary leader of the college's efforts to recruit, retain and graduate minority students. The Assistant Dean will be responsible for supervising the college's [MSS administrator] and coordinating the George Washington Carver Internship Program. The Assistant Dean will convene the college's Diversity Committee. ("Draft Job Announcement: Assistant Dean for Diversity and Graduate Programs," 2010)

During our last meeting Joshua informed me that the hiring process for the position was put on hold because of concerns expressed by the deans of the other colleges at MU regarding creating new positions during a fiscally challenging time where positions were being cut in most colleges. According to Joshua, the dean of the College of Innovation was still committed to hiring an Assistant Dean for Diversity and Graduate Programs despite the concerns expressed by the other deans.

Overall, the College of Innovation prided itself on its long-standing commitment to extension and diversity. The college strived to stand out as a leader within the university through its diversity initiatives and programs. The college also felt a sense of achievement because of its history as the original college at MU. Through my interactions with various administrators in the College of Innovation it was clear to me that the college had a strong identity and the allegiances to the college were stronger than those to MU. The sense of pride, allegiance, and diversity initiatives in place in the College of Innovation all mediate the day-to-day work experiences of Joshua as the MSS administrator for the college.

Joshua, MSS Administrator for the College of Innovation

As previously stated, Joshua has held the position of MSS administrator for the College of Innovation for three years. During our initial meetings and first interview, we discussed both his official and unofficial job description and duties. His official job description states that the MSS administrator's responsibilities include recruitment and retention of minority students and increasing their academic achievement through professional development opportunities, leadership activities, and community service programs. The objectives of the MSS position are accomplished through working with the students, faculty, and staff in the college in addition to working with the minority student organizations based in the college and serving as the chair of the diversity committee. In addition, the MSS administrator is responsible for outreach to high schools and colleges both nationally and internationally as well as coordinating prospective minority student visits. Furthermore, this position must maintain a database of minority students' progress, persistence, satisfaction, and participation in the college's student services. Finally, the MSS

administrator is in charge of the college's summer minority internship program (Joshua, personal communication, April 13, 2010).

Joshua's supervisor, Frank, described the work of the college's MSS administrator to include advocacy, recruitment, retention, problem-solving, and professional development (Frank, personal communication, October 26, 2010). Frank also recognized that Joshua served as a catchall for diversity in the college as he worked to create a safe and welcoming environment for students of color. He also stated that the role of the MSS administrator requires working with various constituents including professors, administrators, parents, students, and community organizations.

In addition to the descriptions offered by the official job description and Frank's account of the MSS administrator's duties, Joshua also offered examples of what his work looked like on a daily basis. No two days were the same, but what was consistent was Joshua's open door policy and his constant contact with students. Joshua believes strongly that in order to be an advocate for students of color he needs to create a safe and welcoming environment in his office. In order to create a welcoming environment, he has a couch, a student workstation with a computer, a mini fridge, an overflowing candy dish, and art on his walls representing African-American, Latino, and Native American communities. There were few visits that I made to his office that did not include at least one to two students lounging on the couch as they waited for their next class or meeting. In addition, he often fielded calls from students on his cell phone as they called to ask questions ranging from student organization activities to academic concerns. Joshua's commitment to enhancing the experiences of students of color led him to go above and beyond to include making trips to and from the local airport to pick up and drop off students as they traveled back and forth. In

addition, Joshua served as the advisor for several student organizations. The student organizations he advised were not limited to those housed in the College of Innovation. He advised a total of six student organizations, including the planning committee for Latino Heritage Month. His commitment to students was evident throughout my observations, interviews with students, and meetings with other administrators.

Joshua's commitment to access and student success motivated his involvement with programs outside of the College of Innovation and local community organizations. He teaches diversity seminars and leadership courses in addition to teaching a course for the College of Innovation's learning community. He also works with the state's Latino Heritage Month planning committee to make sure that MU is represented every year at the weekend long event. In addition, Joshua works with private companies to solicit and distribute scholarships for students of color. Joshua has also submitted grants in order to supplement his programming budget and has been able to fund international trips for some of the college's students of color.

Joshua's work as the MSS administrator for the College of Innovation requires that he serve on several campus committees. In addition to currently serving as the chair of the college's diversity committee, Joshua attends the student services committee meetings. In addition Joshua participates in the MSA and college MSS administrator meetings as well as representing the College of Innovation on the Provost's diversity committee. Each committee varies in regards to its purpose and required level of involvement.

Beyond his work with students, community organizations, and campus-wide committees, his fellow student services colleagues within the College of Innovation also call on Joshua for his diversity expertise. He often works with the college's offices of study

abroad, career services, and development. The study abroad office often relies on Joshua to disseminate information regarding their scholarship for students of color to study abroad. In the fall, the college's career services office hosts a career fair. The office of career services asks Joshua to coordinate a diversity breakfast with employers and students of color for the fair each fall. The development office also relies on Joshua's diversity expertise and asks him for assistance when working with donors who are interested in funding race-based scholarships. Joshua will often host events where donors can interact with student of color scholarship recipients. Joshua also consults with the development office regarding the design of the college's marketing materials. He provides the office with feedback and often reminds them of the importance of including the accomplishments of students of color in their brochures and other materials.

The final piece that is important to include in the overview of the context of Joshua's lived work experiences during the time of this study is the changes that occurred in the physical location of his workspace. Joshua's office was originally located within the student services suite for the college. His office was easily accessible and highly visible within the suite. As previously mentioned, Joshua designed his office space so that it was conducive to student contact. During the summer of 2010, the college was beginning the process of remodeling the student services suite. This activity meant that Joshua and the members of the student services office would have to move to a temporary space during the remodeling process. The temporary office suite was smaller and relocated to a more secluded space in the college. The temporary office space that Joshua was originally given was significantly smaller and less accessible than his original office. In addition, the space was not secured because the back door to the office could not be locked and opened up to a stairwell. Joshua

was not pleased with the space he was assigned without his consultation and with the assistance of his supervisor, he found another space within the building that was better suited for him to continue to provide outreach and support services as the MSS administrator for the college. Although the new office space was not as visible as the original location, he was able to keep his couch, mini fridge, and student workstation. The negotiation of his office space was important to him as he was committed to providing the same level of service to the students and families with whom he worked closely.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide an overview of the broader historical contexts of Midwestern state, MU, the College of Innovation, and Joshua's work as an MSS administrator in order to set a foundation for the study's findings. The overview provided in this chapter will serve as a point of reference as the findings included in the next chapter shed light on how the social and ruling relations, along with the policies, practices, and unwritten rules mediate Joshua's lived work experiences as an MSS administrator at a PWI. The findings are organized in such a way that the ruling relations set the foundation for understanding how both master and counternarratives mediate the work of MSS administrators at PWIs.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

“Critical race scholars argue that traditional claims of race neutrality and objectivity act as a camouflage for the self-interest, power, and privilege of dominant groups in U.S. society” (Yosso, 2006a, p. 7).

Through the use of both institutional ethnography and critical race theory, in this study, I examined how the day-to-day work experiences of a MSS administrator are mediated by the intersections of race and ruling relations. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the social relations and organizations that shape the work of a MSS administrator at Midwestern University?
2. How do the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of Midwestern University mediate the everyday work experiences of a MSS administrator?
3. How do MSS administrators serve as institutional agents of racial equity?

Cumulatively, these research questions address one of the fundamental challenges faced in higher education: striving to achieve racial equity.

The findings in this chapter are organized to represent the ruling relations that mediated Joshua’s work as an MSS administrator. As previously mentioned, ruling relations are sites such as legislation, governing boards, and administration, where power is produced and enabled throughout society (Wright, 2003). Ruling relations are also mediated by dominant cultural ideologies and serve the interests of the dominant society (D. E. Smith, 2005). The ruling relations in this study were Midwestern State, Midwestern University, and the College of Innovation. Within each of these ruling relations there were policies, unwritten rules, and practices that shaped Joshua’s daily work experiences. Through the use of maps, I

explained how each ruling relation is connected to the others and how they intersect to mediate multicultural student services in the College of Innovation.

I incorporated CRT into the creation of the maps by explaining how master and counternarratives are intertwined in the ruling relations and function as the social relations. As previously mentioned, CRT scholars use personal narratives and counternarratives to challenge the dominant stories that provide incomplete and incorrect accounts regarding the effects of race and racism (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). I applied the same principle behind the use of dominant and counternarratives to explain the effects of race and racism on the ruling relations that mediate Joshua's lived work experiences in order to provide a complete account of the work of MSS administrators at a PWI. As previously stated, social relations are the invisible forces that shape the meaning that is placed on the social and these social relations direct people's decisions and actions in purposeful ways (M. Campbell & Gregor, 2004). The master and counternarratives within each organization emerged as the social relations that mediated Joshua's work as a MSS administrator in the College of Innovation.

It is also important to note that the master and counternarratives did not exist in isolation of one another. There are examples in the findings of moments where the master and counternarratives existed in tension. The tensions emerged, as there were instances where the counternarrative reified the master narrative. The practices of the policies and unwritten rules often reified the ways in which the master narrative framed racial equity initiatives.

In summary, the findings are presented differently than "typical" qualitative findings. Instead of themes, there are maps and instead of subthemes, there are narratives and

counternarratives. The use of maps and both dominant and counternarratives is the best-suited mechanism to answer the previously mentioned research questions. The findings first review the ruling relations broadly and then each segment of the ruling relations map will be given special attention, ultimately culminating in an in-depth explanation of how all of the components of the ruling relations are experienced by Joshua in his work as a MSS administrator.

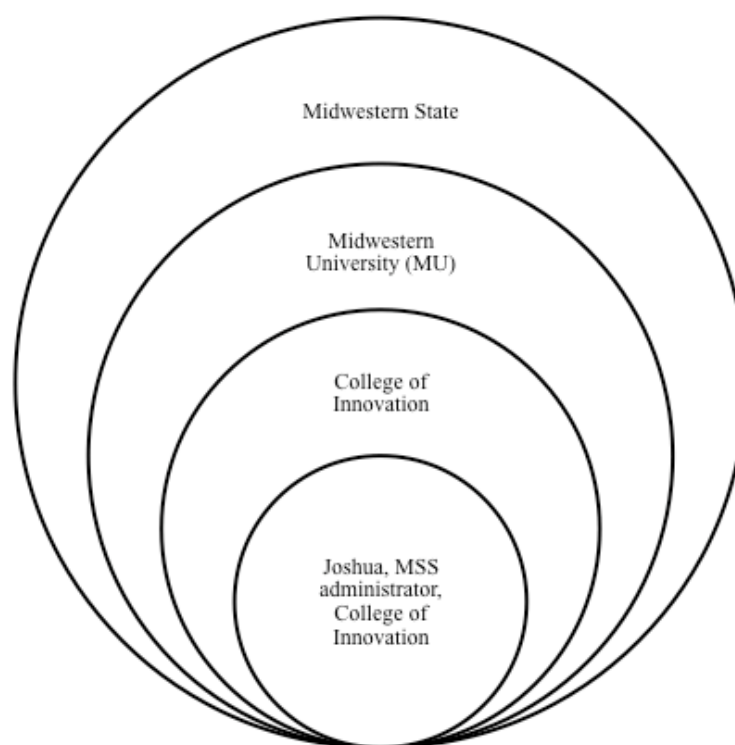
Ruling Relations Mediating Joshua's Work

The process of discovering the social relations and organizations that shaped the work of the MSS administrator started with examining Joshua's lived work experiences and building out from that point. As I continued to meet with Joshua, conducted fieldwork, and examined texts that he shared with me, I began to discover the organizations that shaped his day-to-day experiences. I spent time reviewing documents including his job description, organizational charts for the College of Innovation, annual reports, and various committee meeting agendas and minutes. As I examined the various forms of data, the organizations and social relations began to emerge. Unsurprisingly, it became evident that Joshua's day-to-day work was shaped by a bureaucratic system that stretched beyond the parameter of the College of Innovation to include MU and state organizations such as the Governor's office and the state governing board. Although the original parameters of this study were not intended to extend beyond the university, it quickly became evident that I needed to examine some of the state policies currently in place in order to understand how they affected the university, college, and ultimately Joshua's work.

The original map (Figure 1) included in chapter three represented my original expectations regarding the social relations that mediated Joshua's work. The map depicted an

egalitarian structure where the major organizations were MU, the College of Innovation, and the MSS administrator. All of the organizations were situated in a context that recognized higher education as a meritocratic and inherently racist system. Figure 2 (below) depicts the social relations and organizations differently than I originally anticipated. As I mentioned above, the organizations that emerged from the data were Midwestern State, MU, the College

Figure 2. Ruling Relations



of Innovation, and Joshua as the MSS administrator. The organizations are depicted to represent the hierarchical system in place as well as the interconnection that exists between each organization. The state entities develop policies that MU is expected to implement and MU then responds to the state while directing its colleges on how to carry out the state's directives, ultimately culminating in creating parameters and opportunities around the work that Joshua is able to do as the MSS administrator. Each organization represented in the map

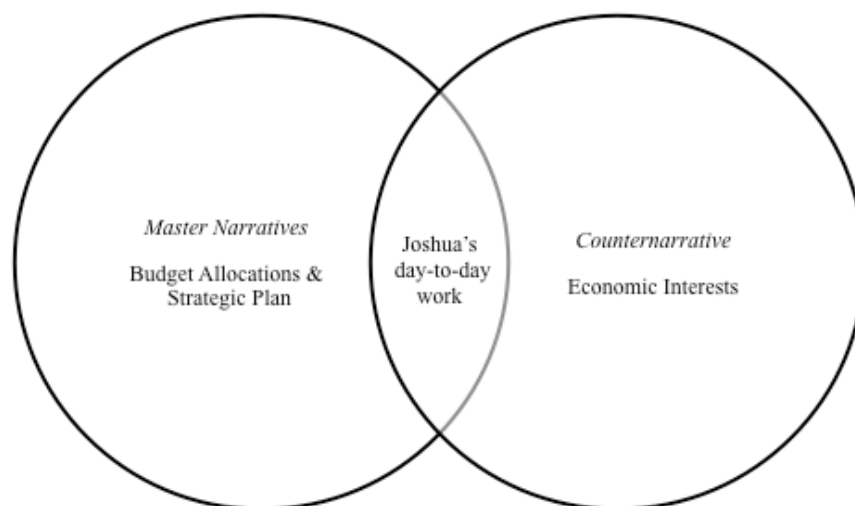
is made up of policies, unwritten rules, and practices that affect how each relates to the other. In addition, there are both master and counternarratives that mediate how racism influences the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of each organization that ultimately shape Joshua's work as a MSS administrator.

In the following sections, the findings focus on each organization individually. In addition, both master and counternarratives are offered in order to depict how racism is interwoven into the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of each organization. Each section concludes with an analysis of how the master and counternarratives function as the social relations that determine Joshua's day-to-day experiences as a MSS administrator.

Midwestern State

Although my data collection began by focusing on Joshua's day-to-day work experiences, it is important for me to begin to explain the findings by discussing how Midwestern State's policies affect the other organizations that shape Joshua's work. As described in chapter four, there were two specific policies, developed and implemented by the state, that were connected to the policies, practices, and unwritten rules at MU and in the College of Innovation. Those two policies were the state governing board's strategic plan and the decrease in state allocated funds for public higher education. Figure 3 (below) depicts the master and counternarratives that emerge from the state policies. In addition, the figure illustrates how the intersections of both narratives mediate Joshua's day-to-day experiences as a MSS administrator. The following sections provide evidence of the master and counternarratives of Midwestern State's policies.

Figure 3. Midwestern State



Master Narrative for Midwestern State

In an April 2010 article, a state newspaper highlighted Midwestern governing board's new goals for minority retention (Busse, 2010). The article included statistics emphasizing gaps in graduation rates between white and underrepresented minority students. In addition, Busse explained that the state governing board had mandated in their new strategic plan that all of the state's institutions of higher education reduce the graduation gaps by half by 2016. Busse quoted the president of the governing board as stating “[We want to] make sure we have greater success rates for our underrepresented minorities. We want all of our students to succeed at the highest possible level.” The article also explained that this was the first time the state governing board had set measureable goals for minority retention and graduation rates.

The actual text of the state governing board's strategic plan provided additional information about both the role of the state governing board and the goals of the 2011-2016

strategic plan. An introductory letter to the strategic plan written by the president of the governing board stated “[Midwestern’s] public institutions and centers share a common focus--enhancing the quality of life in [Midwestern] and beyond through education, research, and service” (Members of Board of Regents, 2010, p. 2). The president went on to explain that

To fulfill their obligations to [Midwesterners] the Regents have used strategic planning to create a long-term vision of the Board and the institutions; to establish the course by which the Board and the institutions will achieve that vision; and to maintain strategic focus and high-quality programs for the future. (Members of Board of Regents, 2010, p. 2)

In order to accomplish its vision, the state governing board included eight goals in the strategic plan. The goals ranged from increasing affordability to increasing the number of students who graduate within four years. Throughout my data collection process, it was evident that the second goal of the strategic plan was most salient for the various units on campus that worked closely with students of color. The second goal stated: “[Midwestern’s] public universities will increase the degree attainment of underrepresented minority students” (Members of Board of Regents, 2010, p. 6). The accountability measure for the second goal is to examine the trends for the six-year graduation rates for underrepresented minority students as compared to non-minority students. The target for the second goal, as stated in the strategic plan, is to “close the gap between the six-year graduation rates of underrepresented minority students and non-minority students by 50% at each of [Midwestern’s] public universities by 2016” (Members of Board of Regents, 2010, p. 6).

As the governing board developed and then published its strategic plan for the Midwestern public universities, the governor's office was asking the state's public institutions to cut their budgets by \$24.5 million. Over the last 30 years, state allocations to the public universities have decreased significantly. For example, in 1981 Midwestern Universities' general education funds consisted of 77.4% state funding as compared to 39.7% in 2011 (Thompson, 2010). The main reason given for the significant decreases in allocations to public institutions of higher education are deficits in state revenue. These deficits are linked to increased unemployment, foreclosures, and declining consumer spending. As education is often one of the largest components of a state's budget, it is often the target of significant cuts during budget crises (Johnson, Koulish, & Oliff, 2009).

Overall the master narrative of Midwestern state policies depicts a state this is committed to the success of all of the students enrolled in its public colleges and universities. In addition, the state is undergoing fiscally challenging times that have required that it cut its financial allocations to the public institutions of higher education. Despite the financial challenges, the state governing board is committed to enhancing the quality of life for all Midwesterners and strives for national recognition as one of the "nation's leading systems of public universities" (Members of Board of Regents, 2010, p. 4).

Counternarrative for Midwestern State

Although the dominant narrative depicts a state that is striving for excellence and particularly concerned for the success of students of color during a fiscally challenging time, a more critical examination of the narrative and the texts that frame the state's stance on student success provides a more complex understanding of Midwestern state's motivations.

As previously stated, Midwestern State's economy is primarily based in agriculture and the

state has a population that is approximately 90% white (U. S. Census Bureau, 2010b). In addition the state has an increasingly aging population as well as an increasing out-migration of its younger residents (Rendon, et al., 2006). The demographic changes, as well as the limitations caused by the state's economic specialization in agricultural industries, serve as motivators for the state to invest in diversifying both its economy and population.

Evidence to support the state's compelling interest in attracting and keeping a younger and diverse population can be found in the governing board's strategic plan. The three priorities for the strategic plan are: "1) access, affordability and student success; 2) educational excellence and impact; and 3) economic development and vitality" (Members of Board of Regents, 2010, p. 6). The economic development and vitality of Midwestern state is one of the top three priorities for the state governing board. Further evidence of the governing board's commitment to the state's economic development is apparent in the strategic plan's seventh goal. Goal seven stated, "The public universities shall contribute to the expansion and diversification of the [Midwestern] economy" (Members of Board of Regents, 2010, p. 8).

The interests of Midwestern state in strengthening its economic vitality as well as training and keeping an educated diverse workforce converge with the interests of communities of color to increase their access and success in higher education. Although people of color have strived not only to gain access to, but also graduate from public higher education institutions in Midwestern State, long before the state mandates, the current economic needs of the state allow for the opportunity to make increasing minority enrollment and graduation rates a state priority. By focusing on the success of minority students, the state's economy and reputation has the potential to reap the benefits of a more racially

diverse, younger, and educated population that could potentially become permanent residents of the state and fill the workforce gaps while also contributing to the state's economic sustainability.

The state's current commitment to increasing student of color success is also compounded by the recent significant increase in Latina/o migration to Midwestern state. Over the last 20 years Midwestern state has experienced a significant increase in its immigrant populations and many of these new immigrants are originally from Latin American countries. These dramatic demographic changes occurred in the 1990s due to the workforce demands of the meatpacking industry (Bruna, Chamberlin, Lewis, & Ceballos, 2007; Dalla & Christensen, 2005; Maldonado & Licona, 2007). Between 2000 and 2006, Midwestern experienced a 49.7% increase in the population of Latina/os (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 2000, 2006). Despite the significant demographic changes in the state's general population, Latina/os are significantly underrepresented in the state's institutions of higher education. Latina/os only represent 2.5% of the total undergraduate student enrollment at Midwestern's public institutions of higher education (Board of Regents, 2008). Given the significant increase in the Latina/o population and minimal representation in higher education, it is critical that the state capitalize on the potential to increase the education level of its new Latina/o resident as the new residents can contribute to both the workforce and financial vitality of the state at higher rates with increased levels of formal education.

The counternarrative for Midwestern State challenges dominant beliefs that the state's commitment to diversity, as evidenced in the strategic plan, is solely motivated by a belief in equity and the value of diversity. As is evidenced in the critical analysis of the data, the state's current economic challenges are closely intertwined with the governing board's

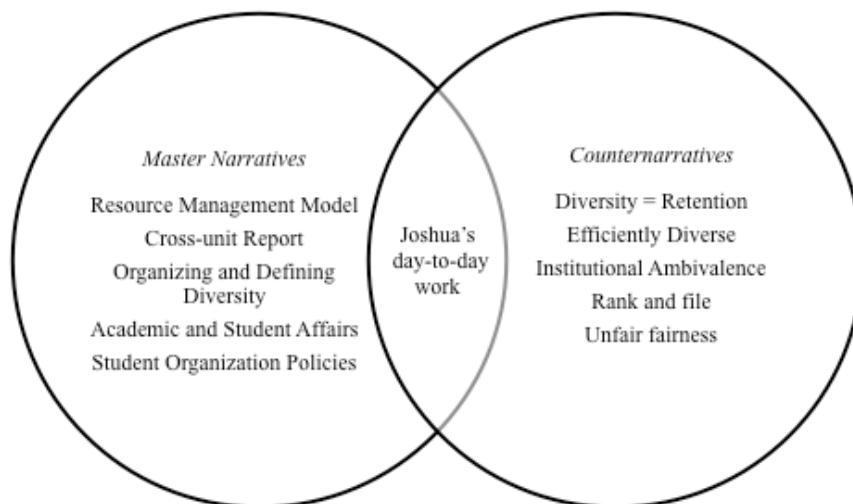
commitment to increasing the graduation rates of minority students. The interests and economic needs of Midwestern state have merged with those of students of color.

Although Joshua's day-to-day lived work experiences were organizationally removed from Midwestern state, the implications for the state's budget allocations and graduation rate benchmarks had significant implications for his work as a MSS administrator. For example, the pressures of budget cuts influenced how MU selected which services and staff to cut from its budget, thus making all services, to include those provided by Joshua susceptible to budget cuts. In addition, MU had to simultaneously focus on increasing student of color graduation rates, thus making the work of a MSS administrator critical in the development of strategies to meet the state governing board's mandates. I go into further detail later in the analysis about how the state's mandates had implications for MU, the College of Innovation, and ultimately how these mandates shaped Joshua's day-to-day work experiences.

Midwestern University (MU)

The examination of Midwestern State focused mostly on the policies that were developed and then passed along to the state's institutions of public higher education. Midwestern University was then asked to implement these external policies. During my analysis I discovered that MU was a complex system of policies, practices, and unwritten rules that mediated racial equity efforts in ways that were seen and unseen. Although I aligned myself with CRT's argument around the permanent and inherent nature of racism, I was still surprised to find evidence of how racism permeates policies and practices that are designed to advocate for equity and diversity. As depicted in Figure 4, the policies, practices, and texts that emerged as having the most impact on Joshua's work as a MSS administrator were: the Resource Management Model (RMM); the cross-unit report; the organization and

Figure 4. Midwestern University



definition of diversity; the practices and policies surrounding distinctions made between academic and student affairs; and student organization policies.

Master Narratives at MU

There were several master narratives that emerged regarding the various policies, practices, and texts that were linked to Joshua's work. Although each of these policies, practices, and texts are linked in multiple ways, my examination of the various social relations limited the consideration of these relations to the ways in which they all informed Joshua's work as an MSS administrator. The following master narratives consist of various forms of data to include field notes, interviews, and documents.

The Resource Management Model (RMM). As previously mentioned, MU was undergoing many transitions and negotiating pressures from the state during the time I was collecting data. For example, the years of consistent and ever growing decreases in state budget allocation motivated the institution to develop its own model of resource

management, thus resulting in the RMM. The institution stated that it was important to develop a new system of resource management for the institution in order to ensure that MU had adequate resources to support the mission of the institution (Resource Management Model: Policies Procedures and Processes, 2010). The following statement was retrieved from a text that explained the background of the RMM: “Due to the dynamic environment in higher education, budget leaders at [Midwestern University] worked with the university community to develop an alternative budget model that will be more flexible and responsive to the needs of the university” (Resource Management Model: Background, 2007).

As a policy, the goals of the RMM are to increase transparency and efficiency, and to intentionally link unit responsibilities with budget decisions, while also maintaining high quality education, research, and outreach programs (Resource Management Model: Background, 2007; Resource Management Model: Policies Procedures and Processes, 2010). In order to accomplish the model’s goals, each unit, including academic units, is responsible for generating its own revenue partially through enrollment. The RMM gives each unit more autonomy for generating, planning, and managing their budgets. One of the principles stated that the RMM provides “university units with the flexibility to create strategic reserves to be used for strategic multiple-year initiatives and for managing unexpected fluctuations of revenues or expenses” (Resource Management Model: Policies Procedures and Processes, 2010, p. 2). Overall, the master narrative regarding the RMM encompasses the notions that although the implementation of the model was in reaction to increasing budget cuts, the RMM provided a mechanism for each unit to take ownership over its own fiscal management. In addition, each unit is able to tailor its own budgetary practices that allows for creating financial reserves for an unclear fiscal future.

Cross-unit report. The cross-unit reports were also generated in reaction to budget cuts and constraints. A March 2010 edition of a campus electronic newspaper for faculty and staff included the following as an explanation for the motivation behind the creation of the cross-unit reports: “With the university absorbing repeated cuts in state appropriations over the last several years, five topics were selected for study in mid-December for the large volume of administrative work that happens under each of the broad umbrellas” (Krapfl, 2010b). The purpose of the reports was to review the functions and programs of both administrative and academic units on campus.

In 2009, MU’s electronic faculty newspaper shared particulars regarding the budget cuts that motivated the cross-unit reports. The newspaper stated,

The university's FY11 budget will be at least \$63 million lighter in state funding over what it was just 18 months ago -- on July 1, 2008. That includes a reduction to the FY10 budget on July 1 and a \$24.5 million mid-year reversion. Further reductions in state support are possible during the upcoming legislative session. The \$31.5 million in federal stimulus funds awarded to [MU] for FY10 also will go away on July 1.

(Krapfl, 2009b)

The newspaper article went on to state that the Provost of MU also anticipated that the budget cuts might cause departments and programs to consider elimination or restructuring of their units. The purpose of the cross-unit reports was explained as an opportunity to identify overlaps in programs and services as well as to pinpoint opportunities for new collaborations. In addition, it was the hope of upper level administrators that the process of reviewing the various departments and units would serve as an opportunity for various units and

departments to plan their future collaborations and initiatives well beyond the 2011 fiscal year.

As discussed in chapter four, the most pertinent report to this study, stemming from the collection of cross-unit reports, was the assessment of the diversity, multicultural, and women's issues programs in central units and the colleges. The purpose of this particular report was to review the programming and administrative efforts designed to support diversity. The report offered recommendations for how the various units could form additional collaborations, eliminate overlaps, enhance services, fill gaps, and increase accountability. In general, the master narrative for the cross-unit reports frames the motivation behind these reports as driven by the budget cuts. Not only did the reports serve as an inventory of the current programming efforts and administrative supports across the university, but they also created opportunities for identifying needs that were not being met and opportunities for collaboration. In addition, the master narrative includes reminders that the budget crisis may require that some units be eliminated or restructured.

Organizing and defining diversity. As budget constraints generated reviews of programs across the university, the institution also had on its agenda redefining and reorganizing diversity. I first became aware that the provost's committee on diversity had a subcommittee for defining diversity through my initial interviews and meetings with Joshua. Joshua served on both the provost's committee and the subcommittee to create a new institutional definition of diversity. As I had the opportunity to attend the provost's committee on diversity meeting, I was able to hear updates on the status of the development of a new definition of diversity. The chair of the subcommittee shared that he and other members were currently reviewing all of the feedback they had received on preliminary

definitions. The subcommittee collected student feedback on the initial definitions during a student diversity conference on campus. They were using the feedback to rework their original interpretations of diversity.

When I met with Sophie, the Associate Provost for Personnel and CDO, she informed me that the last time the institution had updated its definition of diversity was in 2005 as part of the strategic planning process. She went on to share with me that the definitions proposed by the subcommittee this year were more about inclusiveness in contrast to the 2005 definition that focused on tolerance. During our final meeting, Joshua shared the subcommittee's proposed definitions of diversity. The subcommittee submitted the following definition to Sophie as the chair of the provost's diversity committee:

[Midwestern University] welcomes and celebrates diversity creating a safe place to be different and to share ideas. Each of us contributes our talents to [Midwestern University] and we know that diversity enriches our community by fueling creativity and innovation. We strive to provide a positive, nurturing environment to understand each other. Diversity encompasses acceptance and respect by fostering an environment of inclusion that moves beyond simple tolerance to recognizing the richness in the individual identities of people.

Therefore diversity is an active process that requires our continuous dedication in order to meet the needs of present and future generations.

As stated by Sophie, the definition proposed by the subcommittee, which included student feedback, focused on inclusion.

As I met with the MSS administrators in other colleges, they shared with me that each college had its own definition and interpretation of diversity. For example, Norma, the MSS

administrator in the college of mechanics, shared that the definition of diversity in her college extended beyond race and ethnicity to include women. Women were underrepresented in the field of mechanics and therefore it was important to include women in definitions of diversity. Norma also shared with me that the college had engaged in discussions of including diversity of thought in their own reworking of the term diversity. Lily, the MSS administrator in the college of human ecology, informed me that the faculty diversity committee was working on creating manageable and quantifiable goals for diversity. In the College of Innovation, diversity was defined in particular as enrollment of students of color. The definition for the College of Innovation emerged in several venues including my meetings with Joshua, the faculty diversity committee meeting, conversation with Frank, and annual diversity reports for the College of Innovation. Overall, it was clear that each unit had autonomy to define diversity in a manner that met the needs of that particular college or department.

The various definitions of diversity guided how diversity was organized and practiced. Just as the definition of diversity was being reworked across the university, so was the organization and practices of diversity. As discussed in chapter four, the distinction in the scope of functions for both the EO office and the provost's office created new structures of responsibilities for diversity. Prior to the restructuring, the EO office and the associate provost shared responsibilities for university-wide diversity programming, such as the annual MLK birthday commemoration. As a result of the restructuring, the EO was charged with overseeing federal compliance regarding affirmative action reporting and the associate provost was now held responsible for diversity programming that included work/life balance programs as well as managing difficult dialogues training. In addition to restructuring

programming responsibilities, Sophie, the associate provost, was given an additional title of Chief Diversity Officer (CDO). Sophie's duties as the CDO compromised ten percent of her job duties. Although Sophie was unsure of how the institution would define and structure her work as the institution's CDO, she was eager to learn from other CDO's during an annual CDO conference.

Transitions were also taking place with the restructuring of diversity in the student services units across campus. The MSA office, as well as the MSS administrators in various colleges, was undergoing changes in its organization and practices of diversity. The MSA office had redefined their practice of diversity to focus on retention. According to Maria, the director of MSA, she received a directive from the Vice President for Student Affairs to focus her programming efforts specifically on the retention of students of color. She recognized that this directive was directly linked to the state governing board's strategic plan. She felt that the directive helped MSA make clear distinctions between what the office's role was regarding diversity work. She stated that due to the new focus on retention she was able to distinguish which requests coming into MSA fit within their new scope of duties versus those that did not. Maria shared that if she received a call from faculty asking for a diversity program, she was now able to tell faculty that diversity education was beyond the scope of the work of MSA. Maria also shared that the focus on retention allowed her to create closer ties between the office's new mission and fiscal management decisions. She shared the example of how in the past, MSA spent money providing hot chocolate for students during the winter and having pizza parties. Now that MSA was focused on retention, Maria would first ask how having hot chocolate and pizza parties contributed to keeping students at MU and if she could not make the connection easily and clearly, she would not spend the money

unnecessarily. Although Maria appreciated MSA's new focus on retention, she also acknowledged that she was unsure what units across MU were responsible for other components of diversity. For example, she did not know who she could refer faculty to for the diversity education piece. She recognized that diversity work existed within silos at MU and that there was no coordinating entity that brought all of the units working with diversity together.

MSS administrators were also in the midst of transitions both within their colleges and also with regard to their relationship with MSA. MSS administrators in the colleges of mechanics and industrial arts experienced significant changes in their job duties within the last year. Both MSS administrators were asked to serve as academic advisors for their respective colleges in addition to carrying on their duties as MSS administrators. For Norma, her split duties meant that she spent three days of the week working on duties related to her MSS responsibilities and two days a week working on her academic advising duties. The split in her duties also meant that she worked in two different physical locations. She had workspace both within the student services office for the college of mechanics and an office in one of the college's departments. Norma also shared that the college of mechanics had restructured their diversity outreach efforts over the last year. Prior to this year, her position as the MSS administrator was placed organizationally under the Office of Mechanics Diversity Affairs. This particular office was responsible for both recruitment and retention of students of color and outreach to women mechanics students. The office no longer exists and the former Dean of Diversity along with the former MSS administrator for the college of mechanics are now in a new unit within the college that focuses on the recruitment and transition of students of color to the college. Norma, as the new MSS administrator, focuses

on the retention efforts for the college and reports to the Director of Student Services for the college of mechanics. In her newly structured position as the MSS administrator and academic advisor, Norma was given a directive by the dean of the college to reduce the number of duplicate programs and to spend time finding opportunities for increased collaborations across the university.

The other MSS administrator who experienced a significant change in her job responsibilities was Jennifer, the MSS administrator in the college of industrial arts. Jennifer also experienced a new split in her duties. During her first year in the position, Jennifer focused solely on her role as the MSS administrator. Motivated by budget cuts and reorganizations within the college, her job duties were now split between being a MSS administrator and academic advisor. Jennifer's MSS administrator duties include advising two student organizations, providing academic support and social resources for multicultural students, delivering diversity training sessions for orientation classes, and assisting with first year transition and retention efforts targeting students of color. In addition, she currently chairs the college's faculty diversity committee since there are no faculty who are currently interested in serving as the chair. As an academic advisor, Jennifer has her own caseload of students to meet with individually. Jennifer said that her new duties as an academic advisor have changed her workload significantly. This year Jennifer spends 60% of her time focusing on her MSS administrator duties, whereas last year she spent 100% focusing on related projects and outreach efforts. She went on to share with me that by mid-October in 2009 she had hosted five programs focused on students of color and a year later she only had enough time to coordinate one similar program. As a result of the change in her job duties, Jennifer's office location also changed. Jennifer attributed the change in the physical location of her

office to her new duties as an academic advisor. Her office was previously located in a secluded corner of the student services suite and was sometimes difficult to find. This year, Jennifer was relocated to a more visible office that was located across the hall from the main student services office. Jennifer went on to share that she recognized that the change in her job duties was linked to both the budget cuts and the state's new mandates regarding retention, and the RMM. In the college of industrial arts, the budget cuts forced the college to let go of one full-time academic advisor, 17 faculty members, and four staff personnel. As a result of the cuts in staff, all the remaining staff had to take on new duties. According to Jennifer, the focus on retention in the college of industrial arts was closely tied to the college's enrollment driven budget model.

The modification of Norma's and Jennifer's job descriptions represented significant changes in the organization and practices of diversity in their respective colleges. There were also MSS administrators with whom I met who did not experience significant changes in their job duties including those working in the college of human ecology, college of entrepreneurship, and the college of innovation. Even though they did not all experience changes in the organization and practices of diversity within their own colleges, each MSS administrator was currently experiencing changes in the way their work was linked to the MSA office. As mentioned in chapter four, the MSS administrators were originally employed to serve as extensions of the MSA office in each college. MSA and the MSS administrators were closely linked and even tied together by budget allocations, given that the MSA office paid ten percent of their salaries. As I met with Hector (chair of the student services committee) and Marcos (enrollment services advisor), they offered their own insights regarding the shifts that had taken place over time that contributed to a changing relationship

between MSA and the MSS administrators. Both Hector and Marcos have been at MU for over 20 years and witnessed the mutations that have taken place over time regarding the ways diversity has been organized and practiced. Hector and Marcos agreed that the budget cuts, lack of steady leadership in MSA, and changes in personnel over the last five years contributed to a weakening of the relationship between MSA and the MSS administrators. A point confirmed by all of the MSS administrators, Hector and Marcos shared that MSS administrators feel more of an allegiance to their respective colleges than they do to MSA. Marcos shared that the RMM caused each college to focus more on enrollment and retention and therefore rely more heavily on the MSS administrators to contribute to the college's recruitment and retention efforts. Marcos shared that in his opinion the new budget model made it difficult to maintain a more centralized model of student support services for students of color. Hector also attributed the weakening of the relationship between MSA and the MSS administrators to the increased demands placed on the MSS administrators by their respective colleges, thus resulting in an increased sense of allegiance to the colleges. The director of MSA and her supervisor, the associate dean of students, both recognized that the ties between MSA and the MSS administrators were currently unclear and undergoing a period of transition. Lorena, the associate dean of students, did acknowledge that despite the current status of limbo, MSA and the MSS administrators were tied by their shared commitment to provide student support services for students of color.

The master narrative for the organization and redefinition of diversity begins to shed light on the complexities and interconnections that exist between diversity-focused initiatives and other policies. In the case of this study, the master narrative of diversity is intertwined with budgetary constraints and mandates dictated by policies such as the governing board's

strategic plan. In the case of MU, defining diversity is an on-going process. Furthermore, MU values fluidity in its practices of diversity so that each unit has autonomy over creating definitions and practices of diversity that are best suited for their particular context. In addition, despite budget cuts, the work of MSS administrators has been protected. Finally, among various units charged with diversity, programming and outreach are also evolving and a new focus on increasing collaboration allow for both creativity and efficiency.

Academic and student affairs. In general, American higher education makes a distinction between academic and student affairs, thus creating a tension between the two. As stated by Bourassa and Kruger (2001, Winter),

These obstacles have primarily been seen as cultural differences, the historical separation between the formal curriculum and the informal curriculum, the perception of student affairs as an ancillary function to the academic mission, competing assumptions about the nature of student learning, and differential reward systems for faculty and student affairs professionals. (p. 9)

Throughout my data collection process it was evident that MU also made a clear distinction in practice between academic and student affairs. There was a sense of autonomy that came through in the various academic units that was not present when I met with administrators from student affairs units. The distinction was also evident in the missions and memberships of various committees on campus. Furthermore, as I met with the MSS administrators, it was clear that they were placed in the middle of the tension of academic versus student affairs as they were student services administrators housed in academic units.

As I spoke with the MSS administrators in the various colleges, some of them shed light on the fact that they were housed in academic colleges that afforded them some

protections that were not shared by their colleagues in student affairs. Lily, the MSS administrator in the college of human ecology, was the first to point out that she felt protected because she worked for an academic college. Lily felt that the benchmarks for minority retention mandated by the state governing board put more pressure on her colleagues in student affairs than they did on academic units. She also used her frame of understanding both academic and student affairs to explain why she felt shielded from the tensions experienced as a result of the cross-unit report. Lily also felt that the issue of duplication of services examined in the cross-unit report had more of an affect on student affairs than it did on academic affairs. Lily highlighted how she as a MSS administrator was afforded a few protections because her work was housed in an academic unit. For example, Lily did not have to justify how her work contributed to the academic mission of her college and she did not feel that her job as a MSS administrator was in danger because she was housed in academic affairs.

As previously mentioned, Joshua served on several committees, including a student services committee and the provost's diversity committee. Although Joshua served on several other committees, these two particular committees represent the differences that exist between student and academic affairs as the student services committee is housed in student affairs and the provost's diversity committee is housed in academic affairs. The mission of the student services committee is as follows:

The [Student Services Committee's] mission is to work collaboratively to positively impact recruitment, persistence, retention, and graduation of students of color at [Midwestern University]. [The Student Services Committee] is coordinated by MSA, a department in the Dean of Students Office and Division of the Vice President for

Student Affairs. (Multicultural Student Services Coordinating Team, 2011)

On the other hand, the mission for provost's diversity committee is:

The purpose of the committee is to “assess the effectiveness of diversity efforts on campus, identify gaps in university diversity policies and efforts, develop new policies and initiatives as necessary, and ensure that units across the university are meeting diversity objectives.” This group meets monthly and also holds regular meetings with the chairs of the diversity committees of the various colleges and units on campus to collaborate and share information. We also meet with invited guests from the university and the Ames community to discuss our common interests in regard to diversity. (Advisory Committee on Diversity Program Planning and Coordination, 2010)

As I attended both meetings it became evident to me that these two committees served distinct purposes. True to the purpose of student affairs, the student services committee meeting consisted of agenda items that focused on student support, advocacy, and community outreach. During the meeting, committee members expressed concerns regarding how to market their outreach programs to students and strategized new methods of providing support such as providing book scholarships for students who could not afford to buy books. In addition, there was an in-depth discussion regarding MU's policies for undocumented student admission. Furthermore, committee members went around to announce, and invite others to attend, upcoming programs. Finally, the membership for the committee consisted of the MSS administrators from each college, the director of MSA, staff from admissions, housing, TRIO programs, and the counseling center. All of the members of the student services committee worked closely with students of color and provided the students with

support services.

The agenda items for the provost's diversity committee meeting consisted of the reviewing revisions to the diversity website, updates on the status of the diversity definition, information about the cross-unit reports, discussion of the review procedures for the diversity reports collected from units across campus, and the changes in the EO office. Most of the examples given and questions posed during the meeting related to either the institution as a whole or to faculty concerns. For example, most of the conversation around numbers of people of color at the university referred back to hiring numbers and payroll instead of student enrollment numbers. In addition, the examples of programs given throughout the meeting referred to programs targeting faculty instead of students. Finally, as I examined the membership of the provost's committee, it was vastly different from the student services committee because the committee was made up of faculty members, upper level administrators, deans of colleges, and department chairs, as well as student services administrators.

I began to recognize the tension that MSS administrators may face as student services administrators housed in academic colleges while I attended the provost's diversity committee meeting with Joshua. At this point in my data collection, I had spent a significant amount of time interviewing and observing Joshua while at work. Through my observations, it was clear that Joshua's day-to-day work experiences were primarily focused on student retention. As I sat in the provost's diversity committee with Joshua, I began to wonder how he felt about sitting in this committee meeting that did not focus at all on the needs of students. His daily reality appeared to be disconnected from the content of the meeting. From that point on I began to pay closer attention to how the work of MSS administrators could

exist in tension with working for an academic unit.

Both Joshua and Jennifer offered me specific examples of how their work as student services administrators housed in an academic department posed challenges. Joshua shared with me that he was currently the chair for the faculty diversity committee. He was asked to serve as the chair by his supervisor because no faculty within the College of Innovation had volunteered to serve as the chair. When I attended the college's faculty diversity committee I witnessed first hand how Joshua was not afforded the same privileges as faculty. One of the agenda items for the meeting was taking nominations for a new committee chair. The members that were present asked Joshua why he could not continue to serve as chair. Joshua quickly reminded the faculty present that it was indeed a faculty committee and that since he was not a faculty member, it was not appropriate for him to continue to serve in the role. No one present volunteered to be nominated and the agenda item was tabled. Furthermore, as the meeting progressed and the committee brainstormed ideas for how to get more faculty involved with the committee and diversity work in the college, faculty began to use terminology and acronyms that were unfamiliar to Joshua such as FAR, PRS, and OSPA. These acronyms referred to documents and processes that were tied to faculty reviews, promotion and tenure, and grant writing. It almost felt like the faculty and Joshua were speaking two different languages: student services and academic affairs. Joshua was placed in an awkward situation because, as the diversity person for the college, he was the natural default person to serve in this role, but he did not have the training, credentials, nor familiarity with the academician culture to gain legitimacy in his role as chair for the faculty diversity committee.

Jennifer was also the default chair for the college of industrial arts' faculty diversity

committee. She faced challenges similar to those encountered by Joshua. What was interesting about Jennifer's accounts of her experiences as the student services administrator chairing the faculty committee was that although she served as the chair for the committee, she was not allowed to attend the faculty meetings. Jennifer felt that this was a clear signal of what she could and could not do as a MSS administrator housed in an academic unit. She could fill in the gaps, but still did not have enough legitimacy in her role as a student services administrator to gain access to faculty meetings.

The master narrative for student affairs and academic affairs is that there is a clear distinction between student services and the academic personnel of MU. This narrative is typical of most institutions of American higher education. As such, the master narrative blames this distinction on the history of American higher education and ongoing tension between the two sides of the university structure. At hand are questions of how to define learning and what privileges are given or withdrawn based on whether a person is a faculty member or a student services administrator.

Student organization policies. One of the first times I engaged in fieldwork, I had the opportunity to join Joshua and a group of students for lunch at an on-campus dining hall. The students who joined us for lunch were all students who Joshua worked closely with both as students enrolled in the College of Innovation and as the advisor to their student organizations. During that lunch, I first met Vanessa. Vanessa was a graduate student and was currently serving as the chair for MU's celebration of Latino Heritage Month (LHM). Joshua served as the advisor to the Latino Heritage Month planning committee and therefore worked closely with Vanessa. While at lunch Vanessa shared her many frustrations and challenges that she had encountered as she attempted to plan and coordinate events for LHM.

She told Joshua that she met with two administrators from the student union and left both meetings frustrated. Vanessa told Joshua that she felt that the Latino organizations were being punished for expressing their concerns about campus policies. I later found out from Joshua that during the spring of 2009, one Latino organization was hosting its annual event in the student union and had some negative experiences with the student union staff. The members of the student organization expressed their concerns to the administration in a series of meetings, but according to Joshua, no real changes resulted from the meetings.

Vanessa's interactions with Joshua during lunch that day sparked me to take a look at how student organization policies affect the student organizations that Joshua advises, thus affecting his work as the mediator between the policies and the student leaders. Several of the students I interviewed were members of the student organizations that Joshua advised. As I met with them, I asked them about the student organization policies and how they either helped them or hindered them in their roles as student leaders. Vanessa, Ingrid, and Danilo all shared examples with me of how their roles as student leaders of multicultural organizations were frustrating because of the student organization policies.

The experiences the students shared with me compelled me to spend some time examining some of the student organization policies they mentioned, including the budget allocation process. The student governing board oversees the budget allocation process for registered student organizations. As described by the student organization funding webpage,

The Government of the Student Body receives its income from the mandatory student activity fee which is paid by all [Midwestern University] students. The overwhelming majority of this \$1.8 million is spent to enhance student's experiences at [Midwestern University] and specifically in student organizations. GSB also uses some of the

money to provide debt assistance to student organizations, help student organizations to provide accommodations to disabled students, provide services specifically for graduate student organizations, and to depreciate current equipment to keep up with the technology standards of the future. (Funding overview, 2010)

The student governing body also published manuals and various forms of on-line brochures to assist student organizations with their budget preparation processes. In reviewing the documents it was evident that one of the qualifiers used to allocate funding to the student organizations was membership numbers (GSB: Finance 101, 2006). Tables in the document explained that as membership increased, organizations qualified for more funds to support things such as marketing, conference funding, and purchasing of office supplies. It was also clear that the student governing board, along with the student activities office, worked to provide several resources and training opportunities to support student organizations as they prepared to submit budget requests to the funding board. Several manuals, webpages with frequently asked questions, and deadlines for budget submission were available online. Although my examination of the student organization policies came out of concerns with the implementation process, it was apparent that the master narrative for student organization policies includes intentions of transparency and fair treatment. By having clearly stated policies and providing lots of information about the processes and regulations that inform the budget submission and review process, the student governing board ensured that all organizations were being held to the same standards and expectations, and therefore they were ensuring equity throughout the process.

Summary of master narratives. The master narrative for the Midwestern University consists of commitments to diversity, autonomy, creative responses to budgetary crisis,

fairness, and transparency. MU would showcase that despite significant budget cuts, services and programs for minority students and faculty were still protected. Furthermore, the institution has strengthened its commitment to diversity through its current reorganization of diversity exemplified in the creation of the Chief Diversity Officer title given to the Associate Provost for Personnel. In addition, the university's commitment to supporting students of color transcends the historical barriers between student affairs and academic affairs. Through its innovative model, student services administrators are housed within academic units to ensure that diversity is defined and practiced in a way that best meets the particular needs of each college. Finally, transparency and equity are core values of the institution that extend from the RMM all the way to the student governing board's policies for funding student organizations. Overall, the master narrative for MU depicts an institutional commitment to diversity even within economic constraints.

Counternarratives at MU

The counternarratives for Midwestern University complicate the ways we understand how a university practices diversity through policies, practices, and unwritten rules. In the context of this study, the process of complicating the master narrative provides a new understanding of how racism mediates the social relations and organizations that shape Joshua's work as a MSS administrator. The counternarratives respond to each of the master narratives presented for MU.

Diversity = Retention. The master narrative for the RMM presented the new resource model as a way of ensuring that the mission of the university would still be met despite fiscally challenging times. In addition, the RMM gave each unit responsibility for generating its own revenue and the revenue was closely tied to student enrollment. The

counternarrative to the RMM recognizes the intersections between the RMM and the state governing board's mandates to increase graduation rates for minority students. They are intertwined because they inform the way that the institution practices both diversity and retention. The interests of the university, state, and MSS administrators converge to focus on the retention of students of color.

As I met with various administrators across campus, several shared with me that they were aware that the units across the university were newly invested in retention because student enrollment was the primary source of revenue. Lorena, the Associate Dean of Students, said it bluntly when she stated, "Retention is where the money is at now." Both Jennifer and Norma shared examples that confirmed that academic units were talking more about retention. Jennifer shared that although retention was being discussed more across campus, the conversations were structured differently in the student services focused meetings where retention was discussed in reference to the state governing board's new benchmarks. In contrast, the conversations regarding retention in Jennifer's college were tied to the new budget model. Lily, the MSS administrator in the college of human ecology, also concurred with Jennifer and Norma's observations. Lily stated, "Retention translates to dollars and this may be the new motivation for the college to focus on retention."

As I thought about how to make sense of the ways retention intersected with the work of MSS administrators, through the use of CRT as an analytical framework, it became clear to me that the university was compelled to protect the MSS administrators beyond the institutional commitment to diversity. The practices of the MSS administrators all varied, but the one thing that remained consistent throughout all of the positions is that they were charged with retention of students of color. Not only does the university have a vested

interest in protecting the MSS administrators, but so do the academic units. Under the new budget model, the academic units depend on student enrollment and retention for their revenue. As the MSS administrators contribute to both enrollment and retention efforts, it would be unwise for the academic units to eliminate these administrators. As an added bonus, the MSS administrators contribute to the academic unit's work towards meeting the state governing board's new benchmarks regarding minority student graduation rates. In the case of diversity equaling retention, the interconnections of state policies (budget allocations and the governing board's strategic plan) and MU policies (RMM and focus on retention) emerged as I began to piece together how each organization mediates the day-to-day work and protections afforded to MSS administrators.

Efficiently diverse. The budget constraints were the impetus behind the cross-unit report. As already stated, the purpose of the cross-unit report was to identify duplication of services, gaps, and opportunities for increased collaboration. In addition, the cross-unit report was a mechanism to identify ways to increase efficiency and accountability in programming and administrative supports. The counternarrative of the cross-unit report poses the question, "Is it possible to be efficiently diverse?"

Danilo, a senior undergraduate student, is the person who most eloquently pinpointed the tension that exists between supporting students of color and institutional demands for efficiency. During the end of my interview with Danilo I asked him to speak about his opinions on how MU supports students of color. He began to share his experiences as a student organization leader and at the end of his comments he stated, "You know the problem of working with minorities is that it is inherently inefficient and people try to look for ways to do it efficiently but there are none." He went on to state that trying to practice efficiency

when working with students of color is only contributing to more practices of racism and isolation.

Danilo's insights offered me a good way to frame my examination of how MU was imposing expectations of efficiency on programs and administrative units focused on supporting students of color. As the cross-unit report teams were charged with finding instances where programs and administrative supports duplicated services and could increase collaborations, the unwritten goal of the report was to find ways to increase efficiency and therefore reduce institutional expenditures. The cross-unit report provoked feelings of anger, frustration, and even a sense of job insecurity for several of the administrators with whom I spoke. During one of my initial meetings with Joshua in the spring semester of 2010, he was eager to share with me that he had written a response to the cross-unit report and that one of the Associate Deans of the College of Innovation was also planning to respond to the report. Joshua felt that the report was a first step in moving towards consolidating the work of the MSS administrators in each college and moving them out of the colleges and into MSA. He also felt that the report was biased because it did not give equal attention to the work being done in each college. He felt that his work as a MSS administrator in the College of Innovation was not fully represented and was misunderstood based on the findings included in the cross-unit report. In a letter Joshua wrote in response to the report he stated, "The report demonstrates a bias agenda to consolidate all diversity efforts into a single office as a response to the current budget crisis" He went on to argue that "the report does not mention successful programs of diversity in [the College of Innovation] that have been supportive of equity and equality." The Associate Dean's response to the report was also filled with strong

emotions. In an email response to the report sent by the Associate Dean of the College of Innovation, he stated,

The report has the ‘feel’ that the conclusion was set at the beginning—that being a strong [MU] centralized diversity office and set of programs would be much more effective than any/all college-level and non-academic unit diversity activities, programs and services. Then some data were collected and weakly analyzed to support the centralization thesis.

It is evident that the report provoked strong emotions and reactions.

The strong reactions to the report extended beyond the College of Innovation. Both Maria, the director of MSA, and Lorena, the Associate Dean of Students, acknowledged that the cross-unit report caused a lot of tension between the various units reviewed in the report. They both shared that the intent of the report was to identify the work each unit was doing regarding diversity and also to suggest ways that the units could work more closely together. Lorena conceded that the strong reactions to the report were due to a perception that the report was threatening positions and programs across campus. Hector’s insights challenged the process of evaluation of the various programs and units. Hector felt that the review team was not adequately trained to understand that diversity initiatives work best when they are tailored to meet very specific needs, as is the case for the work of the MSS administrators located in the different colleges. Hector stated,

The report did not recognize that MSA and the MSS administrators have clear roles that do not overlap and therefore do not result in duplication of services. The outsider looking in does not have a clear understanding of the ways these positions are structured and the intricacies involved in the work done by MSA and the MSS

administrators. As a result, the outsider looking in automatically assumes that services are being duplicated.

Hector's comments pinpoint the challenges that occur when culturally-irrelevant practices of evaluation are used to assess the work of MSS administrators. Evaluators who are not trained to understand the complexities of working with students of color are apt to misunderstand specialized support services as examples of replications of services. As Danilo stated, efficiency and supporting minority student success cannot co-exist.

Institutional ambivalence. Although the master narrative of defining and organizing diversity would have us believe that the changing organizational structures and the development of new definitions of diversity are evidence of MU's commitment to responding to the fluid nature of diversity, the counternarrative asserts the opposite. I argue that defining diversity as fluid provides MU a scapegoat to practice institutional ambivalence regarding racial equity, thus allowing the institution to get away without taking a strong stance on where it stands with regard to racial equity. Evidence to support my argument lies in the ongoing process of defining and redefining diversity, holding units accountable for their work with diversity when there is no working definition of diversity, and the lack of a coordinating entity that provides a clear mission and purpose regarding racial equity at MU.

During our first interview, Joshua shared with me that he was involved with the work of developing a new definition of diversity. Joshua stated,

I've noticed that every time a new leader takes over, the definition for diversity needs to be changed. The provost's diversity committee worked on this two years ago, so the definition we have is pretty new, so I am not sure why we need a new one now. I also think that it shouldn't be up to a subcommittee to develop the institution's

definition of diversity. I think that the university administration should be in charge of creating a definition.

Joshua's statement sheds light on multiple aspects of the institutional practice of defining and redefining diversity. First, the definition of diversity appears to undergo changes regularly and each new leader of the diversity committee feels compelled to revisit the definition upon taking on the role as chair of the committee. The process of continued reworking of the definition of diversity does not allow for the various members of the university community to become familiar with one definition and implement the denotation in their own work.

Second, Joshua acknowledges the value of having upper-level administrators, such as the university president, participate in the development of the definition of diversity. Without a clear, long-standing definition of diversity, that is not only supported, but also developed by upper-level administrators, the prominence and value of diversity is diminished.

When I attended the provost's diversity committee, the agenda consisted of both updates on the development of the definition of diversity and the collection of the diversity reports from units across the university. The diversity reports were bi-annual reports submitted to the provost's committee by all units on campus regarding their diversity efforts. The reports helped the committee fulfill its mission to assess the diversity efforts on campus. I was puzzled after the meeting about how the committee could hold units accountable for their diversity efforts when the institutional definition of diversity was undergoing changes. When I met with Sophie, the chair of the provost's diversity committee, we discussed the process of defining diversity. She acknowledged that defining diversity was an awkward and tension-filled process. She also shared that there is no strategic institutionalized definition of diversity. In addition, she explained that it is difficult to balance inclusivity with developing

measurable outcomes in the process of establishing a new definition of diversity. Although our conversation offered no new insights, it did serve to confirm that MU did not have a clear nor strategic definition of diversity. The lack of such a definition could prohibit the institution's ability to practice racial equity.

The final piece of evidence that contributed to my finding that MU's policies and practices are institutionally ambivalent to racial equity was the lack of a coordinating entity to organize university diversity efforts. During my conversation with Maria, the Director of MSA, she brought up that one of the challenges of being at a large institution is that everyone functions in their own silos. This behavior provided an additional challenge for the units charged with diversity because there was no coordinating unit that helped organize the diversity efforts across campus. She felt that the lack of a coordinating entity sent an unwritten message that no one in the institution wanted to own diversity. Lorena, the Associate Dean of Students, also asserted the same argument when I met with her and said that she felt that because of the decentralized nature of the university, diversity was almost treated like the lingering "D" that had no real owner. Without an owner or coordinating unit, the institution had no way of knowing what work was actually being done on campus regarding diversity. In addition, diversity units and programs were also without an advocate that could defend their work and purpose during times of crisis. With no designated advocate located at the upper levels of the administrative organization, the institution once again practices its ambivalence towards racial equity.

Rank and file. The master narrative of student and academic affairs explains the differences between the two university units as a result of the history of higher education and differing definitions of learning. The counternarrative examines how the distinctions made

between academic and student affairs have implications for the work of MSS administrators and thus racial equity initiatives. When I met with Frank, he explained the system of differential privileges given to faculty versus student services administrators as mimicking the military practices of rank and file. According to Frank, tenured faculty in particular have earned their stripes and therefore earned respect and other privileges while student services administrators are at the bottom of the ranks and are not afforded the same privileges nor the same type of respect.

I found evidence to support Frank’s analysis of the differential system of privileges between faculty and students services administrators, in the parameters placed on the MSS administrators regarding what they were able and not able to do in their positions. Furthermore, as I examined the membership of various committees, I also found indications of the limited access student services administrators have to upper level administration.

As mentioned earlier, Jennifer served as the chair of the faculty diversity committee in the college of industrial arts, but despite her work as the chair of a faculty committee, she was unable to gain access to the college’s faculty meeting. As she recounted this particular challenge, she stated, “There are just certain things that staff can’t do.” Joshua also encountered limitations in his job because of his student services designation. Joshua actively seeks grant opportunities that support his work with students of color in the College of Innovation. He has successfully submitted grants in the past and has also been rewarded with grants to support his work as a MSS administrator. After receiving a few grants, he was told by his supervisor that he could no longer submit grants on his own. He was told that submitting grants was reserved for faculty members in the college. In addition he was told that if he wanted to pursue grant funding, he should work with a faculty member. The faculty

member could submit the grant as the primary investigator (PI) and therefore gain the accolades and recognition affiliated with being the PI. Joshua was flustered by this limitation and it made no sense to him why he could not pursue grant funding. He knew he had the experience and the drive, so he did not understand why should he be blocked from pursuing funding that in the end would benefit not only the students of color with whom he works, but also the College of Innovation. Joshua stated, “Jessica, I have no idea about these rules. These unwritten rules that MSS administrators cannot write big grants. I guess it is up to faculty and the deans to write these grants.” As Joshua stated, unwritten rules, along with a system of rank and file, limit the MSS administrator’s abilities to enhance racial equity efforts through grant funding.

The hierarchical distinctions between academic and student affairs are also apparent in differences between the membership and organizational placements of the provost’s diversity committee and the student services committee. The membership of the provost’s diversity committee consists of a combination of tenured faculty, deans of colleges, department chairs, student services administrators, and representatives from the provost’s office and from the office of equity. The membership represents all ranks of faculty and administration. Furthermore, the racial make-up of the committee was diverse. Although I recognize that not all members of the committee were present, I was intrigued that most of the committee members present were white (10), with five Latino members, and one African American member. (This racial assessment was my assumption based on phenotype.) Although I made a mental note of the racial make-up of the members, I did not realize how significant the demographics represented in the room would be until I attended the student services meeting. The student services meeting was a stark contrast to the provost’s diversity

committee both because of the administrative titles and because of the racial make-up of the group. Of the 14 people in attendance at the student services meeting, only one was white, based on phenotype. Furthermore, the highest-ranking administrator in attendance was the Associate Dean of Students.

To the untrained eye, the racial demographics and titles of those in attendance would be described as coincidental. I would argue quite the contrary. First of all, the provost's diversity committee is charged with not only assessing the university units' work with diversity, but they are also charged with developing university policies regarding diversity such as the institutional definition of diversity and outcome measures for diversity programs. If the committee consists primarily of high ranking white faculty and administrators, what does that mean for the voices and interest of faculty, staff, and students of color? In addition, the committee housed in student affairs is not given the same types of power to influence institutional change, yet the committee is made up almost exclusively of people of color and is specifically designed to create strategies to ensure student of color success. This committee's sphere of influence was limited to serving as an advisory board for MSA. In addition, the description for the student services committee details the purpose of the committee as advising, assisting, and collaborating, but it does not include language regarding the development and implementation of campus-wide policy. The language used in the description of the provost's committee explicitly states that the committee is responsible for the development of new diversity policies and initiatives. The institutional practices of stratification by race and rank limits MU's ability to ensure racial equity, thus delimiting the work of MSS administrators.

Unfair fairness. The master narrative for student organization policies consisted of guidelines that were clear, readily available, and equitable. The student governing board had a detailed budget allocation process that ensured fair treatment. The students with whom I met offered critiques of the student governing board's policies that claimed to be neutral. The students' insights were the foundation for the counternarrative that understands the student organization policies as unfair fairness.

As I mentioned earlier, I first met Vanessa during a lunch where she was sharing her frustrations with Joshua about programming for LHM. I asked Vanessa for an interview later on in my data collection process and during that interview I asked her to share more about her experiences as a student leader on campus. Her first response to my question was, "Oh my God! I don't think I can say anything positive about that. I hate this institution, I hate it so much! They make it so difficult for students to organize something. It's frustrating. It's heartbreaking." Vanessa shared many frustrations with the administration and policies, but one her primary concerns as the chair of LHM was the inequitable budget allocation process. She said that the biggest challenge she encountered was trying to get the student governing board to understand that the planning committee for LHM was a committee and not a student organization. Since the student governing board allocates funds primarily based on membership, the LHM committee did not qualify for a lot of funding, due to its small membership numbers. Vanessa was frustrated by this standard of measurement because, unlike other organizations, the purpose of the LHM committee was to plan and execute campus-wide programming to educate the entire campus community about Latino culture. When speaking about her frustrations with the budget allocation, Vanessa stated, "I am not saying that we wanted like thousands and thousands of dollars. I am just saying that we got

\$263 for dinner. How do you want us to offer an entire dinner for 100 people with \$263?"

Vanessa went on to share that in order to fund the dinner, she had to find other sources of financial support. She shared,

I had to go to five or six other meetings and offices just to get enough money for the event. I almost had to beg for the money. It came to a point where I felt like I was losing my own self-respect.

Vanessa's negative experiences with the student governing board and other administrators on campus led her to not want to invite any students to be a part of the committee in the future because she felt strongly that she needed to protect students from going through similar experiences.

Vanessa's experiences with planning LHM offered the most powerful example of how institutional policies, such as student organization funding policies, do not apply equitably to all situations. Other students with whom I met offered similar stories of how they encountered tensions and challenges with institutional policies that did not address their particular needs as leaders of multicultural organizations. The "fair standards" did not fit the needs of the multicultural organizations because their memberships were often smaller and their missions were unique. It is no surprise that the membership numbers were lower than those for majority white organizations, as students of color represented 9.1% of the total student enrollment. Furthermore, the missions of the student of color organizations were closely tied to issues of equity and representation of non-dominant cultures, thus making them unique compared to the missions of most of the other student organizations at MU. The experiences of the student leaders affect Joshua in his work experiences as a MSS administrator because he is left to mediate between institutional policies and the needs of the

organizations he advises. Furthermore, he is left to mend the damage caused by other entities as he focuses on retaining the student leaders. As evidenced by Vanessa's strong feelings of hatred towards MU, Joshua had to work closely with her to make sure that did not let these negative experiences impact her academic work. Vanessa shared that Joshua would often remind her that her primary role at MU was to be a student and focus on her academics.

Summary of the counternarrative. The counternarratives challenge the notions of fairness, transparency, and MU's commitment to diversity by complicating the interconnections among various organizations and policies. For example, the focus on retention is presented as being motivated by the board of regents' strategic plan, but upon further examination, there is evidence to support that retention efforts are also driven by the RMM. The cross-unit report exemplified how culturally biased practices of evaluation contribute to incomplete understandings of the purpose and effects of diversity focused programs and units. Furthermore, the practices of institutional evaluation of diversity programs and units were in tension with practices that indicated ambivalence regarding commitment to a strategic and institutionalized definition of diversity. Systems of privilege and oppression were also evident in the rank and file system that afforded limited access of interests representing racial equity to the venues that affected institutional policies. Finally, student of color leaders also encountered institutional practices of racism as they were asked to fit within dominant standards that did not support their work. All of these policies, practices, and unwritten rules are interwoven in the social relations and organizations that shape Joshua's day-to-day work as a MSS administrator.

The various social relations within MU molded how Joshua spent his time at work. Joshua's day-to-day was filled with programs, meetings, and reports focused on retention due

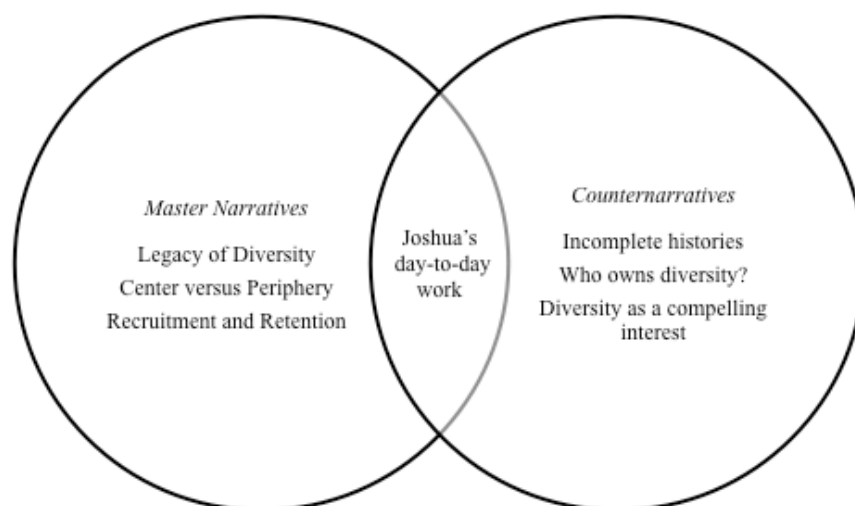
to both the state governing board's mandates and the RMM. In addition, Joshua spent time during the summer and early fall of 2010 responding to the cross-unit report in order to ensure that he was not only able to keep his job, but that the institution understood how he uniquely contributed to the success of students of color. Furthermore, as a result of the cross-unit report, Joshua devoted a significant amount of his time to meeting with his supervisors and other MSS administrators in order to strategically respond to the report. Additionally, the practices of institutional ambivalence limited Joshua's ability to align the purpose of his work with the institution's strategic definition of diversity thus limiting his ability to secure his worth within the institution's organizational structure. Moreover, as evidenced in the findings, Joshua's work was limited by his rank as a student services administrator. Although he was housed in an academic college, he was not afforded all the privileges given to faculty such as the ability to write and submit grants. Finally, Joshua had to counteract the racialized experiences students, such as Vanessa, had across campus. In order to serve as an advocate for racial equity, he had an open door policy, was always willing to take phone calls from students even after work hours, and served as the academic advisor for several student organizations. Overall, MU's practices, policies, and unwritten rules meant that Joshua worked long hours, was highly visible across campus, and always ready to defend and explain his purpose as a MSS administrator.

College of Innovation

As I spent time with Joshua, it was clear that he had a strong allegiance to the College of Innovation and understood how the college mediated his work as a MSS administrator. He also identified the college as his greatest source of support. As I stepped outside of the college, it became evident that the College of Innovation was different from other units on

campus. Their different approach to diversity and the unique way Joshua's work was organized received recognition across campus. The map in Figure 5 depicts how the master

Figure 5. College of Innovation



and counternarratives intersect in the College of Innovation. The following sections offer both the master and counternarratives that shed light on the social relations and organizations within the College of Innovation that shape Joshua's work as a MSS administrator.

Master Narratives in the College of Innovation

The master narratives in the College of Innovation were strong and were tied to the history of the College of Innovation. The link to history in the college was different from what I encountered in other areas of MU. History was a core piece in the marketing of the college, its longstanding commitment to diversity, and in the way that college administrators understood the role that the college played within the larger university.

Legacy of diversity. During the first month of fieldwork, I spent most of my time observing Joshua in his role as program director for the George Washington Carver (GWC)

Summer Internship program. The program's namesake, George Washington Carver, was the first African-American to graduate from MU. Although his accomplishments and affiliation with the university are celebrated across the university, the College of Innovation takes particular pride in Dr. Carver because he was a graduate of the college.

Spending time attending the weekly seminars and attending the research site visits for the GWC program, tuned me into how the college incorporated Dr. Carver's accomplishments into several of their marketing efforts. First of all, the summer internship program that recruited students of color in high school and college from across the country was named after Dr. Carver. Throughout the summer, pictures of Dr. Carver were seen on program brochures, the students were given quick history lessons of his accomplishments, and his name was repeated often as he was held up as an example of excellence for the students.

During the opening event for the GWC program, Joshua presented the students with the history of the program and explained why the program was named after Dr. Carver. Joshua shared with the students that the GWC program was established in 1994 and used as a recruitment and retention tool for the College of Innovation. Joshua then told the students that Dr. Carver was the first African-American student to graduate from MU. During a different seminar session, Isabel, the co-director of the GWC program, described Dr. Carver as "an innovator, researcher, and entrepreneur that made life better for other people." She went on to tell the students that as GWC interns they had the same potential to innovate and make life better for others. At yet another seminar meeting, Isabel handed out copies of an alumni association magazine published in 1998 that focused on Dr. Carver. The special issue was titled, "George Washington Carver: A Legacy of Inspiration." The magazine highlighted

the challenges Dr. Carver overcame as a poor African-American graduate student at MU. It also included quotes from Dr. Carver stating his appreciation of MU for the role it played in his academic training.

The use of Dr. Carver's image was important to the college beyond the GWC program. When I met with Frank, one of the Associate Deans for the College of Innovation, he also shared with me that George Washington Carver was a graduate of the college. He told me that Dr. Carver represented a historical piece for the college and was mentioned in almost every speech given by the college's administration. Frank felt that the history of the college was the foundation for the college's current commitment to diversity. He also argued that the college was committed to diversity because it had an outward orientation that is conveyed through its extension services. Furthermore, the college's strongest advocates for diversity and social justice were all people who according to Frank had "interesting backgrounds." For example the current dean of the college started her career in extension and in that work she focused on meeting the needs of the people in the community over those of the institution. Frank also mentioned that his experiences working abroad and in poor rural areas helped him shape his commitment to social justice.

The college's commitment to diversity was long-standing and evidenced by its history and current focus on supporting diversity. Because diversity was part of the core values of the college, several of the administrators' personal commitments to social justice are aligned with the college's mission. In addition, sharing Dr. Carver's legacy serves as a motivator for current and future students and assures them that MU and the College of Innovation have a long history of welcoming students of color.

Center versus periphery. Once I began to interact with administrators outside of the College of Innovation, it was evident that the college was different in its approach to diversity. Other MSS administrators quickly acknowledged that Joshua’s work was different and that the college was moving in a new direction regarding its targeted efforts to increase the recruitment and retention of students and faculty of color. As I heard these messages from others, I was compelled to go back to the College of Innovation and ask why it was so different. I posed this question to both Joshua and his supervisor, Frank.

When I met with Frank and asked him why the College of Innovation had such a different approach to diversity, he stated, “The college does so because it is good for the college. We are doing it for the right reasons.” When I pushed Frank and asked him if the college’s focus on retention was driven by the governing board’s strategic plan, he responded by saying, “We do that work regardless.” I then went on to ask him how the college worked with other units on campus and he shared with me that MU is a decentralized organization made up of the “center and periphery.” He went on to explain that the center and the periphery “don’t always mix well together.” Overall, he wanted me to know that the college was different because it realized that it could function on its own without the center. Because of this sense of autonomy, the College of Innovation felt that it could develop its own diversity initiatives regardless of what others were doing at the university.

Unlike other colleges that were getting rid of positions, the College of Innovation was working on creating a new position in the college to coordinate its diversity efforts. As stated earlier, the College of Innovation was in the process of creating a position for an Assistant Dean of Diversity and Graduate Programs. This tenured faculty person would supervise Joshua and serve as the main point of contact in the college regarding diversity programming

and initiatives. The creation of this position was another point of evidence that the college felt a great sense of autonomy and that it was loosely tied to the other units at MU.

Despite the college's position on the periphery, it felt a sense of independence. The college prides itself on not only its history but also its current sense of commitment to diversity. Its status as the first college established at MU and its ability to generate funding due to its extension work gives the College of Innovation a sense of entitlement to be different.

Recruitment and retention. One of the particular ways that the College of Innovation practices its commitment to diversity differently than other colleges at MU, is through its focus on both recruitment and retention. Most of the other MSS administrators with whom I met recognized that Joshua's work in the College of Innovation was really different. When I met with Norma, from the college of mechanics, and explained to her that Joshua was my primary participant she reacted by saying, "Wow. Joshua is really different." She attributed the difference in Joshua's work to the fact that he was heavily involved with recruitment and retention for the College of Innovation.

Frank confirmed that Joshua's duties included recruitment, or as Frank put it, "getting them in the door feeling good and wanted." In addition, Frank stated that Joshua was also in charge of retention efforts for students of color enrolled in the college. Frank defined Joshua's work with retention as including his work as an advocate and advising students on a variety of issues including financial aid, homesickness, and academics. Joshua's self-description of his work duties verified that his primary work duties could be categorized into the areas of recruitment and retention. Joshua not only recruits within Midwestern state, but he also travels to national conferences and to Puerto Rico to recruit students of color. His

retention duties include advising student organizations, teaching leadership courses, having an open-door policy, disseminating information about scholarships and internships, and checking midterm grades.

Overall, Joshua's role within the College of Innovation is an integral piece of the college's commitment to the success of students of color. Furthermore, Joshua's focus on both recruitment and retention is different from that of his other MSS colleagues, but is a testament to the college's practice of doing things differently when it comes to diversity. The social relations, supported by the policies and practices of the College of Innovation, assist Joshua in his efforts to increase access and success for students of color in the college.

Summary of master narrative. The master narrative in the College of Innovation is weaved throughout its practices and policies. The college demonstrates its sense of pride through the promotion of its long history of commitment to diversity. As part of its practices of self-promotion, the college celebrates its first African-American graduate, George Washington Carver. The college uses Dr. Carver as a source of inspiration for its future and current students as it hopes to instill a spirit of innovation and hard work in the students. The College of Innovation also takes pride in its increased focus on diversity that stands in contrast to other counterpart units on campus that are cutting back their diversity initiatives. Finally, the master narrative of the college's commitment to diversity is practiced through its support of recruitment and retention activities. As such, Joshua stands out from other MSS administrators because he takes a more active role in the college's recruitment and retention efforts in comparison to his other MSS administrator colleagues.

Counternarratives in the College of Innovation

The counternarrative for the College of Innovation challenges the college to question what motivates their commitment to diversity. What does the college have to gain from focusing on the recruitment and retention of students of color? What are some of the ways the college could impede student success by cutting itself off from the rest of the university? In addition, it is important to challenge the College of Innovation's use of George Washington Carver's image and story and examine what stories and images are not being shared with students and therefore erased from history. All of these questions and challenges are critical in the process of examining how the College of Innovation mediates racial equity efforts.

Incomplete histories. I was very intrigued by the use of Dr. Carver's image throughout the summer program and began to wonder what Dr. Carver would share with the students about his experiences if he were still alive. My ponderings compelled me to take a closer look at the images and stories that were being shared by the college about George Washington Carver.

I started by examining the alumni affairs magazine that was given to the GWC summer interns during one of their summer seminars. As previously mentioned, the title of the magazine was, "George Washington Carver: A Legacy of Inspiration." The content of the magazine included short articles about Dr. Carver's arrival at MU, a layout of the campus during his time at MU, the current status of MU, and narratives of students and other individuals at MU who were inspired by Dr. Carver's work. Throughout the magazine, there are few acknowledgements of what it may have been like for Dr. Carver to be the only

minority student enrolled at MU in 1891. The following quote offers one of few insights about the campus racial climate during Dr. Carver's tenure at MU:

[Midwestern University's] term had already begun when George Washington Carver arrived in May 1891, a transfer student. Although the catalogue had instructed him to bring "three dollars to retain room, and ask for dimensions that you may bring proper furniture, carpet, etc." he came empty-handed. Some sources say that his first day confirmed his worst fears. He was told that he could not sit in the dining hall, but would have to eat with the field hands in the basement.

The article went on to counter this negative initial occurrence with the following,

Except for a few isolated incidents, his first day's dark experience at [Midwestern University] was not repeated in the five years that followed. Not only was Carver welcomed into the dining halls, he became a popular dinner partner. Although he was the only African American on campus, he was certainly not the only student who came empty-handed. [Midwestern University], the country's first land-grant institution, offered a tuition-free education to the children of the working class for the first time in the nation's history. Most of them came with determination to work hard, and not much else.

In this second passage, it was evident that although the author acknowledged how Dr. Carver encountered racism upon his arrival, these instances were described as "isolated" and only occurring a "few" times. Furthermore, the author then proceeded to highlight how Dr. Carver was welcomed and became "popular." In addition, it appeared that despite Dr. Carver's racial positioning as an African-American man, he shared a common experience with his working-class peers based on socio-economic status. In this case, the author appeared to almost

dismiss Dr. Carver's racial positioning in order to replace it with his social class so that others could find a point of connection with his experience. This particular article minimized the significance of Dr. Carver's experiences with racism at MU.

A second article in the magazine titled "The Campus Today," provided a depiction of a modern and updated MU campus that was home to 1,678 U.S. ethnic minority students and also a host of various diversity initiatives. The article started by stating, "[Midwestern University] is committed to helping students better understand today's many cultures." The diversity initiatives listed in the article included the diversity requirement in the curriculum, a Multicultural Task Force, MSS administrators housed in each college, and a minority mentoring program. The underlying message behind this article is that MU has enhanced its commitment to diversity both through programmatic efforts and increased student of color enrollment. As a result, MU is an even more welcoming university now than it was when Dr. Carver attended. The problem with this second narrative is that it gives the impression that racism is no longer a factor that mediates policies and practices and therefore the experiences of people of color at MU are no longer influenced by racism. Just as the first article gave an incomplete account of his experiences, this second article gives an incomplete account of the current campus racial climate.

The College of Innovation's practice of promoting Dr. Carver's legacy as a signifier of its long-standing commitment to diversity is also problematic because it continues to promote an ideology of meritocracy by providing an incomplete and biased legacy of success and overcoming barriers. Students receiving these messages are being told that they will be welcomed in an environment where others like them were given the keys for success. It allows the institution to make the claim that they are not responsible for the failures of

students of color because they have programs and a long history of diversity exemplified by Dr. Carver's legacy. In other words, if Dr. Carver succeeded through his own merit, then students of color can also succeed if they just work hard and persist. These incomplete stories and messages leave current students in limbo, wondering if they are the ones to blame for the challenges they encounter due to institutional practices of racism. It is clear that the college is reinscribing a master narrative of meritocracy that does not account for the affects of systemic racism. Furthermore, the exploitation of Dr. Carver's images and accomplishments creates a point of tension for the MSS administrator who is asked to use Dr. Carver's story as a recruiting tool because Joshua is asked to continue to perpetuate this dominant and incomplete story.

Who owns diversity? As I have previously mentioned, during my first interview with Joshua he alerted me to the tension he and others were experiencing as a result of the cross-unit report. Weaved within that conversation were also references to the strained relationship between him, as the MSS administrator for the College of Innovation and the MSA office. Throughout the data collection process, Joshua continued to mention the strained relationship between his role and the MSA office. It appeared that both MSA and the College of Innovation wanted to hold claim to student of color advocacy. The conversations regarding the tension between the two units began to make more sense to me after I spoke with Frank and he shared his insights about how MU was divided into the center and the periphery and that because of the loosely structured nature of the university, the center and periphery did not always "mix well."

During our first interview, Joshua shared that the College of Innovation was working to figure out ways to release itself from its ties to MSA. Joshua stated that the college wanted

to “cut the umbilical cord with MSA.” The umbilical cord that tied MSA and the College of Innovation together was the ten percent of Joshua’s salary that came from the MSA budget. The connection through salary was a remnant of the original design that constructed the MSS administrators in the colleges as arms of MSA. Frank, Joshua’s supervisor, confirmed that the college had challenges working with MSA. Frank made it clear to me that Joshua “reports to the college, not to MSA.” Frank also shared with me that he did not appreciate how MSA came off as if they know more about student of color recruitment and retention than the college. He went on to state, “It is almost like they are the top looking down.” The college’s sense of ownership of diversity initiatives extended beyond its relationship with MSA. Joshua shared that the graduate college wanted to submit a collaborative grant with the College of Innovation, but the college would have to relinquish its leadership over the summer internship program. The college was not comfortable with relinquishing its oversight of the program and therefore was tentative about moving forward with the grant.

The College of Innovation was not the only unit that sensed the tension between the center and the periphery. MSA administrators also recognized the tension that existed between them and the MSS administrators. Maria, the MSA director, recognized that diversity work was compartmentalized throughout MU, thus making it difficult to work together across units. Lorena, the Associate Dean of Students, shared that the colleges and MSA were disconnected and that it impeded their ability to work together. She said the colleges functioned autonomously and that they seemed to exclude MSA from their diversity work more and more lately. For example, the colleges did not invite the MSA staff to participate in the hiring process for their new MSS administrators. She also acknowledged

that the colleges were still tied to MSA because of the salary contributions. In addition, she felt that despite the disconnections, they were all committed to student success.

Regardless of the College of Innovation's sense of pride and autonomy regarding its diversity programs and initiatives, it is still important to ask if this approach may actually cause reverse effects for their goals of recruiting and retaining students of color. Is the sense of territorialism over diversity counterproductive to student success? By cutting off its ties to MSA, the College of Innovation is isolating itself and its students of color from other resources on campus. In addition, by separating its own diversity efforts, the college is in fact weakening the opportunity for the various units committed to racial equity from coming together to present a united front against forces of inequity. Is the college's practice of "standing alone" contributing to the creation of a hierarchy and compartmentalization between services for students of color? As a result of this hierarchy, units charged with supporting students of color are pitted against one another, thus limiting their ability to create institutional change regarding racial equity. As racial equity work is divided, it is easier for the institution to dismiss and behave complacently towards diversity. The College of Innovation's behavior may in fact cause more harm to the objective of achieving racial equity.

Diversity as a compelling interest. So the next logical question to pose is what does the college have to gain from taking a strong and individualistic approach to student of color recruitment and retention. As already stated, the College of Innovation has taken a strong stance on its commitment to increasing the recruitment and retention of students of color. The college has specifically structured Joshua's position to focus on recruitment and

retention and it has also moved to create a new position that will coordinate the college's diversity efforts.

When I met with Frank, he was honest about what the college had to gain from focusing on diversity. When I asked Frank what were the College of Innovation's priorities regarding diversity, he share two priorities: 1) to improve the understanding between students, faculty, staff and administration; and 2) to continue growth in numbers. He went on to state that the college's commitment to increasing enrollment numbers is all nested in the college's strategic plan. The college has seen good growth lately in its numbers of students of color and it would like to see continued growth. When I asked Frank what motivated the college's development of the Assistant Dean for Diversity and Graduate Programs, he shared with me that the college wanted to increase its visibility as a college that was investing "more heavily" than other colleges in diversity. In addition, this position would allow the college to synthesize its reporting structure and also streamline the budget management for diversity programming. Overall, the new position will create more efficiency and visibility for the college.

As indicated by Frank's comments, the college has a lot to gain from its new investment in diversity. The primary advantage the college has to gain is recognition across the university and beyond. Through its commitment to diversity, the college is also able to access additional resources such as grants. One of the primary responsibilities of the Assistant Dean for Diversity and Graduate Programs is to apply for grants that would contribute to both the funding and reputation of the college. Furthermore, through the restructuring of the diversity programs in the college, the current Associate Deans are relinquished from their roles with diversity programs. The Associate Deans will no longer be

in charge of overseeing the budgets nor will they be responsible for the supervision of the MSS administrator. As a result, there will be fewer administrative advocates for diversity in the college. Although the Associate Deans may feel a personal commitment to diversity, their jobs will no longer require that they advocate for equity within the college. The responsibility for advocacy for people of color in the College of Innovation will be left to the Assistant to the Dean for Diversity and Graduate Programs. Overall, the college has a lot to gain from its commitment to diversity: a reputation as a leader committed to diversity. Furthermore, the college is able to simultaneously relegate its responsibility to diversity to a single person and thus reemphasize the tokenization of diversity work to one person or unit.

Summary of counternarrative. The counternarrative for the College of Innovation challenges the portrayal of selflessness woven throughout the college's master narrative. The college has a lot to gain from its commitment to diversity. By presenting an incomplete history of Carver's experiences as a student, the college is able to erase racism from its history and present itself as an iconic symbol of equity. Simultaneously, the college is able to hold students of color responsible for their own successes regardless of the challenges experienced as a result of a PWI's campus racial climate. In addition, by cutting itself off from other units on campus that support students of color, the college may in fact be causing more harm than good. The College of Innovation is motivated by its own aspirations irrespective of what is in the best interest of people of color. Finally, the reorganization of diversity within the College of Innovation may weaken the college's commitment to diversity by passing off responsibility for diversity to only one unit within the college. The college's motivations are far from selfless and place the college's interests above those of people of color.

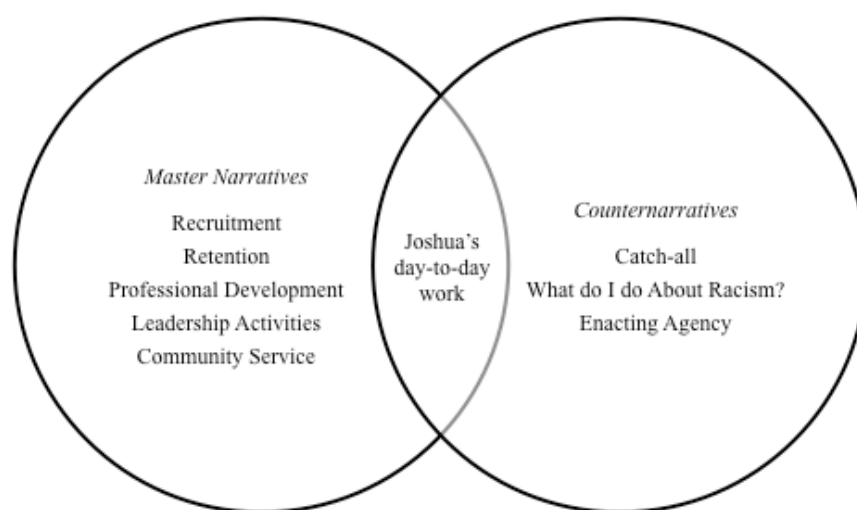
The implications of the College of Innovation's policies, practices and unwritten rules for Joshua's day-to-day lived work experiences are evident in several instances. For example, Joshua was often placed in between his sense of responsibility to the College of Innovation and the expectations from MSA to contribute to the office's work. Joshua had a few instances where his commitments to the college conflicted with requests for assistance from MSA. In one particular instance, Joshua was reprimanded by the director of MSA for not helping with a recruitment event. When Joshua spoke to his supervisor, Frank told him not to worry about what happened with MSA because he really worked for the College of Innovation. Although it was clear to Joshua that his allegiance was to the college, he still had to negotiate conflicting expectations regarding his work responsibilities. Joshua's day-to-day recruitment work was also shaped by the college's sense of pride in its long-standing history of diversity. Joshua admitted that his recruitment strategies included promoting the college as committed to diversity by using Dr. Carver's image as evidence of the college's core value of diversity. Finally, Joshua's work was framed in a way that he was told that he was an ambassador for the college. Wherever Joshua went, he felt that he was always representing the College of Innovation and therefore he felt compelled to go above and beyond to represent the college in the best possible light regarding its diversity efforts. Overall, Joshua's day-to-day experiences as the MSS administrator for the College of Innovation were clearly linked to the college's policies, practices, and unwritten rules.

Joshua, MSS administrator, College of Innovation

The purpose of this study was to understand the social relations and organizations that mediated Joshua's work as a MSS administrator in the College of Innovation. In order to do so I started by spending time with Joshua in order to learn more about his work. As I began

learning about and witnessing his work in the College of Innovation, the apparent simplicity of his scope of duties diminished as I discovered the ways in which his work was connected to multiple organizations, policies, practices, and unwritten rules. Figure 6 depicts Joshua's

Figure 6. Joshua, MSS administrator, College of Innovation



official and unofficial job duties. The following sections start with the master narrative of Joshua's work that offers an overly simplified understanding of his work. I then moved on to complicate this understanding by providing a counternarrative that highlights the unwritten components of his day-to-day work experiences. Following the master and counternarratives I synthesized how the various organizations, social relations, policies, practices, and unwritten rules shape Joshua's lived realities as a MSS administrator in the College of Innovation.

Master Narrative for Joshua

The master narrative for Joshua's work as a MSS administrator is generated primarily from the official job description for his position. The job description provides a broad

description of the areas that Joshua is charged with overseeing as the MSS administrator. The official job description states the following:

Responsibilities: Strengthen the recruitment and retention of minority students in the [College of Innovation]. Increase the academic achievements of under represented groups of students through professional development opportunities, leadership activities, and community service programs.

The job description then proceeds to offer more specific examples of how Joshua is expected to accomplish the broad scope of responsibilities. Exemplars include serving in an advisory capacity to the faculty diversity committee, developing and maintaining a database of students' academic progress, and coordinating campus visits of prospective minority students and their families. Other specifics include overseeing the GWC summer program and maintaining relationships with local high schools and colleges as a part of recruitment efforts.

Joshua's job description is vague and gives broad examples of how he can serve as the college's liaison for diversity. His responsibilities are primarily focused on the recruitment and retention of students of color, but he is also charged to work with faculty through venues such as the faculty diversity committee. Overall, the description offers a general explanation of the expectations of the MSS administrator in the College of Innovation.

Counternarrative for Joshua

When I asked Joshua for his job description he gave me both the official job description and the "real list" of the tasks that make up his daily routine. The list consisted of 50 items. He described this list as the things that are not on his job description that he does to ensure student of color success in the College of Innovation. Examples include creating

marketing materials for the college, providing emergency transportation for students and their families, submitting grants for additional funding, and training students to conduct and present scientific research at conferences. Additional examples include providing academic and social adjustment advising to students, outreach and recruitment trips to Latin America, and connecting students with private corporations for internship and scholarship opportunities.

Catchall. The “real list” is extensive but still not inclusive of all the things Joshua does in order to recruit and retain students of color. He described himself as an “ambassador” for both MU and the College of Innovation. As an ambassador, he recognized that he represented both the college and university in everything he did, regardless of whether or not he was on the clock.

I had the opportunity to observe Joshua at work both on and off the clock. As I mentioned earlier, it was very rare for me to find Joshua alone in his office. It was not unusual to find students “hanging out” in his office in between classes. In addition, I would often run into Joshua at lunch either on campus or in town and he would often be in the company of some of his students. I also had the opportunity to observe how available Joshua made himself to students by the number of calls and text messages he received from some students. I specifically recall one day when I met with him and he was receiving several calls and text messages from some of the student leaders with whom he worked. They had many questions for him regarding the student organization fair that was going on that day. Joshua seemed to pop up all over campus supporting student events.

The students I interviewed also testified that Joshua was accessible and they felt he was committed to their success. Most of the students with whom I spoke had met Joshua at

an event on campus. Ingrid, Fernando, and Heather all met Joshua at a Puerto Rican Student Association (PRSA) meeting. Despite being students in the College of Innovation, their first point of contact with Joshua was while he was working in his role as student organization advisor. Ingrid stated, “I didn’t know Joshua was the MSS administrator when I first met him. I just knew he was the advisor for the PRSA.” Tito stated, “I can’t remember exactly where I first met Joshua, but I know it was at a multicultural event. He’s really involved you know, in like getting all the multicultural students together.”

Students also described Joshua’s role as providing academic and social support. Several of the students offered examples of how Joshua had been a sounding board for them when they encountered challenges at MU and beyond. Tito commented, “I was having a really hard time and he told me about the counseling services and that helped.” Heather shared, “I ask him for advice on anything. You know friends, school, money.” She went on to say, “Sometimes if I am having a bad day, I’ll stop by the office and just have some candy and be like ‘hey..what’s going on?’ It’s just you know, you can just stop by whenever so that’s good. We all visit him.” Heather and Fernando shared that they met each other and other friends as a result of Joshua’s work and his efforts to create a welcoming environment in his office.

Students saw Joshua as a source of information about almost everything. Heather recounted, “He emails us everything about scholarships and internships. I’ve gotten so many random emails from him. He keeps us informed with whatever he hears about.” Heather also shared, “He’s a mini career services, a mini study abroad, and a mini financial aid, a mini student services, a mini everything. Even a mini counseling center. It’s because he knows so much about everything.” Students regarded Joshua as an expert because of his own

experiences as a former student at MU. My series of questions and answers with Fernando really highlighted how students valued Joshua's ability to understand them because of his own experiences.

Jessica: "Who do you go to for advice when you need help with classes?"

Fernando: "I go to both my advisor and Joshua to double check I am on the right track with my classes."

Jessica: "Why do you go to both?"

Fernando: "Because I think Joshua knows a lot about classes. You know he has been here a long time. So I guess he knows a lot, so I ask him for advice. He has been here so long and he came here as a student, so I guess he knows what we are going through."

The quotes from students support that Joshua served as a catchall for them in regards to support, whether it was academic or social. For many of the students I interviewed, Joshua was the sole administrative point of contact for them at MU.

Joshua was not only a catchall for the students, but also for the College of Innovation. Frank acknowledged that Joshua's job covered a wide variety of situations. Frank described Joshua as a catchall "because he never knows what he is going to face on a day-to-day basis." Joshua recognized that he served as a resource across campus for events or needs related to students of color. He recognized that he was the college's diversity expert. Joshua stated, "It's like you are the only minority in the classroom and everyone asks you all the questions about minorities." He went on to share how the marketing department for the College of Innovation will often consult with him as they create new marketing publications. Joshua stated, "The marketing department will be like, 'hey Joshua, we need to do some marketing

thing. Can you come and check these students? Can you find me pictures of minority students?” He also shared that the alumni and foundation offices for the college will also call on him when they are putting together events focused on minority students. Career services asked him to coordinate a minority student breakfast reception with employers during the college’s annual career fair. He recognized that as a MSS administrator he needed to be aware of all the services offered by different departments because these positions are expected to serve as catchalls. Joshua explained,

You need to know all these things. You see career services, you see the foundation, you see the admissions office. Everything around me and I have to learn a little about everything but that was never included in my job description. These are unwritten rules about my job.

Joshua was clearly aware that his actual job duties extended beyond the written duties, but he was motivated to keep doing the work because he was committed to student of color success. The difficult task was getting other administrators within his college and at MU to understand the realities of the unwritten job description.

What do I do about racism? As I spent time with Joshua over the time of the data collection process, we engaged in several conversations about racism and institutional practices of racism. Part of our discussion was led by my interview protocol, but other conversations were a result of his personal encounters with racism as the MSS administrator. In addition, we talked about how to negotiate the tension between knowing that racism existed at MU and having to recruit students of color to MU as a part of his job duties. Not only did Joshua recount his own previous experiences with racism, but I was also able to

witness one particular instance where he had to negotiate the racial climate within the College of Innovation.

During our first interview, Joshua recounted the tense relationship he had with the student services staff in the College of Innovation. His office was located within the student services suite. Joshua found that his practices of student support were often in conflict with the professional practices and expectations of his white colleagues in student services. Due to his involvement and responsibilities campus wide, Joshua did not have traditional office hours. The administrative assistant for student services often found it challenging to understand Joshua's working hours and style. She requested access to his calendar because she felt that it was important for her to know as students stopped by to see him. She was not responsible for working with Joshua, but still wanted access to his calendar. Joshua stated,

I don't follow the 8-5 schedule so they might think this guy is just having fun coming to the office late, but they don't see the other side of things. Sometimes I meet with students at the library, in their homes, or in the cafeteria. This makes me have to be more careful with the privacy because I am not in a trusting environment.

The administrative assistant was also one of the primary sources of racial hostility experienced by Joshua. Joshua recounted,

The secretary comes and closes the door to my office because we are talking in Spanish. She just comes and slams the door shut! She will also make comments about all the students hanging out in my office and say, "Wow. You have a community center in there."

These are only a few examples of the stories Joshua shared about how he experienced a hostile work environment.

I also had the unexpected opportunity to witness first-hand how Joshua had to negotiate inhospitable encounters with his colleagues in the college. The College of Innovation was undergoing a year-long remodeling project that required Joshua and the other members of the student services team to move to a temporary location. The temporary location was smaller and run down. The director of student services assigned all the staff, to include Joshua, temporary office spaces. Without his consultation, Joshua was placed in the smallest office of the new suite in a space that was formerly used as an office kitchen. The space had a back door that was not secured and opened up to one of the building's stairwells. The temporary space could not accommodate Joshua's office set up that was critical to creating a supportive and welcoming environment to students of color and their families. Ironically, this incident happened after Joshua and I had a formal interview where we discussed issues of equity. When I saw Joshua the following day he said to me, "Jessica. Remember we talked about equity yesterday? Well let me tell you about equity today. Let me show you equity." He went on to say, "Jessica, I kind of feel like I was put in the back of the bus! They are putting minorities in the back of the bus, Jessica. I cannot welcome students and their families in this kind of space." After going back and forth between his supervisor, Frank, and the director of the student services office, Joshua was assigned to a private and larger space that was located in a different office suite and removed from the student services staff.

These incidents were examples of how Joshua had to negotiate his own encounters with racism. He recognized that these experiences existed in tension with his obligation to recruit students of color to attend the same environment where he himself encountered racism. He used various strategies to negotiate the tensions such as assuming a more

“positive spin” about being a student of color at a PWI. As he stated, “I try to challenge them to succeed as students of color at a PWI. I tell them we need them here and that they can contribute to the diversity here.” Joshua also went on to share, “Diversity is sometimes the last thing I talk about when meeting with prospective students of color.” He will also use Dr. Carver as a source of inspiration for students of color. Joshua recognizes that the college has not given him the adequate tools to contend with the challenges of recruiting students of color to MU, so he often uses the tools he has witnessed others use such as highlighting the resources available at MU, the accomplishments of alumni of color, and success stories of current students. Overall, Joshua’s day-to-day reality involved negotiating his own encounters with racism and making sense of his job duty to recruit students of color to a campus racial climate that was not necessarily welcoming. The negotiations of these tensions are not listed nor recognized as parts of his official job descriptions, but they are very real for him in his work as a MSS administrator.

Enacting agency. My time with Joshua not only highlighted the challenges he encountered as a MSS administrator, but also how he enacted his own agency within the barriers placed on him by policies, practices, and unwritten rules. Joshua worked around barriers in order to ensure that he was providing students of color with the appropriate supports and resources to contribute to their successes. Joshua created a counterspace within the boundaries of his office, reframed retention, and lived by the policy of asking for forgiveness later.

Joshua believed that creating a welcoming space on campus was an important aspect of retention. He used his office space to build a gratifying and encouraging space in the College of Innovation. As described earlier, Joshua intentionally designed and decorated his

office so that students could lounge, do school work, eat, and see art on the walls that represented their racial/ethnic identities. In addition, he used his office as a safe space where Spanish-speaking students could speak their native language without feeling awkward or isolated. It was also a space where students were able to build their own peer network. As Fernando and Vanessa stated, they met each other there and also met most of their other friends by hanging out in Joshua's office. By creating a safe haven in his office, he is countering dominant ways of understanding what a workspace should look like and how it should be used. He creates this counterspace because he knows that students experience racism and isolation at MU and he wants his office to be a welcoming space for them on campus.

Joshua's savvy helped him find creative ways to work within the boundaries of policies at MU. There were several times throughout my data collection where I witnessed Joshua frame programs, trips, and events as retention efforts. There was one particular trip he organized to hear a speaker in a town 45 minutes away that required coordinating transportation. In order to pay for the transportation for students who were interested in attending the event, he framed the trip as a retention focused event for purposes of the paperwork required to justify the expense. Throughout the summer and into the fall, I would often hear Joshua referring to other events or programs as "retention" initiatives. During our final interview I shared with him that I noticed his use of the word "retention" to define and frame various events. He chuckled in response and acknowledged that he was strategic about how he used the word retention to justify his budget expenses.

Joshua's use of agency extended to his decision to continue to pursue grant funding even though he was told not to do so. During our final meeting, I shared with him that I

noticed how he practiced various sources of agency in his work and asked him if there were any other examples he wanted to share with me. He proceeded to tell me about how he had just received notice that he was awarded a \$5,000 grant to support the College of Innovation's minority student organization. Joshua stated,

I wish I had more support for getting grants, but I did get a grant for the student organization. I had to go under the radar and just share the good news once I got it. Everyone was like, 'Wow! How did you get that?' That was something that no one asked me to do, but I just did it. I wish I could do more. There is so much money out there.

In this quote, it is clear that Joshua is frustrated by the lack of support he receives for his interest in pursuing grant funding. Despite the lack of support he still looks for opportunities that can support him in his work. He breaks the rules and asks for forgiveness later.

Summary of counternarrative. Although Joshua recognized that his official job description did not account for his actual day-to-day lived experiences as a MSS administrator, his unofficial list of 50 items still did not paint a full picture of his work responsibilities. Both documents, official and unofficial, did not include how Joshua had to negotiate the policies, practices, and unwritten rules of multiple organizations. Institutional and state policies regarding retention pushed him to creatively define and redefine retention in order to provide more support for students of color. He also had to negotiate the unwritten rules of what it means to be an administrator at a PWI and have a professional workspace. He faced incidents of racism as a result of the ways he challenged the dominant ways of framing work and professionalism. Finally, Joshua encountered the unwritten expectations of being a MSS administrator. As the MSS administrator he was the catchall

regarding diversity. His expertise had to extend beyond supporting students of color by working with them individually. He also had to have awareness and skills in marketing, fundraising, counseling, and academic advising to only name a few. As already stated, his lived reality extended far beyond the documents that unsuccessfully described his job duties.

Joshua's Day-to-day Experiences

In the previous section I began to focus on how the various social relations and organizations inform the unwritten rules, policies, and practices that together mediate Joshua's day-to-day lived work experiences. In this section I will synthesize how the various forces contribute to shaping his work experiences. Some of the examples may appear to repetitive, but this section focuses specifically on Joshua's work whereas other sections of this chapter incorporated the experiences of other administrators at MU.

Unwritten Rules

For the purpose of this study, I defined unwritten rules as the codes of conduct that are not formally written down nor formalized, but are understood. Furthermore, I stated that unwritten rules are important to understand because they often inform practice. The unwritten rules were particularly important in this study, as I wanted to understand Joshua's work as a MSS administrator. Joshua and I engaged in several discussions about unwritten rules. Although he was unfamiliar with the concept when I first introduced him to it, it only took me sharing one example for him to completely connect with the new concept. Joshua stated, "So unwritten rules, my god. There are so many that I don't even see them." Once he understood, he shared several examples with me of how he had to negotiate around the unwritten rules and how they influenced his work in the College of Innovation.

The first set of examples he shared with me was about fitting into a standard of professionalism as he transitioned to his position as an administrator. He recognized that no one explicitly told him what it would mean to be a MSS administrator outside of the expectations to support students of color, but he picked up on cues of what was both acceptable and unacceptable. One of the first examples he shared with me was how he received cues by observing faculty of color in his college. He heard from faculty of color that when they came back from conferences they often had to go back and forth with the financial manager to explain their expenses in greater detail than their white counterparts. Joshua explained, “Faculty of color have their receipts for travel scrutinized more than those of their white colleagues.” He went on to state, “I learned that I have to go the extra mile because my work deals with minorities. For example, with any purchases I make with department funds, I have to provide a very detailed explanation about what the activity was, how it relates to either recruitment or retention, and list all that attended.” Joshua understood the unwritten rule that as a minority working with students of color, his job duties and activities were susceptible to extra scrutiny.

Joshua also became aware of unwritten rules because his own practices contrasted with the procedures used by his colleagues. The use of his office space and time stood out to the student services staff in the college because they were different. Joshua had an open door policy and did not require that students make appointments to see him. He spoke Spanish openly with students in his office and would often meet up with students in the evenings and off campus. Joshua shared, “Working with minorities and diversity, it’s a totally different time clock than working with white students.” Joshua recognized that his different practices caused tensions with his co-workers in the suite and that they perceived him as having fun

and behaving unprofessionally. He acknowledged that he was breaking an unwritten rule about what was considered “appropriate” work behavior.

Other unwritten rules that affected his work that were previously mentioned in the findings were the boundaries placed on administrators regarding what they could and could not do in their roles, such as applying for grants. In addition, as the person charged with recruitment of students of color, he followed the unwritten rule that he had to present the college and MU as a welcoming campus climate. He did so by talking about diversity last and challenging prospective students of color to contribute to MU’s diversity. As Joshua mentioned, the powerful part about these unwritten rules is the fact that are unwritten. They are hard to recognize, but there are many that shape his work.

Policies

There were two major policies at play during the time I collected data. The Resource Management Model (RMM) and the state governing board’s strategic plan were the primary policies representing the interests of the state and Midwestern University. Although Joshua was protected from budget cuts and the College of Innovation was planning to implement new initiatives, such as the Assistant Dean position, he was still indirectly affected by the budget cuts. The RMM and budget cuts were the impetus behind the creation of the cross-unit planning report. The cross-unit planning report had a large affect on Joshua’s work because he and the College of Innovation had to negotiate pressures to justify and stand behind their diversity efforts. There were strong responses from college representatives to the cross-unit report because of the fear that Joshua’s work as a MSS administrator would be collapsed into the work of MSA, thus removing Joshua from the College of Innovation.

Although Joshua did recognize that the cross-unit report was motivated by budget cuts, he

focused his frustration with the process on MSA instead of understanding it as an institutional policy. Instead of blaming MSA for the cross-unit report, Joshua's feelings towards the review process may have changed if he had recognized that the directive for the review process was given by the Provost's office.

Similarly, Joshua's connection to the state governing board's strategic plan was not evident at first. His understanding was that the College of Innovation had always been committed to the recruitment and retention of students of color. Although there is evidence to support that claim, there is also evidence to support that the college had an additional incentive to support Joshua's work as a MSS administrator because of the new benchmarks given by the state governing board. The benchmarks were given to the individual state institutions and were then passed down as mandates to each individual college. Joshua understood that retention was a driving force behind his job when he engaged in his own agency to expand the definitions of retention. He knew that programs framed as retention focused would receive the most support. In addition, the college was also motivated to focus on recruitment and retention because its revenue now depended on student enrollment. Overall Joshua was connected to these two policies in ways that were both obvious and elusive to him in his role as a MSS administrator.

Practices

Practices are actions or processes of doing something. In this study, there were practices of diversity within MU and the College of Innovation that informed Joshua's day-to-day experiences as a MSS administrator. Practices of institutional ambivalence, structural reorganizations, and allegiance to academic units all mediated how Joshua was able to advocate for and support students of color.

The practices of institutional ambivalence towards race, such as lacking a coordinating entity for diversity and defining diversity broadly, affected Joshua's work in multiple ways. It was clear that no one at MU "owned" diversity. All of the units charged with diversity functioned in their own silos and did not have a clear understanding of how each contributed to a university vision for diversity. Several administrators with whom I spoke, including Sophie, Frank, Norma, and Lorena, acknowledged that MU did not have a strategic or institutionalized definition and vision for diversity. Without a coordinated effort, there was not a clear sense of direction from the institution. Some units, such as MSA, took it upon themselves to create their own definitions and missions regarding diversity. Joshua understood that his role was to focus on recruitment and retention of students of color, but he also acknowledged that diversity was not formally defined by the College of Innovation. The definition of diversity for the college was implied to consist of recruitment and retention, but racial equity was not documented as part of the vision or mission for the college. It comes as no surprise that some units do not have clear and documented definitions of diversity or racial equity, as the institution as a whole is constantly redefining its own understanding of diversity. Although it is important to recognize the value of revisiting practices, such as defining diversity, it is also important to not allow the constant process of revision to prevent the institution from developing a clear and strong statement regarding its value of equity and diversity. As a result of having no clear definition of diversity, Joshua had no measure to hold him, the college, or the institution accountable with regard to racial equity.

In addition to practices of institutional ambivalence, MU and the College of Innovation engaged in practices that are typical of a decentralized organization. As previously mentioned, each unit charged with diversity functioned independently. The

colleges at MU also function autonomously and these practices contribute to a lack of collaboration and create tensions among units. The strong sense of allegiances to individual units affected Joshua's day-to-day work as he experienced tensions between the expectations placed on him from the college and from MSA. Although the connection to MSA would appear to be natural given that both are charged with supporting students of color, the loosely structured nature of the university, coupled with budgetary constraints and pressures, contributed to strained relationships. As such, Joshua's ability to use resources available in other units was limited and thus affected his work as a MSS administrator.

Invisible Soldier of Racial Equity

By the time I finished collecting data, there was little doubt in my mind that Joshua, as an individual, was an advocate for racial equity. In this study, I defined racial equity as equitable outcomes for students of color in higher education that include access, retention, and graduation. Racial equity also encompasses the social transformation of predominantly white institutions, where equity for all students is an integral part of the institution. Despite Joshua's limited power to change MU, his day-to-day work behaviors centered on creating opportunities to ensure equitable outcomes for students of color. In addition, although the purpose of this study was to examine his work separate from him as a person, it was hard to separate his passion for students from his work. He believed strongly in his work and this value led him to go "above and beyond" the call of duty. Despite his unwavering commitment, there were social relations and organizations, along with policies, practices, and unwritten rules, which mediated his work for racial equity. In addition, although his title made his affiliation with advocacy for students of color visible, most of his work to achieve

racial equity went unrecognized and existed beyond the scope of the designated duties linked with the position.

Students' quotes served as testaments to his work and contributions to racial equity. Heather stated,

I have encountered racism on campus many, many, many times. I mainly talk about it with Joshua and my roommates. Joshua usually just had really good advice on how to handle these situations and he's been here for so long that he knows how to handle that kind of situation. He'll also just say something to encourage you and make you keep going and just forget the bad experience.

When I asked students what would happen if there was no MSS administrator, they had strong reactions and made statements such as, "God! I don't know. Get him back!" Tito said, "Wow! I don't want to imagine that. Students would not be aware of anything like scholarships and they wouldn't have anywhere to go." Tito knew first-hand what it was like not to be connected to a MSS administrator because he did not know Joshua during his first two years in school. He explained, "If I would have had the help from Joshua, I bet I would have managed my time better. I would have also been more active in activities that would have helped me become a better person or help me in my professional and future plans." The students' quotes exemplify how instrumental Joshua's role as a MSS administrator has been in their retention and success. It is clear that they recognize that their experiences would have been very different at MU if they had not become connected to Joshua.

Joshua's ability to serve as an advocate for racial equity was also limited by his own practices. Joshua admitted that he often experienced tension between what his job required of him in terms of recruitment and retention, and his personal experiences and beliefs about the

campus racial climate at MU. He knew first hand and through stories he heard from students that he worked with, that MU was not a welcoming environment for people of color. He personally experienced instances where faculty questioned his merit while he was a student at MU and he hears how students of color currently encounter similar instances where faculty and peers challenge the presence of students of color at MU. Despite his experiences, Joshua continues to recruit students of color to MU. He relies on many of the same tools, such as the use of Dr. Carver's image and legacy to reify notions of meritocracy and colorblindness in his recruitment practices. Joshua acknowledges the tensions he experiences, but he is unable to counter the master narratives in his recruitment strategies.

Joshua also shared with me that he gained a new perspective for how his position fit within the broader institution. During our final meeting where we processed the preliminary findings together, I asked Joshua if he learned anything from the process of participating in the research study. Joshua responded by saying, "I understand now why things happen the way they do and it's something I can see now. Other can't see the racism, but I guess now we have to tell them." He went on to share the frustrations he sometimes encounters at work:

Sometimes it's very frustrating for me as a MSS administrator. I would like that when a student steps into my office and he or she has a need that I could help them. I want to help that student because I've been there. I've been without books, I've been without a home, I've been without utilities, and I wish I had the money to help the students. Luckily this semester I didn't have a single student come in that I had to tell I couldn't help them.

For Joshua, the personal is the professional and that motivates him to continue to work long hours, work weekends, and field many calls and emails in order to support students of color at MU in their pursuit of success.

Summary

This chapter highlighted the social relations and organizations that mediated Joshua's work as a MSS administer in the College of Innovation. The organizations in this study were Midwestern State, Midwestern University, and the College of Innovation. Within each of these ruling relations there were policies, unwritten rules, and practices that shaped Joshua's daily work experiences. Through the use of maps, I explained how each organization was interconnected to the others and how they intersected to mediate multicultural student services in the College of Innovation. In addition, I used master and counternarrative to describe the impact of race and racism on the ruling relations that mediated Joshua's lived work experiences in order to provide a complete account of the work of MSS administrators at a PWI. In conclusion, I synthesized how the various social relations, organizations, policies, practices, and unwritten rules influenced Joshua's day-to-day work experiences.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

“Being a part of this research has opened my eyes to things I wasn’t even thinking about. Now I have a new shield of protection because I understand why things happen the way they do and it’s something I can see now” (Joshua, personal communication, December 16, 2010).

The purpose of this study was to examine the social relations and organizations along with the policies, unwritten rules, and practices that mediate the work of a MSS administrator at a predominantly white institution. Through the use of institutional ethnography and critical race theory, I investigated how ruling relations and racism intertwined to shape the day-to-day work experiences of administrators charged with supporting student of color success. Drawing on the methodological tools of institutional ethnography, I mapped out the ways that the social and ruling relations mediated the work of the MSS administrator. Furthermore, the maps were depicted to showcase how the master and counternarratives of each organization’s policies, practices, and unwritten rules influenced the lived work experiences of a MSS administrator.

In this chapter I present a discussion of the findings that emerged from the study. First I provide a summary of the findings as they relate to the research questions. Second, I will discuss how the narratives of each organization are illustrative of several of the tenets and concepts that are integral to critical race theory. In particular, the discussion will tie the narratives to the concepts of colorblindness, interest convergence, and racial realism. Finally, I will offer implications for both research and practice and conclude with a few personal reflections.

Summary of Findings

The following summary is organized to explicitly connect the findings to the research questions that framed this study.

1. What are the social relations and organizations that shape the work of a MSS administrator at Midwestern University?

The organizations that emerged in this study were Midwestern state, Midwestern University, the College of Innovation, and Joshua, the MSS administrator in the College of Innovation. The master and counternarratives in each organization emerged as the social relations that mediated Joshua's day-to-day work experiences. Both types of narratives were the invisible forces that shaped the meaning of the social relations that directed actions and decisions surrounding the work of MSS administrators. Furthermore, each of the master and counternarratives highlighted how racism is inherent in the various organizations.

2. How do the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of Midwestern University mediate the everyday work experiences of a MSS administrator?

There were several policies, unwritten rules, and practices of the various organizations that had a significant influence on Joshua's work. Policies such as the state governing board's mandates, the RMM, and student organization policies defined and changed the Joshua's work responsibilities. Examples of practice included MU's use of institutional ambivalence regarding racial equity. MU's lack of an institutionalized vision or definition of diversity created disconnected systems of support for students of color and therefore mediated the work of MSS administrators. Finally, unwritten rules such as expectations about "professional" behavior, disguised

racist expectations that professionals and students of color assimilate to dominant ways of working, relating, and support.

3. How do MSS administrators serve as institutional agents of racial equity?

The findings in this study confirmed that Joshua, as a MSS administrator, serves as an agent of racial equity through his personal and professional commitments to contribute to increasing access, retention, and graduation rates for students of color. His long work hours, high visibility, and creation of a counterspace in his office were all practices he used to contribute to the success of students of color. Despite his unwavering commitment to racial equity, there were social relations and organizations, along with policies, practices, and unwritten rules that limited his ability to create transformational and institutional change. In spite of these limitations, Joshua enacted his own agency in order to ensure the success of students of color. In addition, although his job title made his affiliation with advocacy for students of color visible, most of his work to achieve racial equity went unrecognized and existed beyond the scope of the official job description.

The next section of this chapter makes the connections between the findings and some of concepts offered by CRT more explicit.

Overview of Findings in Relation to CRT Tenets

The use of CRT in education research provides a structure within which to understand the racial inequities that exist in education (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) and challenges claims to objectivity, race neutrality, and meritocracy (Yosso, 2006b). As previously stated, CRT served as both a theoretical and analytical framework for this study. As such, the findings from this study exemplified how the tenets and concepts stemming from CRT were

enacted by various organizations included in the study. Specifically, examples of colorblindness, interest convergence, and racial realism are found throughout the organizations and their policies, practices, and unwritten rules.

Colorblindness

Colorblindness allows for the widespread dismissal of the affects of racism. In higher education the use of colorblind ideology has allowed for the creation of race neutral policies and programs such as race neutral admissions practices. Colorblind practices are subtle and serve to help whites maintain their benefits and privileges (Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000; Forman, 2004). There are several examples of colorblind practices in this study that influence the work of the MSS administrator.

Racism is minimized in the recruitment practices used by both the College of Innovation and Joshua. The windows of the College of Innovation are decorated with images of Dr. Carver as evidence of its commitment to diversity. The use of George Washington Carver's image and the story of his experiences as the first African American graduate of MU is juxtaposed with the increases in student of color enrollment and development of targeted resources for diversity. This contrast serves to minimize the racism that affects MU and students of color today. By highlighting the ways in which MU has "progressed" over time in its commitment to diversity, the university depicts racism as a thing of the past. Furthermore, the minimization of race portrays the programs designed to support students of color as evidence that the campus racial climate is much better now than it was when George Washington Carver was a student at MU.

Joshua also negotiated the tensions he experienced between having to recruit students of color as a part of his job with his own experiences with the hostile racial climate at MU by

using colorblind recruitment strategies. He shared that he would speak of diversity last when meeting with prospective students of color. Joshua minimized the effects of race and racism both by using the term diversity instead of race and by “saving it for last.” As such, Joshua perpetuated the notion that race no longer mattered and that the campus racial climate was not an important consideration for future students or color.

Joshua’s experiences with a hostile racial work climate stemmed partially from ideologies derived from colorblindness. As Gotanda (1991) purported in his critique of the U.S. Constitution as colorblind, colorblindness consists of an assimilationist ideal that seeks homogeneity rather than diversity. Joshua encountered difficulties with his co-workers in the College of Innovation’s student services suite because he refused to assimilate to the dominant work practices. Unlike his primarily white colleagues, Joshua had an open door policy and did not require that students make appointments to see him. In addition, his work hours extended beyond the traditional eight to five and he would often leave his office to meet students in locations that were convenient for them. Furthermore, Joshua created a workspace that was designed to be a safe space for students of color. As such, his office had a couch, a student workstation, art and music representing communities of color, and more than just the English language was welcomed. Overall, Joshua experienced hostility and questioning of his work ethic by his co-workers because of their assimilationist ideals and colorblind understandings of what is required when working with students of color.

Institutional practices of colorblindness existed beyond the boundaries of the College of Innovation. The repercussions of the institution’s use of colorblind mechanisms of evaluation were evident in both the reactions and responses to the cross-unit report. The units charged with diversity-related programs focused on race and gender, were evaluated under a

single model of evaluation. The data collection and analysis process for all units under this umbrella were the same and no consideration was given to the unique histories, purposes, structures, and constituencies served by each of the units. The various units were treated as an essentialized group and their differences were ignored and denied. As such, most of the units, including the College of Innovation, responded with protests that their contexts and particular needs were not taken into consideration. By providing incomplete and colorblind reports, the various units were weary of possible repercussions, such as being collapsed into one office that would serve the needs of all students under one overarching model.

Finally, as the institution continued to decorate its windows with new definitions of diversity, colorblind definitions of diversity began to move away from quantifiable and clearly defined notions of racial equity to broader and more philosophical notions of inclusion. As recognized by Sophie, the Associate Provost for Personnel and CDO, the newly proposed definition of diversity focused more on tolerance than on attempting to even name or quantify who fit under the umbrella of diversity. Other administrators expressed similar sentiments as they referred to a recent focus on diversity of thought as an important component of new understandings of diversity. Maria warned that institutions need to be careful of how the term diversity is used because it loses its sense of power and purpose when it begins to “simply mean difference.”

Together, these various practices of colorblindness continue to deny the reality of race and racism. As a result, the status quo is maintained and social transformation is nearly impossible. Furthermore, units charged with protecting the interests of diversity run the risk of becoming victims of colorblind practices that do not recognize the intricacies of their work

and instead value efficiency over cultural relevancy. As evidenced through several examples, the repercussions of colorblind practices are felt on both an individual and systemic level.

Interest Convergence

Interests converge to create changes in policies or practices when the benefits to people of color coincide with the interests of whites (D. Bell, 2005; Morfin, et al., 2006). Examples of interest convergence emerged throughout the data particularly regarding policies and practices of the state, institution, and college. The various organizations protected the interests of people of color when the interests of students of color converged with the needs of the white population.

The state governing board also decorated its windows with newly developed mandates focusing on student of color success. The state governing board's focus on increasing the graduation rates of students of color in the next five years is noble at first glance, but after examining it with a CRT lens, it becomes evident that other interests are also being served by these new retention benchmarks. CRT begs me, as the researcher, to ask what about student of color graduation rates makes it an important issue for Midwestern State at this particular point in time. The answers can be found once we begin to understand the demographic shifts and economic challenges taking place in Midwestern State. As previously mentioned, the state faces an increasingly aging population, along with a young population that is leaving their home state at higher rates. These two demographic changes, as well as a primarily agriculture based economy, simultaneously hinder the state's potential for economic growth. By expanding its focus on retaining and graduating students of color, the state stands to benefit from a younger, diverse, and highly trained work force that can contribute to the strengthening and diversification of its economy.

The institution and the College of Innovation also have a lot to gain by protecting the roles of MSS administrators. As both the state and college must now fulfill the mandates placed on them by the state, MSS administrators become key members of the staff, as their jobs focus on retaining students of color. Furthermore, as colleges are now responsible for generating their own revenue that relies heavily on student enrollment, staff members who focus on increasing and maintaining student enrollment numbers are important contributors to the college's livelihood. In addition, both the college and the institution have a vested interest in upholding the work of MSS administrators because they are the scapegoats for anything that goes wrong for students of color. MSS administrators serve as the first points of contact and are often used as experts to "deal" with any campus racial climate issues experienced by students of color. As Joshua recognized, "We are the bodyguards for the institution when it comes to diversity." The bodyguards (MSS administrators) protect the colleges and MU from accusations of not responding to the needs of communities of color. The students of color are appeased by the organizations through the maintenance of MSS administrator positions.

Racial Realism

Racial realism challenges the notion of racial equity because it is important to recognize that race and racism are endemic and engrained in all segments of society (Bell, 1992; D. Bell, 2005a). As previously discussed in the review of CRT in chapter two, Bell (1992) presented four points to explain the concept of racial realism. The four points are: 1) historical point of view; 2) economic evidence; 3) salvation through struggle; and 4) imperatives implicit in racial realism. The findings of this study supported Bell's points of historical point of view and economic evidence.

Bell's (1992) point regarding historical point of view argues that American history is filled with instances of legal progress and regression as related to the rights of people of color. Bell's recognition of the impact of history is tied to one of the main tenets of CRT that recognizes that there are many histories of people of color that are erased, through the practice of ahistoricism, from dominant narratives regarding race and racism in America. CRT challenges ahistoricism by accounting for contextual and historical factors (Crenshaw, et al., 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Dixson & Rousseau, 2006b). Practices of ahistoricism became visible as I examined the College of Innovation and MU. For example, the history of the emergence and development of MSA and MSS services is neither readily available nor well documented. Most of the history I was able to gather was anecdotal and only available from individuals who have a long history at MU. The pieces of history of MSA and MSS that I was able to put together were critical in my own understanding of how the past structures and changes informed and shaped the current status of the two primary entities charged with racial equity. For example, without speaking to Marcos and Hector, I would have never discovered that the MSA office was once housed in the primary administrative building at MU where the other upper level administrators have offices. Over time, the office was relocated both organizationally and physically to its new home in student services. This important, but not readily available, piece of institutional history exemplifies how over time MSA has been both physically and organizationally depoliticized.

Practices of ahistoricism are also evident in the College of Innovation's use of George Washington Carver's story and images. As previously stated, Dr. Carver's image and story are used to portray the college's long-standing commitment to diversity. As mentioned by Frank, Dr. Carver's accomplishments and affiliation with the college are points of pride that

are mentioned at almost every speech given at the college and throughout various other programs including the summer internship program for students of color. Students and others are told that although Dr. Carver encountered a “few initial challenges,” he quickly adjusted and over time became a popular and sought out student. In addition, students are motivated to live up to the legacy of Dr. Carver by becoming entrepreneurs and working hard to improve the lives of others. What is not shared are specific challenges Dr. Carver encountered as not only the sole African American student on campus, but also the only person of color on the campus of MU in 1891. By eliminating the racialized experiences of Dr. Carver, the institution, through its publications, and the college, through its rhetoric, remove racism from the history of the institution. The institution and college exert power by erasing segments of MU’s history that dismantle the historical foundations of institutional racism at MU, thus disabling future generations from understanding the historical and contextual factors that affect the current status of racism at MU.

Bell’s (1992) second point regarding economic evidence argues that examining socioeconomic status by race provides indicators of power in our society. Bell’s point of economic evidence is closely tied to Harris’ (1993) thesis of understanding whiteness as property. Property is often defined as anything to which man can attach value and have right over such as land and other possessions (Madison as cited in Harris, 1993). Harris contended that racial identity and property are interrelated concepts as understandings of property can also be applied to whiteness. Harris argued that whiteness has historically been afforded legal protections in ways similar to property because being white means that access was granted to social, political, and legal benefits. The protection of whiteness has made it a powerful resource that is protected by the law, as is property. As part of her thesis, Harris introduced

four aspects of whiteness as property that include: 1) rights of disposition; 2) rights to use and enjoyment; 3) reputation and status property; and 4) absolute right to exclude. Examples of reputation and status property as well as the absolute right to exclude appeared in the data. Reputation and status property ensures that whites can assume a trustworthy and well-intentioned reputation by simply demonstrating their whiteness. For example, being called white is considered a compliment whereas being called Black is often taken as an insult because of the reputation associated with being Black. The absolute right to exclude allows whites to exclude others and limit their access to social, political, and legal benefits (Decuir-Gunby, 2006; Harris, 1993).

I argue that many of the policies, practices, and unwritten rules that emerged in this study aligned with Harris' (1993) thesis of whiteness as property. Practices such as privileging academic affairs over student affairs and unwritten rules such as expectations for professional behavior provide evidence of how MU protects its whiteness by excluding people and practices linked to people of color from power and privilege. In the contexts of MU and this study, whiteness was represented by people or administrative units that were privileged such as faculty, academic affairs, and primarily white student organizations to name a few. The following are examples of how the data in this study supported some of Harris' aspects of whiteness as property to include the right to reputation and status and the right to exclude.

As stated by Harris (1993), the right to reputation and status property ensures that whites can assume a trustworthy and well-intentioned reputation by simply demonstrating their whiteness. In this study, various components of MU, such as academic affairs, reaped the benefits of the right to reputation. Members of the academic affairs community are

educators and scholars and valued as integral contributors to the well being of the institution. Furthermore, those associated with academic affairs, including faculty, are given rights and privileges because of their reputations, such as being treated as fundamental members of the university. Academic affairs, unlike student affairs, is never seen as an added on segment of the university organization. Along with this reputation comes a sense of security that is not shared by colleagues in student affairs who often fear the repercussions of budget cuts differently from those in academic affairs. Several of the MSS administrators in the colleges affirmed that the student affairs units experienced pressures from the state and institution differently than those in academic affairs.

The absolute right to exclude allows whites to exclude and limit the access to social, political, and legal benefits to non-whites (Decuir-Gunby, 2006; Harris, 1993). Instances where MU practiced its right to exclude interests of people of color emerged in the data. For example, the interests of students of color were not represented in the same fashion in the provost's diversity committee, a policy-generating committee, as they were in the student services committee, which functioned more as an advisory board to the MSA office. The power differentials, represented by the titles of the committee members, as well as the different racial/ethnic demographics of each committee, provided evidence of how the institution denied social and political access to people of color at MU.

Multicultural student organizations were also excluded, through the use of policy, from access to financial, social, and political benefits given to others. The culturally incongruent policies excluded multicultural student organizations from participating in the equitable institutional benefits of being a registered student organization. The policy that affected multicultural student organizations the most was the policy that funding be

distributed based on membership versus potential for campus-wide influence. By excluding these particular student organizations, students of color were once again denied access to the benefits of whiteness as property.

More extreme examples of the absolute right to exclude included the use of physical space as a designator of the value of people of color. For example, the MSA was formerly located in the administrative building on campus. As the MSA office was reorganized, it was removed and excluded from access to the benefits of being located symbolically in the “center” of the campus. The institution enacted its power to exclude MSA from the central mission of the university not only organizationally, but also structurally. More current examples of the use of space to exclude the interests of people of color include the instance where Joshua was put in an unworkable workspace during the renovations in his building. Joshua and his work focused on students of color were placed in a hidden and unwelcome corner of the temporary suite. As Joshua stated, he was “put in the back of the bus with all the other minorities.” His co-workers engaged their whiteness as property and the right to physically exclude him and his work interests from access to any benefits associated with physical space. Fortunately, Joshua was able to find a more appropriate temporary workspace.

Overall, evidence to support the use of colorblindness, interest convergence, ahistoricism, and racial realism was found throughout the data. As such, the evidence affirms that MU is symptomatic of American higher education, as it exists within a meritocratic and inherently racist system. The organizations and their policies, practices, and unwritten rules also exist within a racist system and thus limit the opportunities for racial equity.

Overview of Findings in Relation to MSS Literature

The findings from this study expand the understanding of the work of MSS administrators by examining how organizations, social and ruling relations, along with policies, unwritten rules, and practices all mediate the work that is done to support students of color. Most of the previous research has focused on access, retention, and multicultural education more broadly, but little research has focused on the ways the lived experiences of MSS administrators are connected to policies, practices, and unwritten rules. Furthermore, although there are many commentaries or opinion pieces written about the tensions experienced by MSS administrators due to budgetary constraints and politically conservative climates, no empirical research has focused on how the multiple systems of several organizations, such as state and institutional policies, shape the day-to-day work of MSS administrators. This study contributes to the literature by providing empirical findings that begin to examine how these systems intersect to shape the daily work experiences of individuals charged by institutions of higher education to advocate for student of color success. This study also confirmed some of the theoretical arguments made regarding the current status and future of minority student services. In the following discussion, I examine how the arguments by several scholars and practitioners were corroborated by the data from this study.

Scholars such as Brayboy (2003), Hu-DeHart (2000), and Iverson (2007) contended that universities use diversity initiatives, such as diversity policies, multicultural student services, and culture centers, as window dressings to decorate their institutions with commitments to diversity that are often not integral to the missions and visions of the institutions. MU decorated its windows with similar strategies, such as new definitions of

diversity, a new multicultural center, and the creation of an institutional Chief Diversity Officer. Although the various diversity initiatives appear to be strong statements of institutional commitment to equity, the data from this study show that the various strategies lack long-term planning and in-depth analysis. Furthermore, there are no institutionally developed vision and mission for racial equity that guide the purpose of diversity-related schemes. Brayboy also asserted that the notion of implementing diversity at PWIs is problematic because it oversimplifies the rather complex subjects of diversity and racial equity. As such, without institutional commitments to diversity that go beyond dressing the windows of the institution, diversity efforts will never be more than afterthoughts and add-ons.

Although diversity initiatives continue to exist at MU, the history of multicultural student services at the institution sheds light on the depoliticization of such services over time. As the MSA office and its affiliates, including the MSS administrators, were removed from directly reporting to upper level administrators such as the Vice President for Student Affairs, the restructuring of MSA's reporting line signified a removal of political power. The reason given for the removal of the political power was that MSA needed to focus more on student services and less on the institutional politics surrounding diversity. I would argue that advocating for racial equity at all levels of the institution is a form of student support. Through the institutional physical and organizational restructuring of MSA, MSS administrators were placed in positions where they were responsible for managing diversity through recruitment and retention focused efforts. As stated by Hu-DeHart (2000), "They [higher education administrators] have moved it [diversity] away from its original liberatory

goals toward a corporate model for “managing diversity,” under which diversity becomes merely a recognition of differences” (p. 1).

In addition to confirming a lack of institutional commitment that requires organizational change, this study affirmed that in times of budgetary crisis, the work of MSS undergoes scrutiny that endangers its viability at PWIs. Although MSS administrators were protected in the recent budget cuts, the cross-unit planning report had underlying messages that questioned whether or not the diversity related programs and supports were either expendable or a key component of the institution’s core functions. As Gose (2009) and Kezar (2008) argued, budget constraints can cause institutions to question how integral MSS and racial equity initiatives are to the core functions of the university.

Overall, this study confirmed that MSS exist tentatively within PWIs as they are susceptible to scrutiny during fiscally challenging times and are treated as accessories to the institution rather than as fundamental components of the universities’ missions and purposes. In chapter one, I indicated that budget constraints at Temple University and the University of Maryland resulted in the elimination of funding and administrative positions in the area of diversity (de Vise, 2009; Hernandez, 2009a, 2009b). Although MU did not eliminate MSS positions during the budget cuts, the scrutiny the MSS positions underwent during the cross unit report resulted in the restructuring of job duties. Some MSS administrators at MU were expected to expand their services to all students regardless of race and therefore their focus on racial equity was limited by their new job duties. As such, it is evident that MSS continue to move further away from their political roots as they try to define for themselves what their current role is at a PWI within budgetary, political, and racist constraints. It is important to recognize that the future of MSS is not hopeless, but instead requires a new knowledge and

sense of empowerment by MSS administrators. It is my hope that this study begins to inform MSS administrators of the visible and invisible forces that both enable and constrain them as they work to advocate for student success and equity.

Implications for Research and Practice

One of the focuses of both institutional ethnography and critical race theory is the need to use research to inform praxis. Consequently, the implications generated from the research are more important than the actual study because they provide tangible recommendations for changing practice. In addition, it is important to consider ideas for future research practice as they can continue to inform praxis in the future.

Implications for Research

As I collected data for this study, I was often forced to remind myself of the parameters of this study and that I was only to focus on the research questions established for this study. Due to the exploratory nature of institutional ethnography as a methodology, I was always making new discoveries that had the potential to pull me in different directions because they sparked new curiosities in me as a researcher. The following are a few areas of future research that I think could continue to shed understanding on the complexities of racial equity in higher education.

As I attended conferences and learned from the research of others engaging in work regarding institutional practices of diversity, such as the creation of CDO positions, it became evident to me that this study would garner different results if I applied an organizational theory as an additional framework. For example, using some of Kezar's (2008; Kezar, et al., 2008) work that examines organizational contextual features that mediate the implementation of diversity initiatives or her work that examines leadership

strategies used when addressing diversity to frame this study would add an additional layer of understanding regarding how MU responded to racial equity. In addition, Kezar's work led me to consider beginning the institutional ethnography by focusing on the leadership of the institution and how social relations and organizations mediate the president and provost of a university's day-to-day lived work experiences regarding racial equity.

A second area that needs further research is focused on how PWIs use the images of historical alumni of color to show their commitment to diversity. The parameters of this study did not allow me to delve further into how MU uses Dr. Carver's image to make a broader statement about the institutional commitment to diversity. Joshua alerted me that the football stadium at MU was also named after a former African American football that died tragically. In addition, Joshua pointed out that only African American alumni were highlighted by MU as successful alumni of color. Joshua's insights and my own experiences while collecting data are evidence of opportunities for further research. First, an inventory and historical analysis of how institutions selected their famous alumni to showcase would create a new understanding of how race is framed, defined, and practiced in higher education. Why is it that MU chooses to highlight African American alumni over other alumni of color in their marketing of diversity? A historical CRT analysis of both MU's archives about Dr. Carver and current university publications highlighting his "story" may show how practices of ahistoricism have implications for how race and racism are currently understood by PWIs.

Furthermore, it is important to continue to understand the lived experiences of MSS administrators. As mentioned in my findings, Joshua had to negotiate tensions placed on him because he was asked to recruit students of color to a campus that he knew required "survival" skills for students of color to succeed. In addition, Joshua had to navigate his way

through his own experiences with racism. I think it is important to research how individuals working as MSS administrators practice resiliency as they encounter racially hostile work environments. Examining the MSS administrator's own experiences with racism can bring forth how the campus racial climate affects individuals other than students thus broadening the institution's understanding of what it means to have a "campus wide commitment to diversity."

One of the organizational challenges that Joshua experienced was the fact that his job was positioned in between academic and student affairs. Before engaging in this research, I was naïve about the fact that multicultural student services work could look different depending on whether it was housed in either academic or student affairs. As I visited other campuses that have multicultural student services in either academic affairs or student affairs, I began to wonder what the implications of organizational placement were for racial equity initiatives. An inventory and analysis of several models of multicultural students services offices housed in both academic and student affairs would shed new understandings on the benefits and challenges associated with each organizational model. Do MSS offices in academic affairs receive more support when they are framed as serving the academic mission of the institution? Do the types of services provided by an MSS office in academic affairs look different than those located in student affairs? The answers to these questions have significant implications for understanding various models of advocacy for students of color.

One other area of further research that emerged during this study was the need to develop culturally relevant mechanisms for the evaluation of diversity focused programs and efforts. As evidenced in this study, the lack of culturally relevant mechanisms to evaluate and assess the outcomes of multicultural student services had significant implications that

included the endangerment of race-based programs during fiscally challenging times. Joshua as well as other MSS administrators with whom I spoke recognized that the standards for evaluation utilized by the cross-unit report subcommittee did not adequately examine the work and contributions of each of the units. One of the challenges often encountered by MSS administrators is that they are not adequately trained to engage in the evaluation and assessment of the services offered by their own offices and do not have models for evaluation easily available for their use. Through the development of evaluation and assessment models for diversity, MSS administrators can be better equipped to provide evidence of their effect on learning and retention for students of color during fiscally challenging times.

Finally, the findings regarding the ruling relations described how Joshua as the MSS administrator is situated within a bureaucratic system that is connected to other organizations to include Midwestern state, MU, and the College of Innovation. The diagram of the ruling relations findings is reminiscent of social ecological models such as those developed by Bronfenbrenner (as cited in Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010). Although Bronfenbrenner's model focused on the ways an individual's development is mediated by the environment, the concepts associated with the model can be translated to the study of organizations. The use of social ecological models can compliment and complicate the findings from this study that were based on the theoretical perspectives of institutional ethnography and critical race theory.

The implications for research offered here are only a few examples of research possibilities generated from the findings of this study. Given that little research has focused on institutional practices of diversity, it is important to continue to focus on how organizations mediate racial equity efforts. In addition, understanding the work of MSS

administrators is critical as the nation and public higher education continues to confront budget crises.

Implications for Practice

During this study, multiple organizations emerged as mediating the work of Joshua, the MSS administrator in the College of Innovation. All of the organizations had policies, practices, and unwritten rules that shaped Joshua's work in ways that were both known and unknown to him. The implications for practice offered below are structured so that suggestions for praxis are offered for each organization.

State policymakers. In this study, Midwestern State generated policies that had both direct and indirect implications for Joshua as a MSS administrator. The state governing board's mandate for increasing the retention and graduation rates of students of color were generated at the same time as the state budget allocations to public higher education continued to decrease. State policymakers must consider that their mandates on institutions that are fiscally strained may be unrealistic. Although institutions may be able to find quick fix solutions to meet the mandates, lack of fiscal support limits the institution's ability to make long-term institution-wide changes that positively affect student of color success. The state's mandate oversimplifies student of color experiences and what is required to ensure student of color success.

Policymakers need to work closely with the individual institutions to develop relevant benchmarks and practices that will ensure student of color success. Both the institutions and policy makers should use the wealth of resources available to create culturally relevant strategies for retention. These strategies must acknowledge that there are different histories

with racism for each racial/ethnic group that mediate how it experiences higher education, therefore one overarching retention strategy make not be effective for all students of color.

Institution. Along with state policymakers, individual institutions must find new ways of practicing their commitments to diversity. The recommendations offered here are related to MU's particular approaches to diversity, but may be helpful to other institutions as they examine their own praxis. Furthermore, the implications for practice offered refer MU to resources based on empirical research already available to institutions.

One of the findings from this study pointed out that MU was not using culturally congruent mechanisms of evaluation and assessment when reviewing the various units and programs focused on diversity. As a result, the findings did not provide a complete understanding of what types of supports were being offered and how each program or initiative was structured to meet a particular need. By applying culturally incongruent measures of success, the various units appeared to duplicate services that resulted in perceived inefficient use of funds. The implications for this type of evaluation practices are that units that are incorrectly evaluated run the risk of being cut during fiscally challenging times because they are perceived as inefficient. This practice is particularly dangerous for the future of student services focused on students of color. Institutions can counteract the effects of culturally incongruent assessments by building a team of experts that is made up of individuals who have both experience with and knowledge of the intricacies involved when working with students of color. The evaluation teams can assist each unit with creating individualized assessment tools that take into account the particular missions and outcomes of each unit. Broad practices of assessment are counteractive to the goals and histories of units charged with racial equity.

In addition to expanding notions of assessment, institutions must steer away from practices of ambivalence regarding racial equity. As was the case at MU, a lack of coordination along with no strategic institutionalized definition of diversity, left the institution in limbo regarding its vision and commitments to racial equity. Institutions committed to creating a welcoming campus racial climate can rely on a wealth of resources readily available to them through organizations such as the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU). The AACU published a series of reports titled “Making Excellence Inclusive” that were designed to assist institutions as they worked to develop ways to create institutional change on all levels that included the needs of communities of color. In addition, publications such as the ASHE Reader, “Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Higher Education,” contain multiple readings that focus on the various segments of higher education including faculty, students, policy, and governance. The readings provide implications for practice and many are based on empirical research. Furthermore, the readings offer critiques of common strategies used in higher education when working with diversity. Overall, it is important the individual institutions engage in long-term intentional planning of diversity strategies that include a review of pertinent literature and research.

The practice of intentionality around issues of racial equity is particularly important for MU. For example, the creation of the CDO position was out of a response to the reorganization of responsibility for diversity between the EO office and the Associate Provost’s position. As such, the CDO only made up ten percent of the Associate Provost’s job description. By relegating diversity to only ten percent of the Associate Provost’s job duties, the institution in essence is making a statement that diversity initiatives are not a priority over faculty personnel issues. It may have been more helpful for MU to pause before

creating the CDO position to plan a mission, vision, and plan of action for the position of CDO. How could the CDO serve as a coordinating entity for diversity that is missing at MU? Would the CDO focus primarily on issues of faculty diversity since it is located in the Provost's office or would it work with student recruitment and retention as well? These are just a few examples of key questions that should have been posed prior to the creation of this position in consultation with other university stakeholders. The process utilized by MU to create this position limits the position's initial ability to create transformational change for racial equity. I also want to make clear that my critiques do not prohibit MU from redesigning the CDO position to serve as an effective and holistic leader for racial equity.

Finally, MU must consider how it can develop definitions of diversity that acknowledge the tensions associated with defining diversity. As stated in the findings, MU engaged in the practice of defining and redefining diversity and each new definition engaged notions of colorblindness disguised as inclusivity. The inclusive definition moved further away from explicitly including racial equity as an important component of diversity. As stated by Sophie, MU experienced a tension between recognizing a need to define diversity in a way that provided guidelines for outcomes while also allowing for fluidity and inclusivity. MU may consider developing a philosophical statement of diversity that also includes a list of tangible outcomes as subsets of the broader statement. For example, the philosophy of diversity can include a vision for the university as a community that values diversity and inclusivity. The outcomes associated with the vision statement can speak to specific targets such as increasing access and retention of students of color across the university, increasing the representation of faculty and staff of color, and providing support and resources for other underserved communities. By providing both a vision and outcomes,

the definition of diversity can provide tangible definitions and goals for the various units across the university and therefore create a culture of action versus ambivalence regarding racial equity efforts.

College. The College of Innovation, led by the Dean, already had measures in place to increase faculty commitment to diversity. The faculty diversity committee was established to increase faculty involvement with diversity in the college by increasing communication with faculty about diversity initiatives. In addition, faculty's annual reviews included a section on diversity that required each faculty member to speak to how their work in the previous year contributed to the college's diversity efforts. Finally, faculty were required to speak about broader impact in their grant applications. Faculty in the College of Innovation were encouraged to work closely with the institution's office of sponsored programs to link their grant applications to diversity initiatives already in place at MU. Although it can be argued that these strategies use interest convergence to get faculty to work with diversity, they are realistic strategies that attempt to make some changes that require diversity commitment beyond the MSS administrators.

Expanding ownership for diversity is key, as the college's MSS administrators must be protected from burning out. As the catchalls for diversity, MSS administrators must juggle multiple roles and responsibilities that require long hours and can lead to professional burn out. Joshua was often called on to host events related to career fairs, development, and faculty diversity training. Instead of relying on the MSS administrator to serve as the diversity professional for all units within the college, each unit should hire or designate individuals within their own units who focus on diversity. Although MSS administrators are often consulted for advice regarding programming and other activities, seeking advice is

different from expecting that individual to coordinate events outside of their purview. Just because the event has diversity in the title does not mean that only the MSS administrator is capable of coordinating these efforts.

Finally, protecting the MSS administrator can also be accomplished by creating an inclusive work environment. Joshua encountered hostility, as his work practices did not align with the dominant notions of work. Although it would be helpful to provide a separate space for Joshua to create a welcoming environment for students and their families, it would not end biased understandings of what workspaces should look like. Even though Joshua was supported by his direct supervisor, no clear actions were taken between Joshua's supervisor and the director of the student services suite to address the hostile racial work climate in the suite. The way the hostilities were dealt with was to ignore certain behaviors in order to avoid conflict. The avoidance strategy only continued to allow such behavior to continue to occur. Supervisors must address hostile behaviors. In addition, college leaders must find ways to educate their employees about culturally relevant work practices.

MSS administrator. The purpose of institutional ethnography is to empower the participants with new ways of understanding how their experiences are linked to social and ruling relations. As such, this study sought to help Joshua understand what organizations and their policies, practices, and unwritten rules mediated his daily work experiences. By engaging in this work with Joshua as a research collaborator, we learned a lot together. The following are some of the implications for praxis relevant to the work of MSS administrators.

MSS administrators need to take the time to learn the organizational history behind their positions and also the current status of where their work fits into the larger organizational structure of the university. By examining the history of the position, MSS

administrators can begin to understand some of the underlying tensions they currently encounter and how their work is either impeded or supported by the history of the position. Furthermore, if MSS administrators understand where their positions fit in the organizational structure of the university, this knowledge can also shed light on the institutional commitment to diversity. Knowledge of the organizational structure can also help MSS administrators understand where their funding is coming from and the parameters they have to work within when managing their budgets. By understanding the history and organizational structures of their positions, MSS administrators are equipped with knowledge that can assist them as they navigate challenging territories of racial equity work at PWIs.

In addition to understanding the history and organizational structure of their positions, MSS administrators must also examine the implications of where their positions are located organizationally, such as either within student or academic affairs. As discussed in this study, there are both benefits and challenges associated with MSS being located in academic affairs. MSS administrators located within academic affairs may have less challenges justifying how their work contributes to the academic mission of the institution because they are a part of an academic department or unit. In addition, MSS administrators in academic affairs have greater access and interactions with faculty that can support their work. The challenges encountered by MSS administrators in academic affairs may include that faculty and other colleagues may be unfamiliar with concepts, such as student development theory and retention models, that are associated with the student affairs. On the other hand MSS administrators located within student affairs units may encounter challenges seeking support from academic units and faculty because it is unclear how the work of student affairs can be linked to the work in academic affairs. In this case, it is up to the MSS administrator to find

spaces of common interest that are mutually beneficial to academic units and MSS. For example, MSS administrators can work with faculty or academic units to submit collaborative grants that create faculty-in-residence programs that tie MSS to academic units. These efforts require that MSS administrators can speak the language associated with academic work, such as speaking of grants and publishing research, so that MSS administrators can become politically savvy about maneuvering the politics of academic affairs.

MSS administrators must also seek training to improve their own strategies of evaluation and assessment. As demonstrated by the findings in this study and previous literature, MSS administrators are often called upon to provide evidence of their impact and success during fiscally challenging times. Unfortunately, MSS administrators are often not adequately trained to design evaluation and assessment plans for their own work. Through professional development training opportunities, MSS administrators can begin to incorporate evaluation and assessment practices into their daily routines so that they generate reports with data when asked to demonstrate their success in achieving their stated outcomes.

Finally, MSS administrators must find ways to take care of themselves. As previously mentioned, MSS administrators are often asked to juggle many duties simultaneously. Late hours and having to negotiate unwelcoming campus racial climates can be particularly challenging for individuals who are often so committed to what their work represents that it is hard for them to separate the personal from the professional. For many MSS administrators, the personal is the professional. Despite this admirable level of commitment, MSS administrators must also acknowledge that once they burn out, they put at risk their effectiveness in serving as advocates for racial equity. As such, they must find ways to

balance their personal lives with their commitments to their work. I recognize this goal is difficult to achieve, but it is still a worthy implication for practice.

As already stated, both institutional ethnography and critical race theory require that researchers develop implications for practice that have the potential to create transformational change. The suggestions for praxis put forward in this section offer state policymakers, institutions of higher education, academic colleges, and MSS administrators tangible ways to reconsider their current efforts to incorporate racial equity into their work. In addition, I have provided suggestions for future research in order to expand the examination of institutional practices of diversity.

Conclusion and Personal Reflections

Race and racism continue to be contentious topics for society in general, but higher education in particular. As institutions of higher education struggle to make sense of democratic ideals founded in meritocracy while also valuing diversity of peoples and thoughts, new strategies and ways of understanding racial equity are required to create long-standing and transformational change. This study contributed to understanding racial equity within the context of a PWI, by examining how social relations and organizations shape the work of MSS administrators, which often includes racial equity. By starting with the lived experiences of Joshua, I was able to begin to examine how policies, practices, and unwritten rules created both opportunities and barriers for him as he navigated what it meant for him to serve as the MSS administrator for the College of Innovation. I was also able to understand how various organizations and their policies and practices intersect in ways that are both known and unknown to MSS administrators. Although some may argue that mapping the connections between various social and ruling relations does not offer solutions, I would

argue that knowledge is power and that this power is a newfound tool that can be used to create transformational change. In addition this study contributed to a lack of scholarship focusing on the use of CRT in higher education research.

The process of engaging in this research project was a testament of how the personal is the professional. As a former and soon to be again MSS administrator, I had a vested interest in learning more about how both visible and invisible forces shape the work of advocates for racial equity at PWIs. I indulged myself in the opportunity to ask the tough questions as a doctoral student that I was not able to ask as an administrator. Although I was never a MSS administrator at MU, many of the insights I gained from this experience are transferable to any institution that I work with in the future. Just as Joshua felt that his eyes were opened and that things began to make more sense to him as we engaged in the study together, I also felt my own understanding of institutional practices of racism expand.

I also recognize that although the protections afforded to me will soon expire, I carry many lessons with me as I approach future job opportunities. The questions that I pose for myself and to institutions are different as a result of this study. I feel better equipped to serve as an institutional advocate for racial equity. I know that, like Joshua, I will be tied to institutional commitments and barriers, but I also take with me a new sense of empowerment given to me by my newly acquired knowledge. It is my hope that my work in this study will encourage other MSS administrators to gain a sense of empowerment and agency as they learn to think about their work beyond the day-to-day challenges and joys to include a more systemic examination of the implications of their work.

References

- Advisory Committee on Diversity Program Planning and Coordination. (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.provost.iastate.edu/fad/acdppc/>
- Altbach, P. G., Berdahl, R. O., & Gumport, P. J. (2005). *American higher education in the twenty-first century*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Altbach, P. G., Lomotey, K., & Rivers, S. (2002). Race in higher education: The continuing crisis. In W. A. Smith, P. G. Altbach & K. Lomotey (Eds.), *The racial crisis in American higher education* (Rev. ed. ed., pp. 23-41). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Ancheta, A. N. . (2005). After Grutter and Gratz: Higher education, race, and the law. In G. Orfield, P. Marin & C. L. Horn (Eds.), *Higher education and the color line: College access, racial equity, and social change* (pp. 175-196). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Anderson, T. H. (2004). *The pursuit of fairness: A history of affirmative action*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Arendale, D. R. (2004). Mainstreamed academic assistance and enrichment for all students: The historical origins of learning assistance centers. *Research for Educational Reform*, 9(4), 3-21.
- Baez, B. (2002). *Affirmative action, hate speech, and tenure: Narratives about race, law, and the academy*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Banjeri, S. (2005). Diversity officers: Coming to a campus near you? *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 22(20), 38-40.

- Banks, J. A. (1993). Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions, and practice. *Review of Research in Education*, 19, 3-49.
- Bell, D. (1992). *Faces at the bottom of the well: The permanence of racism*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Bell, D. (2005a). Racial realism. In R. Delgado & J. Stefancic (Eds.), *The Derrick Bell reader* (pp. 73-77). New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Bell, D. (2005b). Racism is here to stay: Now what? In R. Delgado & J. Stefancic (Eds.), *The Derrick Bell reader* (pp. 85-90). New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Bell, D. . (2005). Brown v. Board of Education and the interest-convergence dilemma. In R. Delgado & J. Stefancic (Eds.), *The Derrick Bell reader* (pp. 33-39). New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Benitez, M. (2010). Resituating culture centers within a social justice framework: Is there room for examining Whiteness. In L. D. Patton (Ed.), *Culture centers in higher education: Perspectives on identity, theory, and practice* (pp. 119-134). Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Birnbaum, R. (1990). *How colleges work: The cybernetics of academic organization and leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Board of Regents. (2008). Enrollment: Fall 2008. Des Moines: Board of Regents.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2006). *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in the United States* (2nd ed.). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Bonilla-Silva, E., & Forman, T. A. (2000). "I am not a racist but...": Mapping White college students' racial ideology in the USA. *Discourse & Society*, 11(1), 50-85.

- Bonilla-Silva, E., Lewis, A. , & Embrick, D. G. (2004). "I did not get that job because of a Black man...": The story lines and testimonies of color-blind racism. *Sociological Forum, 19*(4), 555-581.
- Bourassa, D. M., & Kruger, K. (2001, Winter). The national dialogue on academic and student affairs collaboration. *New Directions for Higher Education, 116*, 9-17.
- Bowen, W. G., & Bok, D. (1998). *The Shape of the river*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Brayboy, B. M. J. (2003). The implementation of diversity in predominantly white colleges and universities. *Journal of Black Studies, 34*(1), 72-86.
- Brown, S. K., & Hirschmann, C. (2006, April). The end of affirmative action in Washington State and its impact on the transition from high school to college. *Sociology of Education, 79*, 106-130.
- Bruna, K. R., Chamberlin, D., Lewis, H., & Ceballos, E. M. (2007). Teaching science to students from rural Mexico. *Science Teacher, 74*(8), 35-40.
- Busse, E. (2010, April 30). Regents seek to boost minority retention, *The Daily Iowan*. Retrieved from <http://www.dailyiowan.com/2010/04/30/Metro/17073.html>
- Campbell, M., & Gregor, F. (2004). *Mapping social relations: A primer in doing institutional ethnography*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.
- Campbell, M. L. (1998). Institutional ethnography and experience as data. *Qualitative Sociology, 21*(1), 55-73.
- CAS. (2006). The role of multicultural student programs: CAS Standards and Contextual Statement *CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education*. Washington, DC: Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education.

- Celebrating 150 Years of Excellence in Agriculture at Midwestern University: A Rich Heritage - An Exciting Future. (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.ag.iastate.edu/coa150/timeline.php>
- Chang, M. J., Altbach, P. G., & Lomotey, K. (2005). Race in higher education: Making meaning of an elusive moving target. In P. G. Altbach, R. O. Berdahl & P. J. Gumpert (Eds.), *American higher education in the twenty-first century: Social, political, and economic challenges* (2nd ed. ed., pp. 517-536). Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Chang, M. J., Witt, D., Jones, J., & Hakuta, K. (2003). *Compelling interest: Examining the evidence on racial dynamics in colleges and universities*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Chubin, D. E. (2009, July 23). 'Visible' diversity and the university. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 26, 28.
- Cobham, B. A., & Parker, T. L. (2007). Resituating race into the movement toward multiculturalism and social justice. In S. R. Harper & L. D. Patton (Eds.), *Responding to the realities of race on campus* (Vol. 120, pp. 85-93). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- College Committees 2010-2011: Diversity Committee. (2010). Retrieved January 18, 2011, from <http://www.ag.iastate.edu/committees/diversity.php>
- College of Innovation: Diversity Report to the Provost April 2008 to April 2010. (2010) (pp. 1-9). Ames, IA: Midwestern University.
- Contreras, F. E. (2005). The reconstruction of merit post-proposition 209. *Educational Policy*, 19(2), 371-395.

- Crenshaw, K. W. (1995). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. In K. W. Crenshaw, N. Gotanda, G. Peller & K. Thomas (Eds.), *Critical race theory: The key writings that formed the movement* (pp. 357-383). New York, NY: New Press.
- Crenshaw, K. W. (2003). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory, and antiracist politics. In A. K. Wing (Ed.), *Critical race feminism: A reader* (2nd ed. ed., pp. 23-33). New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Crenshaw, K. W., Gotanda, N., Peller, G., & Thomas, K. (Eds.). (1995). *Critical Race Theory: The key writings that formed the movement*. New York, NY: New Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cross, T. . (2000, Autumn). Hopwood in doubt: The folly of setting a grand theory requiring race neutrality in all programs of higher education. *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, 29, 60-84.
- Crotty, M. (2003). *The foundation of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. London, United Kingdom: Sage.
- Dalla, R. L., & Christensen, A. (2005). Latino immigrants describe residence in rural Midwestern meatpacking communities: A longitudinal assessment of social and economic change. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Science*, 27(1), 23-42.
- Davis, L. A., & Mitchell, S. L. (1999). *The MLO model: A college-level approach to university minority student affairs*. Paper presented at the People of Color in

- Predominantly White Institutions 4th Annual National Conference, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.
- de Baca, M., Colletti, J., & Acker, D. (2008). Diversity Report to the Provost: College of Innovation 2007-2008 (pp. 1-6). Ames, IA: Midwestern University.
- de Vise, D. (2009, November 6). U-Md. students protest official's hiring, *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/05/AR2009110502997_pf.html
- DeCuir, J. T., & Dixson, A. D. (2004). "So when it comes out, they aren't surprised that it is there": Using critical race theory as a tool of analysis of race and racism in education. *Educational Researcher*, 33(5), 26-31.
- Decuir-Gunby, J. T. (2006). "Proving your skin is white, you can have everything": Race, racial identity, and property rights in whiteness in the Supreme Court Case of Josephine DeCuir. In A. D. Dixson & C. K. Rousseau (Eds.), *Critical race theory in education: All God's children got a song* (pp. 89-111). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Delgado Bernal, D. (1998). Grassroots leadership reconceptualized: Chicana oral histories and the 1968 East Los Angeles School Blowouts. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 19(2), 113-142.
- Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2001). *Critical Race Theory: An introduction*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2005). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- DeVault, M. L. (2006). Introduction: What is institutional ethnography? *Social Problems*, 53(3), 294-298.

- DeVault, M. L., & McCoy, L. (2006). Institutional ethnography: Using interviews to investigate ruling relations. In D. E. Smith (Ed.), *Institutional ethnography as practice* (pp. 15-44). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Diamond, T. (2006). "Where did you get the fur coat, Fern?": Participant observation in institutional ethnography. In D. E. Smith (Ed.), *Institutional ethnography as practice* (pp. 45-63). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Diversity Equity and Community: About Us. (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.diversity.iastate.edu/about>
- Dixson, A. D., & Rousseau, C. K. (2006a). And we are still not saved: Critical race theory in education ten years later. In A. D. Dixson & C. K. Rousseau (Eds.), *Critical race theory in education: All God's children got a song* (pp. 31-54). New York , NY: Routledge.
- Dixson, A. D., & Rousseau, C. K. (Eds.). (2006b). *Critical Race Theory in education: All God's children got a song*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- [Draft Job Announcement: Assistant Dean for Diversity and Graduate Programs] (2010, October 22).
- Elliott, E. W., & Ewoh, A. I. E. (2005). Beyond Gratz and Grutter: Prospects for affirmative action in the aftermath of the Supreme Court's Michigan decisions. *Review of Policy Research*, 22(4), 541-553.
- Evans, N. J., Forney, D. S., Guido, F. M., Patton, L. D., & Renn, K. A. (2010). *Student Development in College: Theory, Research, and Practice* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Forman, T. A. . (2004). Color-blind racism and racial indifference: The role of racial apathy in facilitating enduring inequalities. In M. Krysan & A. E. Lewis (Eds.), *The changing terrain of race and ethnicity* (pp. 43-66). New York, NY: Russell Sage.

Funding overview. (2010). *Government of the Student Body*. Retrieved from <http://www.gsb.iastate.edu/funding/>

FY 11 budget development: Cross-unit planning teams. (2009). *Inside Midwestern University for Faculty and Staff* Retrieved September 7, 2010, from <http://www.iastate.edu/Inside/2009/1217/groups.php>

Gandara, P., Orfield, G., & Horn, C. L. (Eds.). (2006). *Expanding opportunity in higher education: Leveraging promise*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Gildersleeve, R. E. (2010). Dangerously important moment(s) in reflexive reserach practices with immigrant youth. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 23(4), 407-421. doi: 10.1080/09518398.2010.492809

Gose, B. (2009, October 11). Diversity takes a hit during tough times, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Gotanda, Neil. (1991). A critique of "Our Constitution Is Color-Blind". *Stanford Law Review*, 44(1), 1-68.

Green, D. , & Trent, W. T. (2005). The public good and a racially diverse democracy. In A. Kezar, T. C. Chambers & J. C. Burkhardt (Eds.), *Higher education for the public good* (pp. 102-123). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

GSB: Finance 101. (2006). In Midwestern University (Ed.), (pp. 1-21). Ames, IA.

Hamilton, K. (2006). Coming to terms with the 'D' word. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 23(14), 42.

- Harris, C. I. (1993). Whiteness as property. *Harvard Law Review*, 106(8), 1707-1791.
- Hefner, D. (2002). Black cultural centers: Standing on shaky ground? *Black Issues in Higher Education*, 18(26), 22-29.
- Hernandez, A. (2009a). Faculty, students challenge University of Maryland's diversity plan, *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://diverseeducation.com/article/13162/faculty-students-challenge-university-of-maryland-s-diversity-plan.html>
- Hernandez, A. (2009b). Temple University's commitment to diversity questioned, *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://diverseeducation.com/article/13160/temple-university-s-commitment-to-diversity-questioned.html>
- Hord, F. L. (Ed.). (2005). *Black culture centers: Politics of survival and identity*. Chicago, IL: Third World Press.
- Horn, C. L., & Marin, P. (2006). Reaping the benefits of Grutter: College admissions and racial/ethnic diversity. In P. Gandara, G. Orfield & C. L. Horn (Eds.), *Expanding opportunity in higher education: Leveraging promise* (pp. 167-192). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Howard, J. R. (1997). Affirmative action in historical perspective. In M. Garcia (Ed.), *Affirmative action's testament of hope: Strategies for a new era in higher education* (pp. 19-46). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Hu-DeHart, E. (2000). The diversity project: Institutionalizing multiculturalism or managing differences? *Academe Online*. Retrieved from <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe/2000/SO/Feat/hu.htm>

- Hurtado, S. (2000). The campus racial climate: Contexts of conflict. In M. C. Brown (Ed.), *Organization and governance in higher education* (5th ed., pp. 182-201). Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Iverson, S. V. (2007). Camouflaging power and privilege: A critical race analysis of university diversity policies. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 43(5), 586-611.
- Iverson, S. V. (2010). Producing diversity: A policy discourse analysis of diversity action plans. In E. J. Allan, S. V. Iverson & B. Ropers-Huilman (Eds.), *Reconstructing policy in higher education: Feminist poststructural perspectives* (pp. 193-213). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Jackson, G. A. (2003). *Saving the other two-thirds: Practices and strategies for improving the retention and graduation of African American students in predominantly White institutions*. Ames, IA: Jackson Challenge Fund and Associates.
- Jaschik, S. (2006). New arguments on affirmative action. *Inside Higher Ed* Retrieved October 13, 2008, from <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2006/06/21/affirm>
- Johnson, N., Koulisch, J., & Oliff, P. (2009). Most state are cutting education Retrieved January 23, 2011, from <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=2220>
- Kauffman, A. H., & Gonzalez, R. (1997). The Hopwood case: What it says and what it doesn't. In M. Garcia (Ed.), *Affirmative action's testament of hope: Strategies for a new era in higher education* (pp. 227-247). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Kezar, A. (2008). Understanding leadership strategies for addressing the politics of diversity. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 79(4), 406-441.

- Kezar, A., Glenn, W. J., Lester, J., & Nakamoto, J. (2008). Examining organizational contextual features that affect implementation of equity initiatives. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 79(2), 125-159.
- Kincheloe, J. L., & McLaren, P. (2005). Rethinking critical inquiry and qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative reserach* (3rd ed. ed., pp. 303-336). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Krapfl, A. (2009a, January 16). State budget crunch hits campus, *Inside Iowa State*. Retrieved from <http://www.iastate.edu/Inside/2009/0116/budget.shtml>
- Krapfl, A. (2009b). Team assignments made for cross-unit reviews. *Inside Iowa State*. Retrieved January 27, 2011, from <http://www.iastate.edu/Inside/2009/1217/cross.php>
- Krapfl, A. (2010a, March 4). Budget first drafts due April 1, *Inside Iowa State*. Retrieved from <http://www.inside.iastate.edu/2010/0304/budget.php>
- Krapfl, A. (2010b). Teams wrap up their cross-unit reviews as part of budget planning, *Inside Iowa State*. Retrieved from <http://www.iastate.edu/Inside/2010/0311/cross.php>
- Kuh, G. D. (2003). Organizational theory. In S. R. Komives, D. B. Woodward & Associates (Eds.), *Student services: A handbook for the profession* (4th ed., pp. 269-296). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Just what is critical race theory and what's it doing in a nice field like education? *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11(1), 7-24.
- Ladson-Billings, G., & Donnor, J. (2005). The moral activist role of critical race theory scholarship. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 279-301). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate, W. F. (1995). Toward a critical race theory of education. *Teachers College Record*, 97(1), 47-68.
- Lather, P. (1993). Fertile obsession: Validity after Poststructuralism. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 34(4), 673-693.
- Lenzo, K. (1995). Validity and self-reflexivity meet poststructuralism: Scientific ethos and the transgressive self. *Educational Researcher*, 24(4), 17-23.
- Lewis, A. E. . (2001). There is no "race" in the schoolyard: Color-blind ideology in an (almost) all-white school. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(4), 781-811.
- Lipson, H. D. (2006). *Talking affirmative action: Race, opportunity, and everyday ideology*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Liu, W. M., Cuyjet, M. J., & Lee, S. (2010). Asian American student involvement in Asian American culture centers. In L. D. Patton (Ed.), *Culture Centers in Higher Education: Perspectives on Identity, Theory, and Practice* (pp. 26-45). Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Long, M. C., & Tienda, M. (2008). Winners and losers: Changes in Texas University admissions post-Hopwood. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 30(3), 255-280. doi: 10.3102/01623737083211384
- Lopez, G. (2003). The (racially neutral) politics of education: A critical race theory perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 39(1), 68-94.
- Lozano, A. (2010). Latina/o culture centers: Providing a sense of belonging amid promoting student success. In L. D. Patton (Ed.), *Culture centers in higher education: Perspectives on identity, theory, and practice* (pp. 3-22). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

- Lum, L. (2009, February 5). The Obama era: A post-racial society? *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 25, 14-16.
- Maldonado, M. M., & Licona, A. C. (2007). Re-thinking integration as reciprocal and spatialized process. *The Journal of Latino-Latin American Studies*, 2(4), 128-143.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interpretive approach* (2nd ed. Vol. 42). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Members of Board of Regents. (2010). *Transforming lives, strengthening [Midwestern State] through education, research, and service*. Des Moines, IA.
- Merriam, S. B., & Associates. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Milem, J. (2003). The educational benefits of diversity: Evidence from multiple sectors. In M. J. Chang, D. Witt, J. Jones & K. Hakuta (Eds.), *Compelling interest: Examining the evidence on racial dynamics in colleges and universities* (pp. 126-169). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Milem, J. F. , Chang, M. J., & Antonio, A. L. (2005). Making diversity work on campus: A research-based perspective. In N. O'Neill (Ed.), *Making excellence inclusive* (pp. 1-38). Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Morfin, O. J., Perez, V. H., Parker, L., Lynn, M. , & Arrona, J. (2006). Hiding the politically obvious: A critical race theory preview of diversity as racial neutrality in higher education. *Educational Policy*, 20(1), 249-270.
- Moses, M. S., & Chang, M. J. (2006). Toward a deeper understanding of the diversity rationale. *Educational Researcher*, 35(1), 6-11.

- Multicultural Student Services Coordinating Team. (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.committees.iastate.edu/comm-info.php?id=122>
- Munoz, C. (1989). *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement*. New York, NY: Verso.
- NADOHE. (2006a). History. Retrieved from <http://www.nadohe.org/history.htm>
- NADOHE. (2006b). Welcome. Retrieved from <http://www.nadohe.org>
- Neville, H. A., Spanierman, L. B., & Doan, B. (2006). Exploring the association between color-blind racial ideology and multicultural counseling competencies. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 12*(2), 275-290.
- Newman, J. D. (1989). Affirmative action and the courts. In F. A. Blanchard & F. J. Crosby (Eds.), *Affirmative action in perspective* (pp. 31-49). New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.
- Nora, A., & Cabrera, A. F. (1996). The role of preceptions of prejudice and discrimination on the adjustments of minority students to college. *Journal of Higher Education, 67*(2), 119-148.
- Olesen, V. (2005). Early millennial feminist qualitative research: Challenges and contours. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative reserach* (3rd ed. ed., pp. 235-278). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Orfield, G., Marin, P., & Horn, C. L. (2005). *Higher education and the color line: College access, racial equity, and social change*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Orum, A. (1972). *Black students in protest*. Washington, DC: American Sociological Association.

- Palmer, C. J., & Shuford, B. C. (1996). Multicultural affairs. In A. L. Rentz & Associates (Eds.), *Student affairs practice in higher education* (2nd ed., pp. 214-238). Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.
- Parker, L. (1998). "Race is...race ain't": An exploration of the utility of critical race theory in qualitative reseach in education. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11(1), 43-55.
- Parker, L., Deyhle, D., & Villenas, S. (Eds.). (1999). *Race is...Race isn't: Critical race theory and qualitative studies in education*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Patton, L. D. (2005). Power to the people!: Black student protest and the emergence of the Black culture centers. In F. L. Hord (Ed.), *Black culture centers: Politics of survival and identity* (pp. 151-163). Chicago, IL: Third World Press.
- Patton, L. D. (2006a). Black culture centers: Still central to student learning. *About Campus*, May-June, 2-8.
- Patton, L. D. (2006b). The voice of reason: A qualitative examination of Black student perceptions of Black culture centers. *Journal of College Student Development*, 47(6), 628-646.
- Patton, L. D. (Ed.). (2010). *Culture centers in higher education: Perspectives on identity, theory, and practice*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Patton, L. D., & Hannon, M. D. (2008). Collaboration for cultural programming: Engaging culture centers, multicultural affairs, and student activities offices as partners. In S. R. Harper (Ed.), *Creating inclusive campus environments for cross-cultural learning and student engagement* (pp. 139-154). Washington, DC: NASPA.
- Patton, L. D., Ranero, J. J., & Everett, K. (in press). Multicultural student services through a different lens: A critical race perspective. In D. Stewart (Ed.), *Building bridges, re-*

- visioning community: Multicultural student services on campus*. Washington, DC: ACPA Books and Media.
- Perna, L. W. (2006). Studying college access and choice: A proposed conceptual model. In J. C. Smart (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (Vol. 21, pp. 99-157). New York, NY: Springer.
- Practice. (2010). Retrieved from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/practice>
- Princes, C. D. W. (2005). The precarious question of Black cultural centers versus multicultural centers. In F. L. Hord (Ed.), *Black culture centers: Politics of survival and I=identity* (pp. 135-146). Chicago, IL: Third World Press.
- Redd, K. E. . (1998, Summer). Historically black college and universities: Making a comeback. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 102, 33-43.
- Rendon, L. I., Kanagala, V., Santos Laanan, F., Nichols, G. S., Shelley, M. C., & Starobin, S. S. (2006). Iowa public higher education: Enrollment challenges, opportunities for future growth. In L. I. Rendon (Ed.), *EP3: Education Policy and Practice Perspectives* (Vol. 1, pp. 1-12). Ames, IA: Iowa State University
- Rendon, L. I., Novack, V. , & Dowell, D. (2005). Testing race-neutral admissions models: Lessons from California State University - Long Beach. *The Review of Higher Education*, 28(2), 221-243.
- Report of the Cross-Unit Planning Team on Multicultural Diversity and Women's Activities Programs and Services (MDWAPS). (2010) (pp. 1-9). Ames, IA: Midwestern University.
- Resource Management Model: Background. (2007). Retrieved from <http://www.public.iastate.edu/~budgetmodel/overview/background>

- Resource Management Model: Policies Procedures and Processes. (2010). Ames, IA: Midwestern University.
- Rhoads, R. A., Saenz, V., & Carducci, R. (2005). Higher education reform as a social movement: The case of affirmative action. *The Review of Higher Education*, 28(2), 191-220.
- Robinson, L. F., Butler, E. R., & Glennen, R. E. (1996). The changing roles and functions for offices of minority student affairs. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 16(1), 70-76.
- Rutgers The State University of New Jersey. (2010). Student affairs administration. Retrieved from <http://studentaffairs.rutgers.edu/about-us/administration>
- Schmidt, P. (2004, March 19). Not just for minority students anymore, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, p. A17.
- Schmidt, P. (2006, February 3). From 'minority' to 'diversity', *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, p. A24.
- Seltzer, R., Frazier, M., & Ricks, I. (1995). Multiculturalism, race, and education. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 64(2), 124-140.
- Shotton, H. J., Yellowfish, S., & Cintron, R. (2010). Island of sanctuary: The role of an American Indian culture center. In L. D. Patton (Ed.), *Culture Centers in Higher Education: Perspectives on Identity, Theory, and Practice* (pp. 49-60). Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Shuford, B. C., & Palmer, C. J. (2004). Multicultural affairs. In F. J. MacKinnon & Associates (Eds.), *Rentz's student affairs practice in higher education* (pp. 218-238). Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

- Smith, D. E. (1990). *Texts, facts, and femininity: Exploring the relations of ruling*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Smith, D. E. (2005). *Institutional ethnography: A sociology for people*. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.
- Smith, D. E. (2006a). Incorporating texts into ethnographic practice. In D. E. Smith (Ed.), *Institutional ethnography as practice* (pp. 65-88). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Smith, D. E. (2007). Institutional ethnography: From a sociology for women to a sociology for people. In S. N. Hesse-Biber (Ed.), *Handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis* (pp. 409-416). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Smith, D. E. (Ed.). (2006b). *Institutional ethnography as practice*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Smith, W. A. , Altbach, P. G., & Lomotey, K. (2002). *The racial crisis in American higher education: Continuing challenges for the twenty-first century* (Rev. ed.). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Solorzano, D. G. (1997). Images and words that wound: Critical race theory, racial stereotyping, and teacher education. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 24, 5-19.
- Solorzano, D. G. (1998). Critical race theory, race and gender microaggressions, and the experience of Chicana and Chicano scholars. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11(1), 121-136.
- Solorzano, D. G., Ceja, M., & Yosso, T. J. (2000). Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate: The experiences of African American college students. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 69(1/2), 60-73.

- Solorzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2001). Critical race and LatCrit theory and method: counter-storytelling. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 14(4), 471-495.
- Solorzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2002). A critical race counterstory or race, racism, and affirmative action. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, 35(2), 155-168.
- Solorzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2009). Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for educational research. In E. Taylor, D. Gillborn & G. Ladson-Billings (Eds.), *Foundations of Critical Race Theory in Education* (pp. 131-147). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Spanierman, L. B., Neville, H. A., Liao, H., Hammer, J. H., & Wang, Y. (2008). Participation in formal and informal campus diversity experiences: Effects on students' racial democratic beliefs. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 1(2), 108-125.
- Stennis-Williams, S., Terrell, M. C., & Haynes, A. W. (1988). The emergent role of multicultural education centers on predominantly white campuses. In M. C. Terrell & D. J. Wright (Eds.), *From survival to success: Promoting minority student retention* (Vol. 9, pp. 73-98). Washington, DC: NASPA.
- Sutton, E. M. (1998). The role of the Office of Minority Affairs in fostering cultural diversity. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 18(1), 33-39.
- Sutton, E. M., & McCluskey-Titus, P. (2010). Campus culture center directors' perspectives on advancement, current issues, and future directions. In L. D. Patton (Ed.), *Culture centers in higher education: Perspectives on identity, theory, and practice* (pp. 157-177). Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Taylor, C. A. (1986). *The handbook of minority student services*. Madison, WI: National Minority Campus Chronicle.

- Taylor, E. (1999). Critical race theory and interest convergence in the desegregation of higher education. In L. Parker, D. Deyhle & S. Villenas (Eds.), *Race is...Race isn't: Critical race theory and qualitative studies in education* (pp. 181-204). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Taylor, E. (2000). Critical race theory and interest convergence in the backlash against affirmative action: Washington state and Initiative 200. *Teachers College Record*, 102, 539-560.
- Taylor, E. (2009). The foundations of critical race theory in education: An introduction. In E. Taylor, D. Gillborn & G. Ladson-Billings (Eds.), *Foundations of critical race theory in education* (pp. 1-13). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Teddle, C., & Freeman, J. A. (2002). Twentieth-century desegregation in U.S. higher education. In W. A. Smith, P. G. Altbach & K. Lomotey (Eds.), *The racial crisis in American higher education* (pp. 77-97). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Terrell, M. C., & Wright, D. J. (Eds.). (1998). *From survival to success: Promoting minority student retention* (Vol. 9). Washington, DC: NASPA.
- Thelin, J. R. (2004). *A history of American higher education*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Thompson, K. (2010, October 6). Rally addresses public education in Iowa, *The Gazette*. Retrieved from <http://www.iowahighereducation.com/2010/10/rally-addresses-public-education-in-iowa/>

- Tierney, W. G., & Chung, J. K. (2002). Affirmative action in a post-*Hopwood* era. In W. A. Smith, P. G. Altbach & K. Lomotey (Eds.), *The racial crisis in American higher education* (pp. 271-283). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Tisdell, E. J. (2002). Researching one's passions: The perils and possibilities. In S. B. Merriam & Associates (Eds.), *Qualitative research in practice* (pp. 89-92). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Turner, S. M. (2006). Mapping institutions as work and texts. In D. E. Smith (Ed.), *Institutional ethnography as practice* (pp. 139-161). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- U. S. Bureau of the Census. (2000). *Iowa: General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2000*. Washington, DC.
- U. S. Bureau of the Census. (2006). *Iowa QuickFacts*. Washington, DC.
- U. S. Census Bureau. (2010a). *Educational attainment*. Washington, DC: Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/education/data/cps/2009/tables.html>.
- U. S. Census Bureau. (2010b). State and county quickfacts. *QuickFacts*. Retrieved from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/19000.html>
- University of Southern California. (2009). Student affairs organizational chart. Retrieved from <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/about/orgchart.html>
- Urciuoli, B. (1999). Producing multiculturalism in higher education: Who's producing what for whom? *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 12(3), 287-298.
- Villalpando, O. (2003). Self-segregation or self-preservation? A critical race theory and Latina/o critical theory analysis of a study of Chicana/o college students. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16(5), 619-646.

- Wallace, D., Ropers-Huilman, B., & Abel, R. (2004). Working in the margins: A study of university professionals serving marginalized student populations. *NASPA Journal*, 41(3), 569-587.
- Weick, K. E. (2000). Educational organizations as loosely coupled systems. In M. C. Brown (Ed.), *Organization and governance in higher education* (5th ed., pp. 36-49). Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Williams, D. (2006, August 24). Beyond diversity: Implementing a dynamic and evolving diversity change project. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 23, 50.
- Williams, D. A. (2003). Multicultural affairs in the age of 'valuing diversity'. *Black Issues in Higher Education*, 20(16), S4.
- Williams, D. A. (2005). Seven recommendations for highly effective senior diversity officers. *Black Issues in Higher Education*, 22(7), 53.
- Williams, D. A., Berger, J. B., & McClendon, S. A. (2005). Toward a model of inclusive excellence and change in postsecondary institutions. In N. O'Neill (Ed.), *Making excellence inclusive* (pp. 1-39). Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Williams, D. A., & Clowney, C. (2007). Strategic planning for diversity and organization change: A primer for higher-education leadership. In T. J. Delmont & R. Secor (Eds.), *Effective practices for academic leaders* (Vol. 2, pp. 1-16). Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Williams, D. G., & Land, R. R. (2006). The legitimization of Black subordination: The impact of color-blind ideology on African American education. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 75(4), 579-588.

Williams, J. B. (1997). *Race discrimination in public higher education: Interpreting federal civil rights enforcement, 1964-1996*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Williamson, J. A. (1999). In defense of themselves: The Black student struggle for success and recognition at predominantly white colleges and universities. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 68(1), 92-105.

Wolf-Wendel, L. E., Twombly, S. B., Tuttle, K. N., Ward, K., & Gaston-Gayles, J. L. (2004). *Reflecting back, looking forward: Civil rights and student affairs*. Washington, DC: National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.

Worthington, R. L., Navarro, R. L., Lowey, M., & Hart, J. (2008). Color-blind racial attitudes, social dominance orientation, racial-ethnic group membership and college students' perceptions of campus climate. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 1(1), 8-19.

Wright, U. T. (2003). *Institutional ethnography: A tool for merging research and practice*. Paper presented at the Midwest Research to Practice Conference in Adult, Continuing, and Community Education, Columbus, OH.

Yamane, D. (2001). *Student movements for multiculturalism: Challenging the curricular color line in higher education*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Yosso, T. J. (2006a). *Critical race counterstories along the Chicana/Chicano educational pipeline*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Yosso, T. J. (2006b). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. In A. D. Dixson & C. K. Rousseau (Eds.), *Critical race theory in education: All God's children got a song* (pp. 167-189). New York, NY: Routledge.

- Yosso, T. J., Parker, L., Solorzano, D. G., & Lynn, M. (2004). From Jim Crow to affirmative action and back again: A critical race discussion of racialized rationales and access to higher education. *Review of Research in Education, 28*, 1-25.
- Young, L. (1986). The role minority students centers play on predominantly white campuses. In C. A. Taylor (Ed.), *The handbook of minority student services* (pp. 13-22). Madison, WI: National Minority Campus Chronicle.

Appendix A

General Interview Protocols

First Stage Data Collection - Interviews with Joshua

- 1) Day to day job duties
 - a. What is your job description?
 - b. Does your job description reflect your actual daily activities?
 - c. Who do you report to?
 - d. How is your work evaluated?
 - e. Describe a typical workday.

- 2) Racial equity work
 - a. What do you do in your job to advocate for racial equity?
 - b. How much of your job involves advocating for racial equity?
 - c. Who else advocates for racial equity in the college?
 - d. How is racial equity defined in your college?
 - e. Are there documents in the college that define racial equity?

- 3) Trans local relations
 - a. What offices within the college shape your work?
 - b. What offices or departments outside of the college impact your work?
 - c. Are there policies within the department that inform your daily work?
 - d. What about policies outside of the college that are within Midwestern University?
 - e. Do you think there are policies outside of Midwestern University that impact your work as a MSS administrator?

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form for Primary Participant

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Title of Study: More than a window dressing?: A critical race institutional ethnography of a multicultural student services administrator at a PWI.

Investigators: Jessica J. Ranero, M.A.

This is a research study. Please take your time in deciding if you would like to participate. Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of how the policies, unwritten rules, and practices of institutions of higher education shape the work of multicultural students services (MSS) administrators and thus impact the overall access and success of students of color at a predominantly white institution (PWI). You are being invited to participate in this study because you are either a MSS administrator or work closely with a MSS administrator

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in the following: 1) a series of interviews; 2) provide access to work related documents such as calendars, reports, meeting agendas, and memos; and 3) allow principal investigator to conduct fieldwork observations of you while you are at work. Your participation in the study will take place over the summer and fall of 2010.

All of the data collected from you as the primary participant will be related to your work as a multicultural student services administrator for your college. The goal of the data collection is to understand the policies and procedures that impact your day-to-day work duties.

The interviews will be digitally recorded and will be retained by the principal investigator in a password-protected external hard drive for five years and will then be destroyed (approximately May 31, 2016). You may choose to skip any interview questions that you do not wish to answer or that make you feel uncomfortable.

RISKS

While participating in this study you may experience the following risks:

- The primary risk of participation in this study is that I will not be able to guarantee that I can maintain anonymity because of the nature and context of the study.

BENEFITS

If you decide to participate in this study there may be no direct benefit to you. It is hoped that the information gained in this study will benefit society by providing administrators and policymakers with information regarding how institutional policies either enhance or limit the work of multicultural student administrators as advocates for racial equity on campus.

COSTS AND COMPENSATION

You will not have any costs from participating in this study. You will not be compensated for participating in this study.

PARTICIPANT RIGHTS

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or leave the study at any time. If you decide to not participate in the study or leave the study early, it will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The principal investigator cannot guarantee confidentiality for participants in this study. Due to the methodology and setting of this study, many of the participants will be easily identifiable based on their campus involvement. Assuring confidentiality in this context is not feasible. Participants will have the opportunity to review a transcript of their interview and redact (edit out) any statements that they would like eliminated as data for the study. In addition, participants that are asked to share documents such as memos, meeting agendas, and final reports will be asked to remove any identifiers from the documents before sharing them with the principal investigator.

Records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations and will not be made publicly available. However, federal government regulatory agencies, auditing departments of Iowa State University, and the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves human subject research studies) may inspect and/or copy your records for quality assurance and data analysis. These records may contain private information.

If the results are published, the principal investigator will assign you a pseudonym to protect your identity.

QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during this study.

- For further information about the study contact either:
 - Principal Investigator: Jessica Ranero, (703) 434-1075, jranero@iastate.edu
 - Supervising Faculty: Dr. Lori Patton, (515) 294-3364, lpattton@iastate.edu

- If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515) 294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515) 294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE

Your signature indicates that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document, and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You will receive a copy of the written informed consent prior to your participation in the study.

Participant's Name (printed) _____

(Participant's Signature)

(Date)