A Study of the Tenure Review Experiences of Deaf Tenured Faculty

Karey T. Pine
St. John Fisher College

Recommended Citation

Please note that the Recommended Citation provides general citation information and may not be appropriate for your discipline. To receive help in creating a citation based on your discipline, please visit libguides.sjfc.edu/citations.
A Study of the Tenure Review Experiences of Deaf Tenured Faculty

Abstract
The purpose of this study was to consider the ways successfully tenured deaf faculty members experienced the tenure review process, and what knowledge and accommodations could be identified to support deaf junior faculty members’ successful navigation of future tenure review. Through the use of semi-structured interviews, twelve deaf full-time professors described an experience inclusive of supports and challenges toward their successful receipt of tenure at a mid-sized comprehensive university in western New York State. The participants’ descriptions revealed an experience framed by seven interrelated themes. These included: (a) a persistent and resilient spirit, (b) of friends and foes, (c) concealing “who I am” to become “who I want to be;” (d) scholarship at what cost? (e) access as hindrance or help, (f) “it was almost like a changing of the guard,” and (g) being prepared. Understanding how tenure review processes and questions of accommodation and access are experienced by this uniquely positioned community can inform higher education leaders on a variety of campuses seeking to expand the diversity of faculty and scholarship, as well as offer important advice to deaf and other minority faculty members navigating tenure review in more solitary circumstances on college campuses across America.

Document Type
Dissertation

Degree Name
Doctor of Education (EdD)

Department
Executive Leadership

First Supervisor
Guillermo Montes

Second Supervisor
Anne Wahl

This dissertation is available at Fisher Digital Publications: https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/education_etd/16
A Study of the Tenure Review Experiences of Deaf Tenured Faculty

By

Karey T. Pine

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by:
Dr. Guillermo Montes

Committee member:
Dr. Anne Wahl

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education
St. John Fisher College

August 2012
Dedication

I believe people and places cross our journeys to share lessons which are often unclear to us at the start. This journey was no different, and in reflection, the lessons have been profound. I am blessed to be able to thank a number of individuals, groups, and communities.

To my husband Bill, and daughter Olivia, you have been an understanding, kind, and supportive cheering section on days when I celebrated this journey, and on days when there seemed less to celebrate. Bill, you know I believe you will be sainted for the sacrifices you have made that continue to afford me opportunities as significant as this one, always with a spirit of love and care that is unwavering. Olivia, my hope is that sharing your mom with this process has given you more appreciation for the importance of education, and inspired a belief in what is possible for you.

There are individuals who helped me to believe this was possible for me, and those who helped me to operationalize it! Dr. Guillermo Montes, you have been first a chair, and then a genuine and kind friend and believer. Please know you have inspired me to pause, to question, and to be forever changed as a member of an academic community. Dr. Anne Wahl, you have truly been the best committee member. I am a better writer, thinker, and person because of you and your investment in me. Dr. Heath Boice-Pardee, you were first a genuine and kind friend, and now also my supervisor. Your support and flexibility has been instrumental throughout, and particularly on the
final two months of this journey. For the Unique ONEs, the Executive Leadership faculty, RIT’s Center for Campus Life, and its Division of Student Affairs, you have all created special and strong webs of support that have caught me when I needed a lift, kept our worlds moving when I needed to step away, and sometimes just encouraged me when I wanted to cry. I am forever grateful to each of you as I reflect on this journey.

Finally, there are no words to adequately thank my dearest of friends and colleagues from the deaf community. Some of you made this possible by helping to tell this story, and so many more of you made this possible by helping me to rewrite my own. I understand friendship, advocacy, love, trust, and faith in profoundly different ways because of the angels and allies among you who have taken the time to patiently teach and learn with me. Please know your lessons live in my head and my heart every day. I am because you are, and I know our journeys together will continue.
Biographical Sketch

Karey Pine is currently the Senior Director of Campus Life for the Rochester Institute of Technology. Ms. Pine attended William Smith College, graduating in 1987 with her Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics. She completed her Master of Science degree in Career and Human Resource Development with the Rochester Institute of Technology in 1993. She began her doctoral studies in May of 2010 with St. John Fisher College in the Ed.D. program in Executive Leadership. Ms. Pine pursued her research on the tenure review experiences of deaf tenured faculty under the direction of Dr. Guillermo Montes, and received her Ed.D. degree in 2012.
Abstract

The purpose of this study was to consider the ways successfully tenured deaf faculty members experienced the tenure review process, and what knowledge and accommodations could be identified to support deaf junior faculty members’ successful navigation of future tenure review. Through the use of semi-structured interviews, twelve deaf full-time professors described an experience inclusive of supports and challenges toward their successful receipt of tenure at a mid-sized comprehensive university in western New York State. The participants’ descriptions revealed an experience framed by seven interrelated themes. These included: (a) a persistent and resilient spirit, (b) of friends and foes, (c) concealing “who I am” to become “who I want to be;” (d) scholarship at what cost? (e) access as hindrance or help, (f) “it was almost like a changing of the guard,” and (g) being prepared. Understanding how tenure review processes and questions of accommodation and access are experienced by this uniquely positioned community can inform higher education leaders on a variety of campuses seeking to expand the diversity of faculty and scholarship, as well as offer important advice to deaf and other minority faculty members navigating tenure review in more solitary circumstances on college campuses across America.
Table of Contents

Dedication ....................................................................................................................................... ii

Biographical Sketch ....................................................................................................................... iv

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................... v

List of Tables .................................................................................................................................. ix

Chapter 1: Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1

Statement of the Problem .............................................................................................................. 7

Theoretical Rationale ..................................................................................................................... 19

Research Question ......................................................................................................................... 27

Significance of the Study .............................................................................................................. 28

Summary of Introduction .............................................................................................................. 29

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature ............................................................................................. 30

Boyer’s Model of Scholarship ....................................................................................................... 31

Academic Reflections on Scholarship and Tenure ...................................................................... 33

An Empirical Review of Scholarship and Tenure ...................................................................... 40

Summary of Literature Review .................................................................................................... 69

Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology ................................................................................... 74
Conclusion .................................................................................................................. 164

References ....................................................................................................................... 169

Appendix A ..................................................................................................................... 177

Appendix B ..................................................................................................................... 181

Appendix C ..................................................................................................................... 183
List of Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1.1</td>
<td>A Comparison of the Pipeline for Deaf Faculty Hiring</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.1</td>
<td>Summary Demographics and Pseudonyms for Deaf Tenured Faculty</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1: Introduction

The ability of American higher education to remain vital and relevant within society depends on the nation’s faculty. Faculty members face multiple demands while contributing to the human stores of knowledge in ways applicable and important to their communities (Boyer, 1990). Among these demands is the education of increasingly and extraordinarily diverse students. Boyer’s (1990) definition of diversity for America’s student body references race, ethnicity, and gender. He also includes the diversity of emerging groups, comprised of a growing number of students with language, learning, and physical disabilities. To generate bodies of knowledge which are significant to the changing world, and create effective responses to these diverse classrooms, colleges and universities must invite and retain an increasingly diverse faculty. Adopting a broader understanding of what knowledge and experience matters when the academy defines and recognizes the achievement of scholarship, through the rewarding of tenure, is one way suggested as a means to this end (Boyer).

For many of America’s colleges and universities, attaining a diverse faculty means increasing the number of faculty members of color and women faculty. The benefits of an academic community inclusive of faculty of color and women faculty are well documented in scholarly research. Studies reveal that the inclusion of individuals from these collective backgrounds enhances the academic experience and environment for all students, while advancing societal contributions to what is known (Hutchison,
The justification for pursuing a diverse faculty in the broader context of America’s colleges and universities includes the impact on the minority and majority student communities, and the contributions made to the expansion of knowledge (American Society for Higher Education, 2009; Turner, 2002).

Two goals for colleges and universities have remained consistent through history: their importance in preparing the next generation of citizens in an increasingly global society, and their ability to expand what is known and the ways it is known (Boyer, 1990). Though this generation of college students includes increasing numbers of students of color and women students, they are living and learning on campuses that are still administered and instructed by predominantly white and/or male faculty members. The presence of and interaction with faculty of color and women faculty helps students from similar backgrounds understand what is possible for their own achievement. These faculty members also become mentors, confidants, and guides as students find their own way in an academic world that is “substantially different” than that of their “white male peers” (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 644). Service by minority faculty in this capacity provides students of color and women students various forms of social capital to support their success in the academy, and ultimately their success when navigating diverse environments and organizations upon graduation (Yosso, 2005).

In addition to the support faculty of color and women faculty provide to minority students on campuses, these individuals offer important contributions to traditional majority student learning, and achievement of a critical campus mission. Students today will enter a rapidly expanding global society, and will need to move comfortably across
and among different cultural communities to ensure their success (American Society for Higher Education, 2009). The more diversity a campus faculty includes, the broader the exposure to different perspectives and backgrounds which can be offered to students, and the more likely it is all students will achieve within the global workplaces and communities they will enter upon graduation (American Society for Higher Education, 2009; Turner, 2002).

In addition to developing a more prepared citizenry, colleges and universities provide society with an incubator for growing society’s collective body of knowledge (Boyer, 1990). Intellectual expansion and stimulation occurs when new research questions are asked by individuals with different viewpoints and life experiences (Turner, 2002). Limiting who is welcomed into the college or university will ultimately limit what can be known and the ways it can be known. This diminishes American colleges’ and universities’ central opportunity to contribute in relevant ways to an evolving global society (American Society for Higher Education, 2009).

In 1990, Boyer called on higher education to re-define scholarship, with the vision that this would ensure the long-term success of American colleges and universities. Referring to the “intolerably small pool” of underrepresented faculty, Boyer described the current state of affairs as a “shocking weakness, if not an indictment, of American education” (p. 66). He offered a broader definition of scholarship, in part, to support opportunities to diversify the faculty interests, skills, backgrounds, and experiences in ways unmatched by America’s European counterparts (Boyer).

More than twenty years have passed since this mandate was issued. Boyer’s (1990) goals for and definitions of scholarship and diversity in the academy were bold.
Among his considerations of diversity within the student body, his predictions of increasing numbers of students of color and students with a variety of physical, emotional, and learning disabilities have proven accurate (U. S. Department of Justice, 2011). Given Boyer’s consideration of a diverse faculty of color as a mechanism for improving the undergraduate experience for students of color, it is reasonable to infer that he also would expect a faculty inclusive of individuals with varying disabilities to improve and enhance the experience of students with disabilities.

In 1990, while Ernest Boyer was challenging the academic community with his broader definition of scholarship, the United States government was making historic strides toward broadening the nation’s definition of diversity and inclusion. The passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was celebrated as the most significant civil rights legislation since the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (O’Brien, 2001). With origins in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504), ADA was viewed as a broader and more significant legislative step.

While 504 had centered access requirements on federally funded agencies, ADA was intended to support broader reforms to access and accommodation in both non-profit and for profit settings. Recognizing individuals with disabilities as full members of society, and as having inherent rights to opportunity within that society, the ADA offered both freedom and protection for these individuals in the workplace, school, and public settings (O’Brien). In part, the law introduced that these settings could and should accommodate individuals with disabilities by providing appropriate alteration to overtly limiting environments or circumstances. Title I of ADA is designated to address issues of accommodation in the workplace (U. S. Department of Justice, 2011).
To respond more adequately to Boyer’s (1990) broad call to diversify, colleges and universities must adequately understand what is preventing or limiting members of underrepresented communities from entering academia as faculty members. Beyond Boyer’s ideology, consideration of the academic workplace for faculty members with disabilities is also a matter of regulatory importance (U. S. Department of Justice, 2011). While substantial documentation exists outlining the measures of inadequate representation and unwelcoming environments for faculty of color and women faculty, little mention is made regarding the presence of or conditions for faculty with disabilities, and the conditions which impact their presence as members of the faculty (Trower & Chait, 2002; Turner, 2002; Turner et al., 1996).

Among faculty of color, research indicates differences in experience, opportunity, and outcome exist between and within racial and ethnic groups. These differences impact perspectives on what are noted as the barriers for each of the racial and ethnic communities in today’s colleges and universities, and would subsequently impact any menu of recommended solutions (Trower, 2009). Similarly, the vast array of conditions and circumstances which encompass individuals with physical, emotional, or learning disabilities makes considering this group in the aggregate irresponsible for the purpose of understanding any specific environmental and cultural barriers which limit access to, and interest in, faculty positions at the college and university level (Peters, 2000).

Deaf people in America can be identified as a cultural and linguistic minority and as a group with an identified disability (Padden & Humphries, 1988). This multifaceted identification provides a unique opportunity to understand the experience and environment of faculty members from at least two relevant lenses. The current lack of
deaf faculty in America’s colleges and universities, when coupled with two identities of relevance to the problem, makes the experience of the comparatively few deaf faculty members uniquely interesting when seeking ways to better develop, welcome, and sustain an increasingly diverse faculty in America.

As recently as 2008, of the nation’s nearly 11 million deaf people, just over 10,000 were serving in some form of teaching role at the postsecondary level (American Community Survey, 2008). Table 1.1 provides a comparison between the pipeline for hearing faculty at the college and university level and for deaf faculty. Consistent with the condition of other underrepresented communities, this disparity suggests that both Boyer’s vision and ADA’s expectations for a diverse and representative campus have not become a reality for deaf people.

Boyer (1990) supposed that a broader definition and application of what it means to be a scholar would be useful in establishing a more diverse faculty. The Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) compelled all workplaces to consider the inherent barriers to access, and their impact on attracting and retaining employees with disabilities. The disparity documented between hearing people serving as faculty and deaf people serving as faculty proportionate to their respective US populations generates questions in the context of both perspectives.

When considering Boyer (1990), there is uncertainty as to whether the definition of scholarship has been sufficiently broadened to allow for inclusion of the unique talents and knowledge of deaf faculty members. Given the goals of both 504 and ADA (1990), questions arise regarding the environment and language within the college or university workplace, and its impact on deaf peoples’ access to the processes, systems, and
networks necessary for their success as faculty scholars. Two decades later, and with the convergence of support by Ernest Boyer, The Carnegie Foundation, and the US Government, there are still large gaps between proportions of hearing and deaf people entering college, and ultimately working as faculty in America. Several aspects relevant to considering this gap are helpful for providing context. These include (a) an overview of the history and present state of deaf people in America, (b) a review of workplace disability laws, and (c) an examination of Boyer’s proposed model for reconsidering scholarship.

Table 1.1

A Comparison of the Pipeline for Deaf Faculty Hiring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>US Population</th>
<th>Hearing</th>
<th>Percentage Hearing</th>
<th>Deaf</th>
<th>Percentage Deaf</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>293,060,192</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10,999,536</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in College</td>
<td>18,662,100</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>136,000</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate from College</td>
<td>7,147,584</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>31,280</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postsecondary Teaching</td>
<td>509,942</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>10,361</td>
<td>.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Data provided using *American Community Survey* (2008), and *US Census Bureau* (2010) statistics.

**Statement of the Problem**

**Deaf people in America.** Studies of deaf people in America repeatedly define and understand this community through two distinct – and often competing - societal lenses. One perspective offers that Deaf people are a cultural and linguistic community of individuals whose orientation and understanding of the world is visual (Burch, 2002;
Hauser, O'Hearn, McKee, Steider, & Thew, 2010; Lane, 1994). Almost antithetical is the perspective that deaf people are individuals with a deficit or disability, given their inability to hear (Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf, 1990; Reisler, 2002). There is a clear outline of historic events noted specifically and repeatedly in the literature for their impact on these definitions of culture, language, and ability in the deaf community.

The use of Deaf and deaf to denote diversity within the community was first suggested by James Woodward (1972). Clarification regarding the intentional use of Deaf and deaf is important as it is used deliberately in discourse related to the community. The generally accepted distinction is that Deaf refers to a community of individuals who share a visually centered culture and the use of American Sign Language (ASL). Traditionally, deaf refers to the larger community of people who share the condition of not hearing (Woodward).

It would be simplistic to suggest that the differentiation of D and d is the only distinction to be made about the diversity of the deaf community. As in any community, differences with regard to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and other individual dimensions of identity all contribute to a rich diversity of perspective, belief, and experience. Given that the primary purpose of this study is to understand the tenure experience of deaf faculty, and questions of accommodation under 504 and ADA, attention to the diversity of Deaf and deaf will provide the most useful and relevant characteristic for consideration. The discussion of several key events and their impact on the broad deaf community provides context to inform subsequent dialogue regarding deaf faculty members’ experiences with tenure processes, as well as determining whether 504
or ADA provide any useful application for deaf faculty members in the academic tenure process.

A visually-centric cultural and linguistic community. The birth of a culture and language for Deaf people in America is reported to have occurred in the corridors and classrooms of residential schools for the Deaf (Lane, 1994; Padden & Humphries, 1988; Van Cleve & Crouch, 1989). Residential schools for the Deaf were established in the United States between 1817 and 1912, and became the first venues for deaf people to gather, transmit culture, and share what has been identified as their natural language (Lane). Estimates are that 90% to 95% of deaf children are born to hearing parents who initially have no instinctual understanding of how a deaf person learns or lives (Hauser et al., 2010; McDermid, 2009). The establishment of residential schools was significant in bringing previously isolated deaf individuals together, providing role models and networks through the Deaf adults routinely employed as teachers, dorm supervisors, and school administrators, and fostering the emergence of a Deaf culture through these collective exchanges and interactions (Padden & Humphries).

By 1882, more than 92% of residential schools used American Sign Language (ASL) for instruction and social interaction in and outside their classrooms (Padden & Humphries, 1988). Fifty percent of the teachers and leaders of these schools were Deaf (Van Cleve & Crouch, 1989). While residential schools had become incubators for the academic and cultural development of Deaf people, the circumstance of these schools was to change almost immediately following their establishment (Ladd, 2003).

“Becoming hearing.” The second annual meeting of the World Congress to Improve the Welfare of the Deaf and Blind, known in present day as the International
Congress on the Education of the Deaf, was held in Milan in 1880. D/deaf teachers and administrators were in large part banned from the Congress (Lane, 1994; Van Cleve & Crouch, 1989). Led by Alexander Graham Bell, the Congressional meeting masked a secondary agenda. Bell wished to promote an oral method of teaching deaf children (Lane). Using his own students, who were primarily deafened at ages after spoken language development had occurred, Bell and his colleagues conducted two days of several well-rehearsed presentations designed to showcase their oral method of educating deaf people. At the conclusion, a Congressional resolution was proposed to ban the use of signed languages worldwide for educating deaf students. With the only significant opposition coming from the American delegation, the resolution was passed (Van Cleve & Crouch). The effect of this resolution was immediate and its roots long-lasting.

Stemming from the resolution, there were sudden and drastic changes for the teaching of deaf children, both with who was permitted to teach and in where these children were taught (Van Cleve & Crouch, 1989). In the decade following the Milan Conference, Deaf teacher representation dropped from 50% to only 25% in residential schools. By 1914, representation of Deaf professionals was reduced to only 20%, and by 1988 representation of Deaf teachers in residential and day schools for the Deaf had fallen to the lowest reported average of 10% (Lane, 1994). As recently as 2008, the increase in representation to a reported average of 33%, suggests that the deaf community continues to recover from the impact of the Milan Conference of 1880 (DeafNation, 2007).

After the Milan Conference, the educational philosophies of residential schools were forced to change, and day schools for the education of deaf children also emerged.
These day schools were promoted by Bell and his Oralist colleagues. Often partnered with public schools, Oralists believed regular daily interaction with hearing teachers, students, and families would aid in the English language development of deaf children and in their assimilation into hearing society (Lane, 1994). The prevalence of oral education grew through the early twentieth century. In 1882, only 7.5% to 8% of the 7,000 deaf pupils in America were taught using an oral method of instruction. However, by 1919, approximately 80% of deaf students were reported to receive their classroom instruction without the use of any manual language (Van Cleve & Crouch, 1989).

Questions did arise regarding the effectiveness of purely or predominantly oral methods in educating deaf people. From as early as 1872 to present, the effectiveness of Oralism as a teaching method was questioned and challenged by American deaf educators (Ladd, 2003). There is an educational and cultural approach which supports the existence of a natural language of deaf people. This natural language is a visual and signed language. In this context, English is viewed as a second language for deaf people, and limiting to a deaf individual’s ability to fully express ideas and thoughts, because of its auditory and spoken nature (Ladd; Lane, 1994). It is clear that the debate among American educators and the Deaf community regarding the appropriate view of language, culture, ability, and environment required for teaching, developing, and evaluating deaf children and young adults gained fervor as a result of the Milan Congress. This debate remains unresolved, and as a result impacts deaf people’s accumulation of necessary social capital, educational acquisition, and primary and secondary language proficiency, each integral to the success of faculty scholars in college and university environments. (Bergey, 2007; Burch, 2002).
**General demographics.** When considering any demographic information regarding deaf people in America, it is important to note the complexities in identifying the population. Deaf can be both a cultural identifier and an audiological measurement. For some affected individuals, deafness carries a stigma and is to be masked. While others with minimal audiological loss may consider Deaf to be the core of their identity because of their upbringing in a Deaf family and community (Walter, 2010). Additionally, because it is an identity that is often realized, shaped, and clarified well into a person’s adult life, deaf may be a classification with which an individual would not identify at one point in his or her life, but may readily identify in subsequent years (Mitchell, 2006).

In light of these complexities, the data most accepted from nationally designated research centers at both Gallaudet University and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) is from two sources. The Survey of Income and Program Participation and the American Community Survey (ACS) are both used as key data sources (Mitchell, 2006; Walter, 2010). Information from both is consistent, supporting the reliability of the reported demographics. The ACS data was more recent at the time of this review, and selected as the primary data set for this reason.

The 2008 ACS reports an estimated 11 million individuals in America with some form of hearing loss that impacts their ability to participate in spoken conversations, compared to more than 293 million hearing people. Deaf people represent approximately 3.3% of the overall population. The ACS indicates 45 as the age in which a notable increase in the identification of deafness occurs in the population, which is concurrently the age at which medical reports identify the onset of age-related degeneration of hearing
individuals (Walter, 2010). These latent, age-related hard-of-hearing and deaf individuals are not as likely to identify with deaf people as their cultural or linguistic community. As faculty, this group is also more likely to have achieved tenure when they were considered fully hearing, and, therefore will be excluded from consideration in this study.

**Deaf people and educational attainment.** Deaf people graduate from high school at a rate of 56%, compared to hearing peers who graduate at a rate of 84% (Walter, 2010). Of deaf people who graduate from high school, approximately 46% receive some college education during their lifetimes. Of hearing people who graduate from high school 60% receive some college education (2020 context statement: Strategic vision for the College, 2009). More deaf students attend 2-year college programs and less attend 4-year when compared to their hearing peers. Some of the disparity between hearing and deaf students’ acceptance to and choice in the type of college they will attend is likely attributed to assessments of deaf high school graduates, which indicate nearly half read at or below the 4th grade level (Walter, 2010).

Based on data retrieved by offices of special services in colleges and universities nationwide, approximately 30,000 deaf students attend college and receive some kind of support services through their institutions. Not all deaf students will seek support services (Walter, 2010). More advanced formulas developed by research centers at NTID and Gallaudet University estimate the total number of deaf students enrolled in colleges nationally is closer to 136,000 (Walter).

For a college or university faculty member, acquisition of the doctorate degree is a typical requirement for advancement at the university level and among academic
colleagues in and beyond the home university. There is disparity between the degree acquisition of hearing and deaf people at every degree level, and the gap continues between these groups at the doctoral degree level (American Community Survey, 2008). American Community Survey (2008) data indicates 1 out of 1,500 hearing people under the age of 45 has earned a doctorate, while only 1 out of an approximate 100,000 deaf people under the age of 45 has successfully attained the same degree. Recalling this disproportion in doctoral degree attainment is useful when analyzing the infinitesimal number of deaf faculty who achieve tenure in American colleges and universities.

**Disability laws in America.** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 was signed into law by President George H. W. Bush on July 26, 1990. This represented the culmination of more than a decade of work between civil rights activists and members of Congress. The ADA was considered the final step in the extension of rights to individuals with disabilities in work and social settings beyond government sponsored programs and agencies.

Seventeen years earlier Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504) had legally established people with disabilities as a protected class, and that no agency, program, or service receiving financial support from the federal or state government was permitted to discriminate on the basis of an individual’s known or perceived disability. The establishment of this law was considered transformative for its cross-disability attention to this community of Americans, and for its effort to shift legal responsibilities for access and inclusion from the individual with the disability to those managing the workplace or program environment. In passing this law, Congress had legitimized experiences of disability discrimination. Advocates capitalized on this momentum to
legally address a number of additional arenas where discriminatory practices had impacted the lives and livelihoods of individuals with disabilities (Mayerson, 1991).

The Americans with Disabilities Act is categorized as a civil rights law prohibiting discrimination based on disability, and impacting an estimated 43 million people with disabilities in the United States (U. S. Department of Justice, 2011; Hankins, 2010; Papinchok, 2005). Framed in five titles, each is focused on environments and contexts in which Congress believed discrimination against people with disabilities was occurring, and had not previously been addressed (U. S. Department of Justice). Title I of the Act applies to all businesses and agencies of 15 or more employees. Organizations funded or operated by the government are excluded, since 504 already serves to regulate these organizations.

Specific attention is paid in both ADA and 504 to protect and provide access to individuals with disabilities in the areas of position application, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, and training (U. S. Department of Justice). For the purpose of the questions and problems being considered, Title I of ADA, as the section of the law addressing discrimination in the workplace, and 504, as a similar law with expectations for federally funded agencies will both be of central relevance. It is the protection and access afforded in support of the advancement of deaf tenure track faculty which will be important to the questions posed for this study.

Initially heralded as a victory for disability rights activists and advocates, the ADA was seen as a significant win in the effort to shift views regarding individuals with disabilities. Until ADA, the prevailing model used when considering laws to protect these individuals centered on a definition of the community as damaged, and in need of
services and support which rehabilitated the individual with the disability (O'Brien, 2001). The implication was that these individuals were “broken” in one manner or another (Morris, 1991). The Americans with Disabilities Act was the first law which considered the rights of individuals with disabilities, and in the US, the extension of rights is paramount to acknowledgement of one’s humanity. The Title I section of the law was a source of initial pride among activists, providing for protection from discrimination in the workplace (O'Brien). This pride was short lived as efforts to apply ADA became mired in court proceedings.

Almost immediately, it became clear that the promise of equal opportunity in the workplace through ADA Title I produced more disappointment than hope for individuals with disabilities (O'Brien, 2001). Several factors led to this disappointment. Powerful lobbies in business and government became concerned about costs for accommodation and access services, and as a result advocated for narrow definitions and applications of ADA. Additionally, federal and Supreme Court judges engaged themselves more routinely in the legal discourse of defining disability rather than in determining reasonable accommodations (O'Brien). As a result, very little workplace change occurred for individuals with disabilities. In fact, from 1990 to 1999, 80% of all Title I cases were thrown out on summary judgment, and therefore never presented at trial. Of the remaining 20%, 94% were decided in favor of the employer (O'Brien).

Disability rights groups, however, had power and lobbies of their own who had gathered strength and support through the 1990s and into the new millennium (Anderson, 2009). Sparked by frustration and disappointment in watching the ADA used repeatedly against individuals with disabilities, activists and advocates for the equal rights of these
individuals launched their own long and persistent plan for alerting Congressional officers. Aimed at educating Congress about the disparity between spirit and application of ADA, the evidence of the success of these disability rights activists’ can be found in the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008 (Anderson).

The language of Title I of the ADAAA is clear and direct in expressing Congress’ own disappointment with federal and Supreme Courts in their application of ADA. Cited for unnecessarily narrowing the definition of disability, and ultimately for not providing the protection intended by Congress under ADA, the amendments attempt to provide clarity and direction regarding the breadth and scope of individuals and circumstances that are to be protected from discrimination under ADA. The ADAAA was signed in July of 2008, and became effective January 1, 2009 (U. S. Department of Justice, 2011). A review of post-ADAAA case law indicates some improvement in the protection and access of individuals with disabilities, though no cases of deaf or disabled faculty members seeking judicial review of tenure decisions under ADA Title I are recorded (J. Gravitz, personal communication, April 4, 2011).

*Deaf people and disability laws.* The focus of this study will be to determine what part 504, ADA or its Amendments Act can or should have in supporting a more diverse faculty, inclusive of deaf people. It is important to note that there is controversy within the deaf community when considering the use of disability legislation to secure or protect individuals’ rights (Lane, 1994). Members of the Deaf community, who consider themselves a cultural and linguistic minority, may perceive the use of these laws as an indication that Deaf is not simply different, but deficient. Countering this is the prevailing view from some members of the deaf community purporting that the disability
rights movement which led to the passing of ADA “helps to frame deafness as a social difference more than a medical one” (Leigh & Pollard, 2003).

Regardless of whether a deaf individual subscribes to a negative or positive connotation of 504 or ADA, it is clear that Congress and the courts intended deaf people to file for claims of protection under these laws. Most workplace accommodations offered to deaf employees involve provisions for third-party communication access services at formal times and places deemed critical by either the employee, the employer, or both (U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2011). To date, case law involving requests for accommodations which require direct language access have been exclusive to the delivery of mental health services (Tugg v. Towey, 1994). In this case, it was decided that the mental health agency must hire sign-fluent clinicians because providing an interpreter did not meet the equal accessibility to treatment standard of ADA (Leigh & Pollard, 2003).

The journey of a junior faculty member to their receipt of tenure is a process dependent on accessing networks, information, and communication that is more likely to be the result of an individual’s connection to informal networks, work culture, and systems (Diggs, Garrison-Wade, Estrada, & Galindo, 2009). Deaf individuals may be unable to readily engage with these informal environments because of an inability to hear conversations which provide hearing faculty members the avenues for access to networks, work culture, and systems. If the inability to hear results in a lack of access to informally shared information relevant in the acquisition of tenure, questions considering the definition of “reasonable accommodation” under the law become pertinent for
considering the ways faculty opportunities and advancement could become more accessible to this underrepresented community.

**Theoretical Rationale**

**Boyer’s Model of Scholarship.** This study will consider how deaf people experience the tenure process, and whether accommodations should or can be identified to support a deaf faculty member’s achievement of tenure. In 1990, Ernest L. Boyer’s *Scholarship Reconsidered* offered the national higher education community a new paradigm for considering faculty scholarship. This Model of Scholarship provides what is now the most common and relevant conceptual framework for this research study. Boyer’s framework challenged longstanding traditions about what mattered for the work of faculty in the university, and created national dialogues which resulted in a shift in the prevailing theory used to define scholarship in America’s colleges and universities (Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997).

Boyer’s (1990) Model of Scholarship was born from a need to more accurately illustrate the history and diversity of faculty contribution and college or university function, in a manner that had been previously obscured by a limited definition of scholarship. In the 45 years prior to Boyer’s Model, scholarship in higher education had been explained and verified using a faculty member’s record of publication, presentation, and citation as the sole measure of achievement (Boyer, 1990). Reconsidering the varying types of colleges and universities, the myriad of ways expertise and innovation is exhibited across disciplines of knowledge, and the full breadth of ways higher education is expected to contribute to dialogues on problems of local, national, and international concern, four aspects of faculty work emerged to explain and understand scholarship.
The four aspects of scholarship described in this model are (a) discovery, (b) integration, (c) application, and (d) teaching. Providing a historical context for how American colleges and universities have arrived at these current restrictions, Boyer challenged academic leaders across the country to more broadly and boldly redefine the standards, moving away from comparing and competing, and toward a model of complementing and collaborating (Boyer).

**Historical context.** Understanding how each aspect of Boyer’s (1990) Model is derived and defined is useful for considering how they collectively interact in redefining the nature of scholarship. The scholarship of discovery is most closely related to what was previously identified as research. Research as an endeavor of the American university is believed to have originated in the early 1800s, and was inspired by the German tradition of the research university. Boyer considers discovery in a much broader context than earlier definitions of research would permit. Discovery in this Model is defined as the pursuit of knowledge through a process of prescribed investigative inquiry. Inclusive of traditionally defined research, discovery also incorporates creative discovery in the fields of the literary, visual, and performing arts (Boyer, 1990).

The scholarship of integration, like discovery, reflects the role of inquiry in the evaluation of a faculty scholar. Identified as the act of connecting knowledge between fields, this work requires the ability to conduct disciplined study along often blurred boundaries of knowledge, and is critical to redefining scholarship (Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997). Integration is characterized by the skill of understanding discoveries in one field of study in the context of their relationship or impact on other fields of study.
(Boyer, 1990). It is the work of integration which ultimately provides authenticity of meaning to the pursuit of knowledge (Boyer).

While the scholarly acts of discovery and integration illustrate the pursuit and synthesis of knowledge, the scholarship of application highlights the importance of using knowledge in the service of responding to larger societal issues (Boyer, 1990). With historical reference to the concept of land grant universities, Boyer (1990) is careful to distinguish the service of scholarly application as different from the modern-day notions of service to social and civic functions on and off the campus. Emerging in the mid-1800s, land grant universities supported scientific understanding in the field of agriculture, and used that discovery to generate advancements for the practical work of the farmer (Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997). Scholarly service in the present is similarly characterized by its advancement of disciplined solutions to large and complex problems plaguing an increasingly global society. Service in the scholarship of application is also necessary for providing new insights and intellectual considerations, brought back to the lab and the classroom to inform further study. Therefore, to be considered scholarly service, the faculty member’s activity must create interaction between field-relevant theory and practice to both reinforce and renew the usefulness of knowledge beyond the academy (Boyer).

Boyer (1990) offers the scholarship of teaching as the ultimate demonstration that knowledge is understood by the scholar. The value and centrality of focus ascribed to teaching in America’s colleges and universities is inherited from the English traditions of the first settlers. These settlers established colonial colleges with faculty largely responsible for the development of the young scholar, and ultimately responsible for the
advancement of both the educational and moral development of their early students. Effective teaching today is grounded in faculty members’ engagement with the intellectual capital of their respective fields, but remains validated by their engagement with students, and in the creation of dynamic and communal learning experiences where knowledge is continuously extended and transformed (Boyer, 1990). As importantly, scholarly teaching is still expected to be grounded in a high level of regard for pedagogy, and to inspire future scholars, securing the continuous pursuit of knowledge and insuring the expansion of what will be known to future generations (Boyer).

Beyond reframing scholarship, Boyer (1990) offers an innovative explanation of how knowledge is acquired. In his Model, where the work of the scholar is to acquire knowledge through pursuit, connection, use, understanding, and expansion, Boyer successfully honors college and university roots in the traditions of English and German higher education, and insightfully acknowledges a uniquely American mandate to synthesize these scholarly functions. His framework articulates the manner in which the scholarly work of America’s faculty can continue to make clear and meaningful contributions to the world’s knowledge, in ways that are distinct from our global colleagues (Boyer, 1990).

**Tenure and the tenure process.** The theoretical Model for Scholarship is operationalized on American college and university campuses through the standards and measures used in the tenure review process. Tenure doctrines often describe the expectations for junior faculty with regard to the scholarly activities they may pursue, and the relative weight of each of those activities toward the receipt of tenure. On the majority of American college and university campuses, Boyer’s (1990) Model for
Scholarship is used to frame these scholarly activities. The frame and language of the tenure policy may align directly with Boyer’s (1990) Model, or may be broadly inclusive of conceptual definitions and practices of the Model (Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997).

A cornerstone of American colleges and universities since the early 1900s, tenure is rooted in fundamental principles for the preservation of academic freedom. In 1940, the American Association of University Professors published their *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure*, defining academic freedom as the right to research, publish, and teach in a manner allowing for open dialogue, and the presentation of potentially controversial ideas in the learned subject matter of a faculty member (American Association of University Professors, 1995). American college and university tenure documents still routinely include statements on academic freedom, with many using the exact language and principles presented in 1940 (The Project on Faculty Appointments at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, 1999).

Tenure, as the means of protecting the rights to academic freedom for faculty members, is defined by an assurance of “‘permanent’ or ‘continuous’ employment until retirement, barring dismissal for cause” (Trower, 2002, p. 43). Supporters of tenure assert that it is only through this assurance of on-going employment that faculty members will avail themselves to researching, disseminating, and teaching ideas which may challenge conventional thinking. It is in this challenge that new knowledge is both discovered and shared (Moody, 2000). Though opponents argue a lack of necessity on modern-day campuses, because “free speech is ingrained in academic life,” tenure remains a foundational institution (Moody, p. 30).
The receipt of tenure is also a critical milestone in a faculty member’s career. It marks a faculty member’s acceptance as a member of his or her campus academic community. The granting of tenure is also significant for the validation it indicates. With tenure, the faculty member becomes a welcomed academic colleague and scholar in the discipline, beyond the home campus (Moody, 2000).

The institution of tenure should not be confused with the tenure review process, which describes the criteria to be applied to the evaluation of a faculty member’s academic portfolio and performance. Pre-tenure and tenured faculty from colleges and universities across the country frequently describe the process as daunting. Customarily considered vague and ambiguous, and fraught with a number of unwritten rules which may change regularly, the tenure review process is more often the source of frustration, tension, and anxiety for scholarly communities than are their fundamental beliefs about the institution of tenure (Moody, 2000; Rice & Sorcinelli, 2002).

Williams and Williams (2006) discuss the impact of a faculty member’s lack of access to these unwritten rules as a barrier to his or her acquisition of social capital. This “campus” social capital is essential when navigating the often vague and subtle intricacies of the “tenure game” (Williams & Williams, 2006, p. 299). Identifying an evaluation system that is more political than principled, the acquisition of campus social capital becomes crucial to a successful outcome in the tenure review process. While this acquisition is difficult for all faculty members, several factors have been identified which suggest that access is more difficult for faculty of color and women at predominantly white and male colleges and universities (Williams & Williams).
Research repeatedly describes environments in majority institutions as unwelcoming or hostile to faculty of color and women faculty (Diggs et al., 2009; Perna, 2001). These environments limit the availability of faculty of color and women faculty to develop working and social relationships with their senior faculty, who are very often white and male (Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007; Johnson, 2001). Stunted relationships with senior faculty who have successfully navigated the tenure review process are detrimental to supporting junior faculty members, who need to be able to rely on senior faculty for access to the unwritten rules, and acquisition of the campus capital necessary to apply those rules (Trower, 2009; Williams & Williams, 2006).

Deaf professionals in predominantly hearing workplaces routinely describe language barriers and an auditory-centric environment, making access to the informal networks and political dynamics difficult (Foster & Macleod, 2003; Kavin & Brown-Kurz, 2008). Deaf faculty members identify language, modality, culture, and lack of awareness all as barriers to forming connections with department colleagues and conversations. These conversations and connections are recognized as critical to the acceptance and success of their work, and the lack of this opportunity believed to be detrimental to the faculty members’ development and achievement (McDermid, 2009; Tidwell, 2004). In spite of this recognition, none of these reports discuss the impact of these barriers on the tenure review process and experience for deaf individuals.

To improve conditions and success for faculty of color and women faculty on America’s college and university campuses, many authors have provided models for both understanding and improving the experience of tenure review (Jackson & Flowers, 2007; Louque & Quezada, 2002; Moody, 2000). Moody (2000) offers a model notable for its
attempt to structure the acquisition of campus social capital, and to recognize the broader view of scholarship put forth by Boyer’s (1990) Model. While developed to benefit faculty of color and women faculty communities, the extent to which this model would serve to describe the tenure review experiences of deaf faculty members is yet unexplored. Because the model is designed to address issues which have been regularly and broadly documented for other underrepresented communities, there is merit in recommending it for consideration at the conclusion of this study.

**Six steps to demystify the tenure review process.** Moody (2000) presents six steps to assist with “demystifying” the tenure review process, and providing access to the campus capital necessary for successful navigation. The steps include:

1. Provide transparent and unambiguous criteria, annual reviews, and mentoring committees to coach junior faculty.
2. Stop the tenure clock without penalty to junior faculty who necessitate a time-out.
3. Ensure intentional mentoring, access to inside information, and equal shares in research-related stipends, space, and time.
4. Relate criteria for tenure to college or university mission.
5. Use Boyer’s Model for recognizing forms of scholarship in integration, application, and teaching, allowing for better appreciation of interests by a number of faculty within traditionally underrepresented groups.
6. Improve the interpersonal, communication, and cultural competencies of senior faculty through workshops and professional development efforts.
Determining whether the participants in this study identify these aspects of campus social capital as important for their success will be useful for generalizing recommendations to enhance tenure experiences for deaf faculty in colleges and universities. The role ADA does or should have in enhancing access to the networks integral to successful tenure review is also important. As deaf scholars find their place in increasingly diverse higher education settings, the regulatory guidance provided by ADA may be useful as campuses seek to operationalize access through accommodation.

**Research Question**

American higher education has historically responded to changing social contexts with dynamic and adaptive solutions. These solutions have been identified and realized through the work of a vital and creative faculty (Boyer, 1990). To reconsider who is welcomed into the community of faculty in the context of these relatively recent changes to educational and legal constructs would be to answer society’s call once again. Research has yet to explore whether deaf faculty members’ acquisition of relevant components of social capital in the college or university would be benefitted by applications of ADA Title I in tenure processes which are commonly framed by Boyer’s Model. The lived experiences of currently tenured deaf faculty provide a central and primary introduction, and inform this diverse scholarly dialogue.

The following research questions will guide the examination of the problem within the defined context:

1. In American colleges and universities, what are the reported tenure process experiences of deaf, full-time, tenured faculty?
a. Were accommodations provided while deaf junior faculty were in the process of achieving tenure as defined by Boyer’s Model?

b. What accommodations should be provided to deaf junior faculty in the process of achieving tenure as defined by Boyer’s Model?

2. What advice do deaf, full-time, tenured faculty members have for deaf junior faculty in preparation for tenure review?

**Significance of the Study**

This study will make contributions to accommodation and access practices for deaf faculty in predominantly hearing college and university settings. While Boyer called for a broader definition and assessment of scholarship, it is unclear whether his call has been translated as broadly to application on campuses. Further, ADA Title I has never been considered for its ability to improve access to networks key to the acquisition of social, or “campus” capital, and which are necessary for successful achievement of tenure (Williams & Williams, 2006). Results from this study may inform applications of Boyer’s Model and ADA.

Additionally, with the Amendments Act to ADA only effective since January 2009, few models exist for determining operating practice and principles for reasonable accommodation. While positioning this study in the deaf community narrows the study, there will be results which could have implications for broader application to other communities of individuals with disabilities. With broad applicability, these results have the potential to impact the 3,302,117 workplaces in the US employing more than 15 workers (United States Census Bureau, 2011).
Finally, a college for deaf people has indicated the need to identify and establish practices which promote and retain the number of deaf faculty as a critical and strategic issue in their next ten years (2020 context statement: Strategic vision for the College, 2009). As a national land grant college, this institution informs the priorities of a national research agenda in support of the deaf community. With ADA more than two decades old, deaf youth who were provided unprecedented access to the education system are now completing undergraduate and graduate programs, and seeking opportunities to apply that education and skill in workplaces that may not yet be prepared for them. This study, conducted in connection with the College, will have national implications for improving the lives of more than 30,000 deaf people graduating from college annually (Walter, 2010).

Summary of Introduction

This chapter has reviewed the problem, purpose, research questions, and potential significance of a study seeking to understand access for its relevance to acquiring social capital for deaf faculty in the process of tenure review. A glossary of definitions and terms relevant to subsequent chapters is provided for review and clarification in Appendix A. Chapter 2 provides a review of the current scholarly literature and studies on tenure, including attention to the theoretical and practical levels of influence Boyer’s Model of Scholarship is having on tenure policy and practice, and the experiences of multiple underrepresented communities seeking tenure in traditional and majority campuses. Chapter 3 discusses the research design and methodology for this study. Chapter 4 includes the findings of the study, and chapter 5, a discussion of the implications for practice and limitations of the study.
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

To properly consider the experiences of deaf faculty who have received tenure at the university level, two broad aspects of the literature regarding tenure provide context. The tenor and content by academic scholars regarding the principle and practice of tenure is important when initially framing faculty members’ experiences. In addition, there is an important body of research literature which empirically validates or challenges these academic renderings. Analyzing both aspects provides the most complete understanding of the current state of the field.

The Carnegie Foundation’s National Survey on the Reexamination of Faculty Roles and Rewards (1994) documented that the principles of most current tenure policies are rooted in Boyer’s Model of Scholarship (Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997). What was less clear was the degree to which this theoretical model had been applied in the practices of tenure review and reward. The discourse that has occurred among academicians, and in the research literature, provides insights into the treatment of Boyer’s Model in tenure review practice.

While the shared experiences of faculty members, in general, provide a useful foundation for this inquiry and understanding, a review of the literature pertaining to experiences distinctive to other minority faculty communities is also important. Deaf faculty members can be identified as faculty who are part of a cultural minority or who are members of a community with a recognized disability (Padden & Humphries, 1988).
In either case, a concentrated review of additional aspects of the literature is necessary to inform an understanding of the experiences of deaf faculty who pursue tenure at the university level. An appreciation of the tenure experiences of both general and minority faculty is necessary when determining whether the reported tenure experiences of deaf faculty members are situated in a larger shared faculty experience, or are unique to deaf faculty members.

Therefore, what follows is an examination of both academic thought and empirical study about the current general circumstances and experiences of faculty who pursue tenure. Subsequently, each section also outlines scholarly and research literature describing the tenure experiences of faculty of color and women faculty. These are included given the positionality of deaf faculty members as part of a minority community. Lastly, a review of the scarce empirical literature specific to the experiences of faculty who are deaf or who have a disability is included for the insight it offers, and to support the relevance of a study of the tenure review experiences of tenured deaf faculty members.

**Boyer’s Model of Scholarship**

Earnest Boyer’s (1990) report, *Scholarship Reconsidered*, called on America’s colleges and universities to fundamentally expand measures of scholarship. To help maximize the range and depth of faculty talent and to honor the historical evolution and unique diversity of America’s colleges and universities, Boyer indicated roles and expectations for faculty must change (Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997). To operationalize a broader notion of scholarship, four elements essential to the work of the
new faculty scholar were identified: (a) the scholarship of discovery, (b) the scholarship of integration, (c) the scholarship of application, and (d) the scholarship of teaching.

Grounded in Germanic traditions of university, the scholarship of discovery includes the work commonly known in the academy as research, and is intended to honor the scholarly pursuit of knowledge. The scholarship of integration acknowledges the important role scholars have in making connections across academic disciplines for the purpose of making knowledge meaningful to others. Both of these forms of scholarship “reflect the investigative and synthesizing traditions of academic life” (Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997, p. 9).

Born from principles of America’s land-grant colleges and universities, the scholarship of application recognizes the responsibility of scholars to engage in the pursuit of knowledge that has meaning beyond the university, and the importance of knowledge gained in this manner for informing what is taught and learned within the university. Finally, the principles of America’s earliest colonial colleges are expanded through the scholarship of teaching, which identifies the importance of both transferring and expanding knowledge (Boyer, 1990).

The suggestion by Boyer (1990) that acquisition of knowledge was a partial, and not the entire, measure of scholarly work and contribution was revolutionary. Also revolutionary was Boyer’s proposition that narrow measures of scholarship served to foster a culture of imitation among American colleges and universities, moving them further from the diverse traditions upon which they were founded, and closer to traditions predominantly defined by America’s research universities. As these traditional beliefs regarding scholarship and the purpose of the university were challenged, it logically
followed that the structures which perpetuated and validated these beliefs, such as tenure, would also be challenged to undergo revolutionary change.

While explaining the ways a broader definition of scholarship would better integrate the unique history and diversity of purpose of America’s colleges and universities, Boyer (1990) also outlined the importance of this philosophical shift for supporting recruitment and promotion of more diverse academic communities. He believed that in redefining the value of what was known, the professoriate would also transform narrow tenets regarding who was permitted to know, and the ways they were permitted to know. The scholarly and empirical reviews reflect an evaluation of the degree to which tenure revolution has taken place, and the degree to which any change has impacted the condition and experience of faculty of color, women faculty, and deaf faculty in America’s colleges and universities.

**Academic Reflections on Scholarship and Tenure**

There are varying opinions with regard to tenure and scholarship among published academics which provide insights into the state of evolution and acceptance of Boyer’s Model of Scholarship into tenure practice. The nature of this literature as individual commentaries on the state of practice recognizably limits the reliability of any one piece, but when considered together, aspects of perceived realities within the field can be surmised. A review of empirical studies is provided later to understand formal research in this field, and to substantiate or challenge perceptions.

**Tenure process and practice.** The amount of flexibility – or capacity – afforded to junior faculty as they pursue tenure is central to determining the extent to which Boyer’s Model has moved from a theoretical construct to a practical reality. Boyer
(1990) and his colleagues suggested multiple ways of encouraging and measuring a broader view of scholarship (Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997). Whether affording faculty increased flexibility in their timeline to tenure, proposing a grid reflective of broader evaluation measures to be applied when considering a tenure application, or suggesting models to evaluate the scholarship of teaching and application, it was clear this mandate for change came with mechanisms to operationalize the paradigm shift (Boyer, pp. 50-51; Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff; Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin, & Prosser, 2000). These changes were offered to demonstrate to America’s colleges and universities ways they could honor the unique nature of each campus and their common goals for rigorous academic review, while implementing a model which broadened the value and definition of scholarly contribution and tailored scholarly recognition in a manner uniquely suited to the purpose of each campus (Boyer). More than 20 years later, scholars’ perspectives about tenure are helpful for evaluating whether progress has been made to this end.

While the literature showed multiple perspectives by faculty scholars on the topic of tenure, little of the research made direct reference to Boyer’s Model. Most of the researchers inferred a connection. Inferences were assumed when language and definitions of tenure review components were consistent with terms outlined in Boyer’s Model of Scholarship.

Immediately after the 1997 Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff report, questions emerged regarding the validity and applicability of Boyer’s Model. One especially critical review posited whether service should be considered a form of scholarship (Cantor, 1997-98). Disturbed by the reference to a scholarship of service, Cantor (1997-
countered that to broaden the definition of scholarship in such a manner would serve only to weaken the essence of what is real scholarship.

As the academic discourse surrounding Boyer’s Model matured, emotions tempered. Acceptance of the need for broader definitions and evaluations of scholarship in the tenure process surfaced. The first significant shift began in the early part of the 21st Century. Beyond acceptance, scholars wrestled with identifying a process for practical application of Boyer’s Model. Broadening the notion of scholar meant identifying ways to assess faculty members’ teaching and service. The identification of standards acceptable to colleges and universities, and consistent with the rigorous evaluation of research in a tenure review process was a central theme (Albertine, 2007; Diamantes, 2002; Ovington, Diamantes, Roby, & Ryan, 2003).

The next measurable shift highlighted the continuing evolution of Boyer’s Model of Scholarship from theory to practice. Questions about the application of Boyer’s Model to tenure review were being replaced by examples of the ways the Model was being applied (Diamantes, 2002). Motivated by a prevailing belief that the fundamental work of America’s faculty is educating the next generation of society, and an understanding that rising costs for college increase higher education’s accountability to meet established learning outcomes, the scholarship of teaching was a natural focal point for this shift (Shapiro, 2006). Creative examples of new evaluation designs outlined the variety of ways the scholarship of teaching was being supported and evaluated in tenure review processes (Adam, 2007; Chalmers, 2011). More broadly, this provided some evidence that the academic community was opening to ways that peer- and public-reviews, already
integral to the evaluation of discovery and integration, could be applied to also evaluate emerging forms of scholarship.

Though this attention to research and teaching may have suggested an increased acceptance of Boyer’s Model of Scholarship, it is important to note that the debate regarding an expanded definition of scholarship was not fully resolved (Shapiro, 2006; Toews & Yazedjian, 2007; Cutler, 2010). More recent commentaries still declared research was the primary form of measurable scholarship, and therefore central in importance for the work of the faculty. In these, teaching remained a distant second, and service almost negligible in value to a tenure application (Cutler).

In one account, Toews and Yazedjian (2007) described the tenure-track faculty member as ringmaster of their tenure process. Using the circus as a metaphor when describing each aspect of the tenure process, the authors identified research as the main event, and relegated teaching to the animal act that only overshadowed the main event when control of the animals was lost. Further, they described service as “the clown act,” which provided a mere distraction between the more important acrobatic and animal acts of the circus (Toews & Yazedjian, 2007, p. 119).

Countering this depiction of tenure as a chaotic process frozen in traditional definitions of scholarly activity, Shapiro (2006) offered a strong and hopeful argument for Boyer-inspired change to tenure systems. He emphasized and reminded his colleagues of the growing importance of teaching and service in a rapidly changing society. Finally, several successful applications of Boyer’s Model of Scholarship were provided as evidence of progressive change in the paradigm (Shapiro, 2006).
In aggregate, the literature revealed unsettled perceptions within the academic community regarding tenure and the applicability of Boyer’s Model of Scholarship; a process typical of the transition from one prevailing theory to another within a discipline. The incomplete nature of the transition creates some challenges when considering certain academic communities. Boyer (1990) indicates that, in part, the case for broadening the definition of scholarship is to support an environment which will welcome and include faculty from diverse backgrounds. In expanding what it means to be a scholar, what also must be expanded is who can become a scholar and how the individual’s academic contributions are measured (Trower & Chait, 2002). The current circumstance for faculty of color and women faculty reveals complications resulting from persistently narrow definitions of scholarship.

**Diversifying the faculty.** The goal of this study is to document the tenure review experiences of an underrepresented (deaf) faculty community. The deaf community has been largely ignored in scholarly writing with regard to tenure review or reward. It is important to understand the issues and perspectives of other underrepresented communities regarding tenure, to help inform the study design and methodology. Much of the literature depicted ways faculty of color and women faculty were unduly challenged by the tenure review process. Moving Boyer’s Model from theory to practice was referenced as one potential mechanism for improving these circumstances.

A 2007 industry report regarding the challenges of supporting faculty diversity emphasized the need for an expanded definition of scholarship when determining rewards and measures inclusive of “diversity work.” Diversity work was defined as the responsibilities assigned primarily to minority faculty on the campus (American Society
for Higher Education, 2007). Included in diversity work was formal and informal mentoring of individual students from diverse backgrounds, and committee work that was assigned, in large part, because of the faculty members’ status as a racial or cultural minority (American Society for Higher Education).

These responsibilities could be easily recognized within Boyer’s (1990) expanded definition of teaching and application scholarship. Yet, the report outlined a current tenure structure with limited capacity for considering this kind of work and contribution by scholars of color and women scholars. The current operational structure, in most cases, had been established and was perpetuated by traditions and practices of senior faculty, who remained predominantly white and male (American Society for Higher Education). Neglecting to incorporate the roles many minority faculty members were routinely expected to assume seems to validate Boyer’s supposition that expanding scholarship would create an expanded ethos of who and what was welcome in the academy.

In comparing the tenure process to a whitewater rafting expedition, the same 2007 report described the often treacherous journey to tenure for all faculty members. Being uncooperative or disinterested with regard to contributing to the collective work of the department or the university could result in the faculty member traveling “off course.” Too many decisions ending off course, and a faculty member could be denied tenure (American Society for Higher Education, 2007).

For minority faculty navigating this tenure review journey, additional complexities were noted. The manner in which faculty of color and women faculty were advised to gain entrance to the network of department colleagues was contradictory. In
addition to maintaining commitments to their “diversity work” at the university, minority faculty members were routinely advised to remain agreeable and pleasant in the face of mounting pressures to also perform “regular” faculty responsibilities (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). This point of inconsistency between standing out and assimilating, reportedly disrupted both the intellectual focus and the practical time allotments which could be devoted to the pursuit of tenure-related activities by minority faculty (Jackson-Weaver, Baker, Gillespie, Bellidos, & Watts, 2010; American Society for Higher Education).

The nature of research and the scholarship of application seemed to serve as additional and specific sources for frustration among scholars of diversity. While Boyer (1990) emphasized the importance of research connected and responsive to the needs of the broader society, several reports of department research agendas which only advanced traditional (i.e. white male) notions of what is to be known and how it can be known were described in this literature. This limitation established an immediate disconnect for many minority faculty from their host institutions (American Society for Higher Education, 2007; Taylor, Apprey, Hill, McGrann, & Wang, 2010).

Scholars explained that minority faculty members were often drawn to research born from within their own cultural or racial communities, seeking to address issues of social inequity and injustice. This type of research was not known to draw funding or notoriety for the research laboratory, department, or university, and was frequently discouraged by senior faculty and department or tenure committee chairs (Few, Piercy, & Stremmel, 2007). Further, the research methods typically employed in conducting these kinds of studies were often labeled as less demanding. A faculty member conducting this
kind of research risked probation or denial of their tenure application for submitting scholarship evidence which carried a perceived lack of traditionally defined academic rigor (Taylor, Apprey, Hill, McGrann, & Wang, 2010; Van Ummersen, 2005).

Collectively, the reviews identified a need for revised mentoring, reward, and promotion practices recognizing the interests and contributions unique to minority faculty, and in the arenas of teaching and service (Jackson-Weaver, Baker, Gillespie, Bellidos, & Watts, 2010; Taylor, Apprey, Hill, McGrann, & Wang, 2010; Thompson, 2008). The ability of America’s colleges and universities to employ the leadership and vision necessary for creating these tailored environments would likely be more realistic if uniform acceptance of Boyer’s Model of Scholarship had already been achieved. Boyer (1990) put forth a vision aimed at celebrating the unique resumes of America’s colleges and universities, and advancing similarly unique tenure practices, to counter the imitative culture prevalent among institutions of higher education at present (p. 54). Ultimately, the academic opinions appeared to show little progress had occurred with regard to fundamental implementation of Boyer’s Model. Studies regarding tenure practices, the tenure experiences of faculty of color, and that of women faculty empirically support this conclusion, while providing insights into study design useful for gleaning the experiences of deaf tenured faculty members.

An Empirical Review of Scholarship and Tenure

As the written descriptions of scholars’ offers one dimension to the body of literature surrounding tenure, the empirical research provides documentation of the practice and experiences, grounded in formal methods of quantitative and qualitative inquiry. The examination of this literature balances the individual spirit of the prior
academic writings with findings and conclusions representing aggregate communities of varying size and scope. In total, the research substantiates many of the themes identified by academic scholars.

**Boyer’s framework and tenure review.** Scholarly commentaries and opinions varied as to the depth of impact Boyer’s theory has had on practical reforms in tenure systems and reward structures. A review of the research findings revealed results as varied as the opinions revealed in the commentaries. The empirical literature provided substantial evidence of an academic community in transition.

In a comprehensive 2005 study of 729 Chief Academic Officers (CAOs), representing 50% of all CAOs at not-for-profit 4-year colleges and universities, questions were asked regarding (a) whether Boyer’s Model had impacted policy reform, (b) the influence of these reforms on faculty evaluation, and (c) whether reform differed dependent on institutional type (O'Meara, 2005). Using four potential campus reforms to the tenure process, universities were labeled as reform or traditional institutions, dependent on whether or not they had implemented at least one type of defined reform (O'Meara). To consider the actual influence of the reforms, a study-specific survey was constructed employing Fowler’s (1993) recommendations for developing and conducting survey research (O'Meara).

Analysis of the data using descriptive and univariate statistics, yielded several significant findings. Two-thirds (68%) of the CAOs indicated that at least one reform had been made at their university to help promote a broader definition of scholarship (O'Meara, 2005). Reform institutions were significantly more likely to indicate that aspects of teaching, as well as institutional and professional service, were given more
consideration in evaluating faculty than was the case a decade ago. Proportionately higher numbers of promotion and tenure candidates stressing the scholarship of teaching and application led to an increase of applicants granted tenure in these cases (O'Meara).

Further analysis using the Carnegie-classification of institutions, predictably found that tenure decisions at Research/Doctoral institutions weighted research contributions of the applicant more heavily, whereas, Baccalaureate institutions were more likely to have granted tenure to those emphasizing the scholarship of teaching (O'Meara). However, results indicating that Research/Doctoral universities had increased the value of teaching in faculty evaluation, and the likelihood that faculty who excelled in teaching achieved full professorship, intimated that a broader definition of scholarship was affecting faculty tenure and promotion criteria (O'Meara). Given the culture of Research/Doctoral universities, as one associated with the most rigid “publish or perish” philosophy, study authors offered that this shift toward some support of teaching and the undergraduate experience was evidence that Boyer’s (1990) framework affected some change in faculty evaluation and tenure conversations among American colleges and universities. The size and scope of respondents substantiated study conclusions which suggested Boyer’s Model was being practically applied in limited, but apparent, instances.

Boyer (1990) specifically outlined concerns with the climate of uniformity among American colleges and universities. His contention was all colleges and universities used a narrow definition of scholarship, and pursued a traditional research agenda at the cost of core and diverse work in the scholarship of integration, application, and teaching (Boyer, 1990). In 2009, a mixed-methods study was conducted on the evolution of rules
governing tenure and promotion at comprehensive colleges and universities. Using data from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1975-1997) and the National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty (1992-2004), and field work spanning two time periods at four comprehensive colleges and universities (1989-1994 and 1999-2002), the study explored how the “rule system governing promotion and tenure at comprehensive universities evolved over time” (Youn & Price, 2009, p. 206). Important when considering Boyer’s (1990) call to honor the unique purpose and premise of each university, findings from this study indicated that increasing external pressures, and the need to legitimize the organization’s work and status - necessary to remain a viable competitor for students - resulted in comprehensive institutions adopting promotion and tenure guidelines which valued research over teaching (Youn & Price).

In comparison to faculty at all four-year institutions, those at comprehensive universities reported larger proportional declines in the belief that teaching effectiveness was central to promotion, while also reporting larger proportional agreement that it was difficult to receive tenure and promotion without publishing (Youn & Price, 2009). Study analysis identified a more than 100% increase in both the number of faculty publishing more than ten journal articles in their careers, and in the mean number of articles published by faculty at comprehensive universities (Youn & Price, 2009). Conclusions suggested comprehensive universities had gravitated toward norms set by research universities. This was particularly noteworthy given that comprehensive universities had been historically characterized for their commitment to teaching and learning; different than research universities, which traditionally adopted more narrow missions and definitions of scholarship (Youn & Price). While this study considers data
from a similar time period as the O’Meara study, evidence was contradictory with regard to the success of a systemic adoption of Boyer’s framework into tenure and promotion structures at American colleges and universities.

It was suggested by Boyer (1990), and reinforced by the Youn and Price (2009) study, that research institutions were steering a narrow agenda for scholarship in American colleges and universities. Conversely, O’Meara (2005) concluded with evidence that research institutions were leading the efforts to broaden the definition of scholarship. A narrowly focused qualitative collaborative inquiry offered evidence to support O’Meara, by revealing one research university’s attempt to document assessment of scholarship in service. Using standards of peer-review and publication as evidence of the credibility and rigor of this scholarly endeavor, the study outlined the experience of legitimizing the less traditional scholarship of application by using measures consistent for those associated with a more traditional form of scholarship in discovery (Aiken, Kay, Mosenthal, & Paolucci-Whitcomb, 2006).

The study conducted by one Faculty Affairs Committee at the University of Vermont documents the committee’s work to address “the conceptual and practical uncertainties inherent in rethinking the work of reappointment, promotion, and tenure (RPT) decisions” (Aiken et al., 2006, p. 25). Chronicling the scholarship of service by a committee charged with broadening their college’s own RPT processes, the report outlined the evolution of the committee’s understanding and measurement of their engagement in this scholarship of service (Aiken et al.). Prompted by Boyer’s (1990) expanded definition of scholarship, an administratively-appointed committee of four faculty recounted the experience of their service using a standard of reporting common to
traditional qualitative research and discovery studies; representing the background, methods, findings, applications, and concluding discussion of the committee’s work. The report concluded by identifying the decisions and outcomes of the committee with regard to RPT, and suggested the report represented a model for evaluating and documenting broader aspects of scholarship; in this case the scholarship of application or service (Aiken et al.). A large public research university endorsing peer-reviewed journal publication of scholarly contribution in the area of application reinforced the contention that there was an evolution of the definition of scholarship within research universities.

Each of these studies was particularly useful when understanding the current state of colleges and universities with regard to systemic incorporation of Boyer’s (1990) expanded framework. One implication is that academic administrators of colleges and universities are largely in agreement with Boyer’s charge that definitions of scholarship be broadened, and report policy reform that supports this contention (O'Meara, 2005). Another implication is that faculty members do not uniformly experience as evolved or progressive an application of the broad definition of scholarship, as Boyer – or academic administrators – may intend (Youn & Price, 2009). Finally, as outlined in a 1997 Carnegie Foundation report, assessing less traditional forms of scholarship using appropriate standards and rigor remains a challenge that colleges and universities continue to address (Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997).

The dialogue with regard to faculty tenure and promotion was universally guided by debate surrounding Boyer’s (1990) Model, and therefore the Model is critical to explaining current theoretical understanding regarding the role of faculty as scholar in American colleges and universities. Inconsistencies and challenges noted between
Boyer’s expanded thinking about the achievement of scholarship, individual campus’ academic policy reform, and faculty experience with regard to what matters for tenure and promotion suggests acceptance and standardized implementation are not yet complete. Underrepresented faculty on campuses may uniquely experience tenure processes and could potentially inform aspects of the study.

**Tenure experiences of faculty of color and women.** Justifications for studies regarding women faculty and faculty of color in the experience of tenure review often noted inequities and disproportions between members of these communities and their white male counterparts in the academy. With the exception of one study regarding the climate for faculty of color at a historically black college, the studies identified and presented are consistent in their articulation and use of underrepresentation as a rationale for their investigations. Each study included demographic reviews of these disproportions, using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Noting the inequities provided context for understanding the findings, narratives, and collective perspectives of the individuals’ lived experiences.

Perna (2001) conducted a quantitative assessment of tenure and promotion in four-year colleges and universities and two-year public colleges. The study was centered on whether sex and/or race/ethnicity had an impact on tenure and promotion decisions. Demographics regarding the underrepresentation of women and racial/ethnic minorities in tenure, tenure-track, and full-time professorship posts guided consideration of this research question (Perna, 2001). A subsample of 10,706 cases from the 1993 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty was generated for the purpose of exploring the question. The subsample comprised respondents who had at least nine-month, tenure or tenure-
track, full-time faculty status inclusive of some teaching responsibilities, and whose primary work was teaching, research, or administration (Perna).

Using control variables which measured “human capital investment, research productivity, and structural characteristics,” a two-step quantitative analysis was employed to investigate sex and racial/ethnic group differences in tenure and in promotion to full professor (Perna, 2001, p. 547). The study sought to identify whether the processes to tenure and to promotion differed for these groups dependent on four-year or public two-year institutions. When controlling for factors of human capital investment, research productivity, and structural characteristics, findings from this study indicated women were equally as likely as men to be granted tenure (Perna).

The control variables did not explain gaps between women and men in promotion to full professor. Control variables were however found to mitigate disproportions between faculty of color and white faculty in both tenure and promotion, except in the instances of non-citizen faculty of all races. Observed tenure and promotion disproportions were smaller at public two-year institutions than at four-year colleges and universities, and control variables explained all tenure and promotion gaps between both underrepresented populations and their white peers at public two-year institutions (Perna).

Conditions and gaps which were not explained by control variables were accounted for by the author in two possible ways. Additional control variables, not considered in this study, could explain these gaps. Alternatively, it was also suggested these gaps existed because an assumption that all individuals experienced and understood the academy in the same way guided an academic climate of structures and policies.
attempting to be color- or gender-blind. This fundamental assumption was criticized for being inaccurate, and the resulting policies created a climate counter to the one desired (Perna, 2001). While these suggestions were not findings, but rather inferences made from the study, they are mentioned here for their consistency with findings of subsequent studies which explored the experiences of scholarship, tenure, and promotion among faculty of color and women faculty.

A 2002 analysis of the 1995 Faculty Survey, conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI), provided insight into the unique contributions of faculty of color toward the scholarship of the college or university, and supported the notion that faculty members of color valued and interpreted their university position differently than their white colleagues (Antonio, 2002). Key questions on the HERI survey were identified and correlated with the four aspects of Boyer’s Model of Scholarship. Univariate and multivariate comparisons of all responses were conducted, with consideration for race, type of institution, and whether individuals possessed a status or a social change orientation, as determined by additional responses to the HERI (Antonio).

Findings indicated that faculty of color differed from their white peers in their interests and work as scholars (Antonio, 2002). Faculty of color tended to maintain a stronger personal commitment to their research than white faculty, to understand teaching as a holistic endeavor which occurs both in and outside of the classroom, and to connect their professional work with service to a greater societal good (Antonio). These norms countered prevailing institutional values regarding measures of scholarship and expectations of faculty, however were consistent with Boyer’s (1990) Model which supported broader scholarly activity and reward (Antonio). This conflict between a
personal commitment to scholarship, and institutional priorities with regard to the work of faculty produced challenges for some faculty of color.

Revealing the stressors when an individual’s inherent cultural and social values countered those of the academic environment, a 2009 qualitative study described the experiences of four faculty of color at a predominantly white university, identifying supports and barriers they encountered during the tenure process (Diggs et al., 2009). Critical Race Theory (CRT) was used to frame and interpret the information collected from four faculty members. The reported experiences of the faculty were collected in three ways: (a) written personal reflections regarding diversity activities when pursuing tenure, (b) individual interviews conducted for the purpose of noting personal and professional histories, and (c) focus groups regarding how diversity activities were valued and measured in the scholarship of research, teaching, and service (Diggs et al.). Eight themes emerged through the data analysis, with four of these identified and discussed for their relevance to the study’s particular research question (Diggs et al.).

These four themes included “developing an academic identity, confronting diversity, mentoring, and safe space” (Diggs et al., 2009, pp. 320-21). Participants described incidents of managing conflicted identities as an academic in a university where professional culture and norms differed from personal scholarly interests (Diggs et al.). Additionally, the barriers encountered when attempting to move discussions of diversity issues beyond the intellectual comfort zone of colleagues was reportedly frustrating. The attention required to successfully navigate these circumstances also reportedly diverted attention and energy from more traditional scholarly pursuits, but was identified as important in creating a more supportive and inclusive university.
environment and culture for faculty of color (Diggs et al.). With regard to mentoring and space, participants identified a need for faculty of color to gather across disciplines for informal and collegial mentoring in a “space” created specifically for them (Diggs et al, p. 325). The findings of this study echoed an earlier qualitative exploration. Themes identified through both studies brought reinforcement and depth to the previous quantitative investigations.

A 2006 qualitative study, aimed at achieving a deeper understanding of the experiences of faculty of color teaching in predominantly white institutions, was conducted to inform recommended support strategies for institutional peers, and changes for campus administrators desiring to create a more welcoming climate for the recruitment and retention of faculty of color (Stanley, 2006). Snowball sampling was used to identify and solicit participants, and the resulting 27 faculty of color represented individuals from 11 academic disciplines, all levels of faculty rank, and 17 different social and cultural classifications. Narratives provided by these faculty members were analyzed using content and narrative analysis methods, and were considered again within a CRT framework. Themes identified in the narratives were determined to be consistent with those identified in the literature review, and therefore deemed credible for analysis. These themes included teaching, mentoring, collegiality, identity, service, and racism (Stanley).

Faculty of color described the importance of teaching as a value inherent to career decisions. In addition, many described the challenges of securing credibility and trust from white students in the classroom (Stanley, 2006). Mentoring was needed for support, networks, and access to the systems and information critical for navigating the
academic environment. Faculty of color described a higher standard regarding expectations for their collegial role in the university, and sometimes invisibility among their peers and campus administrators, even when exceeding such expectations (Stanley). Of identity, faculty of color reported resenting assumptions of any single identity, and noted that assumptions were frequently based on external appearance or cues. This was believed to influence the ways students, colleagues, and administrators reacted to them, and in some instances limited the opportunities available to them unnecessarily (Stanley). In reflecting on service, faculty of color noted conflicts inherent between expectations from their racial and ethnic communities, demands within the academy to represent the diverse perspective, and messages that their commitment to service would negatively impact promotion and tenure. Finally, with regard to racism, forms of both institutional and individual racism were cited as challenges to inclusion, eroding faculty members’ trust in the university and peer groups (Stanley).

Themes from this and previously noted studies often described a desire by faculty of color to achieve incorporation within the institutional environment. By incorporation researchers mean the achievement of access to and inclusion in the central power structures and systems by a group or its members who have historically been excluded. However, for influencing rules surrounding faculty reward and organizational culture, some research suggested work from the margins was as useful as work from the center when pursuing change.

Assembling and presenting narrative data from several earlier author-conducted studies, a 2003 literature review discussed both marginalization and incorporation when cultivating desired cultural change. Defined by researchers as the opposite of
incorporation, marginalization refers to the placement and operation of a group outside of the central power and influence structures inherent to the environment. Narratives asserting the value of incorporation indicated the importance of aspiring to and acquiring positions of power and influence within the university structure, while cautioning that incorporation could quickly become assimilation if unchecked (Turner, 2003).

Other narratives indicated a marginalized vantage point was critical for identifying systems and procedures that warranted change, tempered by an understanding that positioning too far out on the margin could result in exclusion from organizational dialogues which were instrumental to change. It was noted that the numbers of faculty members of color necessary to create change in predominantly white colleges and universities, through either incorporation or marginalization, had yet to be achieved (Turner, 2003). Identifying reasons for the slow rate of growth by faculty of color was central to a subsequent article, Toward a greater understanding of the tenure track for minorities (2009), which outlined specific and important results from the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education’s (COACHE) annual survey.

Though not an empirical study, this article was included in the literature review for several reasons. The article was the most current analysis identified in the literature search. This article also included a unique cross-sectional survey response quantifying the current experience of faculty of color (Trower, 2009). Finally, this article was authored by Catherine Trower, a researcher cited repeatedly in the empirical literature.

The COACHE annual survey administered in 2009 was extremely relevant. It represented the first administration of the survey which yielded sufficient responses by individual cultural and racial groups to allow for consideration of each group’s aggregate
data independent of one another (Trower, 2009). This article served to highlight independent experiences and needs, clarifying previous empirical qualitative and quantitative study findings. A comparative analysis of faculty self-identified as African American, American Indian, Asian American, Hispanic, and white was conducted, highlighting results unique to each group, and implications for understanding the “revolving door” for underrepresented faculty (Trower, p. 4).

Initial findings from respondents indicated all groups, except Hispanics, reported lower rates of satisfaction than their white colleagues regarding interactions with tenured colleagues, and in experiencing a good fit with their department (Trower, 2009). American Indian and African American junior faculty more frequently stated having few opportunities to partner with tenured faculty, and were less prone than their white counterparts to agree that junior faculty received fair treatment. Asian American and African American faculty were less satisfied than their white peers with their collegial interactions, and Asian Americans were also similarly less satisfied with opportunities for professional networking and contact with both junior and senior faculty (Trower).

The results were interpreted in the context of Uncertainty-Reduction Theory, which proposes that individuals organize their communications and experiences given a desire to mitigate the uncertainty or insecurity they may initially experience when relating with strangers (Trower, 2009). In this review, parallels were drawn between junior faculty (newcomers) relationships with senior faculty (insiders). The theory explained that those relationships, which offered networking, partnering, and fit, provided newcomers an expected “social interaction with superiors and peers;” and further identified the expectation that these “insiders serve as ‘sounding boards’ by providing
information that helps newcomers diagnose and interpret the surprises they encounter” (Trower, p. 43). Emphasizing that these relationships were critical to early success and affinity in the organization, the reported lack of these early connections highlighted not only the importance of recruitment, but provided key information for improving longer term retention, when considering the growth of underrepresented faculty in college or university settings (Trower). Another 2009 study considered work organizations and environments for their impact on the retention of faculty of color.

A quantitative multivariate analysis of the 2001 Cooperative Institutional Research Program’s (CIRP) national survey of teaching faculty was used to understand the relationship between “racial climate and faculty job satisfaction” and “intentions to leave the academy” (Jayakumar, Howard, Allen, & Han, 2009, p. 540). Additional questions considered factors in job satisfaction, and whether the relationship described above was unique only to certain groups among faculty of color, or was consistent for all, including white faculty (Jayakumar et al.). Composite dependent variables were created to explore faculty retention and job satisfaction.

Guided by a “theoretical conceptualization of racial climate,” defined by Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, and Allen (1999) an institutional index for racial climate was developed by identifying questions in the CIRP which reflected the four dimensions described in the theory, and constructing an individual level composite variable (Jayakumar et al., p. 547). Independent variables included individual and institutional characteristics, environment, and faculty beliefs (Jayakumar et al.). The relationships between all dependent variables were explored using cross-tabulation analyses, while
hierarchical blocked regression analyses identified factors connected with intentions to leave and job satisfaction measures (Jayakumar et al.).

Results of the analyses helped consider the ways junior faculty may achieve job satisfaction and, hence, be retained. Among all faculty members, it was found that higher salaries, autonomy, and the valuing of one’s research each contributed to retention and satisfaction (Jayakumar et al., 2009). When disaggregated, Black and Latino/a faculty responses indicated the negative influence a reportedly poor racial climate had on job satisfaction (Jayakumar et al.). For white faculty, however, retention was found to be greater when their environment’s racial climate was indexed more negatively (Jayakumar et al.). Differences associated with broad research and interest areas typical among faculty of color versus white faculty suggested an inherent climate of support and recognition for white faculty research agendas in comparison to those generally associated with faculty of color. This was useful when considering how to support junior faculty of color, given the significant connection found between retention and valuing of one’s research (Jayakumar et al.).

Studies revealing the experiences of women in the academy as another, and specific, underrepresented community also related to the research questions. A 2007 quantitative study sought to understand the lack of women in academic leadership positions at National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Carnegie Foundation’s top-ranked medical schools by considering the relationship between the language of tenure criteria and the number of women granted tenure (Marchant, Bhattacharya, & Carnes, 2007). This study proposed that the word “leader” connoted male-gendered traits, per the Bern Sex Role Inventory. Recognizing a lack of women in leadership roles within traditionally
male-dominated medical schools, and tenure as the first hurdle in pursuing academic leadership, the study questioned the impact of the language of tenure review processes in fostering or discouraging women from seeking tenure (Marchant, Bhattacharya, & Carnes).

Twenty-four medical schools were identified for their Carnegie classification of very high research activity, and their NIH listing as a top funded university. Their tenure criteria were solicited and scanned for the appearance of the word “leader.” Concurrently, the percent of women tenured faculty at each university was recorded, and a regression analysis produced a beta (slope) coefficient for each school’s increase or decrease in women faculty from the period 1998 to 2004. These slopes were then categorized as those above an aggregate median slope for all universities or those below, and an odds ratio was calculated in consideration of whether the word “leader” was present in the tenure documents or not for those above and below the median (Marchant, Bhattacharya, & Carnes, 2007).

Results of this study found a significant relationship between universities positioned below the aggregate median slope for number of tenured women faculty, and the inclusion of the word “leader” in tenure criteria. The odds ratio indicated schools which had included “leader” in their tenure criteria were six times more likely to have a median slope below the aggregate for tenured women faculty. No other identified male- or female-associated language in tenure materials, as determined by the Bern Sex Role Inventory, was found to have any relationship to the number of women tenured faculty at a university. Conclusions were provided suggesting alternatives to the use of the word
“leader” in tenure review processes, as a means of dissuading risks to promotion and activation of bias (Marchant, Bhattacharya, & Carnes, 2007).

Women of color in the academy often described an experience consistent with those of faculty of color and of women faculty, and identified their need for a more complex roadmap when navigating the academic environment. In a 2007 study, the experiences of Black women faculty were solicited for an exploration of their mentoring relationships. Driven by extant literature and studies proving that participation in mentoring relationships had an important role in the academic advancement of both women and “non white” faculty, this study sought to attend to this mentoring relationship by understanding its importance and how it contributed to individual success (Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007). A purposive sample of 11 participants was identified for their position as tenure-track, tenured, or administrative faculty at predominantly white universities. Also relevant for participation in this research was that graduate study for all participants took place at predominantly white doctoral extensive universities. Three separate semi-structured interviews of 60-120 minutes each were conducted with individual participants. A constant comparative method was used to segregate the data into composite and broader categories and themes (Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson).

Six women described mentoring relationships that had been established in graduate school. Five had white male mentors, and one had a white female tenured full professor. All appreciated the relationships and the advice provided to them by their mentors, though two believed having a mentor of the same race and gender would have assisted them more in navigating the academic environment (Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007). Four women indicated their mentoring relationships started when they
were tenure-track faculty, and described the assistance these individuals provided as they were socialized into a new organizational culture. Two women had white female mentors, one had a white male mentor, and one had a Black female mentor. Their success in connecting and getting support from these university-assigned mentors included descriptions from no connection or support to those of outstanding and useful relationships. One woman indicated no mentoring relationship in either graduate school or as a new professor. She attributed this to her own identity as an accomplished professional before entering the academy. This concept of self-sufficiency prevented her from reaching out and connecting with potential mentors. This finding was identified as noteworthy given the number of established professionals (women and men) who may likely be returning to the academy in a weakened economy (Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson).

Thus far, studies considered women faculty and faculty of color operating as small minorities within larger predominantly male and white academic settings. The research questions sought to identify barriers to tenure for these underrepresented groups. While these empirical findings are useful for context, the environmental circumstance of minority faculty members in these studies, and the manner in which the studies are framed differed from this study.

The nature of the research context for this study is a university with a deaf faculty community of critical mass; measurable in size and visibility. Strategic planning goals outline a desire to increase the number of deaf faculty. Therefore, achieving a majority of deaf faculty members could be a future possibility (The College Administrative Council, 2010). Considering studies of similarly unique environments is helpful for
positioning this study in the existing literature, and for contrasting and comparing experiences of this individual minority community with others embedded in similar work settings.

Also fundamental to this study design is the recognition that tenure review continues to be successfully navigated by some number of deaf faculty members, in spite of any real or perceived barriers. In contrast to research centered on deficits in the system, environment, or circumstance of the individual, this study seeks to identify aspects of tenure review or individual character which enhanced the experience and course of deaf faculty who have received tenure. The next series of studies offered useful perspective for their positioning in a present and future research context similar to this study’s setting and circumstance. One carefully designed study outlined methodology similarly guided by the desire to solicit aspects of successful tenure review for tenured faculty members from an underrepresented community.

The first, a foundational and frequently cited study on the common experience of “otherness,” at a research university in Hawaii, provided insights from an environment similar to the research context. A two-stage qualitative exploration was used to explore and support themes surrounding the experiences of faculty of color at this large public research university. Using individual interviews and focus groups as stage one, and narrative reporting from the texts of these faculty as stage two of the qualitative study, the researchers sought to identify both barriers to the success of, and perceptions common to ethnic and racial minority faculty (Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998).

Unique to this university was its location in Hawaii. At the time of the study, Hawaii was the most ethnically and racially diverse state, with no group achieving a
statistical majority within the state’s population (Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998). The tenure-track faculty demographics included 69% who were white and 31% who were ethnic and racial minorities. While this 31% still represented a minority of the overall academic community, their representation as a larger critical mass generated curiosity with regard to any differences in experience or perception they encountered, when compared to the findings of studies on lesser-represented minority communities at other predominantly white institutions (Johnsrud & Sadao). For the purposes of this study, critical mass is understood to be a threshold number of non-majority individuals achieved inside a majority environment, and which allows for social visibility and presence to be felt, and/or social movement to occur with and by the non-majority group (Oliver, Marwell, & Teixeira, 1985).

Findings from this study showed that in spite of what appeared to be a critical mass, the experience for ethnic and racial minority faculty at the university still differed when compared to their white peers, and in ways similar to the experiences on predominantly white campuses with smaller populations of minority faculty. Additionally, ethnic and racial minority faculty members described bicultural experiences requiring energy and attention to identify and focus their various lenses on daily institutional situations (Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998). Code-switching, defined as the action of moving between languages dependent on context, was a constant priority and focus, and a routine awareness of always being the other contributed to stress (Johnsrud & Sadao).

Faculty members also described the impact of white ethnocentrism that permeated the university academic environment. Descriptions of the impact on professional
experiences suggested the marginalization of research agendas inclusive of racial or ethnic issues when compared to Eurocentric and Western agendas more typical of research-centered academic departments (Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998). Impact on the native Hawaiian community was also noted by ethnic and racial minority faculty members, when white ‘mainlander’ faculty members’ behavior and interactions in the community appeared arrogant or distant from local/native community members. This experience created internal conflict for faculty native to these communities (Johnsrud & Sadao). Finally, faculty members described an experience lived in the context of a discriminatory environment. Highlighting feelings of tokenism, frustration, questions of their legitimacy, and contention with stereotypes as part of the daily routine for ethnic and racial minority faculty, the participants cautioned that simply because they were representatively more diverse than at other predominantly white universities, discrimination was still prevalent (Johnsrud & Sadao).

The second study, a 2001 exploration of faculty socialization for African American faculty at two urban black colleges, offered understanding with regard to the ways a unique academic environment and population density had positively influenced faculty experience (Johnson, 2001). A qualitative study was conducted, given the paucity of research regarding faculty socialization at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). A purposive sample of eight full-time tenure or tenure-track faculty members was identified for their diversity of gender, status as tenure or tenure-track faculty, and their categorization as full-time faculty (Johnson).

All selected faculty members belonged to “soft science” departments (in the humanities or social sciences) (Johnson, 2001, p. 635). This too was intentional, given
the relative disparity of opinions on standards of scholarship inherent to humanities or social science fields, as opposed to more uniform agreement within the natural sciences. Using established definitions of socialization, the study supposed that socialization would become most important in environments with less clarity surrounding expectations and assessments, and therefore, the presence or lack of a positive socialization experience would be more readily identifiable in a humanities or social science department (Johnson).

The results of this study provided the only findings in which a group, identified by the general research literature as traditionally underrepresented faculty members, indicated a positive socialization experience in the higher education workplace. African American faculty members at these two urban HBCUs identified that clear institutional values were integral to a positive socialization experience (Johnson, 2001). The faculty in this study identified the importance of both informal and formal methods employed for helping to teach and communicate these values. Spontaneous conversations at lunch, in hallways, and at social events all were consistently noted for the ways each supported new faculty members’ understanding of the institutions’ values (Johnson). Formally, the faculty in this sample indicated faculty handbooks, institutional catalogues, student handbooks, and annual meetings with department chairs were all useful in maintaining clarity regarding their campuses’ values and expectations.

This clarity of values and expectations led to positive experiences for faculty with regard to several other aspects of the academic environment at HBCUs (Johnson, 2001). African American junior faculty at HBCUs reported “good collegial relations” with their senior faculty, a supportive and nurturing environment within the college or university,
clear knowledge of promotion and tenure guidelines, and the belief that following these guidelines would result in their receiving tenure or promotion (Johnson, p. 639). These findings countered those of all prior studies identified in this review, and suggested that the homogenous environment provided a distinctive ethos, creating connections and support for this underrepresented community.

However, the findings also identified one barrier to faculty socialization at these HBCUs which was consistent with those identified at other colleges and universities. This study defined “the ropes” of the institution as the systems, culture, networks, structural shortcuts, and institutional policies and practices necessary for performing daily faculty responsibilities in the college or university environment (Johnson, 2001). African American junior faculty members at these HBCUs were similar to their counterparts at predominantly white institutions in reporting that senior faculty had not adequately informed them of the institutional “ropes” (Johnson). Having been identified by junior faculty in both heterogeneous and homogenous campus environments suggests that the presence of this particular barrier to socialization is less likely to be related to a faculty members’ underrepresented status, and rather to be the consequence of other environmental, personal, or professional characteristic(s).

Finally, a third study offered an approach to understanding the experience African American male faculty members’ receipt of tenure through a lens which recognized successful achievement of tenure, rather than one which focused on barriers to success (Warde, 2009). Twelve interviews of tenured African American male professors were conducted and framed by phenomenological approach and analysis. The identification of a dramatic decline in the number of African American men successfully entering and
completing college at all degree levels, and the subsequently low number of African American males qualified to serve as faculty members were both initially identified as causes for attention and concern. Further, this community was least likely to be retained or recommended for tenure, in spite of demonstrated investment in their recruitment at American colleges and universities (Warde). Finally, the review of literature revealed an absence of scholarly research in consideration of the mechanisms and tools employed by African American male professors who successfully receive tenure. The absence of this approach drove the questions and design of the research study (Warde).

A qualitative phenomenological inquiry was used to explore the tenure review experiences of 12 tenured faculty members (Warde, 2009). Without prior studies on the tenure experiences of successful African American tenured male faculty, a qualitative study presented an opportunity to identify factors contributing to successful individual acquisition of tenure for participants. The phenomenological approach employed, allowed participant experiences to also contribute to a broader understanding of the phenomenon of tenure. Purposeful and network sampling procedures were used to recruit study participants from seven different majors, and representing four full professors, six associate professors, and two assistant professors (Warde).

Employing a traditional seven-step phenomenological analysis, transcribed data from 12 individual interviews was generated. Analysis for units of meaning, relevance of the units to the research question, thematic identification, clustering of units, and contextualizing of themes for their support or contradiction of existing literature was conducted within and across all interviews. Results describing the five themes which emerged from this analysis were reported (Warde, 2009).
The five themes repeatedly identified for supporting successful receipt of tenure during participant interviews included (a) mentorship, (b) organizational support, (c) culture/background, (d) collegiality, and (e) networking. Accuracy of themes was affirmed using narrative quotes transcribed from participant interviews (Warde, 2009). Additional recommendations provided by participants as advice to junior faculty were reported in bullet form as results to the secondary study question. Noteworthy among the themes was an expectation that junior faculty serve as informed self advocates by seeking mentors, being collegial, fostering networks, conducting research, and remaining focused on the tasks essential to the receipt of tenure.

The study also described several implications for American colleges and universities. A university environment seeking to diversify its faculty was urged to make mechanisms and strategies readily available to junior faculty (Warde, 2009). Appropriate mentors to inform new faculty members about the formal and informal expectations of the university, coupled with research agendas which are inclusive of “diverse scholarship interest and approaches” were identified for their importance to the success of African American male junior faculty (Warde, p. 505). Finally, Warde (2009) referenced research and participant experiences to promote college and university establishment of diverse student bodies, as this was repeatedly identified as fundamental for creating an inclusive and diverse campus environment.

What emerged from the body of research on faculty of color and women faculty within the variety of college and university environments is useful to driving research design and positioning this study’s deaf community and setting within broader minority faculty member experiences. However, it remains important to explore what studies have
been conducted to specifically consider the experiences of deaf people and people with disabilities in the academic workplace; a group notably absent in mention of any of the aforementioned studies, in spite of their status as “underrepresented” members of their respective faculty communities. Before gaps can be noted and potentially addressed, understanding what has been studied is essential.

**Tenure experiences for deaf faculty and faculty with disabilities.** Extensive literature searches on faculty with disabilities and tenure yielded only one study. This 2007 self-study written by and about three deaf faculty working at three predominantly hearing universities, described the shared experiences of these individuals at universities in both Canada and Australia (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell, 2007). Noting a lack of representation by deaf people in faculty roles, and an anticipated growth in the visibility of this community through growing numbers of deaf students in the university setting, this study can contribute to and build on the discussion and consideration for attracting more deaf individuals into the college or university to serve as role models for students and colleagues (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell). Barriers with the acquisition of qualifications, the appointment processes, finding and maintaining collegiality, attending and presenting at academic conferences, and spontaneity and autonomy of time for scholarly pursuits were themes that emerged when analyzing the reflections of the three participants (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell).

The narrative outlined challenges that are associated with communication access for the deaf individual seeking undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and post-doctorate research work. It was noted that interpreting became more difficult to secure at each juncture. Also mentioned was the experience of missing most impromptu gatherings and
meetings with critical colleagues and peers, because no interpreter was routinely present at those times (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell, 2007). A rich classroom and research experience was described as essential to successfully gaining recognition for appointment as a tenure-track faculty member. However, for the deaf candidate, there were barriers to appointment (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell). Citing a lack of clarity surrounding the definition of “reasonable accommodation” for both employer and deaf employee at the university, and subsequent fears of the on-going costs to employ deaf academics, real factors existed which inhibited the hire of deaf individuals into the academy (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell).

Even when a deaf faculty member was successfully hired, hearing colleagues were often aware of rising costs to departments when employing a deaf individual (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell, 2007). Resentment was identified as a block to building collegial relationships. While collegial relationships were repeatedly described in the literature as a requirement for general faculty advancement and reward in the academy, this study noted their particular importance for deaf faculty in a hearing environment.

The study participants explained the importance of individual colleagues and the information they share, given a lack of opportunity by deaf faculty members to hear passing hallway and “water cooler” conversations (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell). Supported by Johnson (2001), this study also characterized these casual conversations as those providing the clearest insight into the unwritten priorities of the workplace, and invaluable in tailoring most faculty members’ research study development, budget requests, and partnership decisions in a manner congruent with chair or university
agendas. Lack of appropriate communication skills and fear by colleagues, were outlined in the participants’ stories, and the resulting distance between deaf faculty and their hearing peers became another threat to deaf faculty members’ success (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell).

Conference attendance and presentation essential to the creation of an academic network and for contribution to an academic dialogue was an added stress for deaf faculty (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell, 2007). The expense of sending professional interpreters who would be more comfortable with the faculty member’s communication and topic was prohibitive. The alternative to this option often meant uncertified interpreters from a community local to the conference area were assigned to serve. Absent of skill, context, and practice, assigning an interpreter to translate academic material at a level of language and content worthy of conference presentation, resulted in risks to a deaf academic’s reputation and credibility with their peers. Translations attempted by these interpreters were often identified as inaccurate when representing academic concepts, terminology, and study results as expressed by the deaf faculty member. This detracted from the researcher’s ability to describe their work and disseminate their knowledge in a credible and scholarly manner (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell).

Finally, the additional planning time necessary for organization and interpretation of lectures, class time, presentations, and meetings impacted the spontaneous environment these three faculty were able to expect both in and outside the classroom (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell, 2007). While making quick and flexible changes in schedule or lesson plans was difficult, this additional investment of time was also
acknowledged as useful for its positive impact on the teacher evaluations for all three participants (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell). The level of organization each participant maintained to insure successful communication and connection with students was also evaluated to be positive (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell).

With one study, it is difficult to ascertain broad understandings or trends of the experience of deaf faculty as they navigate promotion and tenure. Similar to the growing body of research on faculty of color and women faculty, additional research with deaf faculty participants, conducted from multiple frames, is necessary to gain deeper understandings of their experiences. To bring focus to a study question and design which will contribute to a meaningful understanding of this experience, a comprehensive examination of the current dialogue in relevant and related fields was necessary.

By considering the range of methods used to inform associated dialogues, and then isolating gaps in the information germane to understanding this community’s experience, important justification and foundation for this study was found. Scholarly inquiry positioned at the intersection of the topics of tenure and promotion, and the academic experiences of women faculty and faculty of color revealed a range of theoretical frames and methodological approaches. A centralized review focuses considerations of research framework and methodological approach to inform the research design for a study of deaf tenured faculty members’ experiences.

**Summary of Literature Review**

Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method analyses have each been conducted to understand tenure and promotion systems in relation to Boyer’s Model of Scholarship. The research literature provided several quantitative studies using large samples from
national faculty survey databases (Antonio, 2002; Jayakumar et al., 2009; Marchant, Bhattacharya, & Carnes, 2007; O'Meara, 2005; Perna, 2001; Trower, 2009). These considered broad conditions surrounding the impact of Boyer’s Model on tenure policy reform across institutions, and the ways tenure policies have evolved at particular types of institutions, as defined by the Carnegie Foundation classifications (O'Meara, 2005; Youn & Price, 2009).

National faculty surveys were also routinely used for quantitative analyses designed to explain the relationships that exist between underrepresented groups and aspects of the academic reward environment. Perna (2001) considered the relationship between sex or racial/ethnic affiliation and faculty promotion and tenure. The ways faculty members of color contribute to scholarship was also explored in this manner (Antonio, 2002). Several studies indicated the use of composite variables to measure more discreet factors and conclusions, such as a racial climate profile or a shift in the application of Boyer’s (1990) model (Aiken et al., 2006; O'Meara, 2005; Jayakumar et al., 2009). In particular, an understanding of the impact an institution’s racial climate has on the job satisfaction and retention rates of faculty of color was gained through the development of a composite variable, and an analysis of the CIRP national faculty survey (Jayakumar et al.).

The literature review revealed studies describing the experiences of women faculty, faculty of color, and deaf individuals through a variety of qualitative analyses, and using an array of theoretical lenses for consideration of the data. Most common to the approaches outlined were personal narratives (Stanley, 2006; Turner, 2003; Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998; Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell, 2007). The descriptions of barriers,
inequities, challenges, and needs of these underrepresented communities help to enrich
the quantified demographic and representative inequities described throughout the review
(Aiken et al., 2006; Diggs et al., 2009; Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007;
Marchant, Bhattacharya, & Carnes, 2007).

Additional sources of data came from participant interviews and focus groups. The use of these was less frequent than narrative studies. Most often these techniques were used in concert with other forms of quantitative and qualitative data collection (Diggs et al., 2009; Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007; Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998; Youn & Price, 2009).

The techniques used to achieve the requisite purposive samples for each qualitative study also varied within the literature. Purposeful, networking, and snowball sampling techniques were described, and each will likely be useful in identifying deaf participants in the research context (Stanley, 2006; Warde, 2009). The employment of a self-study as the only identified investigation of deaf faculty members’ experiences suggests a desire from within the community to generate inquiry, and invites further investigation (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell, 2007).

The only mixed-methods analysis identified through this literature review still utilized data from two national faculty surveys to highlight changes over time in the research priorities of comprehensive universities. Combined with an analysis of faculty interviews conducted over two time periods, perceptions and explanations were identified for understanding why the shift had occurred (Youn & Price, 2009). The period of 13 years required to complete this study may provide one explanation as to the comparative scarcity of mixed-methods studies found in the literature.
In several instances, for both quantitative and qualitative studies in this review, analysis employed the use of descriptive statistics, univariate/multivariate comparisons, thematic identification, or constant-comparative analysis, each conducted independent of a theoretical frame or lens (Antonio, 2002; Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007; Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998; Marchant, Bhattacharya, & Carnes, 2007; Perna, 2001; Turner, 2003; Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell, 2007). Where theoretical frames were used to help explain or interpret the data collected, they included Boyer’s (2009) Model of Scholarship, Critical Race, Uncertainty-Reduction, Racial Identity, and Socialization (Aiken et al., 2006; Diggs et al., 2009; Jayakumar et al., 2009; Johnson, 2001; O'Meara, 2005; Stanley, 2006; Trower, 2009). In all instances, carefully constructed research questions drove methodological design, with or without the support of a theoretical frame.

Ultimately, Warde (2009) employed a design most compelling for its alignment with goals for this particular study of deaf faculty members. Rather than commence with the use of a theoretical frame, and unduly influence the study outcome, the choice was made to center on the phenomenon of successful receipt of tenure from the perspective of the underrepresented African American male faculty. Driven by the fundamental recognition that tenure is achieved among some African American male faculty, the resulting analysis affirmed the navigational capabilities of the participants, and generated recommendations for enhancing the experiences of future junior faculty (Warde, 2009). The obvious parallels between this study’s community, methodology, and analysis, and the goals for the study of deaf faculty, made a compelling argument for replicating this
study with the community of deaf tenured faculty. Chapter 3 provides a thorough description of the study and methods used in conducting the inquiry.
Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

Described below is the research design and methodology for a qualitative study of the experiences of deaf tenured professors. The association between the problem statement, research question, and study design is explained. Also included is a discussion of the research context, participant selection, instrumentation, study procedures, and data analysis.

Statement of the Problem Reviewed

In 1990, Earnest L. Boyer identified a critical need for America’s faculty to diversify in ways both immediately apparent and imminently foreseeable. Boyer (1990) held that the expansion of what it meant to be a scholar would support the expansion of who would pursue the role. In spite of the wide acceptance and implementation of Boyer’s Model of Scholarship as the framework for tenure review policies, there remains a comparative dearth of faculty of color and women faculty who have achieved tenure at America’s colleges and universities.

A wealth of scholarly inquiry into barriers to entrance for these groups has been documented (Antonio, 2002; Holmes, Land, & Hinton-Hudson, 2007; Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998). Though contextually important, their fundamental approach to the research question and design is counter to that addressed by this study. This research study of deaf tenured faculty members was aligned with principles of the Warde (2008) study and focused on the experience of tenure processes through the lenses of successfully tenured
African American male faculty members. With a method of inquiry driven by a parallel frame, and the use of an approach affirming the success of an identified minority group, duplication of the Warde study design and methodology was fitting and relevant for this study.

In the same year Boyer (1990) proposed his new model to expand scholarship and membership in the professoriate, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed (U. S. Department of Justice, 2011). Perhaps in conjunction with this legislation, Boyer (1990) predicted that in addition to experiencing on-going growth in the presence of students of color, America’s colleges and universities would be expected to expand their definition of student diversity to include students with a variety of physical and learning disabilities. In fact, during the first 15 years after ADA was enacted, American colleges and universities experienced a 19% increase in the number of students with disabilities arriving on their campuses (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, Knokey, & Shaver, 2010). Even with such consistent growth in the presence of these students on campuses, the number of faculty members with disabilities is miniscule (American Community Survey, 2008). Further, as the review of the literature revealed, questions regarding this population’s access in a successful faculty review process had not yet been sufficiently posed for study, providing rationale for the additional inquiry into whether accommodations have or should be included in the deaf faculty member’s successful tenure review process.

The purpose of this exploratory phenomenological study was to gain more accurate knowledge about the ways deaf people who have successfully achieved tenured faculty status, understand and successfully navigate current tenure systems. A study of deaf tenured faculty positioned in one university environment was conducted. Analysis
in the context of existing research findings for other underrepresented groups is presented to determine individual and aggregately themed responses to the following research questions.

**Research Questions**

1. In American colleges and universities, what are the reported tenure process experiences of deaf, full-time, tenured faculty? Related to this question are the following:
   a. Were accommodations provided while deaf junior faculty were in the process of achieving tenure as defined by Boyer’s Model?
   b. What accommodations should be provided to deaf junior faculty in the process of achieving tenure as defined by Boyer’s Model?

2. What advice do deaf, full-time, tenured faculty members have for deaf junior faculty in preparation for tenure review?

**Rationale for Study Methodology**

When little research has been conducted on a particular phenomenon the exploratory nature of qualitative inquiry is useful (Creswell, 2009). The review of literature uncovered a paucity of research on faculty with disabilities, or on faculty members who are deaf with regard to the tenure review process. This exploratory phenomenological study incorporating the personal experiences of tenured faculty members begins to identify possible variables which are important to subsequent examinations of this community using other methods of inquiry. This general understanding and applicability of findings benefits not only the research site, but other colleges and universities who employ deaf faculty members. Phenomenological research
allows for suggested generalizations to be approximated from participants, when
considered in the context of previously reported findings in studies and/or communities
of parallel context.

Successful receipt of tenure in the American higher education context is
dependent on the junior faculty member readily gaining access to a social and political
system within their host department and university. The campus social capital necessary
to understand and access this system is acquired through mentoring and networking
structures that are sometimes formal, but largely informal (Trower, 2009). These
structures are rooted in a faculty member’s ability to successfully connect to his or her
faculty colleagues through informal and largely spontaneous interactions.

Language and communication become critical tools in this process. When the
language is not only different in structure, but also in modality, to the majority of senior
faculty, it would seem the experience of applying for, documenting, and acquiring tenure
could be impacted (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell, 2007). Because previous
explorations into the experience of deaf faculty members to this regard are scarce, there
was no opportunity to credibly identify the ways in which this unique community
navigates a successful tenure experience. Qualitative phenomenological inquiry
emphasizes maximum flexibility of structure and experimentation with form, affording
the researcher and study participants the opportunity to make meaning of a lived
experience, organically generated, and absent of any initial framing by a theoretical
construct (Creswell, 2007; Hycner, 1985).
Research Context

The University. The context for this study was a comprehensive private university, referenced throughout the dissertation as the University. The University has an enrollment of more than 15,000 students, and a total of over 1,000 full-time faculty members (The University, 2010). One of the University’s many colleges is the College for the Deaf, referred to in this study as the College.

During the time of the study, the University was implementing a rigorous research agenda. Terminal degree requirements for faculty hiring, tenure, and promotion were emerging as the University standard. This supported increased University expectations for scholarly discovery, publication, and dissemination. This cultural shift was reflected in structural modifications to the tenure and promotion guidelines. The campus academic community was fully engaged with understanding the implications of these changes, given the University’s history as an institution centered on the teaching of a largely applied and experiential academic portfolio (The University, 2009).

The College. In 1965, the law establishing a federally-funded College for the Deaf was signed by President Lyndon Baines Johnson. This provided for the establishment and operation of a coeducational, postsecondary institute for the technical education of persons who are deaf and hard of hearing (The University, 2011). By 1968, a national selection process determined the University would serve as the host campus to this federally-funded university, and the first students arrived that fall (The College, 2010).

In the 2011-12 academic year, the College enrolled 1,500 of the more than 15,000 students on the University’s campus. Of the 1,500 students, 1,300 were deaf students
enrolled in a wide array of associate’s degree programs centered in either technical studies or liberal arts areas. The remaining 200 students were hearing students enrolled in the degree programs in American Sign Language Interpretation, and the Master’s in Secondary School Education for the Deaf. Students enrolled through the College can remain in academic programs through the College or, upon acceptance, transfer to any one of the other colleges at the University (The College, 2010).

Environmental data indicated 203 full–time faculty members were employed at the College (The College, 2010). Of that pool, 65 (32%) of the faculty were deaf and of that number, 30 (15%) were tenured faculty who served as the population for this study (Dirmeyer, 2010). It appeared that the proportion of deaf to hearing faculty within the College was not satisfactory to administrative leadership. This was evident in the strategic plan, which identified that increasing hiring, retention, and promotion of deaf faculty and staff members was an institutional priority (The College Administrative Council, 2010).

The tenure process at the College was consistent with revised University guidelines. The tenure review period - or probationary period - was a seven-year period, with materials submitted at the beginning of the sixth year. Credit could be given to a tenure-track faculty member with prior acceptable teaching or research experience upon appointment, reducing the probationary period up to three years. Faculty were expected to show appropriate and consistent evidence of contribution in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service to be granted tenure. The manner for documenting their progress was outlined extensively in the College’s written tenure guidelines. Also per the policy, a candidate’s tenure portfolio was evaluated by the department, the chair, and the tenure
review committee to determine a recommendation to the College’s chief academic officer regarding the faculty member’s fit for tenure to the College (The College, April 2011).

**The researcher.** In qualitative inquiry, “the researcher is the instrument” (Patton, 2002, p. 14). The individual’s experience and place within the research environment is, therefore, important for bracketing in the initial phase of phenomenological research, and contextualizing in the final interpretation of the data (Hycner, 1985). My cultural identity as a hearing person is relevant, given that this was a study of deaf people. The ways hearing people are viewed by the deaf community varies by individual. Typically, the opportunity for a hearing person to be accepted by the deaf community is greater if the person develops both credibility and language skills, each requiring an investment of significant time.

Eleven years of commitment to the College was both beneficial for the purpose of access to and acceptance with the faculty participants. While serving at the College, I was director of a department of employees who were all deaf, and served a student population who also were exclusively members of the University’s deaf community. Developing strong communication skills, and embracing lessons extended to me by core members of the deaf community, my reputation for creating and delivering opportunities which supported the success of staff and students within the community earned me invite and general acceptance into the community. The students and staff who remain connected to me as their advisor, mentor, colleague, and friend serve as one of my most precious achievements and the most relevant evidence of success in this area.

The professional path I have travelled in higher education was exclusively as a member of the professional/administrative staff at the time of this study. Therefore, I had
never been a member of the faculty. As a professional staff member, I brought no personal experience with regard to the tenure process. This allowed for me to be open and curious about the stories of the faculty participants in the study, which was essential to phenomenological study (Hycner, 1985). However, as a member of the professional staff, there was the risk that my interest in considering faculty and tenure could be dismissed or questioned by faculty colleagues. Ultimately, my record of successful professional and personal support for deaf students, faculty, and staff seemed to be sufficient to allow me access to this aspect of the study community’s experience.

Research Participants

Purposeful sampling is used when conducting a qualitative study. Both who was and how many were to be included in the study required reflection inclusive of the participants’ possession of a particular story to tell, and for generating a study of some measurable quality in which to have it told. As the goal is to approximate or approach some generalization from the study data, phenomenological studies typically include 5 to 25 participants (Creswell, 2007). The total population, at the time of this study, from which to draw numbered 30, and the replicated study included 12 participants, the proposed size of this study was 10 to 15, or approximately 330% to 50% of the deaf tenured faculty currently employed within the defined research context.

Initially, participation in the study was solicited by the lead academic administrator for the College community. A follow up personal email outreach to the deaf tenured faculty community in the College was sent one week following the academic leader’s invitation. Access to the community had previously been approved by the College’s president (College president, personal communication, May 2010).
Because the personal email outreach generated 12 participants, no further sampling strategies were employed.

**Instruments Used in Data Collection**

In a phenomenological study, data collection is conducted through the use of interviewing (Creswell, 2007). Because a replicable study was identified to inform the instrument design, questions which paralleled Warde’s (2009) study guided the semi-structured, open-ended interview process. Interview questions are best kept short, open-ended, and uncomplicated (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Because these interviews were conducted in English and American Sign Language, and with the participants using a variety of modalities and language adaptations in responding, the clarity of questions was especially important (Mertens & Ginsberg, 2009). The semi-structured interview guide can be found in Appendix B. The visual nature of ASL, and the multiple languages and modalities which were employed by participants during these interviews supported the use of digital video and audio recordings. The small population, the potentially sensitive nature of individual experiences with the tenure process, and the generation of video recordings required that special attention be given to preserving confidentiality for this study.

**Confidentiality**

To assure confidentiality of individual participants, the following procedures and strategies were used. Interviews were conducted in a physical space outside of the research context to minimize any risk of identification of individuals serving as study participants. Video recordings were voice translated to audio recordings by a certified sign language interpreter, in accordance with ethical tenets ascribed to the profession.
found in Appendix C. All transcription was produced from audio recordings, therefore no visual recordings of participants were necessary for the work of an external transcriptionist, and individual identification of participants was maintained *solely* by the researcher.

In phenomenological research, when data is analyzed, participant quotes are used to support themes which emerge from the interviews (Hycner, 1985). When the study population is small, there is risk of context provided in quotes inadvertently revealing the identity of a participant to those reading and reviewing the study. In consideration of this risk, all analysis and supporting data was reviewed in confidence, and solely with the dissertation committee. Any information noted for its potential to reveal participant identity was removed. As a final assurance that the narratives maintained the anonymity of the participants, each participant received a final summary and list of their quotes recommended for use in the dissertation. Each was given the opportunity to review and make any modifications to insure no identifying information was included in their quotes. This process provided each participant assurance that confidentiality was maintained throughout the study and in publication of the results and analysis.

**Procedures Used**

In conducting this research study, several specific procedures were used. Participants were informed at the onset of the purpose of the interview. This information was provided in written English and American Sign Language. Documents indicating informed consent for participation in the study, and which meet the parameters of both the sponsoring college and the research site were signed prior to commencing with the interview.
Interviewing across language modalities required special thought and attention to the documentation of subtleties of language and linguistic cues, and allowed for the freedom of participants to select their preferred language and communication modes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Mertens & Ginsberg, 2009). The semi-structured interviews were conducted by the researcher in language and mode as determined by the participants. Digital video and audio recording technology used to document the interviews also supported the participants’ freedom to choose their language and modality, allowing individuals to preserve the use of their first or natural language. This recording procedure maintained a direct link to deaf participant stories whether their preferred mode of expression was manual or oral.

Participants who were selected were formally notified using their university email. Scheduling of 60-minute interviews was done at times agreeable to the schedules of participants, and in accordance with interview room and equipment availability. Forty-five minutes of additional time after each interview was scheduled for the generation of field notes by the researcher. Interview times were spaced in a manner which insured no participants were revealed to one another in their exit or entrance to the interview to further maintain confidentiality in the study.

Incentives to participate in this study included the intrinsic gain of information which will ultimately enhance and sustain a deaf faculty member presence and contribution within the research context. Participants also received a personal thank you and gift card to the campus coffee and dessert bar in follow up to their participation in the study. Once initial interviews and data collection were completed with participants, the following process for analyzing phenomenological interviews was initiated.
Data Analysis

Data analysis in a phenomenological study must consider the story the participants have to tell, the essence of each story, and eventually the essence of the collective stories. Analysis begins with bracketing the researcher’s experience to promote an open approach to understanding and identifying meaning within and across participant stories (Creswell, 2007). Hycner (1985) outlined the subsequent need for recognition of units of meanings in the stories, identification of relevance to the research question, thematic clustering, and contextualizing within a larger body of research.

1. Bracket. To approach the participant interviews in their entirety, the researcher must suspend previous experiences and meanings to adequately consider the story from each participant from his or her place and experience. This occurred after interviews had been completed and prior to commencing with their analysis (Creswell, 2007).

2. Review interview as a gestalt. Having bracketed personal experiences, a sense of each interview in its entirety was achieved. Each interview was watched several times, with attention to expressed signed or spoken comments. The body language and facial expressions that are intrinsically a part of sign communication were important in this phase of analysis (National Association of the Deaf, 2011). Like in spoken language interviews, these “non-verbals” were be critical for understanding subtleties of meaning and experience (Hycner, 1985).

3. Identify general units of meaning. A rigorous review of each transcription was conducted to identify units of meaning from each participant within his or
her interview. This step remained literal to the data, and did not yet consider these units of meaning in relation to the research question. Rather this was an effort to “crystallize and condense” each participant’s story (Hycner, 1985, p. 282).

4. Delineate relevant units of meaning. The research questions were then introduced to the units of meaning to determine which units were relevant in answering or clarifying aspects of the research questions. Those determined to be relevant remained active, while those considered irrelevant were removed from consideration for subsequent analysis (Hycner, 1985).

5. Eliminate redundancy. After completing an identification of meanings relevant to the research questions for each participant interview, redundant units were eliminated from the analysis. This step was conducted in a manner which was attentive to redundancy beyond the literal content. Attention was paid to the number of times something was mentioned in an interview, because in some cases it indicated a level of importance that needed to be noted when accurately capturing the essence of that interview. It was also important to attend to the way something was mentioned. Additional factors, such as body language and facial expression, can serve to make the meanings of two identical expressions quite different from the actual signs or words (Hycner, 1985). This was a factor when determining whether units of data were redundant.

6. Cluster relevant units of meaning. Common essences of meaning were identified in the context of successful tenure experiences through another
complete examination of each individual unit of discrete and relevant meaning. As these emerged, they were clustered with preliminary labels. Units of relevant meaning were listed under multiple clusters if they contributed in an essential manner to an understanding of each cluster (Hycner, 1985).

7. Determine themes from clusters. A return to considering the gestalt of relevant clusters of meaning was important in theming these clusters in individual and collective ways. Still working with each participant interview individually, this step identified several themes from many clusters, and attempted to succinctly and accurately capture the essence of the interview in its entirety (Creswell, 2007).

8. Conduct member checks. Credibility is noted in qualitative research for its parallel to internal validity in positivist, quantitative research. The verification of the accuracy of each interview’s essential meaning with the participant is the most important way credibility was established (Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004). Even if a participant agreed with the summary, it was also possible that he or she wanted to add further information. Second opportunities to meet were offered at this point (Hycner, 1985).

9. Modify themes and summaries. Several clarifying conversations did occur in person and through email to allow for personal review and accuracy of communication. No individual interview summaries or themes were modified at their fundamental levels. Some clarity of terms was suggested and modified through this process.
10. Generalize across interviews. The summary of themes for each interview was considered in aggregate across all participant interviews to identify those themes which emerged as common to all or most. Additionally, those which remained unique to one or few participants were also noted as counterpoints to the general themes (Hycner, 1985, p. 293). These decisions were reviewed with the dissertation committee.

11. Contextualize the themes. Because this was a study which replicated an existing study, one contextual environment in which to position any consistent themes and counterpoints of this analysis was within the findings of the existing study. Additionally, several studies with parallel academic settings considered the experiences of minority faculty members. These studies offered opportunities to understand deaf faculty experiences in a larger framework. Identifying ways this uniquely diverse community may share experiences with or be distinctive from other minority faculty members is useful. Deaf faculty members and academic leaders may gain valuable perspectives on resources and support systems with proven success, and also benefit from knowing areas requiring focused attention by this College and University to support creative solutions and supports moving forward.

Summary

This chapter has described the process used in this qualitative study of the successful tenure experiences of deaf faculty in a unique university setting. The next chapter presents the results obtained from this analysis. Chapter 5 provides
recommendations for practice and further study, driven by the findings identified in this inquiry.
Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to consider the ways successfully tenured deaf faculty members experienced the tenure review process, and what knowledge and accommodations could be identified to support deaf junior faculty members’ successful navigation of tenure review in higher education. Deaf people in America have been identified through two distinctive lenses; one as a cultural minority, and another as a community with a disability (Padden & Humphries, 1988). Understanding how tenure review processes and questions of accommodation are experienced by this uniquely positioned community has the potential to inform higher education leaders seeking to expand the diversity of faculty and knowledge on their campuses, as well as to consider evolving applications of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in the tenure review process.

Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Consistent with phenomenological research, the interviews were analyzed first as individual participant experiences, and then for the collective identification of themes across the interviews (Hycner, 1985). In all cases, themes are supported with written English quotes identified in the interview transcripts. For eleven of the participants, the translation of American Sign Language video recordings was used to generate transcripts. In one instance, a participant chose only to speak during their interview, and in that case, the
transcription was made directly from the audio recording. These quotes are referenced by the number of the interview and the quotation number within that interview, as assigned by the Atlas ti Data Analysis software used for coding and analyzing these transcripts.

Pseudonyms for participants were determined, and are indicated throughout the supporting quotes referenced in this chapter. Due to the small population of deaf tenured faculty, providing individual demographic information for the 12 participants would risk divulging actual participant identities. Table 4.1 shows independent demographic information aggregated across the study population compared with the College population’s demographics, and introduces the pseudonyms for the participants.

Table 4.1

Summary Demographics and Pseudonyms for Deaf Tenured Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Population*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master’s/Other</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ASL/Manual</td>
<td>ASL/Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Program</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure Received</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudonyms</td>
<td>Amy Nancy Bill Edward Lucy Sara Cole James Mary Tammy Don Rich</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Information provided by Office of the Chief Academic Officer, The College
This comparison shows study participants were proportionately representative for gender and instructional program categories. The study group had larger proportional representation of doctoral degree faculty and of those receiving tenure after 2006. Given the direction of the University research agenda, these disproportions may be useful in understanding the experiences and needs of deaf doctoral faculty at present in an emerging research university.

In response to the research questions, analysis of the interviews revealed that the tenure review experiences lived by the participants were framed by the following seven interrelated themes:

- Theme one: a persistent and resilient spirit; highlighting deaf faculty members’ tenure review experiences, and the ways their unique background supported success.
- Theme two: of friends and foes; recognizing the role chairpersons played in the successful receipt of tenure.
- Theme three: concealing “who I am” to become “who I want to be;” revealing the messages faculty received regarding language, identity, and tenure success.
- Theme four: scholarship at what cost? identifying the College’s changing direction and narrowed definition of scholarship, and the unintended barriers which impacted the tenure review experiences.
- Theme five: access as hindrance and help; describing circumstances of language and information access which alleviated or heightened the navigational responsibilities of deaf faculty members.
• Theme six: “It was almost like a changing of the guard;” observing the accountability deaf faculty members routinely shared to support their peers’ success, and its apparent impact on the evolution of faculty culture of the College.

• Theme seven: being prepared; outlining the advice study participants shared with junior deaf faculty regarding the necessary preparation to meet rising tenure standards.

Participants described an array of supports, decisions, and strategies used to traverse any barriers identified in the context of these themes. Participants also provided advice to engage supports and mitigate barriers for the next generation of deaf faculty members, recognizing that junior faculty members were plotting a course for their tenure review within a research setting whose targets for success were evolving rapidly at the time this study was conducted. Collectively the interviews provided insight into factors that defined this community’s experience as similar to other minority faculty communities in several regards, unique from other minority faculty communities when reflecting on the impact of language and information access, and successful due to skills and motivations gleaned from the accumulated lessons of environmental and linguistic navigation which had been requisite expectations of their daily experiences since youth.

Findings

When asked about their tenure review experiences, study participants offered a variety of perspectives. At first glance, many themes are consistent with those identified by other minority faculty members on majority campuses. However, deeper consideration of the narratives reveals that cultural and linguistic characteristics of this
community in the context of the College and the University influence deaf faculty member experiences in a number of ways.

**Theme one: a persistent and resilient spirit.** There was a diversity of reflection among study participants when asked to characterize their general tenure experiences. Four participants offered that all the aspects of the experience were reasonable. Cole remembered his experience throughout the probationary period as follows:

> I had a plan of work at the beginning of each year. I had an appraisal at the end of the year. All of that communication was very clear and well known to me. With regard to the tenure process, you did an annual appraisal, and you turned those in through the course of your preparation for tenure.

> They [the chair and administration] would tell you if you were on par if you were below par, and needed to do something to move along to get back on par. I really felt very comfortable with my chair's opinion of where I stood with the tenure process. I felt ready for tenure right on time (1:82).

Bill commented not only on the general experience, “Again, for me personally, it was fair. It was a fair process” (10:12), but also specific to his experience with the tenure committee.

> My committee experience was fair and reasonable. I had 4 hearing and 2 deaf tenured committee members. There was one University professor, and the committee included an interpreter for that person, but it was all reasonable, really. I have no complaints about the process (10:20).
Another five of the participants depicted the tenure journey as an uncertain and isolated time. This characterization was illustrated in Edward’s summary:

It was definitely an interesting experience. It was a nerve-wracking experience. Given what I have shared today, I think it is more of an anxiety-producing experience for underrepresented groups because you are facing a majority community – white, hearing, male, etc. You are constantly processing and strategizing about how to approach people and situations, what to say, this is not exactly a very friendly experience. It was like being in pre-op at a hospital. That is a very anxious time. This was for me too. A lot of uncertainty, and wondering will everything come out okay. A few specific people did make me nervous – mostly because of their reputation or that sort of thing. As the process evolved, it was not that bad (4:189).

Even Bill, who had offered one of the most positive depictions of a tenure experience, shared a cautionary footnote, “…the tenure process was long, bumpy, and untouchable for me. It was wise to have tenured faculty in my corner who could challenge things if needed. And in the end, as a result, it was a fair process” (10:107) reflected the precautionary actions he had taken to be certain the process remained just, and his outcome successful.

Expanding on the strategies he used to navigate his journey, Don recounted his time on an all-hearing football team as preparation for the tenure review process.

So this football team mate became the person I would rely on for all the communication that was available to me going on with the whole team. I was constantly watching the game, scanning the environment, and trying to figure out
what kind of plays we were going to run…. I used a lot of observational skills, as well as depending on this ONE team mate. I even would spend a great deal of time reading people's faces, as I might get a sense of whether it was going to be more likely a pass play or a running play. I really had to be constantly observant of the environment.

For me the tenure review experience was very much the same. There were limits to the sources of information that I could depend on, and then there was a great deal of expectation on me to scan the environment consistently and really understand what was to be expected of me - based on what people were expecting, what were the guidelines saying, what were my appraisals saying. I was taking information from a variety of sources and trying to synthesize it, so I could better understand my next move (3:147).

Edward and Don, like several others, offered their experiences with a rather neutral affect, noting an expectation that this kind of navigation was common in a predominantly hearing environment. Rich explained his tenure review experience in a way that had been similarly shared across a number of interviews, “I grew up as the only deaf person in my town, so I learned to manage that kind of environment my whole life” (2:154).

Among the diversity of perspectives, more severe portrayals of the tenure review experiences were shared by three individuals. In contrast to the reasonable experiences described by some, these participants shared accounts of review periods riddled with intense frustration or anger occurring under more intimidating circumstances. Mary indicated:
It was way worse than any sorority pledging experience I can imagine. Sorority pledging is a friendly experience, and you know that everyone is rooting for you to complete it and join. For tenure review, in my case, it was not a friendly experience, and I was really not certain everyone was rooting for me to be successful. There were so many barriers, and I felt like I was walking on eggshells everyday! There was a lot of questioning of trust, who I could talk to, and how much I could say. I felt throughout the journey that every time I would share a thought or an opinion, there was someone there reprimanding me and reminding me I have no rights here. “You cannot bring a new idea or thought here until you have tenure, then you matter.” The entire time felt like there was no place for me to grow because of the oppressive expectation that you could not contribute until you had tenure (11:108).

In perhaps the most poignant description of a participant’s experience with the tenure process, and of the scars that remained even as tenure was received, Lucy shared:

The tenure review process is very intimidating. Yes, I would say that. The process – my getting tenure - is mostly based on how people perceive me, and I felt like eyes were on me the whole time. That's very intimidating. And, there are repeated examples of people who took advantage of this tenure review system - and my lack of status in it [as a deaf person] - to abuse me. I don't like using the word abuse, but it is really repeatedly taken advantage of. That’s really how I felt. They took advantage of me through the entire system. Then when I got my tenure it was just like a switch flipped and it all stopped. I'm not sure it stopped inside of me. I haven't forgotten (9:123).
Participants described their tenure experiences across a spectrum; in mild and in more severe ways. In any case, their discussions of persistence to the successful receipt of tenure revealed a common spirit of commitment and personal responsibility for their success. A philosophy that emerged repeatedly through the interviews, “You just can’t wait to be asked. You need to roll up your sleeves and pursue involvement where you are interested and it matters” (Sara, 12:69). Bill’s rationale for replacing a member of his self-established mentoring team reiterated this point:

It was ultimately my tenure process. I had lost trust and faith in the person, and I needed to replace them so I would have a full team of advisors who I trusted to support me and give me relevant and wise advice. This tenure process would ultimately be 100% a representation of my work (10:26).

James offered insight into the origins of that spirit, which may be uniquely manifested within this community:

The way I navigated that goes back to my experience as a mainstreamed student. I grew up without access to a significant number of peers. I grew up in an environment where I was often on my own trying to navigate, so early on I learned I really had to be very self motivated. The classroom was not a place that I had full access in my early years, and I had learned how to be self-directed in my learning and gathering of information. I had developed those patterns, and they were what helped me to survive and thrive in a classroom setting - or any academic setting. I just continued on employing those patterns.
Even that meeting with the [college’s academic leader], I found out what was expected for tenure. That was an example of how self-driven I am. I knew I needed to understand this system, so I clarified it for myself (8:56).

The descriptions of the tenure review process uncovered an array of experiences. Some seemed rather typical. For others, what could appear to be typical obstacles and tensions seemed to have been exacerbated by the participants’ position as a minority among a largely majority senior faculty and administrative leadership of the college. Several participants reflected on the ways earlier experiences as members of this particular cultural and linguistic minority had prepared them to navigate isolating circumstances. The lifetime cultivation of a persistent and resilient spirit had been a factor in their successful receipt of tenure. Subsequent themes describing specific aspects of the process and environment helped to illustrate mechanisms which impacted participant drive and success.

**Theme two: of friends and foes.** A majority of the participants recognized the key influence of department chairs on the tenure review experience. Eight participants mentioned the chair’s impact in their opening reflections on their success. Of those eight, five highlighted the ways these individuals positively supported their experiences. Nancy and Cole both detailed many of the ways chairpersons had been described as helpful by several participants.

When I think about my experience I did get a lot of support from my chairperson. That was important in helping me to make sure I was on track as reported in my annual appraisal. My chairperson really made sure that I was on track for tenure (Nancy, 6:7).
Cole, in particular, emphasized a feeling shared by several other participants regarding the importance of a chair’s support to a faculty member’s success:

Really truthfully I think the fundamental key is the support of the chair. It's wonderful to have the support of your chair. The chair must know the system well enough, and be able to provide the support that is needed to the junior faculty member. They really shape the junior faculty member’s ability to get promoted or get tenure (1:66).

Given the centrality of the chair’s influence on the experience, it was not surprising to learn that a lack of presence or connection from the chair generated feelings of disappointment and resentment from participants.

I don’t know what kind information sharing he [the chair] was doing beyond the walls of conversations that I witnessed, but we would meet as a unit every two weeks. You know there would be some announcements kind of information, but we never really discussed in depth the issues of what was going on in [the College]. The important big picture kind of things, we didn't have access to that through the chair (Don, 3:163).

The subsequent discussion of the access experience for deaf tenured faculty in a later section will shed additional light on the significance of Don’s concern. In some instances, these difficulties with the chair expanded sufficiently in scope as to become an obstruction around which the faculty member needed to maneuver.

It was difficult to get my chair’s support. For example, I had certain criteria I was to meet as part of tenure. One involved being a part of college-related projects.
My chair and I identified a project to be involved with, but as soon as I started to work with this project, for some reason, my chair pulled me out of the project.

I began to wonder how it was that I would find projects similar to this first one again, and remembering that these kinds of activities were necessary for my tenure portfolio, I was also concerned. I ended up having to find my own path around this obstacle [of my chair]. I began looking for other projects, and when I found something I could join – because of the initial experience of being pulled out of a project – I just kept completely confidential about what I was working on. I did not share anything about the work I was doing with anyone (Mary, 11:7).

It was clear from both the frequency of mention and the potency of description that the chair had an influence on the academic experience that shaped the journeys of these participants. Even as some experiences with the chair had proven difficult, it was clear that when performed well, the role had the capacity to positively influence the tenure experience of deaf faculty members. That was not true of all experiences identified in this study. The next theme highlights situations requiring additional energy during a tenure review period participants had already described as uncertain, nerve-wracking, and daunting under typical circumstances.

**Theme three: concealing “who I am” to become “who I want to be;”** Across several generations of the tenure process, participants articulated messages they received about being “too Deaf.” In each instance, the faculty member was faced with a choice. They could either choose to accept the risk associated with revealing or maintaining a facet of their personal or group identity, or conceal that characteristic as a seeming prerequisite to the pursuit of tenure success. In many instances, this decision was made
more difficult for its association with qualities which were of central importance to
defining the faculty member’s core identity.

Keeping in mind the research setting was a college for deaf people, Edward, Rich,
and Sara described the advice they received about the use of their native or natural
American Sign Language (ASL). Edward recalled:

…as an ASL user and Deaf in the community. I remember one time a [prominent
and senior] academic administrator in the college called me into their office. It
was during my first year. The individual made it clear to me the strong support
the individual had for people and education environments using an oral approach
to communication. That was decidedly intimidating (4:180).

The advice Rich received from his chair helped validate the intimidation and risk Edward
felt:

He [the chair] said, you know, there are certainly separations between deaf faculty
and hearing faculty here at [the College], and how sign language for example, is
supposed to be used in the classroom. He said it was important for me not to get
involved in that controversy. “You don't want to be seen as too militant,” is what
he said (2:46).

And while Edward explained:

There really was such a great deal of emphasis on simcom… and I had made the
choice to use one modality, and that was signing. I did not use my voice at all on
campus. So, that was a primary concern through the [tenure] process (4:95).

Sara recounted her decision to use her voice, reiterating similar concerns:
One thing I need to mention is that before I received tenure I simcommed all the time. After I received tenure I stopped using my voice. I felt speaking did have an impact on my ability to get my job here. Once I had tenure I knew it could not have an impact (12:71).

Interestingly, accounts of this nature were reiterated by deaf faculty members who had participated in tenure processes over a span of more than 10 years, and were included with equal frequency in the experiences of some of the most recent recipients of tenure as well as those from several years past.

The stories of deaf faculty who had been unsuccessful at receiving tenure reinforced the message for faculty members to be mindful when making decisions which could be perceived as “too Deaf” if they hoped to successfully receive tenure. In the context of being told as a Deaf person to “lay low” politically, Edward offered:

One thing I should add…there was a deaf faculty member who was denied tenure just before I went up. That added to the anxiety levels. The person was just out immediately. A lot of the reason, I believe, was because that person made too many waves. The person burned important bridges (4:191).

Similarly, Lucy recounted the story of another Deaf individual who had been denied tenure:

So the fact that someone had been denied tenure in my department made me very nervous, and created a great deal of pressure for me. The individual who was denied just wished me luck. I was told she had been known for being rebellious and did not get along with people. One of the [hearing] people she had upset was on her tenure committee – and was responsible for denying her tenure (9:100).
Later, when reflecting on this story and her own strategies for navigating the tenure process successfully, Lucy had this to share:

Well, I myself do have a general understanding of hearing people, and I understand what their expectations are of me. I know that most people look to me and expect that I will work on my committees, I will do my job, I will not cause people any problems. I'm good at that. I meet those expectations (9:131).

It appeared that a number of participants felt compelled to make choices regarding their use of ASL during the tenure review period. In some instances, participants described a marked difference in the freedom they felt when identifying linguistically with ASL after their tenure was granted. Other participants indicated their particular attention to the ways hearing people influenced decisions and behaviors at the College, and how these observations shaped their decisions to remain in good stead with hearing people. Finally, while each participant’s manner of responding to these circumstances pre-tenure was vastly different, the need to make decisions such as these seemed to generate some levels of additional stress and trepidation for tenure track faculty during an already stressful tenure review process. Among this participant population, it seems there are some uncertainties about the perceived acceptability of cultural and linguistic traits inherent to an individual’s identity. As such, the College’s decision-making processes and structures might benefit from further evaluation and discussion to determine the extent of these pressures, and their impact on overall deaf faculty member success.

**Theme four: scholarship at what cost?** At the time of this study, all twelve participants mentioned changing expectations for tenure at the University, and the potential impact on junior deaf faculty members’ tenure review experiences. The
changes to expectations for faculty research were certainly on the minds of the study participants. Given its fiscal independence from the larger university, decisions by the College to support administrative changes of this nature were at the discretion of the College’s administrative leadership. At the time of this study, the College’s leaders had chosen to pursue a research agenda consistent with the University’s expectations.

This change in research expectations had not directly influenced the personal lived tenure review experiences of many of the participants. However, a small number of the participants had received their tenure as the expectations for scholarship were evolving. Some knew they would be seeking promotions within this environment, and more than half of the participants were actively engaged in mentoring junior deaf faculty. It was in all these capacities that participants had interfaced with the new expectations, and framed their experiences from these vantage points.

One fundamental concern was a lack of preparation and training for developing and executing a scholarly research agenda. This agenda would be central to satisfying the emerging requirements for both tenure and promotion at the university. As expressed here by Cole:

Most of us who are tenured right now do not really have the training to do research as the University expects it. Can we do this kind of training? Yes, we can. It's just a change in culture. It's a big change in the culture of research at [the College]. It represents a big change definitely, and it's a quick change (1:19).

Beyond the important change in culture necessary at the College, James outlined the challenge of shifting research standards without the appropriate academic foundation:
I think the challenge for those who don't have a terminal degree, they don't have a body or a foundation of research. It becomes harder to develop a research agenda, when your first exposure to scholarship often is typically through your dissertation. Trying to develop your first research or scholarship effort as an independent project, when you haven't had the training a dissertation process would provide you is very difficult (8:139).

Because the College’s academic portfolio was in associate’s degree programs, faculty members in this study were as likely to have the combination of a master’s degree and industry experience as they were to have a terminal degree. In this context, it was evident that study participants recognized changing the research agenda of the College would not be simple. Growing a research culture and providing scholarly preparation of faculty appeared to be in need of further consideration.

Another question that emerged from the participant interviews was of the College’s prescribed priorities for managing time and expectations to allow for increased faculty scholarship. Consistent with several study participants, Cole questioned the impact of unresolved administrative decisions on faculty members.

Under the current system of expectations, will they have enough time to do that kind of research? What I am seeing myself - at least observing right now - is that those new people aren't really given a fair share of time to do the kind of work that they need to do in terms of the scholarly research piece.

The [College] culture with the amount of teaching and tutoring we are expected to do, there just simply isn't enough time to give somebody one day or two days to go and conduct their research. You know, we say that they can block
off time, but the reality is if they block time and are unavailable, then students complain and then supervisors or administrators follow up and ask “why aren’t you there?” (1:102).

Nancy’s observations about departmental management and the realities of the current time commitment for teaching and scholarship reinforced Cole’s observation.

There is that challenge for the chair of balancing the new portfolio for new faculty members. That's good for the candidate. It's very good to give them more time, especially with the current research expectations. It would be impossible to meet the current [research] expectations with a 70/30 [70% teaching/30% scholarship] portfolio, so I understand why they have done that. It honestly can seem more like a 70/70 portfolio at this point (6:80).

As outlined by the participants, the College’s expectations for balancing teaching and scholarship were ambiguous at this point in time. When considered in association with the described needs for support in shifting the College’s research culture and operation, it seemed there was work still to be done at home; within the College.

Another aspect of the changing University research agenda that received a great deal of attention was the expectation that faculty attend, present, and interact at peer-reviewed academic conferences. The University and College tenure guidelines emphasized the importance of developing external colleagues and networks, and demonstrating an ability to contribute to one’s academic discipline. Eight of the individuals raised concerns in the context of this expectation.

Disseminating information in a forum where spoken language is the norm, and expanding research networks and colleagues in environments where hearing and
overhearing conversations is nearly a prerequisite presents an interesting circumstance for deaf faculty members. Participant conversations highlighted the ways tenure requirements could go unmet due to a disconnect between changing University expectations and antiquated College models in support of language access at external conferences and events. Tammy offered observations about a tenure-track faculty member she was mentoring at the time of the study:

I have a colleague who, like I said, is tenure-track. She has just a horrible, horrible time. She does request an interpreter. It's an arduous process, and the conference people themselves, sometimes they have money, and sometimes they don't. And they’re private. Because they are private they don't really have to do anything. Sometimes she just gets an interpreter for her presentation and that’s it (5:75).

James described the role of the conference’s informal collegial environment as a resource for informing the scholar’s research:

At a conference the social component is more important sometimes than even the presentation itself. Poster sessions are important, but not so much the posters – rather it's really the opportunity the poster session creates to talk with people about your research, and that you're starting to identify opportunities for new research or make better connections for research. Both the direct conversations with someone, or even getting filled in on what's being talked about around you – both are really the most valuable and rich information (8:74).

The importance of this informal environment reinforced the concern Tammy had shared for her tenure-track colleague. Amy discussed another way that language access
impacted her when attending the discipline-centered conferences essential for tenure and promotion success:

I think the whole notion of networking and attending a conference is particularly difficult – at least for me – when I am trying to work through an interpreter. If I am watching an interpreter in the front of a room, and then someone behind me asks a question or makes a comment that seems relevant to my research, by the time I get that information from the interpreter and turn around to see who asked the question, I have no idea who was talking, and therefore no idea who I should be trying to network with (7:82).

In discussing a time when a conference organizer had offered to provide interpreting services limited only to the conference’s keynote presentations, Bill articulated the college’s current approach with regard to negotiating support services for external conferences:

And the [conference] organization agreed that in the future – beginning with the following year – they would not make that kind of mistake again. So it was a learning process for that particular organization but that happened a couple years ago. It is not as common as 20 years ago. And, we also have a responsibility to educate these agencies and organizations. We have to accept responsibility for educating them, and they have to have the money to pay for the services. It's really a two-way street (10:82).

This incident occurred when tenure expectations for scholarship were still rather broad and their weight in the tenure portfolio was small. Permitting a one year period for the conference host to “learn a lesson” seemed frustrating, but at that point was not
threatening to the construct of an appropriate tenure portfolio. With changing expectations, participants were concerned errors and lessons like this one could come at a higher cost for faculty at present.

Sara shared the success of a different services model employed by a grant-funded community research initiative:

Really all of their access services are phenomenal! They have a staff interpreter, so for every meeting we have, the interpreter is scheduled, and they even fly her to conferences and presentations with us. This is important, because she knows our vocabulary, our project content, our information in and out (12:101).

She went on to explain how her own credibility and reputation as a scholar could be compromised when relying on an unfamiliar interpreter provided by the conference.

When I go to a hearing conference on behalf of [the College], I cannot take an interpreter with me, and I have definite concerns about whether the interpreter the conference is able to secure will be sufficiently skilled to appropriately interpret my academic presentation. So, I just don’t bother. I have never gone to a hearing conference on behalf of [the College], because I do not want to deal with the issues of communication and interpreting (12:102).

If changing research requirements were to be the standard, the current College services model raised questions for deaf faculty seeking to meet that standard.

Among the diversity of concerns, a small number of participants did outline appreciation for this more rigorous approach to scholarship within the college. After being disappointed in the lack of attention and awareness regarding scholarly research
which had been apparent in both her tenure and promotion processes, Tammy shared the following:

I do think we need more rigor, and when I see them make the changes I say, “More power to you. Go for it!” I know some of the new people over there are whining, but you know I am like, “You’ve got to do this” (5:114).

Edward also identified some possible benefits from a change in expectations surrounding scholarship, though did so cautiously, offering some recommendations for the college:

I have mixed feelings about the Ph.D. degree requirement. It is good because I believe for some [deaf] faculty this will push them to go and get their degree. However, it discounts a whole host of people who are likely to be very good teachers. A Ph.D. does not guarantee you will be the best teacher. If [the College] wants to up the number of Ph.D.s then they need to provide support for those pursuing their degrees (4:223).

In general, the interviews revealed a university which placed rigorous expectations on the faculty member’s research development, implementation, and distribution for demonstrating scholarly excellence. The importance of successful scholarly contributions on the receipt of tenure, and therefore long-term career security appeared to generate concern for this study community. At the College level, participants identified a lack of time, unresolved priorities, and unchanged services models with no fiscal resources to support modifications, all impacting the deaf faculty member’s ability to successfully navigate and achieve in this new arena. Rich offered a message regarding his hope for some attention to this topic by the College’s administrative leaders. This was reiterated in a variety of ways across the interviews:
I think the administration is in the process of learning where to draw the line. Or they are trying to decide – do we just follow [the University] blindly, or do we analytically look at it and say, “we are going to do these things, and there are other things we’re not going to do,” because these things - whatever we would identify - are counter to [the College] mission (2:106).

**Theme five: access as hindrance and help.** Discussions of accommodation evolved to discussions of access within the College and University environments. Across the interviews, accommodation seemed to reflect whether compliance with 504 or ADA regulations had occurred. The most commonly referenced accommodation of this nature was the interpreting services which had been provided for outside hearing faculty members who were part of the committee during the tenure interviews of many study participants.

Discussions of access in the College and University extended to environments outside of the tenure interview, and beyond 504 and ADA. Faculty members described an atmosphere where gaps in access to language and information impacted several aspects of the academic workplace. With more than 85% of the College comprised of hearing tenured faculty, building a successful collegial network involved interactions with hearing peers and senior faculty. As recounted by the study participants, these interactions were sometimes difficult.

When describing his experience with peers in his department, Rich shared, “Well, half of my department would forget to sign when I was there, and I don't speak, so I would be left out of some of those conversations” (2:84). In the context of Don’s
previous comment expressing disappointment with his chair and the content and depth of
dialogue at his department meeting, he proceeded to explain the following:

You know, with my former experience with the chair that didn't sign very well, I
asked several times: could we possibly get an interpreter for the department
meeting? There were five faculty in my department who absolutely could not -
just could not – sign! And not only couldn't they express language, but I'm
certain they could not understand me…The response I got in that case was: but
this is [the College], we are all expected to sign. And my response back? “Well,
then what is the situation with these faculty members?” (3:140).

While challenges were occurring regularly within the College there were also additional
challenges noted about working with hearing colleagues in other colleges within the
University, as Amy described:

I do think it is difficult to network outside of the College community as a deaf
faculty person. I think I would still feel more connected and in real partnership
with my [College] colleagues than I would be able to feel when working through
an interpreter in a predominantly hearing external group (7:84).

Regardless of whether the faculty member was trying to build a collegial network
within or beyond the College, Lucy discussed the added weight on deaf people to
decipher inadequate communication from their colleagues. She offered,

It’s the nuances of language that I think deaf people aren't easily able to always
pick up on when a person who’s hearing doesn't sign as well or signs English. It's
reading between the lines of a senior faculty member’s communication when their
communication or intentions may inadvertently or purposefully be unclear (9:117).

A committee experience reminded Sara about the ways responsibilities for access and accommodation are frequently shifted to the deaf individual.

The note taker could not understand me when I signed only. People on the committee asked me if I would mind simcomming. Again, the feeling becomes that it is the deaf person that is the problem…not that the note taker cannot understand sign language (12:72).

In remembering the general experiences associated with his tenure review period, Edward offered insight into the ways he negotiated this obligation:

Decidedly the burden was on me as a deaf person. I was constantly trying to fill in information, interpret what people meant, and maybe have to ask people to repeat themselves to be sure I was clear. It was a great deal of additional pressure, and the communication burden was never really felt by them [hearing colleagues]. It was exclusively on me (4:102).

Deaf faculty members offered that it was the routine expectation that they take the initiative to pursue necessary information, and then try to make sense of what was received because it sometimes arrived by way of individuals with inadequate sign language skills. The impact of this environment was not limited to collegial interactions. Activities specific and integral to the pursuit of tenure within the College and campus environment were fraught with similar inadequacies of access.

As previously noted, the chairperson’s role was described as key to the receipt of tenure information and the development of plans for the junior faculty member’s success.
Don’s experience with hearing chairs, and their understanding of how information is exchanged and received was understandably of concern, “I don't think that the hearing chairs really do spend a lot of time considering how deaf people get information that is out there. How their deaf faculty get information” (3:134).

Inequities in language access were mentioned for every component of the tenure review journey. Concerns about access started with the faculty orientation where tenure expectations were typically explained, “The workshops that they provided - they were fine, and the presentation was fine, but even the presenter – one of our senior academic administrators - had limited sign skill. So I'm not sure I was getting the full information” (Don, 3:65).

These concerns resurfaced when Sara discussed how the college leadership was trying to expand the research opportunities available to its faculty members:

I do know that [the College] is trying to formalize more connections with another college at the University hoping that there will be some natural partnerships for research that emerge. That is yet to be seen. But even in that circumstance, will an ASL faculty member and a hearing faculty member who does not sign be able and willing to invest the time to learn how to communicate with each other? It will take longer. And I doubt they will be able to get an interpreter for every interaction (12:98).

Concerns were reiterated again when Nancy explained why and how she had to manage the use of an interpreter in her tenure committee interview:

I have had experiences where the receptive skills of the interpreter were not so strong, and they voiced things I never said or were way off the point. This is
frustrating, and sometimes embarrassing. With tenure, I could not afford this kind of confusion. I verified that the individual was strong to be sure that the interpreter would understand me during my interview (6:38).

And finally, Rich observed that in his experience, deaf faculty who had been denied tenure were less likely to appeal that decision. He explained this as follows:

Deaf people really feel burned out in the process. I think they get burned out. They decide to look for opportunities somewhere else. They just go look for something else at that point. I think it’s also the possibility that in many cases, they just don't understand the appeal process well. And, it's not explained well to them (2:71).

From the concerns, interactions, and interpretations that the study participants expressed, their daily experiences involved expected quests for connections, colleagues, and administrative understanding. They also involved the additional weight of managing interruptions and disturbances to that quest because of more complex language access obstacles. Again, these obstacles were often cited as being the result of individuals who seemed naïve to or unappreciative of their role as hearing and/or non-signing people in generating this unnecessary burden.

During these interviews, thoughts on access also included the strategies individuals used to operate within and around the obstacles they regularly confronted. In response to the lack of signing by his colleagues, Rich presented the following:

It's one of those things that I wouldn't stress significantly about. I would address it if I could. If it wasn't at a time or person that I could address it with, I would just leave it, and figure out how to catch up later on whatever I might have
missed. I might go to another faculty member to get that information if I missed something (2:85).

Mary reported gaps in her access to information in the conversational environment, but also in the written one. After sharing that she had enlisted the help of a colleague with proficient sign skills to help her carefully review the written guidelines for tenure using ASL, Mary explained the following:

This [tenure] is an intimidating process. Faculty are already pressured and stressed making sure they don’t miss a detail. And now this document that really guides your five-year journey is not available in my native language. It was just helpful to minimize that one stress by reviewing it in ASL (11:84).

Perhaps tapping into the navigational strategies he previously outlined, James discussed his management of the environment as follows:

I'm not sure for me how much this might have impacted me because I am someone who is pretty self-driven in terms of identifying resources and people who can help me. As long as I know what I need, and I know that I need someone and I know that this informal learning opportunity is missing, then I will often go looking for resources to fill that gap for myself (8:65).

These accounts revealed a community who recognized a disparity, and took responsibility for mitigating it. They also revealed the sizeable amount of their time that had to be dedicated to engaging this host of navigational tactics for the purpose of curtailing the effect of gaps in language and information access.

In response to the specific question of whether 504 or ADA would be useful for improving conditions with regard to access and accommodation, study participants
immediately recognized the applications outside of the College. James expressed this
with regard to universities beyond his own:

With faculty at predominantly hearing universities, they talk about their
interpreting situations, and that often an interpreter will show up just for a
meeting or just for a formal event. The informal opportunities to chat with people
as they describe them are pretty limited - very limited. If you need to be able to
talk with senior tenured faculty to understand the research and workplace
dynamics, and that senior faculty member does not sign, but you only have an
interpreter for formal settings - in that kind of situation - I do see where ADA or
504 would work (8:66).

Routinely, these general reflections shifted toward the other colleges at the University.
Tammy and Rich readily distinguished needs within those environments.

If I was a deaf faculty member, and I just didn't have an opportunity to or I just
tried to pop my head in and have a conversation with them [the chair], then I don't
think it would be quite as easy as it is for – or is supposed to be for – us here in
[the College]. And then you would have to have an interpreter present in those
cases, and that would just change the whole dynamic for you and the chair if you
were the deaf person. (Tammy, 5:70)

Rich noted a host of environments which would demand language and information access
for a deaf faculty member in one of the other colleges at the University:

If I was to try to get tenure in another college, sure, I would get less
communication, and I would get less side conversations in that college. I would
miss that kind of information. I am not sure it would be a violation of ADA law
or policy, because ADA really argues for specific things in a specific environment. It doesn't talk so much about the global environment.

I think there would need to be a lot of provision for interpreters for department meetings and for meetings with chairs. But, it is really important to know what your coworkers are talking about with each other. That would be missing if you were in a predominantly hearing college, even here. So, yes I think it would be applicable (2:153)

Notably, many study participants had just described similar limitations within the environment at the College, but made interesting distinctions about application of the laws.

When asked about 504 and ADA applications within the College, the participants offered that because this setting was unique and the language of ADA was unclear, any resolution to the gap in access would need to come from a shift in community expectations at the College level. Edward articulated these points as follows:

I think the answer might be different here than for other universities. ADA requires that there is access provided to the surrounding environment, and if many people do not know sign, then I would see how it applies there. But here – at [the College] part of the question is what does ADA cover? Interpreting and other things like that. I think if I was to apply ADA here, it would mean we would have to require signing all of the time on campus. That is the only way we really could guarantee equal access to the “system” and to the tenure process (4:113).

Sara reiterated what she believed would be one of the challenges with regard to an application of the laws in the college.
One problem with ADA is that an organization can claim undue burden. [The College] environment already is inherently inclusive of an “undue burden” because there are how many deaf people here? To require [the College] to provide services for ALL of the deaf faculty, ALL of the department meetings, ALL of the - whatever events and activities - that is an undue burden, so I do not think ADA would be able to be useful. I could be wrong, but I don’t *think* that would be able to cover the environment at [the College] (12:80).

When asked about applications of 504 and ADA, a small number of study participants did not identify any issues with access specific to the tenure process at the College. Bill described the supportive and successful nature of access and accommodation in the tenure process:

There are faculty who sign for themselves. The college will hire an interpreter to support the access of [University] representatives in the interviews. Access I think is not an issue. All department chairs sign for themselves. Well let me think on that. Yes, all department chairs sign for themselves (10:71).

Lucy characterized her experience in a similar manner when she explained, “I did not have limited access. Everybody signed and communication was not an issue. I understood everything very well” (9:29). Though the majority of study participants described more limited access to information and language, it is remarkable that within one setting, vastly different depictions of the environment emerged.

In general, it appeared that access was an inherent challenge for these deaf faculty members inside the College or at the greater University. Perhaps because they had been successful in receiving tenure, participants found it more difficult to determine whether
these access inequities would impact someone’s successful receipt of tenure in the college, and therefore warrant applications of 504 or ADA. Don represented the feelings of many when reflecting:

Maybe I would've learned more about tenure if I had an interpreter with me at department meetings. Maybe there would have been conversations that I missed that would have helped fill me in on certain things. Maybe those kinds of conversations would have benefited me in retrospect. I will never know for sure, and even some of those side conversations - or hallway conversations where people are constantly clarifying information - maybe that would've had an impact. I don't know (3:145).

Edward commented on the unknown impact on tenure, and questions of compliance. He also articulated the ways this issue seemed much broader than one system and a responsibility beyond what a regulatory application could resolve.

[The College’s] issue has always been communication access, especially not signing in the presence of deaf people. This deprives a community of professionals from office dynamics and dialogues; the informal information sharing that occurs in hallways and casually through office conversations that a hearing person may be directly involved with or may informally overhear. Deaf faculty do not have that same access. Again, would that affect my tenure process? I don’t know. But making me a second class citizen really should not have any place here at [the College].

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act focuses on access in agencies receiving federal funds. [The College] is definitely federally funded, and should
therefore make the environment accessible all the time. So, when people choose to simcom and drop signs as a result, or just decide to talk only in the presence of deaf people, that is really a violation of our rights as human beings; our civil rights. That is just an on-going and repeated violation of 504 in the informal environment every day (4:122).

In aggregate, the experiences for deaf faculty members as colleagues, scholars, and teachers seemed to have been grounded by the expectation of respect for their human right to pursue career success without limitations imposed by another community. Whether individuals noted specific instances of those limitations or not, the manner in which this community of deaf scholars internally worked to encourage one another to move beyond challenging circumstances was embedded in the final two themes to emerge from these interviews.

Theme six: “It was almost like a changing of the guard.” Study participants frequently mentioned the roles deaf colleagues specifically had played in offering them support, and assisting with access to political, administrative and organizational understanding which was relevant to tenure. The majority of participants also emphasized an accountability they maintained to serve their colleagues and junior faculty members in the same manner, subsequently recognizing what appeared to be changes in the workplace culture.

I was very anxious even when I received the [tenure] letter. I did not open it right away. I really was afraid to know the answer. I paged a deaf colleague and friend and let them know I had gotten my letter. My friend encouraged me to open it, but I explained I was very nervous about doing so. The friend offered to come
and sit with me as I opened the letter. I was relieved. We met at 10 pm (Mary, 11:47).

Mary’s interview had recounted a very difficult and uncertain tenure review process. Upon receiving her letter, she was genuinely fearful that her application for tenure had been denied. And, at the most vulnerable of professional moments, she outreached to a deaf colleague, and was met with a kind and authentic offer of support, not bound by time or space.

Repeatedly, study participants explained the important role their deaf colleagues played in their successes. Sara summarized her experience with a deaf senior faculty mentor as follows:

This person really just helped me to see how to support my position responsibilities with the kinds of choices I was making in all these other aspects of my work. I met with this colleague pretty regularly, and would also discuss how to navigate [the College] politically, because there were a number of things going on that I did not agree with, and yet I did not have tenure yet, so I wasn’t sure how to manage those situations. I really think that relationship and the advice I received through my tenure review period was the most valuable resource I had (12:10).

Like Sara, many explained the importance this network served in maintaining a connection to the political environment and administrative decision-making at the college. While all did not name formal College organizational structures, Rich did so:

I used the Deaf Professionals Group (DPG). The DPG was able to give me some insight into what people had gone through, what people might be going through
now, and just helped me get some perspective on what I might expect. The Group also gave me information on the politics of what was going on, and that was helpful (2:59).

When deaf individuals also served in administrative leadership roles, they were able to offer deaf faculty members another level of learning and insight into college operations as explained by James:

[The deaf leader] offered pieces of information about how their organization worked. There were bits and pieces of information about their daily life as an administrator. We often would compare [the College] with [another college for deaf people]. We talked about those kinds of things. When I think “gossip,” what I mean really is access to that sort of information; that opportunity to learn about how the individual viewed things or made decisions at their leadership level (8:94).

Eight participants articulated a personal mission that went beyond what they gained from this network. Universally, these participants shared a mission to compensate for gaps in the current campus environment, and to support the next generation of faculty members in a manner different than they had experienced.

Recognizing a disparity in the information shared between hearing and deaf faculty members, Don noted, “I think it's important that [deaf] people share information with one another, because the hearing faculty members don't really share much with our deaf junior faculty. They need to get filled in through the network of deaf people” (3:45).

Given the barriers embedded in the tenure review experiences and collectively described by the study participants, the following reinforced the ways the deaf network
served to counteract these barriers. During her study interview, Amy had relayed personal instances of senior faculty members who withheld information or remained distant from her as a junior faculty member. When considering the ways she could help deaf junior faculty, Amy stated:

I would be very happy to encourage them through the process, as well as to be open to answering any questions they may have. I would definitely open myself up to them and try to create a more comfortable environment than the one I experienced (7:21).

Rich had witnessed how this network of deaf colleagues helped mitigate the specific challenges presented by a difficult chair:

Within the deaf community people are very open to asking one another who are deaf for support or feedback. They talk to each other. I think that network of deaf faculty in the deaf community does help to lessen the impact of a chair that might be more difficult to work with (Rich, 2:56).

Finally, after serving on a tenure review committee, Lucy reflected on her experience in the following way:

I wanted our committee to be seen in a positive light for this junior faculty member as well as for us interviewing them. It was important to me that the junior faculty member felt good at the end of their process; that they felt good about it. One thing that was very interesting about that tenure review committee was that all except two were deaf. There were only two hearing people, and the generational make up of the committee was also different. It was almost like a changing of the guard (9:128).
These study participants recognized the importance the network of deaf colleagues had played for them, and accepted their place as keepers of the next generation. Whether the changes this network generated were strategic initiatives or happenstance, as Lucy described, it appeared that a slow and steady evolution had begun.

**Theme seven: being prepared.** In spite of the diversity of experiences and various challenges, when asked to advise deaf junior faculty on navigating their tenure review process, study participants were in agreement in their responses. It was evident through the striking consistency of their advice that these deaf faculty members appreciated the importance of tenure review, and expected deaf junior faculty members to respect it, as well as succeed within this context.

The advice was concentrated in four distinct ways. Junior faculty members were counseled to generate a fundamental understanding, clarity, and support upon which they would build their case for tenure. Beyond laying the groundwork for the journey, it was important that junior faculty members were employing the University’s administrative mechanisms to gather feedback and track progress. In addition to structures and systems, tenured faculty emphasized that the primary work of junior faculty members remain central and paramount in their quest for tenure. Finally, several faculty highlighted aspects of the collegial culture which they felt needed attention and mindful negotiation.

**Building the foundation.** Study participants repeatedly emphasized the importance of reading and understanding tenure expectations. As Bill inquired, “How can someone move through a process without understanding the guidelines?” (10:116). Perhaps because of the rapidly changing University expectations, Cole reiterated the importance of frequently reading the tenure guidelines.
Always read your tenure and promotion paperwork. Read the guidelines. Review them regularly. Even though sometimes they change annually, it's important that you read them and make sure you are covering every item in them. You just want to be sure not to miss anything. I remember being told to read it over and over again. Every once in a while pull it out and read it again (1:129).

In conjunction with reading the published information, participants also emphasized the importance of actively seeking clarification.

Given the stressful and detailed nature of tenure under even the best of circumstances, an emphasis by study participants on the importance of asking questions to be clear on tenure expectations was understandable. As Rich pointed out, departmental interpretations of the process and requirements may vary. “I really would emphasize to ask a lot of questions. Each department is different. It's true the process is the process, but how each department chooses to interpret that process is different” (2:126).

The pressure of time was also a motivation for seeking clarity in a quick and effective manner. “Always ask questions if you're not sure of something. Always. If you're not clear on something or the way something is to be done, then check before it becomes too late” (Cole, 1:129). In an environment of multiple languages, varied sign language competencies, and two communication modalities, it was not surprising to have such continuity of attention to making sure the next generation of deaf faculty understood clearly the rules of an already complex tenure road.

Managing and attending to the guidelines in the context of the five-year tenure “clock” was emphasized by a number of deaf faculty participants. “Read and review the
documentation from the beginning in year one. Do not wait until your fourth year. You need to know what the tenure expectations are from the get go” (Nancy, 6:86). Edward reiterated:

Do not wait until the end of your process to open the document regarding expectations for the first time, and then realize there are things you should have been doing for four years. By that time it is too late (4:136).

Identifying individuals for support and counsel was also a priority at the beginning of a successful tenure process. As Sara recounted, “Number ONE in importance is to find a mentor. Find a mentor who has already navigated through the tenure review experience successfully! And a mentor that is generally respected” (12:112). And, in sharing “First thing is I would encourage them to find a good ally who can support them through this process” (11:93), Mary clarified what characteristics were important for her when selecting this support person:

They need to have experienced the tenure review process themselves as well. The person needs to really know the College well, including its political landscape. It would be good for the person to be able to provide two or three different perspectives on any question or decision. That helped me to have a clearer picture of what was really going on around me at any given time. You also need that person to be a cheerleader for you at certain times (11:103).

Study participants reinforced a need to establish a solid foundation. To do this, elements including clarity and understanding of tenure expectations, time management of the process, and collegial support for the journey needed to be in place. Attention then shifted to advice regarding documenting and tracking tenure progress.
**Employing administrative systems.** Stressing the importance of viewing the organization and construction of a variety of tenured faculty portfolios, Edward shared what had been mentioned by many. “I found it helpful to read other faculty members’ tenure documentation – their portfolios” (4:24). Nancy clarified:

The opportunity to review other people’s tenure review materials is very helpful. Many people were very willing to share their documentation with me, so I could get an idea…. these gave me a good idea about how to structure the portfolio and materials into parts A, B, C, and D (6:44).

Viewing others’ portfolios was recommended as a tool for structuring the new faculty members’ portfolio at the beginning of the tenure process. On the other end of tenure review, there was also a great deal of agreement among participants to “Have others look at your documentation. Have others look at your portfolio before moving forward. That’s very important” (Lucy, 9:111). Cole made the point about why this was particularly important.

Tenure committees are really made up of a variety of departments. Departments have different views on what should be in the portfolio and how to manage the portfolio. It would be beneficial as you're building your portfolio to get perspectives from a variety of different departments, because all those perspectives may be represented on the tenure committee (1:129).

In addition to structuring and completing a portfolio, these participants offered insights for managing feedback received throughout the tenure review process.

Formal appraisal processes were noted for their importance in a variety of circumstances. Don articulated the most common of the advice as follows:
Pay attention to that performance appraisal - that annual appraisal - and what your chair and the associate vice president say in terms of what you need to be doing. Take that language, put it in your plan of work, and then make sure you accomplish it. Accomplish it in the next year. Don't neglect that component of your work (3:110).

Another important aspect of documenting and tracking was noted by Edward.

Use your self appraisal wisely. Your supervisor may see your work in a different light, but if you have documentation you are providing and narratives you can support with the documentation annually, then your file already contains a wealth of evidence in your favor. Your supervisor may not always be right, and with proper documentation you can represent a different perspective if you see it that way (4:136).

**Stay focused on your work.** While stressing the importance of foundational structures and administrative systems necessary for successful receipt of tenure, the study participants also underscored the importance of job performance. Edward advised junior deaf faculty, “Do your job well….Do everything asked of you. Give no one any reason to turn you down” (4:136). As individual aspects of faculty performance teaching, scholarship, and service each received specific reference.

Perhaps in response to the University and College emphasis on the changing role of scholarship in the tenure review process, several study participants seemed intent on reminding junior faculty of their important role as teachers. Amy captured this when sharing: “Don’t forget your responsibility to be a good teacher to students” (7:91). Cole provided practical advice on the matter. “Realize that students – teaching them, and
being prepared for them – consume a great deal of your time. You may not realize that up front, but it is important to realize that” (1:129).

Given the University’s aggressive pursuit of a more developed research agenda, many of the tenured deaf faculty members centered their advice on developing research skills and scholarship portfolios. James suggested: “You really need to collaborate with people if you do not have a background and training in scholarship and research. You need to find somebody that you can collaborate with and connect to their research project” (8:145). Sara further reassured new faculty that there were options for developing their skills and their portfolio.

Even with increasing demands for scholarship, it does not mean you have to lead or be the only researcher – out on your own. You could be an assistant or involved with one aspect of the research. All of that is still counted toward your scholarship work. Even if you are a third or fourth author, [the University] does not define at what level you have to author. Even if you join a presentation, all of that counts and you can document it. Join in as part of your own learning process, and as you learn more you can become more involved and lead projects yourself. I was never really told that I could develop my skills through an evolutionary process, by first joining projects, and gaining experiences (12:112).

Advice regarding College service and involvement focused on the responsibility of deaf junior faculty to widely assert their interests and goals. Cole and Sara discussed this in similar ways.

Grab opportunities to be involved. Don't wait for opportunities to come to you. Look for opportunities to get involved. All of that is advice I would give them.
Look for opportunities to get involved with committees….Show you are a participant at the university. Show you are willing to contribute to the university's work (Cole, 1:129).

Sara reinforced Cole’s message when sharing: “Let people know what you want to be involved with. Tell people on the committees that interest you, tell your chair, make your goals known. You cannot wait for someone to notice you. You have to assert yourself” (12:112).

Grounded by solid foundations, organized by established documentation systems, and centered on primary job responsibilities, it also was important to study participants that junior deaf faculty considered the reputation and network they would develop en route to their application for tenure. This final consideration from study participants addressed navigating aspects of the political and collegial landscape at the College.

Edward and Sara captured the sentiments of many when offering their advice to the next generation of deaf faculty members.

**Navigating and networking on the journey.** Garnering a positive reputation and the respect of colleagues across the College is important to all faculty members seeking tenure review success. Edward recommended the following as a means to this end for deaf junior faculty in this environment:

Maybe lay low for a while, given the circumstances. The circumstances are such that there is still a system of oppression operating within [the College]. Therefore, it may be good to lay low for a while. Take that time to earn the respect of the community. Consider your credibility. It may not be fair, but
honestly I would give this same advice to hearing faculty as well. Know the right people. Don’t burn bridges (4:136).

And Sara cautioned deaf faculty members:

Be mindful of who you affiliate with casually prior to receiving tenure. If you are associating with faculty who are disruptive or who even may have been in trouble outside of work, then you might want to wait perhaps to become too close with them until after you have received tenure (12:112).

With the variety of personal experiences that had been shared regarding the obstacles presented by hearing people and other non-signers in the participants’ own tenure review processes, a curious sense of encouragement was evident in the advice shared with deaf junior faculty on the topic. With regard to the diversity of language and communication systems and modalities, Edward recommended:

Keep an open mind and an open heart. You will experience a diversity of communication modalities and views at [the College], so don’t be so “set” on one way or another based on your own “ethnocentric” views. Be open to knowing and seeing other views that exist as well. Listen (4:136).

And, lastly, in spite of the insensitivities of many hearing colleagues which she had shared during the interview, Sara remained optimistic and hopeful when offering:

Put aside your assumptions about hearing people, even based on past experiences. There are cool hearing people out there, and deaf faculty need to be open to getting to know them. I have been surprised, and my ideas and information as a faculty member and scholar have been enriched by conversations I have had with hearing people. I might have missed those opportunities if I was closed to
meeting and interacting with hearing people. You may find some difficult people, and so don’t spend any more time with them. But you also may find new friends and allies out there too (12:112).

**Conclusion.** Ultimately, this cadre of participants prevailed in their receipt of tenure. While several felt prepared and found the journey rather routine, most characterized some points on the journey as a test of perseverance through various levels of challenge and adversity. In any case, what drove these individuals to persist seemed in one way no different than others who choose a life of scholarly service; a passion for the pursuit and sharing of knowledge.

Yet, their passion seemed to have been intensified by a duty to their community. In a community where more than 90% of the members are born without immediate access to adult deaf role models, these individuals seemed to recognize a responsibility to serve this role for one another and future generations. Driven by a mission to provide what may have eluded these participants as they moved through the ranks of higher education, their tolerance of a system laden with macro inequalities, and microinequities was of less consequence than the duty of care they had to the next generation of deaf faculty and students.

**Summary of Results**

This study focused on the tenure review experiences of successfully tenured deaf faculty members. The primary purpose of the study was to determine barriers inherent to the tenure review experiences, and the accommodations which were useful in overcoming these barriers. A secondary purpose of the study was to identify advice to current and future deaf tenure-track faculty members in support of their successful navigation of the
tenure review process. This chapter presented the results of a phenomenological analysis of the interview texts.

In several instances, the study revealed experiences that were typical of many faculty members as noted in broader studies of other faculty communities. Some deaf participants relayed experiences that were smooth and “expected” while others described more difficult roads. In the instances where experiences were described in stressful or intimidating ways, these circumstances were reportedly made worse by gaps in access to the language and information necessary to support faculty success.

A notable amount of time was allocated by deaf faculty members to maneuver through this environment. A collective of supportive and understanding deaf colleagues was often counted on to fill some of the gaps and advocate for long-term changes which would reduce these additional demands on faculty members’ time. Chapter 5 will contextualize these findings through discussion of literature relevant to the research questions, and consider how the findings help academic colleagues and leaders to support the experiences of deaf faculty members in similar circumstances, as well as those who may be negotiating more solitary environments.
Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings of a phenomenological study of the tenure review experiences of 12 deaf, full-time, tenured faculty members. In addition to the primary question of their experiences, secondary questions regarding use of accommodations and advice as offered by study participants to junior deaf faculty members will also be discussed. The ways the findings may inform current practice and possibilities for further research are also presented. Topics included in this chapter are: (a) discussion, (b) implications for practice, (c) limitations, (d) recommendations for future research, and (e) conclusion; for this chapter and the dissertation in its entirety.

This study suggests that deaf tenured faculty members have a variety of tenure review experiences, and often navigate many of the same challenges as faculty members from other minority communities on majority campuses. Accounts of dismissive, intimidating, and sometimes oppressive experiences by junior faculty members of color and by junior faculty members who are women are discussed repeatedly in the literature (Antonio, 2002; Diggs et al., 2009; Johnson, 2001; Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998; Stanley, 2006; Trower, 2009; Turner, 2002; Warde, 2009). Though these deaf faculty members are working in a college setting where deaf students are the majority, among the faculty community, deaf people remain a minority group (Dirmeyer, 2010). Their described
experiences when considered in the context of other minority faculty studies support their positionality as a cultural and linguistic minority.

There are aspects particular to the experiences of deaf faculty members that differentiate their tenure journeys from those of other minority communities to some degree. These differentiations are most often related to issues of accommodation for and access to communication and information. While limited access to the organization and its power structures is generally noted as a barrier for minority faculty members, what is meant and what is to be navigated in the context of access for deaf faculty members appears different in both nature and degree of impact on the lived tenure experience of the individual.

**Discussion**

Twelve deaf tenured faculty members from a college for deaf students positioned within a predominantly hearing comprehensive university shared their tenure review experiences framed by the following research questions:

1. In American colleges and universities, what are the reported tenure process experiences of deaf, full-time, tenured faculty?
   a. Were accommodations provided while deaf junior faculty were in the process of achieving tenure as defined by Boyer’s Model?
   b. What accommodations should be provided to deaf junior faculty in the process of achieving tenure as defined by Boyer’s Model?

2. What advice do deaf, full-time, tenured faculty members have for deaf junior faculty in preparation for tenure review?
The resulting seven themes reflect facets of their collective responses to these questions. When positioning these themes inside a body of previous studies of minority faculty, the responses support this community’s common experiences as “others” in some instances. In other cases, the responses reveal experiences that are apparent and exclusive to these participants as members of this uniquely defined minority. Finally, the advice offered by this community is remarkably consistent with that outlined in the literature, and notable for its fundamental assertion that tenure is important and achievable for deaf junior faculty regardless of the circumstance.

**The tenure experience in common with “others.”** In response to the question of their tenure review experiences, deaf faculty members’ reflections span across a continuum. Some found the experience to be predictable, clear, and equitable. Others characterize the journey as expectedly challenging. Still others represent an encounter that is arduous, intimidating, and oppressive. A broad diversity of experiences was represented across a sample of 12 people in one small and insular college environment.

In spite of vast differences in the lived realities of these 12 journeys, in totality they appear consistent with previously studied tenure experiences of minority faculty members. Possible explanations for the reported diversity of experiences can be suggested by considering these findings in the context of several prior studies of tenured minority faculty. In the context of this literature, one possibility is that deaf faculty members have diverse vantage points from which they view the College, and if so, this offers some insight into the collective diversity when depicting tenure experiences with the College.
In a study of the experiences of African American tenured faculty at two Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), a traditionally underrepresented community of faculty reported positive tenure experiences (Johnson, 2001). Clear institutional values, well-articulated expectations, casual and easy collegial interactions, and a series of formal and informal opportunities used to communicate values and expectations all are named for their positive impact on the experiences of eight African American faculty members. Because this finding was counter to a number of other studies of minority faculty in majority academic environments, the homogenous nature of the HBCU environment was credited with positively influencing the experiences described in this particular study (Johnson).

The point has been made that the 12 deaf faculty members worked in a predominantly hearing environment, but it could also be that this environment was “deaf enough” to help explain the experience some faculty members had with the tenure review process. Recall that more than 90% of deaf people are born to hearing families, 69% live in homes where no functional sign language is used, and less than 5% are ever a college student in a place where they are the majority (Hauser et al., 2010; Bahan, Bauman, & Montenegro, 2008; Walter, 2010). Much of this is counter to the experience of most other minority community members who typically share a common history and language with their family, and often whose shared experience extends to other culturally influential social systems, such as school and church. While this College for the Deaf was not a predominantly deaf workplace, it is possible that it may have been more deaf than these faculty members had previously known. As such it could be that the College was predominantly “deaf enough” for some of the deaf faculty members, and therefore
provided them with a tenure review experience comparable to the one described by the African American faculty members working in HBCUs, which are notably and predominantly African American workplaces.

Countering the positive and inclusive experience of African American faculty at HBCUs, a study on the common experience of “otherness” situated at a research university in Hawaii reported the negative tenure experiences of a different minority community (Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998). At the time of the study, that university faculty was comprised of 69% white faculty members, and 31% faculty of color. Though underrepresented among the university faculty, within the communities surrounding the university these minority faculty were part of Hawaii’s majority population. It was posited that a “critical mass” of minority faculty coming from this community context may have a tenure experience more positive and inclusive than minority faculty members at traditional majority campuses. The study revealed a different outcome (Johnsrud & Sadao).

Participants in the Johnsrud and Sadeo study (1998) described experiences of frustration, exclusion, disappointment, and oppression similar to other minority faculty on majority campuses (Diggs et al., 2009; Stanley, 2006; Turner, 2002). In addition, and perhaps because they were walking more distinctly in two worlds on a daily basis, these study participants reported an exhausting pressure to maneuver through institutional situations requiring code- and culture-switching in order to be successful (Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998). These accounts were very similar to the experiences described by those deaf tenured faculty members who had negatively characterized their tenure review experiences. For those deaf faculty members, it may be that the College environment
was not “deaf enough,” and their experience reflective of one more consistent with minority faculty members in a traditional majority university.

Consistencies between the experiences outlined in the research literature, and those generally illustrated by the deaf tenured faculty members support consideration of deaf faculty as a cultural minority while giving credence to the findings of this study. The nature of the academic environments in previous study literature, combined with the possible influences of each deaf faculty member’s perception of the College environment provides one possible explanation for the range of deaf tenured faculty experiences within this one academic setting. As clearly as the question of a lived tenure review experience supports the existence of similarities between deaf and other minority faculty, the question of accommodation and access distinguishes the experiences of deaf tenured faculty from other minority peers in equally clear ways.

**Accommodation and access: otherness among “others.”** The research literature generally identifies the importance of minority faculty members accessing organizations’ central power structures as a mechanism for mitigating obstacles to their collective success, while supporting universities that seek to build diverse faculty communities (Stanley, 2006; Turner, 2003). Disparities of access for all minority faculty are well documented and most certainly challenging. However, the findings of this study, consistent with one previous study of deaf tenured faculty, reveal a definition of access which is vastly different in nature and degree when considering the environmental and organizational negotiations in which deaf people must engage when working in predominantly hearing environments.
The study participants differentiate the concepts of accommodation and access when discussing their tenure review experiences. Accommodation refers to the provision of services, such as interpreting and captioning, which is guided by the regulatory umbrella of 504 or ADA. Access is used when discussing broader inclusion in the collegial networks, informal hallway and office interactions, and additional settings or conversations that are part of the systems which drive operations and decision-making in the academic environment.

When considering applications of 504 and ADA, study participants agreed that there would be likely applications for deaf faculty seeking tenure at traditional hearing universities. These faculty members extended that application to include the other predominantly hearing colleges also on the campus of the University where the College of the Deaf is located. Deaf faculty members emphasized applications of 504 and ADA extending beyond the formal work settings, and to include the provision of access to the informal work environments where important scholarly and collegial conversations spontaneously occur.

Study participants were less apt to see useful applications of 504 and ADA in the College specific setting. The number of deaf faculty members and the diversity of accommodations which would be necessary are beyond the scope of these regulations according to the responses of several participants. Participants in large part shifted their attention to their own experiences of access to communication and information within the College. In many cases, their descriptions are consistent with a previously published study of deaf tenured faculty members, each working in predominantly hearing university settings.
A 2007 study of three deaf tenured faculty members at two different traditional hearing universities in Canada and Australia discussed the challenges of navigating in these environments. Though the settings were international, gaining access to the university’s administrative systems, formal conversations, spontaneous environments, and to peer-reviewed conference settings to inform a faculty member’s understanding of expectations and research priorities remained as important as it had been described for American college and university faculty members. There were several reported barriers to these opportunities in these two university settings given no expectation that others in the environment knew or used sign language, or understood the cultural norms of a deaf faculty member (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell, 2007).

Gaps in information and communication reported in the previous study were consistent with the reported experiences of several of the 12 deaf faculty members participating in this phenomenological study. In hearing universities and in the College for the Deaf, participants expressed concerns regarding missed information about formal goals and expectations, as well as missed collegial communications at the “water cooler.” Sometimes identifying ignorance, fear, and resentment from many colleagues, participants in both studies described the importance of the “right” deaf and hearing colleagues for support and information sharing (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell, 2007).

Challenges regarding participation and presentation at discipline specific peer-reviewed conferences were also emphasized in both studies. Access to the informal conference environment, and to the maintenance of professional reputation and credibility in a world of imperfect support service models, was consistent for deaf faculty members in both settings. Participants from each college and university also described
the burden of an additional and significant investment of time which removed them from their primary responsibilities, but was required in their deployment of strategies essential for closing these access gaps (Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell, 2007).

While studies of other minority faculty frequently reference limited access to systems and information as a part of their cost for joining majority communities, the additional language and modality “tax” upon deaf faculty members seems markedly different. Unlike any other minority community, deaf faculty members in and outside of this study carry the additional weight of mining for essential information and communication, securing accommodation services, and compensating for inherent inaccuracies and misrepresentations when employing those services. With their scholarly credibility and reputations at risk, the pressure to understand what is expected of them, disseminate information through presentations and small group interactions, and maintain an accurate exchange of ideas and dialogues raises the stakes regarding access to an entirely different level.

**No excuses: advice to the next generations.** A secondary question of this study seeks to advise deaf junior faculty members toward successful navigation through their own tenure review processes. With experiences in this study regarding tenure, accommodation, and access consistent with the experiences described by minority and deaf faculty in prior studies, the advice is likely relevant for deaf junior faculty members, whether negotiating their experience as a lone deaf faculty member in an all-hearing setting, or as part of a sizeable community of deaf scholars. The general usefulness of this advice for a minority deaf faculty community is reinforced by its marked similarity to
advice offered in an earlier study of African American male tenured faculty members (Warde, 2009).

Prompted by concerns with a decline in the number of African American men entering and completing college, and its long-term impact on the pipeline of African American male faculty members, a study of 12 African American male tenured faculty members was conducted to determine strategies for success and advice for African American junior faculty navigating similar environments (Warde, 2009). Through eight summary themes junior faculty were advised to identify mentors, build their portfolios, foster collegiality, navigate the political landscape, generate publications, attend scholarly conferences, serve on appropriate committees, and remain focused on the primary responsibilities of their faculty post (Warde). The identical nature of the advice provided by deaf tenured faculty to their constituency continues to reinforce an understanding of deaf faculty members as members of a minority faculty community, and support the integrity of this phenomenological study.

The advice provided by deaf faculty members is consistent and focused within the study interviews, and when compared to the previous study of African American male faculty members. The importance of junior deaf faculty members assuming responsibility for their successful tenure experience from beginning to end is at the core of each tenured participant’s reflections and suggestions. A variety of mechanisms are recommended to actively engage in this responsibility. Advice focuses on four aspects of the tenure review process: (a) laying solid foundations, (b) employing administrative feedback and progress-tracking systems, (c) making outstanding contributions as a teacher, scholar, and academic citizen, and (d) navigating the political landscape wisely.
while networking openly with colleagues. Embedded within each of these focal points is
innate agreement with each piece of advice offered to African American male junior
faculty members. For minority faculty members in traditional majority environments, the
roadmap seems clear and consistent. In further reflecting on Boyer’s (1990) goals for
increasing the diversity of America’s faculty, what is most important to come from these
tenured faculty members is the message that with the appropriate attention and
persistence, tenure is achievable.

**In consideration of Boyer’s Model of Scholarship.** The setting of this study
was the University; a four-year, private, comprehensive institution. In potential contrast
to Boyer’s goals, but certainly consistent with published trends in higher education, the
University has recently adopted tenure and promotion guidelines inclusive of a more
rigorous and narrow research agenda (Youn & Price, 2009). These expectations for
heightened scholarly activity generated accounts of anxiety and concern for many deaf
faculty members participating in this study. Questions of accommodation and access
were raised within each of the interviews.

An institutional research culture cannot be established solely as the result of
policy change, and cannot be sustained without collegial dialogue, partnership, and
connection within the academic setting (Warde, 2009; Woodcock, Rohan, & Campbell,
2007). It cannot be ignored that as “people of the eye” deaf people communicate in
primarily visual ways (Ladd, 2003). Within the College, deaf faculty members describe
their experience in a world whose frame is still centered on language and communication
that is heard and spoken. Deaf faculty members appear to be negotiating for entre at all
times and in the most fundamental of settings.
Reports of people “forgetting to sign” in department and college-wide meeting settings, the requisite extra time to meet “beyond the meeting” to compensate for gaps resulting from others’ communication missteps, expectations to simcom - marginalizing the integrity of sign language in favor of spoken language - and an organizational operating procedure in which deaf faculty members accept they will “miss out” on the valuable exchange of information that occurs in hallways, community gatherings, and at the “water cooler” collectively promotes unacceptable standards for access. Under recently expired tenure expectations, deaf faculty members already seemed to be combating an “accumulated disadvantage” with regard to both incidental and critical information (Gladwell, 2008). This understandably generates questions about the kinds of collegial connections possible when language and communication expectations are elevated to include the necessary scholarly dialogues demanded by new tenure and research standards.

Beyond the College and University, new expectations which essentially mandate attendance at discipline-based conferences for the purposes of building external collegial networks, establishing and expanding research agendas, and disseminating scholarly findings are also of special concern. To satisfy expectations associated with conference attendance requires an extraordinary amount of time and planning on the part of deaf faculty members. This also reportedly produces a great deal of uncertainty for deaf faculty members operating under already inadequate College and University access service models.

Fundamental accommodations like interpreting services are unplanned expenses for conference hosts, and with ambiguous regulatory terms such as “reasonable
accommodation” and the provision for claims of “undue burden” by the organization, deaf faculty members report conference coverage which is limited in scope. When services are provided, the probability of securing professionally certified interpreters familiar with the academic language and vocabulary of the conference is low. In either the external conference or internal college environments, it is the informal and spontaneous environments inclusive of organizational and discipline-centered “gossip” that can no longer be dismissed by deaf faculty, their hearing colleagues, or the College and University leaders. If tenure is to be granted to faculty who are fully engaged in the dynamic research agenda of the University, then the University and the College must work in tandem to provide equal avenues for this engagement to its deaf faculty community, while ensuring an authentically robust and fully inclusive research culture shaped by the contributions and interactions of all of the faculty at the University.

The changes to this University’s scholarship standards may be new, but they are reflective of trends for many of America’s colleges and universities, and standards are likely to grow more rigorous over time. As a result, the need for resolution on this campus is pressing. With the benefit of University support, and a community of College-based experts on being deaf, receiving tenure, and the ways deaf faculty can best contribute to a sustainable research culture and an inclusive research agenda, this community is in the best position to construct solutions.

Because of national shifts toward similarly focused research agendas, deaf faculty members on other campuses will have equally pressing needs, and far more narrow circles of support and expertise. Therefore, the solutions generated through an effective University and College partnership have the promise of widespread application and
benefit for deaf faculty members in a number of college and university settings. Structures for discovering bold and innovative responses from the College and the University are discussed in the following section.

**Implications for Practice**

The findings of this and a previous study suggest that what most challenges and differentiates the tenure and university experience of a deaf faculty member is the navigation for access to information and people. Therefore, the implications for practice are centered precisely on matters of access. This section will offer considerations for leaders outside of the study University and College, considerations for deaf junior faculty members pursuing tenure, and finally, considerations for leaders inside the University and College where this study took place.

**Beyond the research setting.** For academic leaders intending to support deaf faculty members on their campus community, it can be tempting to immediately begin determining what services will be provided and when they can be available. A more strategic approach is useful for supporting the deaf faculty member and creating the most engaged academic community possible. Because the described experiences and themes of these deaf tenured faculty members so closely paralleled those of other minority faculty members on majority campuses, considering Moody’s (2000) model for “demystifying” the tenure review process is a helpful starting point.

Moody (2000) provides six steps which support an inclusive and welcoming academic environment. It is recommended that academic leaders seeking to more evenly allocate campus capital necessary for navigating the tenure review process ensure the following is in place:
• Provide clear tenure expectations, use annual appraisals, and appoint mentoring committees to coach junior faculty.

• Communicate opportunities for time-out or extensions to the tenure clock without penalty to junior faculty who may have a need for this.

• Ensure access to inside information, and equal shares in research-related stipends, space, and time.

• Articulate the connection between tenure criteria and college or university mission.

• Use Boyer’s Model to support the recognition of various forms of scholarship beyond discovery, demonstrating an appreciation of diverse interests by a number of faculty members within majority and underrepresented groups.

• Improve the interpersonal, communication, and cultural competencies of senior faculty through workshops and professional development efforts.

Recognizing the additional complexities associated with establishing a visually inclusive environment in spoken language communities, further adaptations to campus culture and environment could attend to the following:

• Take inventory of the campus culture. Every campus community is different, and often individual colleges, schools, and programs within the university will operate as a subculture. Understanding the kinds of formal and informal expectations the culture dictates for department, school, college, and university interactions will be important when considering the level of support services which are “reasonable” for enhancing the deaf faculty member’s and the university’s success.
• Engage the deaf faculty member. With a clear understanding of the culture which exists on the campus, and the level of interaction which is expected by and from fully engaged faculty members as a result, have a conversation with the deaf faculty member to discuss the variety of strategies and services which can be assembled to support an integrated experience for all. Many of the strategies below will be dependent on an individual’s preferred ways of expressing and receiving information. It is critical to partner with deaf faculty members to make subsequent decisions about access, inclusion, and services which are beneficial to everyone.

• Consider “who” communication access and services benefit. It can also be tempting to consider support services as provided for deaf faculty members. In most instances, a campus’ goal is to pursue the development of a diverse faculty community as a means of enriching the nature and content of academic discourse. Unless the campus is one where everyone knows sign language, without support services, the entire faculty community fails to benefit from the contribution of the deaf faculty members’ knowledge and experience in ways outlined above. Support services are for everyone who will be, should be, or would like to be interacting with deaf individuals, as well as important to deaf faculty members navigating the environment.

• Make time for the chair. Given that study findings indicated the pivotal role the chair serves for deaf tenure-track faculty, allowing time for the chair and deaf faculty members to cultivate a relationship will be critical. Time is especially important to allow for conversations and concepts to be translated
between a visual and a spoken language. If this is the first time a chairperson is working with an interpreter, time is also important to allow for the chair to grow accustomed to the interpreter’s presence and to work with their deaf faculty member to appropriately understand and engage the interpreter’s role. Finally, chairs and deaf faculty members will need to work to establish trust while using this third-party conduit. Building trust under this circumstance naturally requires more time.

- Identify the right peer/senior faculty mentor. While Moody (2000) notes the importance of mentors in a general way as outlined above, the importance of a mentor for a deaf faculty member navigating a predominantly hearing environment is purposefully emphasized here. A previous study of successful deaf administrators in predominantly hearing workplaces emphasized the important role a “chatty” hearing colleague could play in filling necessary political and informational gaps (Kavin & Brown-Kurz, 2008). This individual should have experience with tenure, a well-informed and inclusive view of the university and the academic environment, and a healthy understanding of the organizational and personal dynamics at the university.

- Enhance inclusivity as a “deaf friendly” workplace. There are a number of modifications that can be made to the ways a department or a division chooses to conduct business which can be more or less inclusive of deaf faculty members. Employing those that generate more inclusivity requires little cost but a staunch commitment to maintaining the strategies. The following is a
list of many of the areas where modifications can be of great support to the inclusivity of all:

- Meeting facilitation: Consider the management of turn-taking, side conversations, placement of presenters, note taking, and general pace of the meeting.
- Space and room arrangement: Placement of seating, lighting, and attention to visual sight lines can make a significant difference with regard to access.
- Design and use of visual media: Efficiency of purpose and text for visual aids, and maintaining complementary rather than competitive use of visual tools enhances clarity of communication.
- Access to film media: Knowing where and how to get productions captioned, or best practices for working with support services when captioning is not possible, sends a clear message that access for all is a priority.
- Use of poetry, song, comedy, and slang: These are culturally and linguistically specific phenomena, and therefore easily lost in translation. To keep messages and communications clear, it is always best practice to remain purposeful and direct in language choices.
- A language rich environment: Create an environment where learning some sign language is promoted. An example could be to arrange for lunch time instruction of basic sign language related to the workplace. Do not expect deaf faculty members to lead these sessions, though
they may be helpful or interested in identifying appropriate instructional resources.

- Response to service disruptions: Determine and communicate policy and practice in advance which is consistent with priorities for the inclusion of all. Should support services need to cancel unexpectedly everyone will know how or whether to proceed.

- Support conference activity. This is another opportunity to evaluate university priorities and expectations with regard to any faculty member’s participation at a conference, and then consider the level of support services necessary for a deaf faculty member to meet those priorities and expectations.
  
  - Invite the deaf faculty member to be a part of this conversation.
  
  - Together, determine how service requests will take place, and who will negotiate with conference hosts on behalf of the university should initial service requests be denied.
  
  - Identify and train a team of administrative support staff to facilitate scheduling communications and other logistical tasks associated with arranging support services.

It must be emphasized that deaf faculty members, like all faculty members, are individuals. Therefore, employing any or all of the aforementioned strategies will only be effective if they are tailored to the individual faculty member, and also to each individual situation. The ways that any person gains access to information and communication varies dependent on a number of factors, and for a deaf faculty member this would be no different. What is critical is that the university leadership is clear about
the priorities for all faculty, and there is a commitment to work in partnership to insure the environment and services are aligned for deaf faculty members to support those priorities.

**For junior deaf faculty members.** The findings of this and previously conducted studies with deaf and other minority faculty members suggest that the journey to tenure on a predominantly majority campus is at once manageable and challenging. Clearly, the tenure review process is designed to be challenging for all junior faculty members. It appears that the described experiences of isolation, exclusion, and in some cases oppression create an environment which intensifies the challenges and stresses for minority faculty members in many instances.

To navigate the process successfully, senior deaf faculty members suggest that preparation begin immediately, and attention to progress is deliberate, consistent, and includes:

- Knowing what is expected and how to get answers is of fundamental importance.
- Identifying both formal and informal mentors and allies who are trustworthy and knowledgeable about the university and the system can provide necessary support.
- Using annual appraisals, mid-tenure review processes, and regular one on one meetings with the chair to constantly address feedback and track progress will insure preparation at the time of portfolio submission.
• Performing the primary responsibilities of a faculty member with regard to teaching, scholarship, and service is essential to establishing a strong case for tenure.

• Developing a collegial reputation with peers and senior faculty members establishes both credibility and trust that the faculty member is interested and able to make long term contributions to the community, and to the field of study in the academic context of the university.

• Navigating the political landscape is equally as important as managing the academic one.

In the context of the described challenges when accessing information and communication, it is important that deaf junior faculty members who are operating on predominantly hearing campuses consider strategies which inform their accommodation requests and proactively mitigate the language barriers that complicate already challenging experiences. Kavin and Brown-Kurz (2008) offer recommendations for deaf professionals operating in predominantly hearing workplaces to build and sustain a resiliency of spirit. The skills and practices which enable a deaf professional to serve as an informed self-advocate, and a beneficial member of their organization are useful for deaf faculty members to consider and include:

• Knowing the legislation governing access and accommodation in the workplace.

• Attending on-going training and professional development in the areas of empowerment, self-advocacy, assertiveness, and communication.
• Developing a team of workplace colleagues who are willing to consider the possibility that difficult circumstances exist, and who can offer counsel about how to address them.

• Prioritizing regular contact with the network of workplace colleagues as a primary strategy for gathering information about the informal workplace dynamics and issues which are key for employee success (Kavin & Brown-Kurz).

In addition, the deaf faculty members at the center of this study emphasized the importance of a network of deaf colleagues. According to participants, this network offered an understanding of the institutional challenges, support when times were difficult, and a wealth of different information and strategies which were useful for navigating the system and structures. A deaf faculty member operating in isolation in a hearing university would not have proximal access to a deaf collegial network. However, organizations such as DeafAcademics.org offer virtual opportunities to connect with colleagues around the world for both discipline-based and colleague-centered information. Engaging with this type of community would be another way to strengthen personal resiliency in support of persistence to success.

Even as colleges and universities should become educated and aware of the possibilities for supporting a deaf faculty member, deaf professionals and professors are in agreement that the deaf faculty member also do what is necessary to become educated and engaged with the process and their organization. The tenure process for deaf faculty members is a situation in which neither party will have all the information and resources necessary to generate the best outcome. Working together with the intention of becoming
the most informed partners, academic leaders and faculty members will ultimately produce the most successful results for all involved.

**At the College and the University.** When formulating plans to improve experiences in this specific College and University setting, many of the strategies outlined above for general universities should be considered. However, the unique convergence of expertise, mission, and community within this research setting make it possible to generate an entirely original approach, serving to resolve present campus concerns and as a model for all campuses in the achievement of a campus vision for diversity, teaching, and scholarly rigor. To do this, the campus must recognize the experiences and assumptions that exist regarding what is or will be possible for an individual, the College, and the University. Two participants offered important insights to this end. When describing the tenure experience, one study participant offered the following:

> I think about a university like a quilt….The way a university decides the composition of their quilt is through the tenure process. Each faculty member is invited to contribute and upon receiving tenure, they become a part of the fabric of that University….I did my work, and I worked hard. I did good scholarship and research, and I had a vision for myself all that time that I’d be proud to be a scholar on that quilt…When I submitted my materials for tenure at [the College], I found myself facing expectations [for scholarship] that were lower than those I had of myself…it was counter to my nature to seek that kind of environment. ...My nature and practice would have driven me to work at a place where the expectations were higher and I was aspiring to them.
As a deaf faculty member, however, one of the challenges is that I see my colleagues working at universities where the expectations are higher, but in predominantly hearing university environments. They have no collegial involvement, they have no networking, they are alone. So, for me on this journey, I could've been successful in the tenure process at a more prominent research university … or qualified for tenure at [the College]… But I felt like I really had no “best” option. I could either affiliate at the place with higher expectations for scholarship, feel alone, and experience inherent oppression and audism in an intensive way… or choose a place with a deaf community, and lower expectations for scholarship. The reality of that decision was a depressing moment for me (8:169).

In contrast to this description, another faculty member considered scholarship at the College and the University as follows:

For me, it's a bit odd because in thinking about this - and in pausing here to think about it – [the University] has always promoted itself as a teaching university. Now there are some changes in place. I think with the changes to focus on research and scholarship, we are diminishing our focus on students. I think that's a problem. I think they're reducing the focus on students in favor of what they will gain from research in terms of funding. Certainly that's a big part of [the University’s] priorities right now. I'm worried about how [the University] will maintain its ability to be distinguished from other colleges if we are going where other colleges have gone already, as opposed to maintaining our own special
focus on students and being a teaching university. I'm not sure really 100% this is for the best for the future of [the University].

With research you are focusing more on the priorities that are project-based. You do it, you get your money. If the money runs out you stop the project, you move on to something else. With teaching you’re really focusing on skills. I think focusing on skill building over the years requires a more consistent effort. Focus on that seems very different to me - to be a university that would focus on research versus a university that focuses on teaching (2:94).

…I think [the College] needs to focus if they're going to try to adopt this research agenda….I think [the College] is in a weird place right now, because it's trying to match [the University’s] expectations, but it also has a unique mission in terms of education for the deaf. I think the administration is in the process of learning…(2:105).

It is these two perspectives, seemingly exclusive of one another, that currently challenge, but could inform the work of the College and the University in developing a model for scholarship which honors campus principles with regard to diversity and teaching.

The University promotes itself as an incubator for innovative and “out of the box” thinking (The University, 2010). The University also acknowledges its significance as the host of a unique and important national College for the Deaf (The University). The College has indicated its desire to increase the number of deaf faculty members, and to support the advancing research agenda of the University (The College Administrative Council, 2010).

Findings from this study would suggest that in the context of this aggressive
research agenda, the current models at the University and the College for supporting deaf faculty members are falling short. Deaf faculty members do not generally report conference experiences which fully contribute to their tenure portfolio, or successfully advance the University’s research agenda. A conference participant cannot disseminate information about their home university’s research agenda and connect that agenda with the work of other scholars if access services are routinely unpredictable, unskilled, and unavailable.

Additionally, the University’s and the College’s blended histories as teaching institutions have firmly established a perceived divide between teaching and scholarship. At this point in time, the campus has not uniformly established an alternative campus culture, shaped by the written expectation of a balanced academic portfolio, and inclusive of both outstanding scholarly work and excellent teaching. This combination of changing expectations, curious faculty communities, resident experts on what it means to be a deaf scholar, and a campus-wide thirst for innovation may provide the precise set of circumstances to resolve the conflict posed at the onset of this section. The answer should not be for deaf scholars to have to choose credibility or collegiality, or for the College to have to choose scholarship or teaching. Informed and supported by an agenda for innovation and creativity, the work of the University and the College could be to find a new answer for itself, its current faculty scholars, and for those yet to come.

Therefore it is a recommendation in the context of the current incongruities faced by the College, that the University and the College collaboratively consider solutions. At the onset, this process needs to adopt the belief that alternative strategies are possible for building a culture of scholarship which complements a culture of teaching in unique and
distinctive ways. It needs to support a desire to identify scholarship of the highest standards and which affords a diversity of faculty members - deaf and hearing - full entre, participation, and contribution. And, it needs to include an investment and invitation to generate these solutions at a “table” which is inclusive of all: the University leadership, the College leadership, and the deaf tenured faculty members serving as resident experts for informing these solutions.

Could there be a R1 university where there is also a deaf collegial network? Is it possible to be the best teaching and research university for deaf people? Wouldn’t successfully achieving this exemplify the “category of one” standards that are actively grounding the University’s current agenda, and demonstrate in a real and authentic way the University’s pride in and commitment to the College and the unique community it serves? In places which pride themselves on being some of the best incubators for innovation and advocates for deaf education in the world, it would seem only right that this University and this College, respectively, imagine the unimagined, and find solutions that have yet to be found.

Limitations

In spite of diligent efforts made to ensure the credibility of this study’s findings, there are limitations that must be recognized. First, the participants self-selected in to the study. The entire study population was solicited, and individuals chose to participate, knowing both the topic and the researcher. It is possible that individuals made decisions to participate because of more extreme experiences with tenure or because of their knowledge of the researcher. It is also possible that individuals made decisions not to participate in the study for similar reasons. Additionally, this study population exists in a
unique academic environment. Though a minority community, there is a measurable community of deaf faculty tenured to a college with a distinct mission centered on deaf students. Finally, the University’s changing research agenda happening concurrent to the study likely influenced the experiences and concerns of this study population. As a result of these limitations, this study cannot be considered representative of all deaf tenured faculty members in the traditional American college or university. Therefore, the findings should be considered suggestive as opposed to conclusive.

Recommendations for Future Research

In consideration of the limitations of this study, several recommendations for future research are suggested to broaden its scope. Because this study was limited only to deaf tenured faculty members, and considered in the context of minority tenured faculty, the extent to which many of the experiences outlined are genuinely distinct from those of majority tenured faculty members at traditional majority universities is unclear. Given this ambiguity, it is difficult to determine if the experiences are the result of an inherently arduous tenure system, the result of a system influenced by dominant and subordinate cultural dynamics, or the result of some combination of both events. The tenure experiences of tenured hearing majority faculty should be explored in conjunction with the experiences of tenured deaf faculty through future research.

Additionally, the nature of the College’s mission as a national college exclusive in its service to the deaf community, makes it difficult to generalize the experiences of the deaf tenured faculty in this study setting to those of deaf faculty members at more traditional colleges and universities. A similar study should be conducted with individual deaf tenured faculty members located in more traditional environments. Comparisons of
the previous study, this study, and the future study would contribute to a more broad understanding of the tenure review experiences for all deaf faculty members. With a body of themes to consider, a quantitative tool could be developed. This would allow for widespread outreach and collection of information from deaf individuals, and an ability to validate experiences across the larger population.

Finally, conducting this study at the time of changing University research expectations generates an opportunity for future study. Uncertainty surrounding these expectations is likely to have influenced participant reflections and priorities in the present study. Determining the extent of influence this changing scholarly context has on shaping participant experiences will require future study.

Conclusion

In 1990, Ernest Boyer initiated a revolution of thought by re-defining what it meant to be a scholar. Recognizing the diverse histories of America’s colleges and universities, and intent on broadening concepts of what could be known and who was included in the process of knowing, Boyer (1990) proposed that scholarship move beyond the traditional definition of discovery, and include the academic work of integration, application, and teaching. The literature suggests that Boyer’s revolution of thought has yet to become a revolution of practice in American colleges and universities.

The lack of implementation and application is particularly troubling when considering the importance of diversity, and its impact on teaching and scholarship on the nation’s campuses today. Boyer (1990) anticipated increases in the diversity of students with regard to race, gender, ethnicity, and a variety of physical, emotional, and learning needs. His predictions about growth in the diversity of students on American campuses
have been realized (U. S. Department of Justice, 2011; United States Census Bureau, 2011). In spite of his call to academia to significantly increase the presence of minority faculty more than two decades ago, growth in the diversity of our nation’s faculty has not yet been achieved (Turner et al., 1996). This is a concern for a variety of reasons.

Considering teaching as the transfer and transformation of human knowledge, diverse faculties support the successful teaching of both majority and minority students (Boyer, 1990; Turner, 2003). Majority students benefit from the exposure to an expanded array of viewpoints and considerations of the world around them, challenging their ideas and discourse, and broadening their capacity to critically think and consider multiple perspectives (American Society for Higher Education, 2009; Turner, 2002). In addition to these benefits, minority student learning can also be enhanced by the presence and interaction of faculty members from similar backgrounds as role models. These faculty members provide living examples of what is possible for minority students, serving as inspiration and motivation for achievement. Minority faculty members also support students as they gain navigational skills and understanding in a campus environment which may not readily be aware of or sensitive to their daily experience (Turner, 2002; Yosso, 2005). Increasingly diverse student bodies gain a greater breadth and depth of knowledge when guided by increasingly diverse faculties.

In addition to transferring and transforming knowledge through teaching, scholarship has an essential purpose on American college and university campuses; to expand the human stores of knowledge by expanding what is known (Boyer, 1990). Boyer (1990) argued that current systems which limit the ways knowledge is gathered and limit who is gathering the knowledge ultimately limits what can be known, and is
destructive to this core function of the college and university in America. Concerned by a significant lack of diversity among faculties across America’s college and university campuses, Boyer proposed broadening the definition of scholarship to open doors for increased diversities of perspective and people. This diversity of perspective and people would generate new ways of knowing, ultimately fulfilling the fundamental intent of scholarship while establishing a national academic culture more open and adaptive to diversity than had historically been the case.

Faculty diversity has remained stagnant in spite of Boyer’s call and case for change. Additionally, studies seem to verify little modification in the ways scholarship has been defined and measured. In the twenty years since Boyer proposed a new vision for scholarship in American colleges and universities, these realities seem to further support that more progress has been made in word than in deed (Cutler, 2010; Toews & Yazedjian, 2007).

This study of the tenure experiences of deaf tenured faculty was conducted during a comprehensive university’s evolution beyond its teaching mission. Consistent with national trends as presented in the literature, this comprehensive university has adopted an aggressive agenda for scholarship (Youn & Price, 2009). At initial review this appears to be one more university countering Boyer’s hope for expanded consideration of what is meant by scholarship and of who is included in the ways a scholar is defined. With more careful review, this need not be the case.

It could be argued that the shift to re-prioritize scholarship in this setting opens the door for change in support of Boyer’s (1990) Model. With roots as a traditional teaching institution, scholarly pursuits in the areas of discovery and integration have
historically received less attention at the University. Expanding the research agenda has the potential to open opportunities for the pursuit of knowledge in a manner consistent with Boyer’s goals.

The University is also host to the College for the Deaf. As host to this college, the University has one of the world’s largest deaf faculty communities in existence on a predominantly hearing college campus. This diverse and visible presence provides the University and the College an opportunity to reinvent the definition of scholar and revolutionize models and expectations for scholarship in ways that are imaginative, innovative, and inventive in their response to Boyer’s charge.

Deaf tenured faculty members have vividly described the challenges they confront as traditional scholars in pursuit of scholarship using traditional systems. University and College resources are unlikely to change in a manner which would resolve these traditional circumstances in the foreseeable future. Fortunately, nothing about Boyer’s (1990) vision was traditional, and nothing about this campus’ resolution need be either.

The College and the University are co-hosts to a community as broad and fundamentally diverse as could have been imagined by Boyer more than 20 years ago. With an assembly of innovative problem-solvers, a community of committed deaf scholars, and a mission to become a category of one University, this campus is in the most exacting position to realize a national Model for Scholarship consistent with Boyer’s vision (Boyer, 1990). Achieving a successfully inclusive recalibration of scholar and scholarship and teacher and teaching on a campus with diversity of this nature would have relevant and important implications for the expansion of knowledge in this
community and beyond, serving well diverse student and faculty communities across the campus and across the country.
References


Tugg v. Towey (Florida US District Court 1994).


Appendix A

Glossary of Terms

The following is a listing of key terms used throughout this proposal:

Access: The fundamental right to approach, enter, exit, participate, communicate, and/or interact with an environment, organization, community, or individual (Webster's Dictionary, 2009).

Accommodation: Modifications to the environment, or to the manner in which the tasks and interactions in the environment are conducted, enabling an individual with a disability to have equal access and privileges as those afforded individuals with no disability (Papinchok, 2005).

American Sign Language: “A visual-gestural-spatial language in which the placement, movement, and expression of the hands and body are part of the language. It has a complete grammar and syntax different from English. ASL is considered by the Deaf community to be the natural language of people who are deaf” (University of Texas at Dallas, Callier Center for Communication Disorders, 2010, p. 1).

Campus Social Capital: The social and shared expectations and norms which foster networks, relationships, and resource access critical for career establishment and success within the academic college or university (Williams & Williams, 2006).

Colleges and Universities: A term inclusive of post-secondary academies which are accredited, non-profit, private and public institutions of higher education. These
include institutions with programs granting two- and/or four-year undergraduate degrees, as well as an array of graduate and terminal degrees. While there are technically distinctions between the terms, they are used interchangeably for the purpose of this study.

**Critical mass:** A threshold number of non-majority individuals achieved inside a majority environment, allowing for social visibility and presence to be felt, and/or social movement to occur with and by the non-majority group (Oliver, Marwell, & Teixeira, 1985)

**deaf:** The larger community of people who share the condition of not hearing (Woodward).

**Deaf:** The smaller community of individuals within the deaf community who share a visually centered culture and the use of ASL (Woodward, 1972).

**Disability:** For the purposes of this study, the ADA definition of a disability will be used. Therefore, a disability is defined as “a physical or mental impairment which creates substantial limitations in one or more major life activities” (Papinchok, 2005, p. 297).

**Faculty:** The “keepers of the academic gates” in American colleges and universities. Faculty members are responsible to develop and approve curriculum, create standards and measures for graduation, and establish and maintain criteria for faculty evaluation (Boyer, 1990, p. 78).

**Junior faculty:** Junior faculty are members of the academic community who have yet to complete the tenure review process on their campus.
Senior faculty: Senior faculty are members of the academic community who have successfully navigated the tenure review process and have been granted tenure.

Manual Communication: Also called sign language. Refers to any of several visual-gestural systems of communication employing manual gestures, as used among deaf people (Dictionary.Com, 2012).

Oral Communication: “A communication method in which listening is the primary means of understanding language and speech (talking) is the primary means of expressing language. In addition to listening, a child is encouraged to watch the speaker for additional information from speechreading, facial expression, and gesture. No sign language is used. This method is sometimes called auditory-oral” (University of Texas at Dallas, Callier Center for Communication Disorders, 2010, p. 1).

Scholarship: On college and university campuses, whose fundamental charge is to expand the stores of human knowledge, scholarship is the process used by faculty in the acquisition of knowledge. Knowledge is identified through scholarship in discovery and integration, it is made meaningful using the scholarship of application, and knowledge is transformed through the scholarship of teaching (Boyer, 1990).

Simultaneous Communication (simcom): “A communication system in which spoken English and its manually coded (signed) version are used at the same time. The term “total communication” may at times be used to describe simultaneous communication” (University of Texas at Dallas, Callier Center for Communication Disorders, 2010, p. 2).

Tenure: The granting of a guarantee of permanence of employment on a college or university campus. The institution of tenure was established to insure that principles
of academic freedom would remain intact, and that scholars would be assured the right to pursue research, teach, and publish without threat to their employment or control by their employer. Tenure is awarded after a junior faculty member has completed a probationary period of most typically seven years (Ovington, Diamantes, Roby, & Ryan, 2003).
Appendix B

Interview Guide
**Interview Guide**

To conduct phenomenological interviews which seek to understand the experiences of tenured deaf faculty members, the following interview guide will be used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Interview Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Please describe your tenure review process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What factors and/or experiences do you believe contributed to you successfully earning tenure? Please describe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>In light of ADA, are there any accommodations you would identify as necessary for improving a junior faculty member’s access to the university or department tenure process? Please describe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>What advice would you give to current and future deaf tenure-track faculty to help them best successfully advance in the professoriate and earn tenure?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Topic</th>
<th>Possible Prompts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenure and Boyer’s Model</td>
<td>In discussing your tenure review process, you have not mentioned ________ (fill in with research, service on or off campus, teaching, conference participation), and I am wondering if you have anything you would want to add about this area when considering your tenure review experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moody Six Steps</td>
<td>I noticed you have not mentioned any relationships with senior faculty while pursuing tenure. Were there any relationships you would like to mention? Can you describe what makes this relationship worthy of mention? Can you comment on your preparedness for guiding new faculty once you had tenure? You have not yet mentioned the college’s mission/vision. Was the tenure process connected to the mission/vision? At what point in your junior faculty career were the tenure expectations reviewed with you? Who reviewed them with you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>Can you clarify your comment with regard to ________? Can you have an example you can share that would help me to understand this part of your experience? Help me understand more about ________. So, what I understand from your description is ________, would this be accurate?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix C

Interpreter Code of Conduct: Confidentiality

American Sign Language interpreters adhere to the following conduct with regard to confidentiality.

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Tenets:
1. Interpreters adhere to standards of confidential communication.
2. Interpreters possess the professional skills and knowledge required for the specific interpreting situation.
3. Interpreters conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the specific interpreting situation.
4. Interpreters demonstrate respect for consumers.
5. Interpreters demonstrate respect for colleagues, interns, and students of the profession.
6. Interpreters maintain ethical business practices.
7. Interpreters engage in professional development.

Applicability
A. This Code of Professional Conduct applies to certified and associate members of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc., Certified members of the National Association of the Deaf, interns, and students of the profession.
B. Federal, state, or other statutes or regulations may supersede this Code of Professional Conduct. When there is a conflict between this code and local, state, or federal laws and regulations, the interpreter obeys the rule of law.
C. This Code of Professional Conduct applies to interpreted situations that are performed either face-to-face or remotely.

Definitions:
For the purpose of this document, the following terms are used:

Colleagues: Other interpreters.
Conflict of Interest: A conflict between the private interests (personal, financial, or professional) and the official or professional responsibilities of an interpreter in a position of trust, whether actual or perceived, deriving from a specific interpreting situation.
Consumers: Individuals and entities who are part of the interpreted situation. This includes individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing, and hearing.

1.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

Tenet: Interpreters adhere to standards of confidential communication.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters hold a position of trust in their role as linguistic and cultural facilitators of communication. Confidentiality is highly valued by consumers and is essential to protecting all involved.

Each interpreting situation (e.g., elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education, legal, medical, mental health) has a standard of confidentiality. Under the reasonable interpreter standard, professional interpreters are expected to know the general requirements and applicability of various levels of confidentiality. Exceptions to confidentiality include, for example, federal and state laws requiring mandatory reporting of abuse or threats of suicide, or responding to subpoenas.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:
1.1 Share assignment-related information on a confidential and “as-needed” basis (e.g., supervision, interpreter team members, members of the educational team, hiring entities).

© Copyright 2005 the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
1.2 Manage data, invoices, records, or other situational or consumer-specific information in a manner consistent with maintaining consumer confidentiality (e.g., shredding, locked files).

1.3 Inform consumers when federal or state mandates require disclosure of confidential information.