

The Failure Project: Self-Efficacy, Mindset, Grit and Navigating

Perceived Failures in Design and the Arts

by

Megan Workmon Larsen

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Approved March 2018 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Pamela Kulinna, Chair
Danah Henriksen
William Heywood

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2018

ABSTRACT

Artists and designers are preparing for rapidly changing and competitive careers in creative fields that require a healthy dose of resiliency to persevere. However, little is known on how students within these fields become more self-efficacious, gritty, situated toward a growth mindset, and persistent over time. This mixed-method action research study investigates how undergraduate arts and design college students approach and navigate perceptions of failure as well as incorporates an intervention course designed to increase their self-efficacy, growth mindset, and academic persistence. Participants were eighteen arts and design students representing a variety of disciplines from an eight-week, one-unit, 300-level course that utilized arts-based methods, mindfulness, and active reflection. After the course, students had significant changes in their self-efficacy and academic persistence as well as moderate significant change in their fixed mindset.

DEDICATION

For my father, for his persistence and love of learning

For my mother, for teaching me to fail with (some) grace and her unending resilience

For my husband, for his wholehearted kindness and love

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Don't search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.

- from *Letters to a Young Poet* by Rainer Maria Rilke

This work is full of questions, and I am forever grateful for those living them along with me into an answer. This work would not have been possible without the support of my family, friends, committee members, and academic institution. I am especially grateful for the guidance of my chair, Dr. Pamela Kulinna, as well as the unending support from my co-instructor Dr. William Heywood and committee member Dr. Danah Henriksen. To my friends and family, thank you for meeting me for weekend summits, asking questions, learning alongside me, and continuing your support of my persistence in this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| LIST OF TABLES..... | viii |
| LIST OF FIGURES..... | x |
| PREFACE..... | xi |
| CHAPTER | |
| 1 CONTEXT..... | 1 |
| The Umbrella of Design and the Arts..... | 2 |
| Creatives and the Creative Process..... | 2 |
| Contextual Issues for Design and the Arts..... | 7 |
| Design and the Arts Training in Higher Education..... | 9 |
| Preparation for a Career in Design and the Arts..... | 10 |
| Educational Systems Context..... | 10 |
| Higher Education in Arizona..... | 11 |
| Personal Context..... | 17 |
| Rationale for Intervention..... | 18 |
| Problem of Practice and Purpose of Study..... | 20 |
| 2 REVIEW OF SUPPORTING SCHOLARSHIP..... | 23 |
| Primary Constructs..... | 23 |
| Social Cognitive Theory and Self-Efficacy..... | 23 |
| Mindset..... | 27 |
| Grit..... | 30 |
| Persistence..... | 31 |

| CHAPTER | Page |
|---|------|
| Supporting Constructs..... | 33 |
| Resilience..... | 33 |
| Theory of Planned Behavior..... | 36 |
| Mindfulness..... | 39 |
| Research on Similar Intervention Strategies | 42 |
| 3 METHOD | 47 |
| Design of the Study..... | 48 |
| Pairing Action Research with Design Thinking..... | 48 |
| Sequential Mixed-Method Approach..... | 51 |
| Study Timeline..... | 52 |
| Method..... | 54 |
| Role of Researcher..... | 55 |
| Cycle 1: Preliminary Exploration and Initial Course Module Design..... | 55 |
| Cycle 2: Full Course Proposal and Instrument Refinement..... | 61 |
| Cycle 2.5: Intervention Course Final Design..... | 82 |
| Dissertation Cycle: Intervention Course Data Collection and Analysis..... | 86 |
| Trustworthiness of Data..... | 97 |
| Threats to Reliability and Validity..... | 98 |
| Threat of Instrumentation..... | 98 |
| Threat of History | 98 |
| Threat of Maturation..... | 99 |
| Limitations | 99 |
| 4 RESULTS | 100 |

| CHAPTER | Page |
|--|------|
| Quantitative Results | 101 |
| Reliability of Quantitative Measures..... | 101 |
| Findings | 102 |
| Qualitative Measures | 111 |
| Participant Overview..... | 112 |
| Findings | 113 |
| Participant Constructed Course Components | 113 |
| Arts-Based Projects | 116 |
| Arts-Based Project Themes | 126 |
| Semi-Structured Interviews..... | 129 |
| Conclusion | 150 |
| 5 DISCUSSION | 151 |
| Complementarity of Quantitative and Qualitative Data | 152 |
| Results in Relation to Research Questions and Theoretical Frameworks | 152 |
| Theoretical Frameworks..... | 152 |
| Tying the Threads Together Across Cycles..... | 159 |
| Overall Emergent Themes..... | 163 |
| Limitations of Study..... | 170 |
| Implications for Practice | 172 |
| Active Reflection in Academic Settings..... | 173 |
| Utilization of Arts-Based Projects for Student Development..... | 173 |
| Transformational Approaches to Student Learning..... | 174 |

| CHAPTER | Page |
|--|------|
| Implications for Research | 176 |
| Lessons Learned and Closing Thoughts | 177 |
| REFERENCES..... | 179 |
| APPENDIX | |
| A RECRUITMENT SCRIPT | 193 |
| B CONSENT LETTER..... | 195 |
| C SURVEY RECRUITMENT LETTER..... | 199 |
| D INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR CYCLE TWO | 201 |
| E SURVEY PILOT: GRIT AND MINDSET | 203 |
| F SURVEY PILOT: SELF-EFFICACY, MINDSET, GRIT AND PERSISTENCE | 207 |
| G INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR DISSERTATION CYCLE..... | 213 |
| H FOUND POEMS FROM CYCLE TWO INTERVIEWS..... | 215 |
| I QUANTITATIVE MEASUREMENTS PRE-TEST BY ITEM..... | 234 |
| J QUANTITATIVE MEASUREMENTS POST-TEST BY ITEM | 241 |
| K QUANTITATIVE MEASUREMENTS COMPARISON BY ITEM | 245 |
| L FOUND POEMS FROM DISSERTATION CYCLE INTERVIEWS..... | 249 |
| M IRB APPROVAL LETTER | 266 |

LIST OF TABLES

| TABLE | Page |
|---|------|
| 1. Educational Persistence Models and Motivational Theory Perspectives Adapted from Hadley, Bloom, and Robbins (2012) | 32 |
| 2. Study Timeline | 53 |
| 3. Arts-Based Research Translation Strategies from Manders and Chilton (2013)..... | 56 |
| 4. Internal Reliability of Questionnaire Scales | 65 |
| 5. Frequencies and Descriptives for Survey Pilot Two by Item..... | 68 |
| 6. Descriptives for Survey Pilot Two by Construct | 70 |
| 7. Cycle Two Participant Overview | 72 |
| 8. Definitions of Failure by Participant, Cycle Two | 80 |
| 9. Failure, Design and the Arts Course Schedule by Week..... | 83 |
| 10. Sampling Design..... | 88 |
| 11. Dissertation Cycles Research Questions, Data Collection Tools, and Justification.. | 91 |
| 12. Dissertation Cycle Interviews Participant Overview..... | 93 |
| 13. Internal Reliability of Questionnaire Scales Pre-, Post-, and Combined | 102 |
| 14. Descriptives for Pre-Test by Construct | 103 |
| 15. Frequencies and Descriptives for Pre-Test Full Participation | 105 |
| 16. Descriptives for Post-Test by Construct | 107 |
| 17. Frequencies and Descriptives for Post-Test All Participants | 108 |
| 18. Descriptives for Pre-Test and Post-Test by Construct | 110 |
| 19. Means, Standard Deviations, and Paired T-Tests | 111 |
| 20. Dissertation Cycle Interview Participant Overview | 112 |
| 21. Summary of Weekly Reflection Questions by Course Participants..... | 113 |

| TABLE | Page |
|--|------|
| 22. Mindset Sections Post Intervention Course by Participant | 130 |
| 23. Self-Efficacy Sections Post Intervention Course by Participant | 133 |
| 24. Definitions of Barriers Post Intervention Course by Participant | 134 |
| 25. Judgement and Persistence Reflections Post Intervention Course by Participant .. | 138 |
| 26. Definitions of Success Post Intervention Course by Participant..... | 144 |
| 27. Definitions of Failure Post Intervention Course by Participant | 148 |
| 28. Future Research Questions | 177 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| FIGURE | Page |
|---|------|
| 1. Ajzen’s Theory of Planned Behavior Model (2006) | 37 |
| 2. Design Thinking Model Adapted from Stanford Design School (2016) | 49 |
| 3. Creative Projects from Josephine, Sophomore, Art | 116 |
| 4. Creative Projects from Cassie, Senior, Architecture..... | 117 |
| 5. Creative Projects from Claire, Senior, Architecture | 118 |
| 6. Creative Projects from Christina, Junior, Architecture..... | 119 |
| 7. Creative Projects from Dani, Senior, Design Studies | 120 |
| 8. Creative Projects from Jordan, Senior, Environmental Design..... | 121 |
| 9. Creative Projects from Molly, Sophomore, Theatre | 122 |
| 10. Creative Projects from Shaynea, Sophomore, Film..... | 123 |
| 11. Creative Projects from Lauren, Junior, Music | 124 |

PREFACE: A BEGINNING NARRATIVE

I study creativity, risk, and failure. And, even knowing what I do about these constructs and concepts, my own work still sometimes makes me feel like an abject failure, a catastrophe at the nexus of emotional arts and analysis for measured improvement.

When I started this journey, the story of how I arrived here felt like a hole in my heart. It was and is a story about risk, fear, and failure, perseverance, grit, and resiliency. And, how studying the things I feared the most in turn made me realize how I had at some point become so lost, so hesitant, and so fearful along the way in my creative life.

When I was eleven, I started taking voice lessons from our church's organist, Beth, a former Ms. California winner who sat in the front of the congregation like a queen upon her pipe organ throne. Betraying her perfectly coiffed hair and smart, curated ensembles, Beth was extremely goofy and would cheerfully remind me "tits up!" in the midst of learning an art song or aria, much to the amusement of my pre-teen self. She taught me to breathe, to be present, to take complex music and break it down into small, fathomable pieces. She taught me how to dress for recitals and bow with grace. She taught me that being a singer was just as important as anything else.

Twice a year, we would hold studio recitals in Beth's large basement, wedged in between the shuffle board, two pianos, small pipe organ, all the families perched on folding chairs while waiting to hear their fledgling star perform a bit of rudimentary Bach. Beth would usually wear some flamboyant ensemble with a sparkly pin on her shoulder. My parents always attended, my dad in his best sports coat with his trousers sharply creased from his time as a colonel in the military and my mom in some vaguely powerful outfit with an odd piece of jewelry from a far-off land. I have always referred to my mom as the executive hippie, a rural Colorado girl turned career woman with a specialty in managing a

brain injury rehabilitation program with a strong penchant for anti-establishment, militant feminism. My dad, an orthopedic surgeon by way of a career in the Air Force, grew up in the middle of Californian farm land, dirt poor, precocious, and with many brothers inclined to compete at all costs to win. My parents both had always played various instruments, sang in church choirs; my love of music was familiar, a part of our family. So, after negotiating the array of plastic chairs jammed together, my dad always sat in the third row, in the middle aisle, and he would nervously twist his paper recital program into a tight tube of anxiety as he waited for me to take the slightly cleared out space in the center of the room only a few feet away. Without fail, he would always cry when I sang.

Years later, after singing the world over, numerous recitals, tears, ball gowns, a degree in voice performance from a prestigious east coast conservatory, I would always look to the third row, center aisle, for my parents, my dad consistently wringing the increasingly nice program between his hands. I asked him one time why he did it, if he was nervous for me, if he feared for what I was about to do on stage. And, he said no, he was just so proud he could not stand it just sitting there. *He was just so proud.* And, when I was in my mid-twenties, two days after his birthday upon which I had called to sing to him, he did not wake up that morning.

And, I stopped singing.

Studying voice is a long conversation about breath, about the resonance of your body, your very bones, the music vibrating your whole being as you attempt to cut through an entire orchestra of sound. You can feel the emotion well up inside as you breathe, the pain of love, the sorrow of song, written by mostly long dead men with a penchant for powdered wigs. The moment of stepping on stage is a second of vulnerability, of promise, and of hope. There is so much fear of missing a note, a beat, a queue, but at the same time it

forces the performer to truly be present. To sing with abandon is to delve into exhilarating risk, to make daring choices, and to work with others in the intention of greatness.

After my father's death, I decided to attend graduate school not for voice or opera, but for education. To reframe myself with an understanding of how to help others, to shepherd along students the same way Beth had once done so for me (though perhaps with generally fewer references to tits). I stumbled upon a chamber group for singers, and I happily, safely, sang along with them for two years as I worked on reinventing myself from musician to researcher. As time passed and jobs changed, the question changed from "When are you singing next?" to "Do you still sing?" And, I began to realize the hole in my heart would never repair itself until I learned to keep going even when afraid, until I harnessed my stubbornness and grit back into the thing that hurt the most, until I truly sang.

My research mind drives me to understand why certain people persevere, why they have so much grit, how they learn to move through what they then perceive as an epic failure. My musician's heart still feels the pangs of disappointment in my own journey, but it is still driven to fully realize how hard work, practice, and study play a role in how artists approach their creative lives. To think about failure is to inherently think about the future, a changed outcome, a missed opportunity, a different path, a calculated risk, a new collaboration.

And, when I think about the future, I think about what I would tell my own future children, my new family. I think about how I want to be sitting in the third row, center aisle, nervously rolling my paper program into a tube, my husband attempting to calm my nervous anxiety for that moment of performance. How my mom, wearing some avant-garde piece of jewelry from a far-off land, sitting with flowers, is ready to present a post-performance congratulations for a job well-done. How I want not only my own children but all creators to

risk, to create, to be bold, to question everything, to forge new, exciting connections, to break the rules, to bring people together. How I want them to look at their fears directly and know they will make it through even if their perceptions of the future might change. And, I think about how mostly I want them to really, truly *sing*, whatever their craft.

So, really, my research, my life, my creative pursuits, are both failures and new beginnings all at once. It's about a perception of loss and the dogged reinvention of the future. It is about disappointment and hope both living in the same place. It is about curiosity and inspiration, courage and risk, despair and creation. It is the beginning of a long perseverance, the memory of your former dreams, and knowing that fear is just that temporary moment before you step on stage.

CHAPTER 1

CONTEXT

In order to enhance understanding and provide background information for this particular problem of practice as well as the proposed intervention, first I will overview the larger and local contextual setting. I will also address current research in the fields of the arts and design in an effort to illustrate existing and present issues within these fields. Contexts demonstrate observed values, competing priorities, and power structures while also providing a deeper look into the complex systems at play in a particular problem of practice. An intervention can show the strain between the history of the setting with the addition of any new practice, as “managing the tension between replicating tried-and-true practices and modifying them (or inventing new ones) to fit local conditions weighs on decision makers, shapes key events, and leads to success or failure” (Sutton & Rao, 2014, p. 35). Arts training for this study falls into several key contexts: higher education, arts education, Arizona State University (ASU), Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts (HIDA), specific schools and programs, and the paradigms of their particular fields. Additionally, to better understand this complex context, I will also consider the arts and design as a whole, research related to groups within these categories, and current issues within the larger societal culture around the arts and design. Overall, the following chapter will serve as a guide to consider risk and failure within the larger contexts of arts and design fields, higher education as a whole, and within the specific context of the study. The following sections are akin to a funnel, starting with the broader considerations of the whole of creative fields to how they are addressed in educational settings to the minute details of the study context.

The Umbrella of Arts and Design

The arts and design, for the purposes of this study, encompass a variety of visual, performing, and technical arts and design fields. The visual arts are comprised but not limited to the fields of drawing, painting, sculpting, metal working, photography, and more as the performing arts comprise music, dance, theatre, and other performative arts. Design, a close relative to the arts, is how creatives conceptualize, create, and improve things. Design, in this context, includes architecture, landscape architecture, graphic design, visual communication, industrial design, design psychology, environmental design, and interior design. Arts and design differ in their general approach; the arts looking to inspire and communicate to others while design functions in a slightly more purposeful way geared toward usage or creating understanding. Both the arts and design are largely technical in foundational knowledge with natural talent in creation, interpretation, and communication coming into play when considering overall ability. However, the arts and design are not exclusive categories as interdisciplinary arts such as film and other new fields bolstered by technology combine visual, performative, design, and other humanistic fields create works that do not fall succinctly into either type, or rather, across disciplines, fields, and approaches.

Creatives and the Creative Process

For the purpose of this study, I will use the term “creatives” when referring to both visual artists, performing artists, and designers as a collective. Generally, artists and designers require well-developed creative, interpretive, and memorization skills. Creatives generally fall into two categories, those who produce original content such as composers, designers,

choreographers, or painters, and those who primarily interpret another's source material, performance artists such as musical theatre performers, dancers, or singers (Kogan, 2002). The creative process is largely private while the process of interpretation is primarily collaborative, performance artists usually working in a group or team to produce work (Kogan, 2002). Public exposure and critique are constant sources of stress in the life of an artist as they are consistently evaluated and appraised by peers, faculty members, teachers and audiences (Kogan, 2002).

In the 1950s, Guilford (1950) asserted that the creative process is divided into the four distinct steps of preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification. Creative thinking is generally distinguished by the formation of associated elements into new combinations which are in some way useful or meet a specified requirement (Mednick, 1962). And, the more an individual knows or has the capacity to learn, the more they are probable to reach a creative solution through their resources of association (Mednick). By the 1990s, there had been much debate over the process of creation and numerous scholars had added to the four-step model (Lubart, 2000-2001). In a more modernized approach, Amabile (1996) separated out the creative process into problem solving/task identification, preparation by gathering information and resources, response generation through seeking multiple potential responses, and testing possible responses against criteria for validation. In considering Amabile's approach to the creative process, Lubert notes that this updated version of the creative process also includes a final phase about creating further work as "a person may either stop [the creative process] because a successful product is achieved, stop due to failure, or return to one or more phases in the process for further work" (p. 297). Failure, as illustrated in this model, can bring the creative process to a complete halt.

Additionally, when considering problems, a creative approach versus a standard, noncreative approach differ in four ways; 1.) creative problem solving stems from unclear problems allowing for a problem-construction phase in the process, 2.) creative processes generate new ideas that involve both divergent and convergent thinking, 3.) creative processes go through multiple cycles of divergent/convergent thought, and 4.) creative processes combine and/or reorganize information from across multiple structures whereas standard problem solving uses information in existing categories (Mumford, Supinski, Threfall, & Baughman, 1991, 1996, 1997). However, the creative process as a whole is not easily generalizable given the numerous creative tasks, projects, fields, and sequences considered in the process of creativity. Lubert (2000-2001) asks some pointed questions to the body of work around the creative process, namely the unanswered question of “how does a person’s level of perseverance or intrinsic motivation impact the creative process?” (p. 305). So, even as the creative process has been well researched, the formulate process and development of the creative individual is only just recently becoming a research interest. So, even as I will use creatives as the collective identified for artists and designers, there are some important distinctions in their development, processes, and priorities as further detailed in the following sections.

Performing artists. *Performing artists intentionally practice.* The arts, in most of their functional areas, are in some way about performance. And, practice, training, and competition are key components of performance, regardless of specific domain. The ability to recognize, manage, and cope with stress, internally motivate toward optimal performance, and deliberately practice to achieve skill-mastery are common themes with elite performance (Smith, 2003; Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Romer, 1993). Long-term training for elite

performance takes about ten to fifteen years and is generally divided into stages by level of development and skill mastery rather than age (Smith, 2003; Manturzevska, 1990; Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer, 1993). Deliberate practice takes into account previous knowledge, the individual's motivation to improve performance and their ability to focus on the repetitive tasks by which they will improve performance (Ericsson & Smith, 1991; Ericsson et al., 1993). Motivation largely plays into this process as deliberate and repetitive practice is not intrinsically enjoyable, so individuals must place value on high performance as well as be internally motivated to improve their performance prior to deliberate practice (Ericsson et al., 1993). In discussing how to motivate music performers, Smith (2005) suggests that teachers and institutions should encourage task goals, the goal to improve personal performance, while discouraging ego goals, the goal aimed at achieving at a higher social standing, as much as possible. Guiding elite performers away from ego goals is especially imperative as internal motivation and performance actually decrease due to formation of these ego driven goals (Elliot & Church, 1997). In a study of motivation variables as related to practice, Smith (2005) found that performers who set task goals reported using more diverse practice strategies, the internal motivation to learn correlated with focused and varied learning behavior.

In a longitudinal study of the lifetime development of professional musicians, Manturzevska (1990) found that family environment and intrinsic motivation most influence musical development while social and emotional support from outside sources such as teachers develop their musical ability. Professional musicians overwhelmingly hail from families with musical backgrounds and families of a certain socio-economic status, generally from the middle and upper socioeconomic classes (Manturzevska, 1990). Professional

musicians study for a significant period of time as “it takes about sixteen years of systematic training under a qualified teacher in or outside of the music school to become professionally prepared in music” (Manturzevska, 1990, p. 125). The combination of individual personality, motivation, competence, and prestige of the individual’s music teacher all come into play in determining an individual’s success within the musical world (Manturzevska, 1990). The greatest artistic achievements in musicians’ lives are self-reported to occur between the ages of 25 and 45, a time in which the performer feels more secure in their internal development and social standing (Manturzevska, 1990).

Visual and fine artists. *Artists are deliberate information-seekers.* Visual and fine artists work in a vast assortment of mediums, encompassing painting, ceramics, multi-media work, intermedia, metals, wood, technology, and more. Given artists’ work in a variety of mediums in an effort to inspire or intrigue their audiences, artists seek out and collect information as part of their work. Art students, “searching for creative self-identification, are drawn to the lives and works of successful artists, living and dead” and thus need access to copious amounts of information in order to explore their craft (Hemmig, 2008). In a study looking at how artists utilize information, Cowan (2004) found that artists use five primary sources of information in their work; 1.) the natural environment, 2.) the work itself, 3.) relationships with others and their work, 4.) self-inquiry, and 5.) passive information gathering in the form of general attentiveness (versus active attention and information seeking).

Designers. *Designers engage in the process of finding fitting solutions.* Designers can be found in a variety of fields: architecture, landscape architecture, graphic design, visual communication, industrial design, environmental design, interior design, and more. Though their fields can be dissimilar in application, they all approach problems and projects through

the *process* of design. Design as whole is a process in which individuals or collaborators break down a larger problem into smaller, manageable solutions in a reiterative cycle, working to define the problem, collect information, analyze ideas, develop and test solutions, present ideas for feedback, and then improve the design (Chicago Architecture Foundation, 2016). Thus, designers deal with uncertainty as part of their core training and professional life, testing ideas, developing solutions, and reiteratively considering how their results lineup with the presented problem. And, in the design space, uncertainty “motivates designers toward resolution through action, and epistemic uncertainty has been identified as a mediator between design requirements and the deployment of particular design strategies” (Tracy & Hutchinson, 2016; Ball, Onarheim, & Christensen, 2010). In terms of this process, designers can also experience a phenomenon called *design fixation* when they are provided with example solutions as part of the design process to then unconsciously focus on this solution to the detriment of creative solution-finding, this re-creation of work leading to a loss of innovation (Jansson & Smith, 1991; Vasconcelos & Crilly, 2015).

Contextual Issues for Design and the Arts

Arts and design intuitions grapple with a variety of issues: audience longevity in fields with declining cultural relevance, career preparation integrated into traditional curriculum, available funding for projects or study, the complexities of working as an artist in rapidly changing fields, and even the very role that creative fields should play in modern society. Pursuing a creative degree is just the beginning of a lifetime of ongoing learning because most creatives continue to practice, study, coach, or take lessons in their field for the rest of their lives. Adding in the complexities of changing technology and a gig/freelance economy for artists, arts/design education is undergoing very large paradigmatic shifts. The arts and

design find themselves within a changing landscape of increased consumption of their outcomes with decreasing rational for their societal importance. Overall attendance for traditional arts events has fallen yet consumption of arts and cultural goods has contributed to over \$704 billion to the yearly economy, 4.23% of the total GDP of the United States (National Endowment for the Arts, 2016). And, adjusting for inflation, from 1998 to 2013 the overall value of arts increased by \$165 billion, or 32.5%, showing a massive upsurge in the arts and cultural goods economy (National Endowment for the Arts, 2016). Strum (2014), while reflecting on the confusing times afoot for the arts and design asks the following questions; “Are the arts, as currently taught, a worthy and sensible choice of discipline for a 21st-century college student to pursue at a time when college costs have risen so dramatically and the ability to repay loans remains a rising challenge?” (p. 46). As post-college earning potentials for artists and designers tend to be lower than their STEM counterparts, college loans in turn tend to be more challenging to pay off over time, an issue made even more difficult given how higher education costs as a whole are significantly outpacing inflation and income adjustment (Strum). Inflation has risen approximately 115% percent with family incomes adjusting 147% since 1982, yet college costs have grown 490% in the same time period (Strum, 2014; National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2012). In the context of education, creative fields have also been increasingly attached to economic structures, these fields more and more intentionally linked to STEM fields, business, and other fields perceived to be economically viable. Yet, this combination is not truly the answer as the arts/design can sometimes be shifted to a much more auxiliary role in the pursuit of the “tried-and-true” economic pursuits. I do think the questions we should be asking ourselves, not in bastions of like-minded people but rather as a whole, ugly societal spots and all, is the age-old question whether education and the arts/design are

currently public or private goods. And, are these two concepts perhaps more entwined than we have ever so believed? The sustainability of creative fields depends on their shift to becoming a private good, paralleling how education has also moved over time from a liberal-arts focused public good to an increasingly career-preparation focused private good. Schools, and in the case the arts/design, “occupy an awkward position at the intersection between what we hope society will become and what we think it really is, between political ideals and economic realities” (Larabee, 1997, p. 40).

Design and the Arts Training in Higher Education

Within higher education, arts and design education has become increasingly similar in design, curriculum, and experiences across the nation. There are a variety of accrediting bodies for arts education in America: the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, the National Association for Schools of Music, the National Architectural Accrediting Board, and many more, whose purpose is to improve educational practices while also maintaining high professional standards in each respective field. Creative field training programs were much more dissimilar and specialized in the historic conservatory training style, each small formal system only teaching a few core programs with little access to other specialties or coalitions. As arts education in higher education has evolved and globalization of arts has taken place over the last half century, training programs have become more isomorphic in that they all interact with the same organizations in the field, evolve well defined patterns of arts organization coalition building, handle a significant increase in information load, and develop an awareness of other participants in their common field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Preparation for a Career in Design and the Arts

Arts and design education also has experienced an increased emphasis on career-readiness and fulfillment, as exemplified in one of the largest studies in the arts, the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP, 2014). Researchers who conducted SNAAP have collected data from over 92,113 arts alumni from the fields of performance, design, architecture, creative writing, film, media arts, illustration, and fine art. The researchers surveyed arts alumni on their education, employment, relevance of art training to work, needs after graduation, experience as teachers, and a variety of financial issues. Currently, SNAAP researchers have continued to work with 286 arts training institutions and have released reports annually as well as looking into specialty issues such as the specific challenges of arts internships. In a report that described how recent arts alumni were functioning in the working world, 64% of recent arts graduates reported working in careers that were very relevant or relevant based on their arts training (SNAAP). In comparison, the National Science Foundation (2010, as cited in SNAAP) found 58% of biology majors, 56% of accounting majors, 53% of mechanical engineers, and 53% of journalism majors were working in relevant fields related to their major. Results from SNAAP also showed artists were among the most satisfied and happy professionals when working in their fields, despite their reports of their struggles with financial burdens and debt accrual.

Educational Systems Context

In a shift away from the context of arts and design fields, the next section will consider the contexts of higher education in the state of Arizona, the specific context of the academic institution in which the intervention study took place, and the academic college

associated with the study. I will also address my personal context as a researcher as well as how the concepts intertwined with the study are currently addressed in popular culture.

Higher Education in Arizona

Public higher education in Arizona consists in three large state schools, Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, and the University of Arizona (Arizona Department of Education [ADE], 2015), serving over 150,000 students across the major universities. There are twenty-one state community colleges and nineteen regionally accredited private state colleges (ADE). Interestingly, Arizona also hosts two of the larger for-profit universities in the nation, the online University of Phoenix and the in-person and online Grand Canyon University. Among the three top public universities in the state, ASU functions in an entirely different manner with its core mission of being the New American University, creating opportunity and access to students who might have not otherwise been able to pursue a degree at a large, research university.

In terms of the arts within higher education in Arizona, the Maricopa Community College in Mesa boasts a strong arts program with a high number of transfer students to the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts (HIDA) coming from this locale. In terms of competition in a four-year university within the arts, Northern Arizona University offers ASU competition possibly in their music program, but in general is ranked lower in all arts and designs programs. ASU is the top arts choice in Arizona in terms of a formal education system with HIDA boasting some of the top ranked programs for the entire state and several arts programs in the top twenty for the entire nation.

Arizona State University. Arizona State University (ASU) is a very large, public, primarily non-residential, research university with its principal campus located in Tempe, Arizona (Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2015). Arizona State University has one of the largest student enrollments in the United States with over 83,301 students across multiple campuses, ranking fifth in the nation in the total enrollment according to the National Center for Education Statistics (2015). ASU is chiefly a university centered on undergraduate education with 81% undergraduates and 19% graduate students. ASU awards over 19,000 degrees within one academic year (Arizona State University [ASU], 2015c). 82% of undergraduate students are full-time students and 60% are residents of Arizona (ASU, 2015c). According to the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (2015), ASU also has participated in elective classifications for community engagement, curricular engagement, as well as outreach and partnerships.

ASU's primary goal is to be a new model for higher education in America, framing itself as the "New American University" for the 21st century around the ideals of quality education, expansive access to education, and meaningful work to impact society for the greater good (ASU, 2015b). The ASU Charter (ASU, 2015a) states the following:

ASU is a comprehensive public research university, measured not by whom we exclude, but rather by whom we include and how they succeed; advancing research and discovery of public value; and assuming fundamental responsibility for the economic, social, cultural and overall health of the communities it serves.

Additionally, ASU's blueprint for the New American University is designed around eight core aspirations—leveraging its place, enabling student success, transforming society, fusing intellectual disciplines, practicing social embeddedness, conducting use-inspired research, engaging globally, and valuing entrepreneurship (ASU, 2015b). In 2016, 2017, and

2018, *U.S. News* ranked ASU as the top Innovative School in the nation, asking college presidents, provosts and admissions deans to rank colleges on innovative improvements to faculty, students, curriculum, campus life, facilities and technology.

Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts. The Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts (HIDA) is comprised of five distinct academic schools and one cross-disciplinary structure: The Design School, School of Music, School of Art, School of Film, Dance, and Theatre, School of Arts, Media + Engineering, and Cross-Institute, with numerous academic units residing in each structure. Over 5,000 students are enrolled in HIDA with around 700 faculty members and a staff of 150 (Herberger Institute for the Design and the Arts [HIDA], 2015). In 2009, the Arizona Board of Regents approved the merger of all the ASU arts-affiliated programs into one primary institute, so HIDA as a whole is still quite new and is now the largest comprehensive design and arts school in the nation (HIDA, 2015). HIDA encompasses over 135 degree programs, running the gamut from digital culture to dance movement to industrial design and music therapy (HIDA, 2015). With such varied degree programs and initiatives, the academic schools run independently of one another, each providing their own staffing, programming, and curriculum. Additionally, HIDA encompasses numerous research centers, performance venues, galleries, and art museums. The Cultural Enterprise and Entrepreneurship initiative and the academic journal on arts entrepreneurship, *Artivate*, are also located within HIDA.

Within the ASU context of the New American University, HIDA functions in a hybrid fashion with some programs having open access in terms of application and some programs being immensely selective in their student application process. The majority of open access programs within HIDA are milestone programs, which include competitive

processes to continue through the program. In some cases, the curriculum has been designed to reduce the numbers of students in the programs on an annual basis based on their overall degree-specific portfolio and academic achievement. The selective degree programs, such as music performance or film production, also function on the milestone or jury system with students vying for a continued position in the program year after year through established processes of assessment. Students who do not pass their milestone or score sufficiently high to continue in their program are then moved to a *general studies* degree. For instance, students are moved from the specific Graphic Design Bachelor of Science in Design (BSD) to the general Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Design degree (BA). This process has created a two-tiered system within competitive programs. The unfortunate consequence is that students sometimes equate the BA degree to failure in pursuing their chosen major and future career. As of the academic year of 2017, some of these programs have been dissolved or moved into academic units depending on their relevancy, alleviating most of the two-tiered degree programs for future classes.

As a local context for this problem of practice, HIDA presents some complex issues with respect to balancing new innovations with the politics and values of the previously established structures. The central dean's office is comprised of fairly new leadership. The new dean began in 2014, brought in specifically from Vanderbilt University for his work on the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP) project on post-graduation career pursuits for arts students. Meanwhile, the individual schools have generally retained their original faculty and support staff with increasing changes in leadership roles (*e.g.* director, associate directors, and assistant directors). HIDA as an institute itself has only emerged as a conglomerate of arts colleges within the past five years. Prior to this consolidation, each

school functioned as its own individual college. Thus, the power and values within each college have been very well defined and as a result the central institute has not yet developed a distinct structure. The very nature of the lack of unification can be seen in how the schools and departments have been staffed with very few in the central institute and numerous positions replicating the same work in each individual school. Additionally, as each school designed its own structure, the curriculum, and extracurricular experiences greatly differ between schools, programs, and concentrations, leading to an imbalanced experience for students as well as uneven allocation of resources. In terms of finances, some schools are able to offer more curriculum pieces for non-major students, bolstering their overall revenue through these practices. The schools that do not have these required structures in place or strong development practices, in turn, do not have access to the same amount of financial support.

Moreover, there has been a recent shift in how status and value have been constructed within the entire institute. The new HIDA mission has been articulated as fostering socially-engaged practices and centered on arts students' work to enact world change on wicked problems. This evolution of artist as agent for change versus specialized performer has been part of the larger evolution of arts training in the world, but in the local context this has tended to lead to conflict especially when considering faculty engagement with students. Typically, arts programs offered smaller class sizes and individualized interactions between faculty and staff beginning at the undergraduate level. The majority of career training for a specific field therefore came from these faculty interactions, but the job field for graduates has changed immensely in the past few decades. Nevertheless, faculty interaction and instruction have generally remained rooted in the former linear education-

directly-to-chosen-profession process even as students are attempting to prepare for alternative or new careers related to creative fields. There are obvious outliers to this issue in that there are more and more career-preparedness related courses offered in the academic units, but preparation for an alternative creative career path perhaps outside of the standard degree preparation remains an ongoing problem for students and the overall field.

As an organization, HIDA is “loosely coupled” because each individual school has the ability to change independently, adapt locally, and function at a high level under the larger umbrella organization of the entire institute (Weick, 1976). When training at the school level breaks down, this malfunction has been isolated from all other schools. Individual schools within HIDA have also been able to make rapid changes and economical decisions, for example, such as reduction in oversight leading to fewer conflicts and inconsistencies within the unit itself though not necessarily the whole institute in the long run (Weick, 1976). HIDA, as part of a larger system of ASU and public higher education in American, has also become more isomorphic because the management of an arts organization no longer looks any different than the management of any other academic college. Currently, each school within HIDA has been battling isomorphism with respect to the institute as a whole as well as the general culture of ASU. Thus, the former independently run schools have been feeling pressure to align their mission and vision with one another. In considering the overall trends of isomorphism in arts education as well as the reality of programming across disciplines, I am left with the following questions: Simply, is HIDA big enough and powerful enough as the largest comprehensive arts training college in the United States, to lead change against more traditional, entrenched views that currently influence educational expectations and training in the arts? And, is HIDA willing to actually

do so considering this would take significant restructuring and re-visioning? All signs currently point toward, “yes” for both questions, but changes in culture and paradigm take significant time, effort, and organization.

Personal Context

In the fall of 2014, I began a position within the central HIDA Dean’s Office within the centralized Office of Student Success, a department encompassing all undergraduate advising, student support, and student engagement. From 2014 to 2018, my position was the only centralized position for student engagement programs and initiatives. As a department of one for the entire undergraduate student population of approximately 4,000 students, my job encompasses overseeing academic programming in the residential community for on-campus students, advising student organizations/councils, piloting career and entrepreneurship initiatives, coordinating first-year entrepreneurship fellowships and an upper-division academy for high-achieving students, teaching a leadership development seminar, allocating certain scholarships, coordinating all major student-driven events for the central institute, and planning future strategic programs such as the early start Camp Create. As a component of my position, I supervised a student staff of seventeen Student Academic Mentors until the academic year of 2016-2017 when I redesigned the student leaders to be a cohort of ten interdisciplinary students called the Creative Fellows. Within my staff position, I teach two courses: a fall leadership seminar and a spring project management course, though I rotate several different curricula through this structure to change the modules each year in an effort to pilot new intervention strategies. At the central administrative level of HIDA, there were previously two full-time staff positions for which 5% of their total time was allocated to career-related programming, my own position in student engagement as well

as a senior academic advisor. In 2015, the advising-career hybrid position was changed to focus on curriculum review, so I am now the only staff member with any allocation of time to career related matters within my job responsibilities. As of spring semester of 2018, an additional staff line has been added to student engagement to support student persistence, retention, and to focus on the overall first-year experience in the college.

In terms of my own personal creative context, I have spent over the last decade working in the arts or areas related to the arts. My responsibilities have varied from performing as an opera singer to co-managing a graphic design studio to looking at the development of creative college students to now working in student engagement at one of the nation's largest arts colleges. I am passionate about arts education as well as how to innovatively prepare college students for future careers as creative professionals. From my experiences in working for a small, private and highly competitive performing arts conservatory as well as a large, private, and elite research university with top ranked arts programs, I can easily say that arts education has struggled in engaging students no matter the size, scale, or funding available at each institution. From attending conferences like the Arts Entrepreneurship Conference, Three Million Voices, and the Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities as well as talking to colleagues at various other arts institutions, these areas have been consistently seen as a massive problem of practice for these specialized schools, regardless of size or specialty.

Rationale for Intervention

Given the rapidly changing fields of arts and design, how institutions train their students for success has also changed in recent years. As technology continues to evolve

creative fields, access to higher education changes over time, and societal priorities concerning creative fields ebb and flow, preparing students with the strengths and skills to define their own success while learning to navigate perceived barriers is imperative to include within systems of education. Studies have shown that increased self-efficacy leads to increased performance, academic or otherwise, as well as the ability to adapt to transition (Bandura, 2001; Chemers, Hu, & Garcia, 2001). Moving from a fixed to growth mindset may allow individuals to re-conceptualize perceived setbacks in order to view them as learning opportunities, an especially important aspect in fields that include public critique, feedback, jury systems, and auditions (Dweck, 2006). Given the particular demands of creative field training and career preparation, there are few research studies on the specific population of undergraduate artists, musicians, designers, and other creatives. HIDA, as the largest interdisciplinary arts and design institute in the country, also occupies an interesting intersection of disciplines, so previous research on these populations has only really considered a small fraction of the possible disciplines in play for HIDA's undergraduate student population. Failure, or the study of failure, is a popular topic in higher education as part of a way to allow students chances to risk, to innovate, to prototype, and to try again with the goal to learn the skills and traits associated with growth mindset, resiliency, and persistence. Yet, there is a gap in literature considering these constructs along with the creative student populations. My hope is that through this study, students can both make meaning through their reflections on their own success, perceived failures, and abilities to move through their academic program while also bringing these skills to their future endeavors. I also hope to contribute to the body of literature on both the research around each construct, but mostly to introduce creative undergraduate students more thoroughly to contemporary research in higher education.

Problem of Practice and Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to examine how undergraduate arts and design students define success and navigate failure as part of their learning process, incorporating aspects of self-efficacy, mindset, grit, and persistence. Arts and design students are preparing to work in rapidly changing, competitive fields in which perceived failure can present challenges for persistence. The research component of this study is to explore how arts and design undergraduate students perceive their own academic and creative “failures”, how they learn to re-conceptualize these experiences to develop grit, resiliency, and persistence, and how efficacious they are in dealing with future barriers.

Data will be gathered to answer the following research questions to address self-efficacy, mindset, grit, persistence, and perceived successes and failures:

RQ1: To what extent do undergraduate students in design and the arts become more *efficacious* through experiences in an intervention course on failure?

Sub-RQ1: How do students make meaning through reflecting on their own *self-efficacy*?

RQ2: To what extent do undergraduate students in design and the arts fall on the *fixed/growth mindset continuum*?

Sub-RQ2: How do students make meaning through reflecting on their *mindset*?

RQ3: To what extent are undergraduate students in design and the arts *gritty*?

RQ4: To what extent are undergraduate students in the design and the arts
academically persistent?

Sub-RQ4: How do students make meaning through reflecting on their
academic *persistence?*

RQ5: How do undergraduate students in design and the arts negotiate *perceived*
failures?

RQ6: How do undergraduate students in the design and the arts make meaning out
of their *definition of success?*

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF SUPPORTING SCHOLARSHIP

In the following section, I will overview the primary constructs supporting this research study as well as note important studies utilizing these constructs with college student populations. Additionally, I will overview supporting theoretical constructs as well as note research that crosses over the constructs in order to better consider multiple constructs in action. The main constructs for this study are self-efficacy, mindset, grit, and persistence. I have included additional sections on resiliency, the theory of planned behavior, and mindfulness as a supporting construct as these concepts will be used within the intervention course. For this section, it is important to keep in mind the differences in each construct: Some are theories (self-efficacy and planned behavior), some a belief system (mindset), one a personality trait considering effort, perseverance, and zeal toward long-term goals (grit), some are a process developed over time (resiliency), and another is a consideration on how extrinsic factors influence determination over time (persistence). Mindfulness in turn is a practice stemming from an ancient world religion. Two of these constructs, self-efficacy and mindset, align with motivational theories while persistence as a construct tends more toward considering contextual support structures as influencers on student academic persistence. Grit, in the meantime, is a non-cognitive trait based on an individual's motivation, perseverance of effort, and passion to achieve a long-term goal. I will then also overview research on similar interventions in order to further ground the proposal course on learning to navigate failure as a learning process.

Primary Constructs

Social Cognitive Theory and Self-Efficacy

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) reflects the idea that individuals learn in a social context, comprised of observations of people, behaviors, and environments (Bandura, 2001). By observing these factors, individuals form mental guides around performed behaviors and behavior consequences, remember event sequences, and consider specific social contexts, thereby influencing expectations and behavior (Bandura, 2001). Thus, motivation as a process is the ability to internally consider future consequences, this deliberation playing a significant role in the activation and persistence of behavior (Bandura, 2001). Motivation also can be influenced by goal-setting, self-evaluation, and standard-setting for performance (Bandura, 2001). Proponents of SCT assume psychological procedures serve as a means to build and foster self-efficacy, individuals' beliefs they are capable of performing the necessary behaviors to produce particular performance outcomes (Bandura 1977, 2001). Self-efficacy increases in individuals as perceived control over motivation, behavior, and social environment increases (Bandura, 2001). Considering skills and incentives, "efficacy expectations are a major determinant of people's choice of activities, how much effort they will expend, and of how long they will sustain effort in dealing with stressful situations" (Bandura, 2001, p. 194). When establishing efficacy expectations around the benefit of a certain procedure or process, individuals tend to assume that these benefits will be driven by external forces, e.g., skill acquisition as taught by an expert, rather than the benefits coming from increased self-efficacy, e.g., increased belief in being able to achieve their creative vision. Efficacy expectations differ in magnitude, how difficult was the task; generality, how specific or general was the task; and strength, how strongly did an individual expect to be

successful at the task (Bandura, 2001). In an earlier study, Bandura notes that experiences based on accomplishing performances versus vicarious learning through observation produce stronger, higher, and more generalizable efficacy expectations (Bandura, 2001). And, as increased self-efficacy expectation correlated with increased behavior in regard to a target, simply doing something versus watching something being done is more likely to lead to a change in behavior (Bandura, 2001).

Contextual support, role models, and self-efficacy. In considering how role models influence participation in activities, in this particular realm it has been commonly cited that role models or important others affect attitudes and self-efficacy but did not exert much influence on future behavior (Carsrud, Olm, & Eddy, 1987; Krueger, 1993; Scott & Twomey, 1988). In a recent study, Garcia, Restubog, Bordia, and Roxas (2015) find that context-specific supports such as parents or faculty members help develop career self-efficacy and optimism. In this particular study (Gracia et al., 2015), they find that social support from important influencers increases optimism and internal confidence. However, the relationships among social support, self-efficacy, and optimism have still not been thoroughly researched. Contextual support systems vary within academic disciplines, and in considering how mentorship from experts plays a role in arts education, it is also worth considering how these social supports influence individuals. In a study considering how looking up to role models of a “superstar” persona influence an individual’s sense of self, Lockwood and Kunda, (1997) find that important, relevant experts affect self-view, provide inspiration, and foster self-enhancement. Additionally, individuals are most inspired when they perceive that their own similar ability to the “superstar” as attainable or that they perceive their own abilities can increase over time (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997). If the

relevant expert was perceived to be too far removed in terms of ability or having had achieved their status on an unachievable timeline, individuals experience perceived self-deflation in terms of their goals (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997). In a later study, Lockwood, Jordan, and Kunda (2002), found the inspirational influence of both positive and negative role models depends on the individual's goals at the time of encounter. Positive role models inspire promotion-focused individuals in their goal of achieving desirable outcomes whereas negative role models most influence prevention-focused individuals, those who focus on avoiding undesirable outcomes. Additionally, academic motivation increases when the goals of the individual were aligned to the most effective role model, positive or negative, though overall, individuals are more likely to value promotion goals over prevention goals over a longer time period (Lockwood et al., 2002).

Optimism and self-efficacy. Chemers, Hu, and Garcia (2001), in looking at academic self-efficacy in first-year college students' performance and adjustment, find that self-efficacy and optimism are both strongly related to both performance and adjustment, directly tied to academic performance and indirectly connected through an individual's coping perceptions and expectations. In a longitudinal study of 186 Korean, female college students, Bong (2001) finds that task-value predicts academic enrollment while self-efficacy is linked to performance. Optimism and positive expectations also predict a smoother academic transition to new environments as optimistic students report lower levels of stress while also noting higher levels of social support and well-being (Chemers et al., 2001; Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992). Luckily, some forms of optimism can be learned. Dispositional optimism, the belief that generally good things will occur over time, is a stable personality trait, yet situational optimism is a stronger predictor on overall emotional response and belief

(Nonis & Wright, 2002; Segerstrom, Taylor, Kemeny, & Fahey, 1998). Linking back to self-efficacy, “expectations of favorable outcomes cause individuals to renew their efforts to realize *a priori* goals...unfavorable expectations may result in a reduced effort or even a complete disengagement from a particular activity” (Nonis & Wright, 2003, p. 332). By learning optimism, people are able to utilize their positive outlook to respond to barriers as well as develop resiliency over time (Seligman, 2011). Seligman posits that people with optimistic explanatory styles, essentially how people account for negative events in their lives, consider that positive events happen through permanent conditions while negative events are the result of temporary influences. Meanwhile, those with pessimistic styles tend to be more realistic. In looking at both approaches, Seligman adds that optimism is vital in having the perseverance to see where your talent and work will result in the end while pessimism instead offers more of ability to accurately assess future negative possibilities. Seligman suggests utilizing the ABC technique to explain how cognition moves through (A) adversity, (B) beliefs, and (C) consequences. Seligman suggests that in order to break the cycle of pessimistic thoughts, individuals should divert attentions away from negative thoughts mentally or even with a physical reminder, decide to evaluate negative thoughts at a later date, and/or argue against thoughts that may be rooted in past experiences. People, as a whole, are fairly oblivious to the value of positive and optimistic emotional responses as “negative emotions often reflect immediate problems or objective dangers, they should be powerful enough to force us to stop, increase vigilance, reflect on our behavior, and change our actions if necessary” (Seligman, 2002, p. 7). Seligman also offers that in an effort to move to a positive view, individuals should also consider how adversities perhaps stemmed from specific, changeable, and impersonal causes.

Mindset

Mindset is a belief system an individual holds about themselves, their ability to do things, and their most basic traits including aspects like intelligence and talent level (Dweck, 2006; 2015). Mindset as a concept came about through Dweck's (2006) work on understanding why some students fixate on substantiating their ability while others "just let go and learn," moving through failures by embracing dedication and hard work (p. 15). From early studies, Dweck found two distinct meanings of ability, a fixed ability that requires proving to others or documenting intelligence and a flexible ability developed through learning. In the former, *fixed mindset*, individuals consider their traits such as intelligence, talent, or ability as fixed, unmovable traits, highly valuing talent over work in their pursuit of success (Dweck, 2006). Fixed mindset drives a competitive urgency to prove worth, and when in this mindset, a setback or failure "can be a permanent, haunting trauma" (Dweck, 2006, p. 34). Meanwhile, individuals with a *growth mindset* consider intelligence and talent as the jumping-off point, embracing the idea that their ability can be developed and grown through dedication, practice, and hard work. Growth mindset as a method is not solely about effort put forth to achieve something, rather the effort is the means by which to learn and improve through a variety of approaches, strategies, and motivating factors (Dweck, 2015). A growth mindset approach to learning considers both the short and long term facets of learning, how people succeed when approaching challenges or setbacks while also looking toward the future for next steps. In revisiting her work in 2015, Dweck notes that mindset is not a simple either-or binary question, as mindset is much more about the journey than a specific location. Dweck (2015) also concludes that all people have a mixture of both fixed and growth mindsets, they are likely to always have such a blend of approaches to learning,

and paying attention to fixed mindset thoughts/actions leads the way to developing a growth mindset.

Mindset, character, success, and failure. Dweck (2006) writes about how the idea of “character” interacts with mindset, noting that *character* is the act of working hard or even sometimes harder once a person has achieved their goal in order to stay at the top of their particular game. Character, in Dweck’s work, is the force that “makes you practice, and it’s what allows you to dig down and pull it out when you most need it” (2006, p. 95). Character, in this sense, also allows people who are not perhaps the most naturally talented to win games, ace auditions, or perform at a higher level than their peers relying on their innate aptitudes. Individuals with *growth* mindsets consider personal successes the times when they have done their personal best in both learning and improving their own practice.

Additionally, a growth mindset allows an individual to perceive setbacks as motivating factors and take charge of the processes that can bring them successes (Dweck). With a *fixed* mindset approach, individuals look to their natural talent in order to drive their successes, not taking control of their abilities or motivations (Dweck). Fixed mindset is a “finished product” rather than the growth mindset approach of “work in progress,” and thus “finished products have to protect themselves, lament, and blame” (Dweck, 2006, p. 103). People with immense natural talent with a fixed mindset, high level creative performers, athletes, doctors, really anyone who has effortless, high aptitude in their particular field, yearn for their talent to be validated by others (Dweck, 2006). However, this particular fixed mindset actively works against what they want to achieve in that it separates them from others, a focus on the singular *I* versus *we* of a team, collective, or collaborative group. The danger of this singular approach is that it becomes a “nobody-somebody” syndrome of failure, in Dweck’s words

“if I win, I’ll be somebody; if I lose, I’ll be nobody” (2006, p. 105). Greatness and high performance do not grow out of the competitive ego of a fixed mindset, and though some people may have immense natural talents in a particular field, a growth mindset allows a person to also find success in learning and improving, rather than just winning. In considering impact on students, if students “can be redirected to see intellectual ability as something that can be developed over time with effort, good strategies, and help from others, then they are more resilient when they encounter the rigorous learning opportunities presented to them” (Yeagar & Dweck, 2012, p. 306).

In a study of 81 psychology college students between the ages of 17 and 29, Taylor and Gollwitzer (1995) find that participants with a deliberate mindset have an overall poorer mood, self-esteem, and perceived invulnerability. Participants were asked to complete mindset tasks as well as the Multiple Affect Adjective Checklist, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and a measure of their perceived vulnerability to risk. In looking at deliberation, asking half of the participants to contemplate the pros and cons of making a major change in their lives as part of developing a mindset, they found that “deliberation may be a time when people are relatively realistic about their talents and shortcomings and the resources and limitations of the environment” (Taylor & Gollwitzer, p. 217). The other half of the participants were asked to delve into an implementation mindset, planning out the implementation of a decision they had made and come up with goal-directed actions. Implementation-group participants did not differ significantly from deliberation-group participants in mood or self-esteem, but they did measure higher on perceived invulnerability to risk. In a dissertation study, Sriram (2010) looked at mindset as a way to promote academic success for high-risk college students. This study included 105 undergraduate

students enrolled in a remedial course, the 60 treatment students participating in a four-week online intervention geared toward developing a growth mindset and a malleable view of intelligence versus a 40-person control group participating in a four-week online intervention course based on study skills. Students in the growth mindset treatment group had a significant change in their perceptions of intelligence while no change in growth mindset was shown in the control group. Additionally, students in the growth mindset treatment group also reported higher levels of academic effort and higher study skills, yet GPA for either group did not change significantly.

Grit

Grit is the combination of passion and perseverance that leads to high achievement (Duckworth, 2016). Moreover, grit is the ability to sustain interest and effort over an extended period of time, connecting the idea of self-regulation as individuals with better self-control are able to persevere in the face of short-term gratification (Duckworth et al., 2007). Grit includes working with persistence through perceived failures as “grit entails working strenuously toward challenges, maintaining effort and interest over years despite failure, adversity, and plateaus in progress” (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007, p. 1087-1088). Essentially, grit is the long game, a focus toward a given goal over the course of years versus immediate achievement based on short-term, intense effort. Individuals with high amounts of grit do not forgo immediate and short-term goals but rather “the gritty individual not only finishes tasks at hand but pursues a given aim over years” while also setting for themselves “extremely long-term objectives...even in the absence of positive feedback” (Duckworth et al., 2007, p. 1089).

In considering how individuals develop grit over time, Duckworth and Eskreis-Winkler (2013), after looking at a cross-sectional analysis that shows an increase in grit over adulthood, ponder that people may have an increasing appreciation of efficacy of effort over time. In a study looking at self-regulated learning and academic achievement in a population of 213 college students, Wolters and Hussain (2015) found that perseverance of effort, an aspect of grit, is a predictor for all aspects self-regulated learning while consistency of interest was associated only with environment management strategies and procrastination. In another study looking at how grit impacts academic success in black, male college students at predominately white institutions, Strayhorn (2014) found that grit was positively related to grades while background and other academic factors in combination with grit explained 24% of variance in black men's grades. The study looked at 140 black, male, primarily on-campus students enrolled full time at a predominately white, public research university in the south east of which 61% were first generation college students and 35% had grown up in urban neighborhoods (Strayhorn). Study participants filled out the Black Male Student Success Questionnaire as well as the Short Grit Scale (Grit-S).

Persistence

In the world of higher education, the term *persistence* is commonly used alongside the terms *retention* and *attrition*, linking academic persistence to the core idea of continuous enrollment without any interruptions at a two or four-year university with the goal of degree obtainment. Habley, Bloom and Robbins (2012) define a “persister”, based on the Merriam Webster definition of persistence, as an individual who “goes on resolutely and stubbornly despite opposition, importunity, or warning; one who continues firmly and obstinately” (p. 13). Retention, versus persistence, assumes that academic objectives are both linear and

constrained by time, yet students may persist at another institution or on a non-traditional timeline (Habley et al.). Educational persistence model research differs in approach from theories based on motivation, educational persistence models considering contextual support structures, social influences, and academic engagement versus motivational theories which instead look at drives, goals, and expectancies (Habley et al.). In the following table, adapted from these authors' work around educational persistence, the constructs from educational persistence models are contrasted with motivational theory perspectives.

Table 1

Psychosocial Constructs from Educational Persistence Models and Motivational Theory Perspectives Adapted from Hadley, Bloom, and Robbins (2012)

| Educational Persistence Models | Motivational Theories |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Contextual influences | Motives as drive |
| Financial support | Achievement motivation |
| Size of institutions | Need to belong |
| Institutional selectivity | Motives as goals |
| Social influence | Academic goals |
| Perceived social support | Performance and mastery goals |
| Social engagement | Motives as expectancies |
| Social involvement | Self-efficacy and outcome expectations |
| Academic engagement | Self-worth |
| Commitment to a degree | Self-concept |
| Commitment to an institution | |

Previous constructs, self-efficacy and mindset, more solidly align with the motivational theories as presented in the above table. Persistence, in comparison, considers contextual influences, social influences, and academic engagement as ways by which to predict or control for educational success.

In a study of 401 undergraduate students, of which 254 lived on-campus at a very large university in the Southwest, students were asked to complete the revised UCLA Loneliness Scale, the Perceived Social Support Inventory – Family and Friends, and the Persistence/Voluntary Dropout Decisions Scale (Nicpon et al., 2007). The researchers found that social support positively influenced academic persistence decisions and negatively related to loneliness with women overall receiving more social support from friends and family than did men.

Supporting Constructs

The following supporting constructs of 1.) resiliency, 2.) Azjen’s Theory of Planned Behavior, and 3.) mindfulness are all utilized within the intervention course design as parts of the curriculum and course learning. Even though they are not necessarily being measured for this particular study, I have included additional information on these supporting constructs to provide additional contextual understanding.

Resilience

Resilience is an elusive process at times as it “provides some kind of answer to why one person crumbles in the face of tough times while another gains strength” (Neenan, 2009). The key word, however, is process. Resilience is the process by which people adapt

when faced with stress, threats, trauma, or other adversities. Resiliency is not a trait, rather incorporating behaviors, thoughts, attitudes, emotions, and actions that can be learned through experiences over time. Richardson (2002), in overviewing the last three decades of work around the concept of resiliency, notes that the current idea about resiliency theory supports that there is “a force within everyone that drives them to seek self-actualization, altruism, wisdom, and harmony” (p. 313). Resiliency concerns motivation, yet it also assumes that all humans have the capacity to change and transform as well as develop their own moral framework over time (Richardson). An individual’s capacity for resilience changes given a particular circumstance, the context of the setting, and their intrinsic selves; it is not a static process as it ebbs and flows over time with the individual’s own development. Thus, resiliency requires a good deal of flexibility to address new problems, barriers, or experiences. In working to resiliency, Neenan suggests a three-step approach considering how beliefs strongly influence how individuals feel and respond to event: a.) adversity, b.) beliefs about adversity, and c.) emotional and behavioral consequences. Neenan also considers the strengths that underpin resilience to be a high tolerance for frustration, self-acceptance, self-belief, humor, support from others, the ability to keep things in perspective, curiosity, problem-solving skills, adaptability, and the ability to find meaning to build a better future. Self-belief, essentially self-efficacy in another guise, is connected to self-discipline, the ability to stay focused on goals as well as carry out behaviors that help achieve aspirations. Neenan notes that “self-belief without self-discipline is having big dreams which are never realized” (p. 79). Resiliency is a process that must be practiced to continuously cultivate the skills and strengths needed to navigate new and unexpected barriers. Mirroring mindset, the ability to reframe or manage negative emotions around challenges allows an individual the ability to grow and maintain a resilient outlook. In considering individuals who are able to

maintain a resilient outlook over time, Neenan notes that resilience is “a willingness to be open to new ways of thinking and acting without insisting on knowing the outcome before it occurred, persevering to reach their goals, gathering along the way resilience-promoting knowledge from both their successes and setbacks, and through their struggles seeing themselves as stronger than they previously imagined themselves” (p. 183).

Resiliency and performance. Mental toughness and resiliency is an additional aspect of performance. Increasingly referenced in sports psychology and music psychology, mental toughness is hazily defined in a variety of ways, generally encompassing traits such as optimism, confidence, self-esteem, determination, willpower, motivation and advanced performance consistency (Jones, 2002). Nonetheless, individuals with well-defined and developed psychological coping mechanisms are more determined, focused, confident, and effective in performance as in comparison to those who score lower in mental toughness parameters (Connaughton et al., 2008). Jones, Hanton, and Connaughton (2002) found several attributes associated with mental toughness in performance situations: self-belief, desire, motivation, ability to cope with performance and lifestyle distractions, experienced performance anxiety and pressure, and being able to maintain technical precision while in physical or emotional pain. In a study addressing how mental toughness in performance is a constant long-term process, Connaughton et al. (2008) found that internalized motivation to succeed, a reassuring support network and hardy psychological skills all came into play in maintaining mental resilience.

Individuals with perfectionist tendencies can be so hyper-focused on their performance, critique, and evaluation that they have difficulty sorting through their own thoughts as well as identifying distress symptoms such as depression or anxiety (Kilbert,

Lamis, Collins, Smalley, Warren, Yancey, & Winterowd, 2012). In a self-reported survey of 413 undergraduate psychology students looking at the relationship between perfectionism, student distress, and resilience, the researchers found that resilience mediated the effects between socially-prescribed perfectionism and depression/anxiety (Kilbert et al). Individuals with high levels of self-imposed and socially-imposed perfectionism are also less likely to engage in resilience enhancing attitudes and behaviors, tending to instead move toward catastrophizing outcomes and dependency on others (Rudolph, Flett, & Hewitt, 2007; Sherry, Hewitt, Flett, & Harvey, 2003).

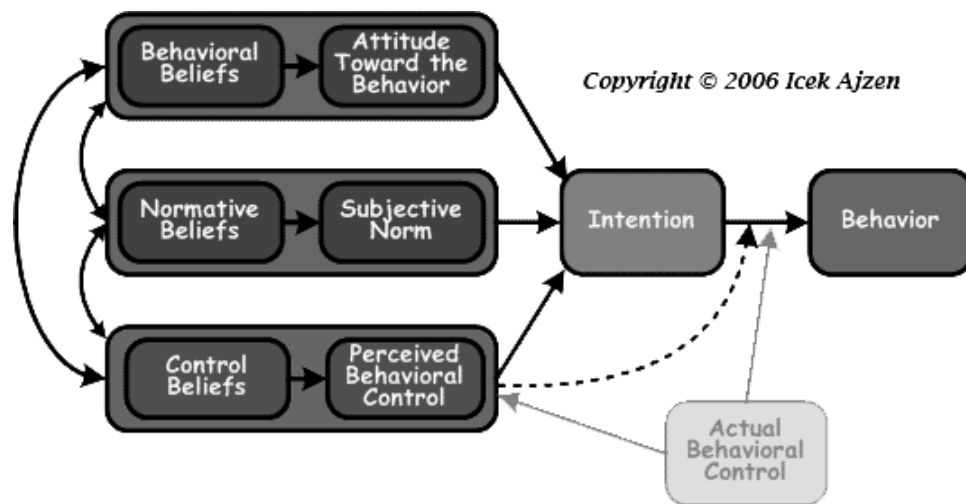
Developing academic resiliency. Social connection, the ability to be adaptable, and a sense of belonging, all aspects of resilience, are connected to academic performance, persistence, and increased personal well-being. Looking at how first year college students transition to college, Leary and DeRosier (2012) found that two aspects of resilience, social support systems and optimistic cognitive styles, overall predicted lower stress in students. In this study, 120 undergraduate students from four universities in Pennsylvania were given a 10-item perceived stress scale and a 30-item resilience factor questionnaire looking at social connections, self-care, cognitive style, and coping skills. After analysis, Leary and DeRosier suggest that “emphasizing the importance of these types of social-emotional resilience strategies could effectively increase first year students’ ability to cope with the stressors of college and thereby significantly increase students’ academic and social-emotional adjustment” (p. 1219).

Theory of Planned Behavior

What then causes students to behave or participate in an engaged way, and how does their intention influence their behavior? Intention is considered as the immediate precursor

to behavior as well as an indication of an individual's inclination to perform a certain behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Intentions toward behavior also provided insight into other core functions of engagement, such as examining perceived availability of resources, exploring consequences of action, probing situational role beliefs, and investigating the eventual beginning of a new venture (Kreuger et al., 2000). Behavior, according to Ajzen (1987; 1991), is the observable response within a specific situation. Behavior may be difficult to observe or infrequent enough to miss in observations, but examining underlying *intentions* offers understanding about the processes leading to a behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), behavior is considered to be a function of compatible intentions and perceptions of behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). Behavioral beliefs and attitudes toward the behavior, normative and subjective norms, control beliefs and perceived behavioral control, and actual behavioral control all influence intention which in turn shapes behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

Figure 1. Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior Model (2006).



Behavioral beliefs and attitudes toward the behavior. Behavior belief is the individual's idea that a certain behavior will produce a certain outcome, though a person may

simultaneously hold numerous beliefs toward a single behavior (Ajzen, 1991). How a person values the outcome as well as how accessible their belief sets are to them in turn influence overall attitude toward the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude toward the behavior is how positively or negatively the behavior was valued overall by individuals (Ajzen, 1991).

Normative beliefs and subjective norms. Important others, family members, friends, peers, teachers, or other core influencers, influence how an individual perceives behavioral expectations, resulting in the formulation of normative beliefs toward a behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norms are how the individual perceives social pressure to perform or not perform a behavior, determined by the whole set of normative beliefs at play around the specific behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

Control beliefs and perceived behavioral control. Control beliefs are the perceived barriers or shortcuts to the performance of a behavior (Ajzen, 1991). How each control belief is weighted positively or negatively then influences overall perceived behavioral control, individuals' perceptions of their ability to perform a behavior, (*e.g.*, students may not think that it is their choice). (Ajzen, 1991).

Actual behavioral control. Outside of perception, actual behavior control refers to the resources, talents, and training an individual needed to perform a given behavior, the external factors at play in the larger scheme of successful action (Ajzen, 1991). Intention and perceived control alone do not produce successful behavior if actual behavioral control is not in place (Ajzen, 1991).

Inspiration as related to TPB and intention. In a quasi-experimental study of 250 business and engineering students at two universities in London and Grenoble, Souitaris, Zerbinati, and Al-Laham (2007) found that students enrolled in an entrepreneurship program showed increased subjective norms and intentions toward entrepreneurship

activities. Participants in the entrepreneurial program reported *inspiration* as the highest benefit related to increased intention and changed norms while the education components of learning and resource utilization did not show as much influence on intention. Inspiration, in this particular study, was defined as “the infusion of some idea or purpose into the mind and the awakening or creation of some feeling of impulse” (Souitaris et al., p. 572). Inspiration came from specific emotion and passion-driven events during the program and suggested that the more traditional model of access to information and opportunity-recognition were lacking in their consideration of the importance of emotion and attitude toward intention (Souitaris et al.). Inspiration as a psychological construct has been more thoroughly investigated in Thrash and Elliot’s (2003) work, which defines inspiration as a construct characterized by evocation, motivation, and transcendence. Thrash and Elliot conducted four studies to measure inspiration traits, inspiration across time and populations, and how motivation constructs influenced inspiration. “Inspiration was found to correlate positively with perceived competence, self-esteem, and optimism, consistent with [the] proposal that evocation, motivation, and transcendence imply an influx or bolstering of psychological resources” (Thrash & Elliot, p. 885). Inspiration as a concept appears to be commonly understood across populations and time, representing a consistent recognition of an inspirational event and feeling (Hart, 1993; Thrash & Elliot, 2003).

Mindfulness

Mindfulness meditation is a component of a mediation technique that comes from ancient Buddhist tradition (Eberth & Sedlmeir, 2012). Mindfulness in particular refers to the self-regulatory practice of the awareness of the immediate, often incorporating ideas of openness, acceptance, curiosity, and the simple act of observing one’s own experiences as they are happening (Eberth & Sedlmeir). Kabat-Zinn, the researcher who originated the

mindfulness-based stress reduction (MSBR) process, defines mindfulness as the act of “paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4). For the formal approach of MSBR, practices include mindful movement (awareness of body), sitting meditation (awareness of breath), and the body scan (awareness of different regions of the body) (Cullen, 2011). Segal, Williams, and Teasdale (2002) adapted mindfulness to more traditional western therapeutic processes, creating mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT).

So, why exactly has this practice found its way into higher education? Simply, it works. Mindfulness reduces stress as well as aids in helping people suffering from depression and anxiety while also fostering non-judgmental thoughts and resiliency (Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2002; Baer, 2003). Thus, mindfulness is much more frequently used in college courses, curriculum, and experiences in an effort to reduce stress, foster positive mood, and encourage students to decrease self-judgement. Integrating mindfulness into a weekly course for international students, researchers found that participation led to increased non-judgmental and non-reactive approaches to students’ own thoughts, feelings, and emotions while also assisting in their ability to cope with stress and improve overall performance (de Bruin, Meppelink, & Bögels, 2014). In a study of 166 college students looking at whether mindfulness increased in a movement-based course, researchers found that total mindfulness scores increased overall which in turn influenced positive changes in mood, perceived stress, and overall sleep quality (Caldwell, Harrison, Adams, Quin, & Greeson, 2010). In Cash and Whittingham’s (2010) work on mindfulness, they note that while in operation mindfulness has five components: 1) observation, 2) description, 3) acting with awareness to the present moment, 4) acting in a non-judgmental way, and 5)

maintaining a non-reactive attitude. Cash and Whittingham (2010) found that participants, 80 from meditation organizations and 26 undergraduate psychology students who completed an online questionnaire relating to the five components of mindfulness, with a higher level of non-judgmental mindfulness also had lower levels of depression, anxiety, and stress-related symptoms while those with a higher ability to act with awareness in the present moment were also less likely to have symptoms of depression. In another study of 504 participants, Van Dam, Sheppard, Forsyth, and Earleywine (2010) note that self-compassion, a construct related to mindfulness practice, is related to increased positive quality of life and overall psychological health. Mindfulness allows those who practice it to pay attention to their own emotional regulation, increasing their ability to focus and pay attention to their own states of being (Hamilton, Kitzman, & Guyotte, 2006).

Echoing the emergence of mindfulness as a practice, positive psychology has also risen to the forefront in educational settings. Positive psychology is the study of “human flourishing, and an applied approach to optimal functioning...It has also been defined as the study of the strengths and virtues that enable individuals, communities and organizations to thrive” (Positive Psychology Institute, 2012). Seligman, one of the first proponents of positive psychology, notes that positive psychology allows individuals to use their “signature strengths and virtues in the service of something larger” than themselves in an effort to live a fulfilled life (2002, p. 263). Seligman divides happiness into three distinct categories, 1.) pleasure and gratification, 2.) strengths and virtues in action, and 3.) finding meaning and purpose. Additionally, the ability to think about the constructively about the past, be mindful of the present, and embrace optimism for the future through reflection allows for greater happiness (Seligman). According to Seligman, the ways by which to find happiness or

positivity of being in the present is through savoring experiences, breaking habits, and actively utilizing mindfulness to be in the present. Mindfulness is thus a tool by which to engage in the process of developing a fulfilled and emotionally healthy life. In looking at how mindfulness and cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) interconnect, researchers found that mindfulness allows individuals to decrease the emotional charge associated with fear, test hypotheses in terms of their own emotional states, and change their perceptions of in relation to their own body and expectations (Hamilton et al.).

Research on Similar Intervention Strategies

This research study incorporates an eight-week, mindfulness-centered course around the core concepts of learning from failure, defining personal success, and developing tools for persistence and resiliency. In terms of intervention strategies, courses are not new to this game as specific courses designed to address issues within a student population is, essentially, the development of modern higher education. So, in terms of similar intervention strategies, what does the research show on course interventions as a whole, to what extent are courses used for learning events around the ideas of the above constructs, how is impact measured, and do these course-based interventions affect persistence?

In a study looking at three common intervention strategies, first-year seminars, service-learning opportunities, and learning communities, Keup (2005) found positive relationships between all three approaches to an integrative collegiate experience. Keup based this study on Tinto's work on the longitudinal model of student departure (1987, 1993), considering how pre-college characteristics such as family support, high school achievement, and experiences influence matriculation alongside personal skills, and abilities as connected to students' personal and institutional goals. Utilizing data from the national

Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) from 2002 and 2003, Keup analyzed data on 19,995 students, of which 43.7% participated in a first-year seminar course, 39.1% engaged in service learning, and 10.2% lived in a learning community. In terms of grades, student engagement in these intervention areas did not show a strong relationship to academic achievement, but “all three curricular interventions are associated with self-perceived change in analytical and problem-solving skills” (Keup, p. 72). Students engaged in these three types of interventions were also more likely to turn in assignments in a timely manner, exercise good academic practices in the classroom, spend more time studying, and socialize with peers (Keup). Additionally, students who participated “in service-learning, first-year seminars, and learning communities appear to be far more likely to interact with faculty both inside and outside of class, feel ‘completely successful’ getting to know faculty, and work with a professor on a research project” (Keup, p. 73). Even though these three types of interventions suggested integrated experiences in college, they did not show a significant relationship to students’ plans for future enrollment. Yet, persistence may be the outcome rather than the measure of retention as Keup notes that “it is possible that the three curricular programs may facilitate specific institutional experiences that lead to the decision to persist rather than serve as a direct conduit to retention” (p. 73).

In developing a six-week course to reduce psychological distress and perceived stress for a population of 128 undergraduate students, researchers found that students who underwent the intervention strategy versus the control group had greatly reduced distress signifiers, anxiety, and perceived stress (Deckro et al., 2002). The six modules for this particular course were designed around relaxation-response based skills such as mindfulness exercises, cognitive behavioral interventions such as goal setting and identifying automatic

thoughts, lecture topics on coping skills and relaxation practices, and individual practices geared toward practice and reflection (Dekro et al.). The researchers utilized the Symptom Checklist-90-Revised, Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, and the Perceived Stress Scale to establish a baseline for the treatment and control populations as well as in a post-intervention measure. The intervention course resulted in significant reductions of overall distress, anxiety, and perceived stress, yet did not show any statistical significance in promoting future healthy behaviors.

In another study, Steinhardt and Dolbier (2008) developed a 4-week resilience intervention designed to enhance resiliency, coping strategies, and protective factors while also decreasing symptoms of stress during challenging academic time periods. The study looked at treatment group of 30 students versus the control group of 27 students on the wait-list for the course, both populations randomly assigned to each group. In this particular study, 64.9% were undergraduate students with 17.5% masters and 17.5% doctoral students also taking part in the study. For this particular short intervention course, modules were designed around 1.) transforming stress into resilience practices, 2.) taking responsibility for behavior, 3.) focusing on empowering interpretations utilizing Ellis's ABCDE thinking model, and 4.) creating meaningful connections as well as the influence of support structures on thinking, behavior, and health (Steinhardt & Dolbier). For the pre- and post- intervention measures, the researchers asked students to answer 1.) the 30-item Dispositional Resilience Scale on challenge, commitment, and control, 2.) a 25-item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale based on measures of stress reactions, anxiety and depression, 3.) a 28-item Brief Coping Orientations to Problems Experienced scale with 14 two-item subscales on active coping, planning, positive reframing, acceptance, humor, religion, emotional support,

instrumental support, self-distraction, denial, venting, substance use, behavioral disengagement, and self-blame, 4.) a 6-item Life Orientation Test based on optimism, 5.) a 19-item modified version of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule to rate positive feelings and emotions, 6.) a 10-item Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale, 7.) a 20-item Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Index to explore depressive symptoms, 8.) a 19-item modified version of Positive and Negative Affect Scale, 9.) a 4-item Perceived Stress Scale, and 10.) a 20-item Symptoms Checklist looking at various physical and psychological symptoms. In terms of findings, the experimental group for this intervention had more resilience, more effective coping strategies, higher scores on self-esteem and self-leadership measures, and lower overall scores on depressive symptoms, negative affect, and perceived stress than the control group (Steindhart & Dolbier). Looking at resilience in particular, “compared with the control group, the experimental group showed improvement in resilience and the protective factors (i.e., positive affect, self-esteem, and self-leadership) with the exception of optimism” while the intervention as a whole “appeared to be effective in reducing psychological symptomatology (i.e., depressive symptoms, negative affect, and perceived stress) but not psychosomatic symptomatology (ie, symptoms of illness)” (Steinhardt & Dolbier, p. 451).

Shifting to look more thoroughly at failure, in looking at previous work around failure-adverse and failure-accepting students, Covington and Omelich (1986) found that even as each students’ increasing effort reduced feelings of guilt and shame, the same high effort contributed to negative connotations with failure as they perceived high effort resulting in failure as a demonstration of low ability. This self-worth focused and motivational perspective on failure rearranges the paradigm from “high effort → low

guilt/shame” to “high effort → inability → shame” (Covington & Omelich, 1986, p. 447). Children generally perceive success as the effort to gain achievement, and thus perceive failure as a lack of effort. Therefore, “by the time the individual reaches adulthood, ability has become the paramount virtue by which one’s worth is defined” (Covington & Omelich, 1986, p. 447). As students navigate these issues of self-worth and effort, they can become uncertain about their own ability status and begin to develop failure avoidance as a strategy by which to preserve their own self-worth (Covington & Omelich, 1986). Although avoiding failure may temporarily reduce stress and negative thoughts of incompetency, failure avoidance inevitably leads to the very failure the students initially were attempting to avoid in the first place.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

The previous chapters illustrated the problem of practice, the contexts for this study, and relevant literature. In the following section, I will discuss how I approached the research questions, my research paradigm, the design of the study, the study method, the proposed innovation, data collection procedures, data analysis plan, perceived threats to reliability and validity, and the limitations of the overall study.

The purpose of this study is to examine how undergraduate arts and design students define success and navigate failure as part of their learning process, incorporating aspects of resiliency, grit, and growth mindset. Arts and design students are preparing to work in rapidly changing, competitive fields in which perceived failure can present challenges for persistence. The research component of this study is to explore how arts and design undergraduate students perceive their own academic and creative “failures”, how they learn to re-conceptualize these experiences to develop grit, resiliency, and persistence, and how efficacious they are in dealing with future barriers.

Data will be gathered to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: To what extent do undergraduate students in design and the arts become more *efficacious* through their experiences in an intervention course on failure?

Sub-RQ1: How do students make meaning through reflecting on their own *self-efficacy*?

RQ2: To what extent do undergraduate students in design and the arts fall on the *fixed/growth mindset continuum*?

Sub-RQ2: How do students make meaning through reflecting on their *mindset*?

RQ3: To what extent are undergraduate students in design and the arts *gritty*?

RQ4: To what extent are undergraduate students in the design and the arts *academically persistent*?

Sub-RQ4: How do students make meaning through reflecting on their *academic persistence*?

RQ5: How do undergraduate students in design and the arts negotiate *perceived failures*?

RQ6: How do undergraduate students in the design and the arts make meaning out of their *definition of success*?

Design of the Study

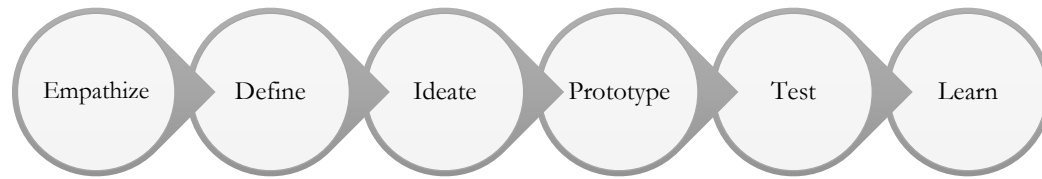
Pairing Action Research with Design Thinking

Action research as a research design allows the insider practitioner to determine a problem in their practice, design and implement an appropriate intervention, systematically follow a process of inquiry to gather data, and through careful reflection and analysis come to a deeper understanding of their context and possible next steps with respect to

intervention. Additionally, action research carries the possibility of educational change throughout the participatory process and reiterative cycles (Mills, 2011).

Given my context within the academic fields of design and the arts, I am habituated with the methodology of design thinking. In my view, action research and design thinking are similar in overall approach and model with similar outcome expectations. Design thinking is commonly utilized to solve complex problems and find desirable solutions (Fullan, 2001; 2007, Brown and Wyatt, 2007; Brown, 2007). A design thinking mindset is solution-focused and action-oriented toward creating a preferred future, aligning with the tenets of action research. Like the reiterative cycles of action research, design thinking asks that the researcher address issues in a cyclical process toward generating stages of innovation (Brown, 2007). In the Stanford Design School (2016) model of design thinking, innovation comes from the overlapping of feasibility, viability, usability and desirability, all excellent places to start when considering an action research approach to innovation in practice. Successful innovations within design thinking models address both the experiences of the user or participant while also eliciting emotional responses and adapting to changing conditions (Brown, 2007). Instead of the cyclical approaches of traditional action research, I utilized a design thinking approach by using the model that asks the designer-researcher to empathize, define, ideate, prototype, test, and learn for the next phase (Stanford Design School, 2016). Essentially, in my overall method, I layered action research over design thinking, allowing the action research the ability to guide the overall process and study momentum while utilizing design thinking to give shape and structure to the individual cycles.

Figure 2. Design Thinking Model Adapted from Stanford Design School (2016).



Within this model, *empathy* is the key to designing innovations for people, allowing the designer-researcher to both gain new understanding of their participants and dynamic contexts. Empathizing requires observing, engaging, and listening to people in order to uncover deeper meaning and understanding. The step of *definition* allows the designer-researcher the opportunity to define the problem, consider their own role and point of view, and gain insights into the best ways to address problems. *Ideation* gives the designer-researcher time by which to generate new concepts, innovations, and solutions, moving from problem identification to solution-based approaches. *Prototyping* includes both the practical and imaginative, the designer-researcher bringing forth multiple innovation ideas in a reiterative process designed to answer the guiding questions of the project. The Stanford Design School (2016) guide for design thinking lays out the *why* of prototyping as a method to problem solve, to communicate, to start a conversation, to fail quickly and cheaply, to test possibilities, and to manage the solution-building process over time. *Testing* elicits feedback after the innovation build as well as another opportunity to revisit the empathy stage in order to make meaning from the user-participant's experience. Testing also allows the time to refine solutions, learn more about the context or participant, and to refine the designer-

researcher's point of view. Design thinking as a whole requires the designer-researcher to cycle through the process multiple times or reiterate through steps in order to generate innovations.

For this study, I spent an academic year listening, observing, and talking to undergraduate students (*empathize*) as I defined my problem of practice (*define*), asking the simple yet complex question of “how do undergraduate students in the arts and design learn to navigate perceived failures?” Through several pilot stages and an on-going curriculum development process, I was then able to *ideate* on possible solutions. In Fall 2016, I worked with Dr. William Heywood, the Assistant Director of the Design School, to *prototype* a six-module curriculum around the concepts of values, strengths, resiliency, learning from failure, tapping into inspiration, and prototyping risk and failure. Gaining feedback from the participating students as well as analyzing their work, we were then able to *test* the approach in order to refine the innovation process for the next academic year and study phases (see Cycle 1 results and planned cycles for Cycle 2 and Cycle 3 in following sections).

Sequential Mixed-Method Approach

This action research/design-thinking study will utilize a mixed-method research design. By utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research threads, this study aims to understand undergraduate student experiences and perceptions more fully while also allowing the strengths and weaknesses of each approach to be mediated through triangulation (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Study Timeline

The study timeline is broken into pilot phases and dissertation study phases as seen in the table below. After several interview pilot phases during the academic year of 2015-2016, I settled on studying the concepts of how undergraduate arts and design students conceptualize and navigate perceived failures as well as how they develop self-efficacy, mindset, grit, and persistence throughout their academic programs. For Fall 2016, I designed, conducted, and analyzed the first questionnaire pilot on the constructs of mindset and grit. For reasons that will be addressed in the quantitative data section in following sections, I piloted the survey for a second time during the Spring 2017 semester as I re-tooled the instrument to measure the constructs of self-efficacy, mindset, grit, and persistence. In Spring and Summer 2017, I piloted the semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix D) to determine the best way by which to address these issues through this qualitative method. I refined both the quantitative and qualitative instruments over the summer for application within Fall 2017 for the first study phase. For the dissertation cycles, the quantitative survey went out at the beginning of the academic semester for Fall 2017 after which participants were asked to partake in a semi-structured qualitative interview as well as produce or submit creative work around navigating failure. The second quantitative survey on the same constructs went out again at the end of the Session A course during October 2017. Participants then were interviewed after the conclusion of the course. Other data sources included student information and course projects around self-efficacy, mindset, grit, and persistence.

Table 2

Study Timeline

Study Timeline

Study Pilot Phases

Cycle 0: Interview Pilot 1 (Defining Problem)
Spring 2016

Cycle 1: Questionnaire Pilot 1 (Online)
Fall 2016

- *Constructs of Mindset and Grit*

IRB Approval Process Completed

Cycle 2: Questionnaire Pilot 2 (Online)
Spring 2017

- *Constructs of Self-Efficacy, Mindset, Grit, and Persistence*

Interview Pilot 2 (Gaining Understanding)

Summer 2017 Data Analysis
Refine Instruments

Dissertation Study Phases

Cycle 3: *Part 1*
Fall 2017 Pre- Questionnaire #1 (Online) - August

Part 2
Arts-Based Projects Mid-Semester
Post - Questionnaire # 2 (Online) - October

Part 3
Interviews – November to January

Cycle 4: Concluding Data Analysis, Results, and Discussion
Spring 2018

Method

In this following section, I will overview my role as a researcher first before detailing the first two pilot cycles and then going into the dissertation research cycles. In cycle one, I will overview arts-based approaches to curriculum design as well as the initial online questionnaire design. For cycle two, I will discuss the course proposal, redesigned online survey instrument, the qualitative interviews process with students, faculty, and alumni, and data analysis from the second research cycle. During cycle two, the qualitative interviews with faculty and alumni served to gain better understanding of how these populations approach issues of self-efficacy, mindset, resiliency, and persistence. Finally, I will detail the dissertation cycle participants, recruitment methods, quantitative and qualitative data methods, data analysis, and results.

Role of Researcher

As this study utilizes action research as its method, I am a participant-observer in the study in multiple ways, using my own reflections, experiences, data collection tools, and action steps to improve student experiences, perceptions, and behaviors. The overall goal of participatory action research is to bring about local change as well as engage participants in understanding their own lived experiences. As a designer-researcher, I will endeavor to reduce bias in the instruments and data collection tools to allow students access, equity in process, and experience. My hope is to involve other participants within my context in the discussion of approach as “eliminating the researcher’s bias in selecting the data sources through collaboration with the stakeholders becomes very important because it helps ensure that the collected data truly represent stakeholders’ views” (Ivankova, 2015, p. 210).

Cycle One: Preliminary Exploration and Initial Course Module Design

Through the pilot stage of design in Fall 2016, I collaborated with a Design School faculty member, assistant director, and clinical psychologist, Dr. William Heywood, on a six-module set of classes for his undergraduate design course for 250 students and my upper-division leadership course for ten sophomores, juniors, and seniors. We then co-taught the two courses together for the module set. The course modules addressed value and belief systems, growth and fixed mindset, resiliency, design thinking and reiterative prototyping, reflection on their inner voice of judgement, the cognitive effects of critique, and tapping into inspiration as motivation. The modules included several creative arts-based projects as well as weekly reflective journals on the learning experiences presented in class. Through this pilot stage, we determined that the course resonated more with upper-division students through their comments on the modules and quality/resonance of their reflective work. Therefore, in considering this aspect, we proposed, designed, and instructed a course at a 300-level general elective course for arts and design students.

Overview of arts-based projects in course design. In the pilot stage of the module design, we incorporated several arts-based approaches within the curriculum structure. Students wrote weekly reflective journals in order to process learning as well as increase their creative flow around new concepts, composed poetry on concepts such as their value systems and strengths, penned themselves a creative letter from the future to offer advice on how to navigate barriers, concept-mapped and designed a project deemed “risky”, made collages around community building and goal setting, and also wrote creative narratives at the end of the semester after annotating their reflective free writing for the

semester. In this regard, the course modules mirrored Manders and Chiltons (2013) translation strategies for arts-based research as seen in the following figure.

Table 3

Arts-Based Research Translation Strategies Adapted from Manders and Chilton, 2013

| Creative Strategies | Objectives |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Collage | To use creative means to transition between visual and textual worlds; reduce anxiety toward arts-based approaches |
| Free Writing | To document the process; to learn through reflection; to increase creative flow; to reduce anxiety |
| Poetry | To use words to discover meaning through textual and verbal thinking |
| Concept Map or Diagram | To visually contextualize and locate; to make connections |
| Storytelling | To use imagination to unlock new insights; to move perspective around a concept to more fully understand |
| Other Arts Forms | To generate new insights; to clarify and expand; to transition from words to another art form that may be easier to translate |

Collages. Students were asked to prepare a collage about themselves, their values, and their communities. Collages aid students in translating and navigating both visual and textual paradigms as well as reduce anxiety toward future arts-based projects.

Free writing. Students were asked to free write after every class in order to learn through reflection, document their learning process over the semester, and to increase

creative flow. They were encouraged to incorporate other arts-based mediums in their writing journals (*e.g.* poems, drawings, designs, music, etc.) in order to amplify meaning and connection.

Poetry. Students were asked to write poems on concepts covered in class in order to use words and new structures to make meaning. In the pilot phase, students wrote poems about their core values and strengths, and many utilized the poems for other creative projects.

Concept maps. Students were asked within the course to concept map or diagram concepts presenting in the course. Concept maps help students form connections between concepts and sometimes disparate ideas while also engaging them in visual learning.

Storytelling. Students were asked to write themselves a creative letter from their future self, addressing where they have gone post-graduation, how they got there, how they navigated perceived barriers, and who helped them along the way. Students were also asked at the end of the semester to annotate their free writing journal and then synthesize the semester into a creative narrative piece. Writing stories and narratives aided students in using their imagination and creativity in meaning-making.

Other art forms. Students were given art-based projects during the semester such as the Inner Voice of Judgement and Inner Voice of Persistence projects that ask them to personify their inner voice, create a piece of work in their preferred medium, and then write about their experiences, perceptions, and behaviors. These projects were aimed to help students develop new insights into how they approach the world, clarify and expand on their

sense of self, and transition to a creative medium in which they feel most comfortable expressing themselves.

First quantitative online questionnaire pilot. For the initial data collection component for cycle one, I compiled an online questionnaire to collect quantitative data. The following sections will overview the participants, recruitment, data collection procedures, data analysis, results, and discussion for cycle one's survey pilot.

Participants. The participants for the initial module design in the courses were the GRA 101 Designing Life first year design students of which there were approximately 250 students and the HDA 494 Leadership Seminar course in which there were ten upper-division students from across all schools in the institute. The ten upper division students as well as other student leaders in a similar role were recruited by email and social media to take the online survey in order to pilot the tool for use. They were informally asked for feedback on usability and ease of taking the survey instrument. Originally, eight participants took part in the survey from this group with a total of 43 participants at the end of the semester.

Recruitment. For this initial cycle focused on defining the problem, solution-ideation, and intervention prototyping, approval from the Institutional Research Board (IRB) was not completed so data was gathered in pre-existing structures such as course evaluations and casual conversations with students to aid in understanding the problem of practice. For the online questionnaire, student leaders were contacted by email and on social media to be part of the pilot stage of the survey. Students were recruited in the upper division course to give feedback after going through the course modules, both officially in the post-course assessment process and informally as a group. Students in the GRA 101 course wrote reflective journals every week and also participated in the formal course evaluation at the end of the semester.

Instruments. In order to measure undergraduate student grit and mindset, I designed and used a survey questionnaire in Fall 2016 to assess how students perceive their own grit, fixed mindset, and growth mindset. The questionnaire (Appendix E) comprises ten items on mindset based on Duckworth's (2016) grit scale and ten items based on Dweck's work (2006) around mindset, five items devoted to fixed mindset and five items to growth mindset. The questionnaire asks for a variety of demographical information as well as estimates for how many hours a week students estimate they study and how many hours they practice their particular craft. As the students surveyed were arts and design undergraduate students in the arts and design academic programs, I decided to divide studying and practicing as concepts in order to measure both activities. The questionnaire in total consisted of 22 Likert scale items, nine multiple choice questions, and one write in answer for age. The Likert scale for this questionnaire asks participants to rate their responses as 1.) Very Much Like Me, 2.) Mostly Like Me, 3.) Sometimes Like Me, 4.) Not Much Like Me, and 5.) Not Like Me at All, aligning with the five-point Likert scale used in Duckworth's grit tool. Overall, the internal consistency reliability of the 12-item Grit Scale measures in a range from $\alpha = 0.73$ to 0.87 with the two sub-factors of consistency of Interest at $\alpha=0.84$ and perseverance of effort $\alpha = 0.78$ (Duckworth et al., 2007, Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). The mindset scale had an internal reliability measure of $\alpha = 0.94$ (Dweck, 2000; Dweck, 2006). The reliability of the scales will also be more thoroughly discussed in the following section for their second iteration in Cycle Two.

Data analysis. Quantitative data from the online survey was analyzed for frequencies, descriptive statistics, and internal consistency reliability by using SPSS. From the HDA 494 course, casual verbal feedback was given on how the students felt about the

content as well as what they enjoyed or would like changed for future iterations. These conversations were informal and not documented as IRB approval had not yet been granted.

Results. Utilizing SPSS, I ran analytics on the survey after the first small sample of eight participants and again at 43 participants. As individual constructs, the Cronbach's Alpha (α) for grit was 0.87, fixed mindset was 0.80, and growth mindset was 0.75. The entire questionnaire's Cronbach's Alpha (α) was 0.63. Removing the item "If I cannot learn through studying, I think there is something wrong with me" in the construct of fixed mindset increased the Cronbach's Alpha (α) to 0.76, an acceptable amount of internal consistency reliability for the questionnaire.

Discussion. This cycle was, using the Design Thinking model, about defining the problem, ideating on possible solutions, and prototyping initial ideas. The survey instrument began the initial part of a testing stage, but as the tool did not fully reflect the problem of practice in that it did not consider self-efficacy and persistence, it will require retooling and new constructs for the next research stage. The institute, participants, and instructors defined the issue as how students learn about the process of resiliency through curriculum as a way to increase self-efficacy, academic persistence, resiliency, and perhaps their grit. The initial course modules were designed around the concepts of value and belief systems, growth and fixed mindset, resiliency, design thinking and reiterative prototyping, reflection on their inner voice of judgement, the cognitive effects of critique, and tapping into inspiration as motivation. By using the same modules in two very different courses, a 250 seat first year seminar versus a ten-seat interdisciplinary, upper-division course, we were able to gauge how students responded to the materials in different settings, class sizes, and development stages. We were also able to observe how students engaged with the concepts as well as how they utilized their unique skill sets to produce some of the arts-based projects

within the course. The upper division students' work, especially their creative work around their inner voice of judgement, letters from the future, and final narratives, were more resonant and showed understanding of the course content.

Cycle 2.0: Full Course Proposal and Instrument Refinement

In January 2017, Heywood and I proposed a course for the 2017-2018 academic year focusing on self-efficacy, growth mindset, resiliency, and persistence as ways by which to develop emotional intelligence and aid in self-efficacy development specifically in the realm of navigating perceived barriers. As of February 2017, we were given approval to move ahead in the design of a curriculum based on these concepts, a stand-alone class lesson to be incorporated into the various HIDA ASU 101 courses in each academic unit and then as a one-unit, eight-week 300 level course for the A session. At ASU, courses are designated as A, B, or C session, A session taking place in the first eight weeks of the semester, B session taking place the last eight weeks of the semester, and C session comprising the entire sixteen academic weeks of a semester. In our proposal for the stand-alone course, we estimated enrollment to be around 24 students from across disciplines at the institute. The final course was seated for 22 students with a final enrollment after withdrawals at nineteen students.

Participants. For this cycle of research, the participants were cross-disciplinary undergraduate students recruited to take the second survey pilot based on the constructs of self-efficacy, mindset, grit, and persistence. Additionally, I interviewed faculty and alumni over the summer months as content experts to better understand how undergraduate arts and design students make meaning of perceived failures, come to their definition of success, and engage in the processes of becoming more self-efficacious, resilient, and persistent.

Recruitment. Participants were recruited by email with a cover letter explaining that their participation was voluntary as well as explaining the confidentiality process. The students sampled for this cycle of the study were selected from the HDA 494 course in which the students experienced the six modules from the initial pilot design as well as counterparts in student leadership positions and on-campus students that did not experience the course. Faculty and alumni were sampled purposively at first and then by asking for recommendations for faculty in areas in which I do not have strong connections. For alumni, I asked the alumni specialty group from HIDA for recommendations for local alumni from across academic disciplines. All participants digitally consented to participation in a form integrated into the survey.

Procedures. After the recruitment stage, student participants were sent a link to an online survey. Given the timeline near the end of the academic year and during the summer months, students were not asked at this time if they would like to participate in future cycles of the study or submit creative work. For faculty and alumni interviews for this cycle, I contacted them after the recruitment email to schedule an in-person interview, lasting approximately 30-60 minutes. Interviews were recorded, saved with a unique signifier only known to the researcher and participant, transcribed, and coded for themes.

Instruments

For cycle two, I used the second iteration of the quantitative survey as well as conducted qualitative interviews with students, faculty, and alumni. The quantitative survey looks at the components of self-efficacy, mindset, grit, and persistence. In order to better understand the experiences and perspective of participants, I utilized semi-structured interviews related to the themes of the survey. The qualitative interview protocol considers

mindset especially natural talent versus work, how participants work through perceived barriers or setbacks in order to develop persistence, how they as well as other important stakeholders in their life define success, and how they have moved through perceived failures.

Quantitative questionnaire pilot two. After the cycle one pilot of the questionnaire, I decided to move forward with modified constructs for the second pilot survey, looking at self-efficacy, mindset, grit, and persistence due to the availability of validated tools geared more toward pre- and post- test scenarios. For these purposes, I used the General Self Efficacy Scale (GSE), Mindset Scale, the 12-Item Grit Scale, and an adapted version of a persistence scale. The General Self Efficacy Scale (GSE) (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995) is a 10-item scale developed to assess how individuals believe in their ability to respond to difficult situations or perceived barriers. Originally developed in Germany yet designed to be utilized cross-culturally, the scale has been translated into many languages and used to test populations with a wide age range. In terms of reliability and construct validity, the scale is generally very consistent across populations, measuring a Cronbach's Alpha (α) of 0.78 in Leganger, Kraft, and Røysamb's (2000) study looking at self-efficacy scales as used in health behavior research. Overall the α ranges for this scale from 0.75 to 0.94 across a variety of languages and research studies (Luszczynska, Scholz, & Schwarzer, 2005). The Mindset Scale is a 10-item scale adapted from Dweck's (2000; 2006) work, consisting of two factors looking at fixed mindset and growth mindset. The overall α for the mindset scale has been reported as 0.94 (Dweck, 2000). The 12-Item Grit Scale was developed by Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, and Kelly (2007) to measure perseverance and passion for long-term goals. The scale consists of twelve items looking at two factors, perseverance of effort and

consistency of interest. The overall α for grit ranges from 0.73 to 0.87 with the α for consistency of interest at 0.84 and perseverance of effort at 0.78 (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009; Strayhorn, 2013). For the Grit Scale, Duckworth (2015) notes that it was designed to consider individual differences rather than changes in behavior over time, therefore it is not designed to be utilized in a pre- and post- survey format. However, I decided to include grit as a construct in the second pilot for these purposes as there is some debate on whether grit is a skill or a trait, the former that can be learned while the latter is a personality component. Grit, in this survey, may not show change over time, but it is still an important measure in the overall consideration of how all the constructs interact. For the Persistence Scale (Davidson, Beck, & Milligan, 2009) I adapted items based on their work on an instrument that predicts student attrition. Originally a 53-item scale, Davidson et al. created an instrument that looked at 1) academic integration, 2) social integration, 3) supportive services satisfactions, 4) degree commitment, 5) institutional commitment, and 6) academic conscientiousness. I adapted items from academic integration and degree commitment components of this study, rewriting items from question prompts to statements of “I can” to align with the other survey components as well as incorporate the concept of “can” as a judgement of capability versus intention. The original survey items showed strong internal consistency within each factor, and validity of predictability was checked by administering the questionnaire to first year students and then using scores to predict if they would return to college for their second year, with a 66% success rate of prediction. In the original survey data, the overall α for all six factors was 0.75 with the α for academic integration 0.81 and degree commitment 0.70.

The chart below details the scales, associated researchers, number of items in the scale, whether the scale has been modified in any way, and the overall Cronbach's alpha (α) for the measure.

Table 4

Internal Reliability of Questionnaire Scales

| Scale | Researcher(s) | Number of Items | Modifications on Survey | Original Cronbach's Alpha (α) |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------------|--|---|
| General Self-Efficacy (GSE) | Schwarzer & Jerusalem (1995) | 10 | No | Overall $\alpha=0.75$ to 0.95 |
| Mindset Scale | Dweck (2000); Dweck (2006) | 10 | Yes – Prompts were rewritten to incorporate “can” as a judgement of capability versus intention. | Overall $\alpha=0.94$ |
| 12-Item Grit Scale | Duckworth et al. (2007); Duckworth & Quinn (2009) | 12 | No | Overall $\alpha=0.73$ to 0.87 Consistency of Interests, $\alpha=0.84$ Perseverance of Effort, $\alpha=0.78$ |
| Persistence Scale | Davidson, Beck, & Milligan (2009) | 11 | Yes – Prompts were rewritten to incorporate “can” as a judgement of capability versus intention. | Overall $\alpha= 0.75$ Academic Integration, $\alpha=0.81$ Degree Commitment, $\alpha=0.70$ |

In the second pilot phase for the questionnaire in Spring and Summer 2017, I fine-tuned the quantitative instrument on the constructs of self-efficacy, mindset, grit and persistence, performing reliability analysis by using Cronbach's Alpha for each construct as well as the overall instrument. The Likert scale for the self-efficacy items ranged from 1.) Cannot do at all, 2.) Hardly can do, 3.) Moderately can do, and 4.) Highly certain can do. The

mindset items' scale was 1.) Strongly disagree, 2.) Disagree, 3.) Mostly disagree, 4.) Mostly agree, 5.) Agree, and 6.) Strongly agree. For the grit scale, Likert items ranged from 1.) Not like me at all, 2.) Not much like me, 3.) Somewhat like me, 4.) Mostly like me, and 5.) Very much like me. To align with the self-efficacy items, the academic persistence items were modified to be "I can" statements as well as use the same Likert scale of the following: 1.) Cannot do at all, 2.) Hardly can do, 3.) Moderately can do, and 4.) Highly certain can do. The full questionnaire can be found in Appendix F.

Data analysis. Questionnaire data was analyzed using SPSS, looking at descriptive statistics, frequencies, internal consistency, reliability, and correlations when appropriate. Data from this cycle of research informed the questionnaire design for cycle 3 during Fall 2017. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 22 with the mean of around 20 years old. Of the twelve participants, three were from the School of Art, two were from the School of Arts, Media + Engineering, three were from the School of Film, Dance, and Theatre, three were from the School of Music, and one participant was from The Design School. Seven participants were from Arizona with the remaining five participants from out-of-state. In terms of gender, seven participants were female, three male, and two identified as transgender. The majority of participants for this cycle identified as white with one participant noting African American/Black and one participant identifying as Latino/Hispanic. The average for credit hours enrolled was seventeen units with a range from ten to 23 credit hours. Participants noted that they on average studied approximately 10.25 hours a week (responses ranged from 0 to 20 hours) and practiced 10.83 hours a week (response ranged from 0 to 20 hours). Of the twelve participants for this cycle, eleven lived on-campus.

Results. For this cycle, please see the below sections for the internal consistency reliability and descriptive statistics by item and variable.

Cronbach's Alpha. The Cronbach's Alpha (α) for the entire questionnaire of forty-three items was 0.91, suggesting that the items had a relatively high internal consistency. For the sub-scale of self-efficacy, the α is 0.91 over ten items. For mindset, the α over the ten items is 0.75. By removing the question "I can think there is something wrong with me if I cannot learn through studying", the α for this sub-section raises to 0.79. The twelve-item scale on grit has an α of 0.66. By removing the item "I am diligent in my pursuits" the α would raise to 0.74. For the twelve items on persistence, the α is 0.88. Removing "I can reach out to my peers for help in my program" would slightly raise the α to 0.89.

Descriptives. The following chart details the mean, median, and standard deviation for each questionnaire item. Standard deviations over 1.00 have been bolded. The smaller the standard deviation number, the narrower the distribution is amongst the score range. Overall, the scores in the below chart illustrate fairly consistent agreement on items.

Table 5

Frequencies and Descriptives for Survey Pilot Two by Item

| n=12 | | | |
|--|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| Item | Mean | Median | Std. D. |
| <i>General Self-Efficacy (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)</i> | | | |
| I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough. | 3.75 | 4.00 | 0.45 |
| If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want. | 2.91 | 3.00 | 0.51 |
| It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals. | 3.50 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events. | 3.33 | 3.00 | 0.65 |
| Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations. | 3.42 | 3.00 | 0.39 |
| I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort. | 3.83 | 4.00 | 0.39 |
| I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities. | 3.50 | 3.50 | 0.52 |
| When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions. | 3.50 | 3.50 | 0.52 |
| If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution. | 3.67 | 4.00 | 0.49 |
| I can usually handle whatever comes my way. | 3.67 | 4.00 | 0.49 |
| <i>Growth Mindset (6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | |
| I can make mistakes and struggle while knowing it's okay. | 4.5 | 5.00 | 1.17 |
| I can work until I figure it out or understand it. | 5.25 | 5.00 | 0.75 |
| I can engage in new challenges especially when I learn new things. | 5.17 | 5.00 | 0.83 |
| I can complete challenges and tasks as long as I keep working through them. | 5.00 | 5.00 | 0.83 |
| I can keep working until I find out what works best for me. | 5.17 | 5.00 | 0.83 |
| <i>Fixed Mindset (Negative Worded Items on 6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | |
| I can feel bad about myself If I don't learn something quickly. | 3.25 | 3.00 | 0.62 |
| I can learn without studying. | 3.83 | 4.00 | 1.11 |
| I can think there is something wrong with me if I cannot learn through studying. | 3.91 | 4.00 | 1.00 |
| I can feel like giving up when I am learning something hard. | 4.25 | 4.00 | 1.06 |
| I feel like giving up when I cannot do something very well right away. | 3.91 | 4.00 | 0.79 |
| <i>Grit (5-point Likert Scale from 1. Not like me at all to 5. Very much like me)</i> | | | |

| | | | |
|---|------|------|-------------|
| New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones. | 3.50 | 3.00 | 0.90 |
| I have been obsessed with an idea, project, or pastime but later lost interest in it. | 3.17 | 3.00 | 1.03 |
| I often set goals but later choose to pursue something else. | | | |
| I have difficulty maintaining my focus on a project. | 2.17 | 2.00 | 0.83 |
| My interests change over time. | 3.08 | 3.00 | 1.08 |
| Setbacks do not discourage me. | 3.58 | 3.50 | 1.08 |
| I do not give up easily. | 4.33 | 4.50 | 0.88 |
| I am a hard worker. | 4.58 | 5.00 | 0.51 |
| I finish whatever I begin. | 3.83 | 4.00 | 0.51 |
| I am diligent (industrious and hard-working in my pursuits). | 4.33 | 4.50 | 0.78 |
| I never give up. | 3.91 | 4.00 | 0.78 |
| I have overcome setbacks to conquer a challenge. | 4.42 | 4.00 | 0.51 |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <i>Academic Persistence (Academic Integration) (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)</i> | | | |
| I can see intellectual growth in myself as I progress in my degree. | 3.50 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I can reach out to my faculty members for help in my program. | 3.41 | 3.50 | 0.67 |
| I can reach out to my peers for help in my program. | 3.33 | 4.00 | 0.98 |
| I can see the connection between what I am learning and my future career possibilities. | 2.92 | 3.00 | 0.67 |
| I can advance new ideas related to degree program. | 3.17 | 3.00 | 0.71 |
| I can actively participate in discussions around my selected field. | 3.42 | 3.00 | 0.51 |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <i>Academic Persistence (Degree Commitment)(4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)</i> | | | |
| I can earn a college degree. | 3.83 | 4.00 | 0.58 |
| I can commit to the work that it will take to earn a degree in my selected field. | 3.75 | 4.00 | 0.62 |
| I can persist in pursuing my chosen field. | 3.67 | 4.00 | 0.65 |
| I can become successful in my chosen field. | 3.58 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I can know that my family is supportive of my pursuit of my chosen field. | 3.41 | 3.50 | 0.67 |
| <hr/> | | | |

In terms of entire variables, the below chart details the descriptive statistics of each construct, noting the minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation. The standard

deviations ranged from 2.38 for persistence in degree commitment to 5.11 for grit. As a low standard deviation denotes that the data points are close to the mean of the set, thus the larger standard deviation indicated that the data points are spread in a wider range of values.

Table 6

Descriptives for Survey Pilot Two by Construct

| n=12 | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Construct | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Self-Efficacy | 27.00 | 39.00 | 35.08 | 3.86 |
| Growth Mindset | 19.00 | 30.00 | 25.08 | 3.63 |
| Fixed Mindset | 16.00 | 23.00 | 19.17 | 2.41 |
| Grit | 37.00 | 56.00 | 43.50 | 5.11 |
| Persistence – Academic Integration | 14.00 | 24.00 | 19.75 | 2.93 |
| Persistence – Degree Commitment | 12.00 | 20.00 | 18.25 | 2.38 |

Discussion. Overall, the modified instrument produced reliable and valid scores for the participants in the pilot study. The reliability assessments showed a high level of inter-item agreement and the descriptive statistics gave a better view as to how this data might range in terms of the next sample. As seen in the above chart, the greatest standard deviation was for the construct of grit, but that is not surprising considering that particular construct is considered a stable personality trait, giving way to likely a large range of data that will not align or move in similar ways to the other constructs measured especially in a pre- and post-test setting. Moving forward to the dissertation cycles, I fine-tuned the demographic questions, but decided to maintain the construct items from the pilot study.

Qualitative semi-structured interviews. For the interview component of this cycle, I arranged interviews with students, faculty, and alumni from Spring 2017 to the end of August 2017. The semi-structured interview protocol for all three populations was essentially the same, asking three different populations for their experiences with mindset, defining success, and navigating perceived failures. The interview protocol was divided into three sections on 1.) mindset, 2.) barriers, challenges, and persistence, and 3.) success and failures. The following are several sample questions for the semi-structured interview:

- How do you feel about learning new things especially when they are challenging?
- How does learning new things impact talent? Can you provide an example?
- When was a time you learned something from a perceived setback or challenge?
- How do you personally define success?
- Can you give me an example of a time that you perceived that you had failed?
- If you could give your future-self advice on failure, what would you say?

For the full protocol, please see Appendix D.

Participants. For the second cycle of research, I interviewed ten participants: four alumni, three faculty members, and three upper-division students who had gone through the initial course design modules from Fall 2016. Participants were recruited via email (Appendix A) and then the interviews were scheduled based on their availability to take place in their choice of location. Participants also selected their own pseudonyms for ease of member-checking when they were asked to read transcripts, found poems, and other study components. The interview protocol was the same for each category of participant, the only change to ask alumni about their past experiences as a student and to inquire with faculty as

to how their students approach issues of self-efficacy, mindset, persistence, and navigating failure. The table below details the cycle two interview participants.

Table 7

Cycle Two Participant Overview

n=10

| Name | Category | School | Major | Gender | Ethnicity | Age |
|------------|----------------|--------|-------------------|--------|-----------|-----|
| CJ | Alumni | Art | Ceramics | Male | White | 30s |
| Courtney | Alumni | AME | Digital Culture | Female | White | 20s |
| Molly | Alumni | Music | Film and Music | Female | Latina | 20s |
| Dolores | Alumni | Art | Painting | Female | Latina | 40s |
| Beatrice | Alumni/Faculty | Design | Graphic Design | Female | White | 30s |
| Juniper | Faculty | Design | Graphic Design | Female | White | 40s |
| Ollie | Faculty | AME | Digital Culture | Female | Native | 20s |
| Winne | Student | Art | Photography | Female | White | 20s |
| Brittany | Student | Music | Music Performance | Female | White | 20s |
| Anna Marie | Student | AME | Digital Culture | Female | White | 20s |

Data analysis. Interview data was recorded, transcribed, and coded by poetry as well as looking at emergent themes to better inform understanding of content areas and differing perspectives on this problem of practice. Found poems were used as a way to annotate longer interview transcripts as well as condense a participant’s ideas into a few pages. Each poem was arranged chronologically, and the words were not changed from the transcripts. Any creative repetition or re-ordering was notated in bold. Each poem was sent to the participants after creation along with their entire interview transcript to be member-checked to ensure the poem aligned with their overall thoughts. The appendix of found poems can be located in Appendix H.

Results. Three themes emerged from the initial interview transcripts: participants’ reflective degree choice process and its impact on their academic field, how participants viewed themselves as continuous learners, and differing value perceptions as related to their

field and familial expectations of success. Participants also discussed the importance of failure, how it played a role in their lives, and how their definition of failure has changed over time.

Theme 1: Reflection as a tool for creative degree choice and career path. A consistent theme across participants was the degree choice process and their reflective decision to commit to a program in design and the arts, a process that sometimes came with significant internal struggle. With these particular participants, alumni and faculty spent more time prior to their creative degree choice looking for fit while current undergraduate students appear to be much more mid-process in terms of reflection, looking at how they can bridge disciplines and careers rather than stay in their degree-specific field. In the alumni populations, participants talked at length on the process of declaring a major, the struggle to mind their academic sense of belonging, and their subsequent changed degree choice. Beatrice, an alumna of the graphic design program with a master's degree in a design field, began her studies looking to study veterinary medicine and English.

Initially, I went to school for pre-veterinary medicine. I had this entire plan worked out. "Alright, I'm going to go to college. I'm going to be a vet. And, then I will work in rural South Carolina." Then, I was going to be an English major. I took this class, humanities, English, writing, and a computer credit all in one. We read books, watched movies, wrote papers, and learned how to post them on the internet... In the days of animated gifs, so mine had stars and aliens, and it was really, really bad. Then I started taking classes on html, desktop publishing. I changed to graphic design. It just had never occurred to me that it could be a profession. Or, that I could have an outlet in that way, as a creative person (Beatrice, personal communication).

CJ, an alumnus from art with undergraduate degrees in ceramics and photography and a master's degree in museum studies, started his journey as a pre-medical student, switching to a creative field after reflection on the competitive culture of medical students.

I started off as pre-med, all intention of becoming a doctor. It turns out being a doctor is really hard, and I got really disheartened primarily based on the culture, everyone wanted to be on top of the curve. I then realized you could actually do a degree in the arts. I had no idea. I was interested in combining two disciplines, saw it as a challenge (CJ, personal communication).

A painter for most of her life, Dolores first pursued degrees in linguistics and German as a student in Mexico before completing her third degree in painting. She adds that, “I feel that if you only have one life to live, and you don’t explore that passion, it’s like a waste of a palette” (Dolores, personal communication). Meanwhile, Juniper, a current faculty member in design spoke about her conflict selecting art or design, feeling like she had to choose between the two fields as she progressed through the fields. Now with multiple master’s degrees in art and as a member in the field of design, she spoke about the power of reflection as a tool to figure out how to make meaning of degree and career progression. In the following quote, Juniper discusses her struggle to find meaning and her place within her graduate studies:

I knew I wanted to be a maker from the time I was seven years old. I always just did art. I wanted to work at an art museum, that was what I was going to do. And, I did. I went straight to grad school after, probably a mistake, where I ended up floundering because I was young and didn’t understand the difference. I felt like I was going on a path of what you’re supposed to do instead of really being able to reflect on what was really right for me (Juniper, personal communication).

Juniper adds that her students continue to struggle in their academic programs, viewing education as black and white while learning to work through the ideas that creative disciplines generally do not fit in this paradigm.

Many of them are conditioned to see education as black and white. And, creative disciplines are not black and white, so they get really confused and flustered when there’s no wrong answer and there are many right answers. The culture of test-taking and authority doesn’t set them up to function independently. As a learner, and without a foundation to trust themselves and their own ideas, they have only been taught to regurgitate someone else’s ideas (Juniper, personal communication).

Current undergraduate students such as Winnie, a senior photography major, and Brittany, a senior trombone performance major, ruminated much more on how they ended up in their academic programs through previous experiences while also using reflection in their current programs to consider their next career directions. The majority of undergraduate students for this study see their career path post-graduation as more than just their academic training, pulling ideas and information from a variety of experience to create their own individual pathway. Brittany, a music performance major, had studied music privately for most of her life, but has found a new direction through her music performance program and has recently begun to consider where she fits post-degree program. Brittany notes that she has been actively struggling with determining her path, yet she understands roadblocks at this point “are just myself, going in weird directions and turning around in circles, not being focused on an actual path or going straight down it anymore” (Brittany, personal communication).

That’s something I’ve been thinking a lot about lately. Especially, musicians, we don’t consider ourselves artists. Or, no one tells you that you’re an artist. There are a lot of things I didn’t think I could do, make posters, talk to artists, understand where they are coming from, work at an art museum. Just doing those things are kind of little signs along the way, “I am an artist, too – I can do these things” (Brittany, personal communication).

Molly, a recent alumna with degrees in film and music, echoes Brittany’s thoughts on the limitations of certain creative fields, noting “I was the only dual major...And, it was even difficult to get allowed to do a dual major. It felt a bit that I would be ostracized” (personal communication). Molly also added that in moving forward in her career at this point, she is figuring out how to balance all her creative facets in a practical manner.

We all have this ideal for the paths of our career, what we would like to achieve. It’s a very narrow window, and it puts a little bit of pressure which is something I never had to do in the past. “I’m gonna do everything; I’m a renaissance woman.” Which is great, but you can’t make a career out of everything (Molly, personal communication).

Theme 2: Learning as a life-long journey. Participants, no matter their degree program or status, all talked about learning as a continuous process as well as an important component of creative work in some aspect. Beatrice, the design alumna, mentioned that “I love to learn, a life-long learner, really excited about learning new stuff” as well as noting that after years of reflection she has come to believe that you really “have to be creating for yourself in order to fill your creative cup” (personal communication). Molly, the film and music alumna, notes that she “doesn’t think you should ever just get somewhere and say, ‘I’m done -- This is it’ as she sees “learning, doing new things” as integral to her creative life (personal communication). CJ, the art alumnus in photography and painting, viewed art training as “the complete rejection of a rigid process,” allowing him to turn mistakes into successes and informing all his next steps (personal communication). Courtney, an alumna from digital culture and an experimental musician, notes that her approach is all about learning reiteratively while also being flexible and documenting your path. Courtney suggests in terms of her own learning process that “it’s important to be as flexible as you can but also know your own limits, and that a win for someone else is not a fail for you,” suggesting documentation of each step of your process to figure out in the end what worked, what did not work, and how to experiment again. Dolores, the linguistics major turned arts entrepreneur with a background in painting, is driven by her principles and values to work as hard as she can and to learn more to provide for her family.

I almost touched bottom when I had to leave my house, living with an abusive person and feared for my life. I had to get out of that situation with three children And, ended up with nothing. I had lost it all. All I had was two hundred dollars in my pocket and I had to take care of everything from immigration documents to get a driver’s license. I didn’t know how to drive at the time. So, I had to do it all, all over again. I went through the challenges and the processes, creating a new life. I realized that you don’t really lose anything. You just get an opportunity to create it all again. And, once you learn that, nobody can take it away (Dolores, personal communication).

After reinventing her life, she pursued her degree in painting and focused on learning everything to become an independent business owner, learning new skills and perspectives along the way. Juniper, the design faculty member, relates learning to talent and practice, essentially fixed and growth mindset, noting that learning relates these two things and inevitably comes down to spending time on something you enjoy doing. “Talent and desire are really related, but it’s also about practice, about enjoyment. You are not going to spend time doing something you do not enjoy” (Juniper, personal communication). Molly, film and music alumna, talks about her learning approach as just “saying ‘yes’ to a lot of things,” taking opportunities in unlikely places and fields to help her grow as an actress, filmmaker, and musician. She also offers advice to first year students, noting “I would say to freshman, it's all going to change, and take experiences as they come. Embrace them. And, practice. But, don’t practice *too* much. Keep a balance in life” (Molly, personal communication).

On the current student side, Winnie and Brittany related learning to a reiterative process more related to their upcoming goals and own expectation for performance. Brittany can sometimes be frustrated by learning new things due to her own high expectations. Brittany notes that “learning new things, it’s really frustrating. I want to be as the same level, not going back and relearning. It really depends on the expectations I’m setting for myself and the goals I have in mind for whatever the new thing is” (personal communication). Winnie echoes this sentiment, noting that “it’s always daunting to learn new things as you only see how challenging it is. You don’t see the actual thing itself. But, then love of learning kicks in, and I just eat that up. The challenges drop away” (personal communication).

Theme 3: Differing perceptions of success. All participants noted that in terms of success, they personally had different definitions and expectations concerning success than

their overall creative field and their family. Most viewed their own field's definition of success as fairly limited and narrowly defined. In terms of the field of music, Molly and Brittany have both struggled with going a different route than that of a performer. Molly notes the following:

Other creatives on the front of my field [of music], agree that success is very narrowly defined. But, some people have a hard time changing the definition of what it should be, usually tie it to a personal sense of fulfillment. But if they are being honest with themselves, they will use success as a marker for social status. "Look at my successes" rather than "I made this goal" (personal communication).

In terms of important people in their lives, most of their families defined success as financial stability versus the participants' focus on creative fulfillment. Courtney noted that she "decided I was a success when I got dental insurance because I was officially more adult than my parents," but even as she and her parents consider her a success at this point in her life, she has come into conflict with her partner's family focus on monetary gains.

To my parents always, I am a shocking success. But, my partner, his family is all wealthy. So, every time that you sort of show up with new weird ideas or when I'm showing them my art or my work, or telling them about the things I'm doing there's always this like, "Well, how are you going to make money off that?" Money doesn't actually equal happiness. I mean, security does. To the people who are really important to me, success is more about consistently being happy enough, to definitely have more blessings than trials (Courtney, personal communication).

Ollie's experiences are somewhat similar to Courtney's in that her family "defines success as money and material things, being able to pay your bills" while she focuses more on happiness and her ability to give back. Winnie, the senior photographer, adds that by the end of her academic program, she knows who she is as a person and that the journey rather than the result is more meaningful for her.

It's kind of cheesy, but I know who I am. I know that I'm going to succeed in something. It's not about who you are at the end of your life, it's what you've done in between, and that just says everything about anything. When you're doing art, yes,

the final product means something, but how you got there, and the challenges you overcome, and the thought process you have, it's so much more meaningful.

Theme 4: The importance of failure in the creative process. Participants overall do not particularly enjoy experiencing a perceived failure, but they view it as a way to improve or reframe their process in order to move forward and build resilience. The following chart details each participant's response to defining failure in their context.

Table 8

Definitions of Failure by Participant, Cycle Two

| Name | Failure Definition |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| CJ Alumnus Art | Failure is a little bit based on perspective and what I'm trying to accomplish. On a baseline level, attempting something and it not working. If you try at a relationship, a program, if you try getting to work on time, it's successful if you accomplish it, and you are rewarded... Now, I approach failure like it's the end of the world. It's like being able to see the reverberations of failure, mistakes coming with repercussions. In school and art making, there not a whole lot of mistakes that are the downfall of your career, your relationships. It's much more difficult to pick yourself back up after a failure. Failure in art is an experiment. Failure in life can be shattering. |
| Courtney Alumna AME | Failure feels like such a negative, but not being able to do things or not being great at something doesn't automatically mean you suck as a person. I fail at stuff all the time. Failure is more just like a swing and a miss. Just one fact of life. |
| Molly Alumna Film and Music | [Failure] definitely makes you more resilient which is really important in the arts. The way you are going to redefine success is also true with failure. Because maybe not getting the position you wanted or getting published or what have you, can be seen as failure. But, there are so many different ways you can fail or succeed. They're almost interchangeable sometimes. |
| Dolores Alumna Art | It's not easy. A lot of painful and harsh experiences. The hardest rules to follow are the rules of limitation. When people tell me no, you can't do this, you can't do that, there are certain implicit rules that put blockages I just don't understand. Everybody can succeed if they put their mind to it. But, people produce enough thoughts on failure, their fears get in the way. It's like that little voice inside your head. They have to let go of that. You have to understand you are living your life as your own. |
| Beatrice Alumna Design | A lot of my choices in life have been driven by feeling like I'm not good enough. I would do things and tackle things because somebody said I couldn't do it. Or, I thought I couldn't do it. I got very ornery about it, "I'll show you." I was so insecure in my own way of trying to figure out how to be like people I admired. "Wow, they're good. They're doing well. What could I be doing better? Am I trying hard enough?" Or, I'd take it personally. It's just a core rule, you're just not good enough. That's just kind of how I operated for a long time. Now I realize those are just talents that other people have, it doesn't mean other people cannot build those. As I near forty, I've done a deep dive into who I am, what makes me tick, what matters to me, talking to counselors. I fully believe sometimes you just don't have the tool in your kit, and you need to go to the store and get the tool. |
| Juniper Faculty Design | I think a lot of people see failure as this end point, over, the end, everything is done. But, to me, I think failure is an indication of a pivot point. There are moments where I really struggled, it didn't work, I tried different things, I backtracked and started over. I had conversations about why we were going this way. I banged my head against the wall, trying new things every week. This is the hand you are dealt, and you get to it the best you can. But, it's an opportunity to see how I can change my approach, see these strategies that I've always used, suddenly not work anymore. To me, failure is a moment, but it isn't the end of the story. |
| Ollie Faculty AME | If you are nervous because you don't feel like you have the knowledge, who cares? If you have questions, ask them. Do it. Awful things will always happen. Things will always pop up, but they will always get better. You will get it done despite setbacks. Don't let it upset you. You'll get there. A combination of using your talent to your advantage, your knowledge to your advantage, accepting it. You'll get better. |
| Winnie Student Art | Failure, it's not usually ever about what other people want of you. I always set myself up higher. For some people, my failure might be success, but to me it's just when you don't meet your own expectations. |
| Brittany Student Music | Fear can hinder your creativity. If you're afraid to fail, you aren't going to take risks. And, in a bad situation, sometimes the best art comes out of that place. My best art is when I'm collaborating with other people, doing it for myself. I just loved hearing everyone's stories and what they are passionate about. You discover things along the way. |

Discussion. My take-aways from the interviews are the importance of utilizing reflection as a way to help students commit to their creative degree programs as well as begin their journey into their future careers, instilling the importance of life-long learning in the future curriculum design, giving students the tools by which to pilot through different perceptions of success, and holding space for students to reflect on how perceived failures can become new ways by which to learn and improve their creative process.

Practicing reflection for academic persistence and degree commitment.

Within the intervention course, I want to utilize reflective practice as a way to explore why and how students came to their creative degree program as well as how they currently make meaning of their creative pursuits.

Instilling the importance of life-long learning and curiosity. Given the importance of continuous learning for creatives, I want to move forward in a way that will allow students of the course to practice their curiosity and explore concepts while also providing a structure by which to synthesize content from a variety of contexts and areas.

Developing tools to pilot through differing views of success. For the intervention course, I want to have students explore their own definitions of success while considering external attitudes and subjective norms around success in their chosen fields. For course assignments, the supporting theory of planned behavior would therefore work to deconstruct student's attitudes, norms, and perceived control to over time influence their creative intentions and future behaviors.

Learning to navigate perceived failures to learn. Participants saw the value of failure from the safety of hindsight, so I want to incorporate mindfulness and reflective tools into the intervention course to aid students in experiencing their current state as well as aiding in their reflection processes to make meaning out of past failures. By considering the

past, present, and future within the course, I hope students will be able to construct knowledge around how they approach risk, fear, and failure as well as develop the skills they will need to gracefully and meaningfully navigate challenges in the future.

Cycle 2.5: Intervention Course Final Design

Failure course curriculum design process. The concluding component of this research cycle was revisiting the initial six modules from the previous cycle to then co-create and design an eight-week course during Session A of Fall 2018. Heywood and I met to discuss course structure, topic areas, assignments, and assessment tools. The course schedule and outline can be seen in the below table.

Table 9
Failure, Design and the Arts Course Schedule by Week

| Date | Content Areas | Assigned | Due |
|----------------|--|---|---|
| Class 1 | Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness Introduction • Intent of class and relation to creative process/design thinking • Setting class ground-rules • Dialogue on “What is failure to you?” • Triangle/Square/Circle | Pre-Test on Self-Efficacy, Mindset, Grit, and Persistence Narrative on Failure Inner Voice of Judgement | |
| Class 2 | Inner Voice of Judgement and the Creative Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness • Voice of Judgement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Visual and narrative • Metaphor for Creative Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Visual representation • Triangle/Square/Circle | VIA Characters Strengths Cloud of Strengths and Talents Creative Metaphor | Narrative on Failure Inner Voice of Judgement Due |
| Class 3 | Values, Strengths, Talents, and Purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness and Drawing • Overview of Strengths • Eight Intelligences • Values and Purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ What are your values? ◦ What is your purpose? • Triangle/Square/Circle | Creative Metaphor Cloud of Values | Cloud of Strengths and Talents |
| Class 4 | Defining Success and Creating Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness • What’s your 50,000 foot view? • And, how are you going to get there? • Triangle/Square/Circle | Cloud of Goals | Cloud of Values |
| Class 5 | Failure, Feedback, and Critique <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement and Mindfulness • How do you get unstuck? • Feedback, Critique, and Finding a Critical Friend • Triangle/Square/Circle | Inner Voice of Persistence | Combined Cloud – Strengths, Talents, Goals, and Values |
| Class 6 | Vulnerability and Fear <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness • The Power of Vulnerability • Inner Voice of Persistence • Toolkits for the Journey • Triangle/Square/Circle | Toolkits for the Journey | Inner Voice of Persistence |
| Class 7 | Developing Resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness • Resiliency • Triangle/Square/Circle | Post-Test Failure Narrative Rewritten | |
| Class 8 | Continuing the Journey in Persistence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness through Movement • Combining Your Tools to Move Forward • Questions to Live | | Post-Test Toolkit for the Journey Failure Narrative Rewritten |

Course assignment overview. In an effort to further explain the course components, I have described the course assignments in the following sections.

Narrative on failure. For this assignment, students were asked to write a creative non-fiction or fictional narrative on a time they had perceived they had failed.

Inner voice of judgement (VOJ). This assignment asked students to contemplate their default narrative network/Inner Voice of Judgement (VOJ) that arises during moments of negative self-talk. Student were asked to create a project in the medium of their choice to personify their inner voice of judgement, giving it a name, describing how it talks to them and what language it uses, where it lives, and how it feels.

Metaphor for creative process. For this assignment, students were asked to consider a metaphor for their particular creative process and then create a project in the medium of their choice to explain how they approach the process of creation.

Clouds of strengths, talents, values, goals, and combined cloud. Students were asked to take the VIA Character Strengths Quiz via the University of Pennsylvania Authentic Happiness website. Then they were asked to create, in the medium of their choice, a cloud that encompassed their strengths and talents. After going over values and goals in class, students were then asked to follow the same process to create a cloud of their values and goals. At the end of the cycles of creation, they were then asked to synthesize their personal clouds around their strengths, talents, beliefs, goals, and values into a creative project.

Inner voice of persistence (VOP). While considering their combined clouds of personal traits and goals, students were asked to design a counterpoint to their Inner Voice of Judgement project, creating an Inner Voice of Persistence to aid in their interruption and reframing of the negative self-talk aspect. Students were asked to fulfill all the same

components of the project, giving their VOP a name, noting how it talks to them and what it says, where it lives, and how it feels. Students were then asked to put both VOJ and VOP projects in a space they commonly use for creative projects in order to better recognize the VOJ and to utilize the VOP as a method to interrupt and disrupt negative self-talk.

Toolkit for the journey. After a class discussion on risk and feelings of uncertainty when working in a medium they do not control, students noted the mediums in which they felt the least comfortable or outside their usual use. For the Toolkit for the Journey, students were then challenged to synthesize their understanding of the course into a new creative project in a medium outside of their regular usage, reflecting on what they have learned and the tools they have to move forward to resilience.

Narrative on failure rewritten. Students were asked to review their initial narrative on failure and rewrite their story. This assignment was left very open ended to allow students different options of analysis, reflection, editing, or the option to add new chapters to their beginning narrative.

Mindfulness exercises. Each class period began with an instructor-led ten-minute mindfulness exercise. In an effort to diversify the mindfulness activities as well as explore different methods to practice mindfulness, we asked students to do breathing meditation, practice mindfulness through intentional movement, draw/doodle as an action of mindfulness, practice mantras, and finally participate in a movement mindfulness exercise with a choreographer and dancer. Mindfulness activities were voluntary, and students were given the option to remain outside during the activities.

After designing the eight-week course along with Dr. Heywood, the next cycle leads to the dissertation study cycles during the fall of 2018.

Dissertation Cycle: Intervention Course Data Collection and Analysis

Setting and context. The overall context and setting for this study is the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts (HIDA) at Arizona State University (ASU). HIDA is the largest interdisciplinary arts and design institute of higher education in the country with 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Given the size of HIDA, there are 700 faculty members as well as 150 staff members across the institute. There are approximately 138 distinct degree programs and minors encompassing the visual arts, performing arts, arts and technology, and design disciplines. This study specifically considers how arts and design undergraduate students make meaning through reflection on their perceived failures and definitions of success as well as look at how their self-efficacy, mindset, resiliency, and persistence change through an experience in a course centered on these constructs. The specific context for this intervention is a one-unit course, HDA 394: Failure, Design, and the Arts, offered during the eight week A Session of Fall 2017. This course was coded as a junior level elective without prerequisites and was capped at 22 students. This course was offered to all HIDA students, making it one of the few interdisciplinary courses currently offered in the catalogue that bridges each individual academic unit.

Participants. The participants for this study are undergraduate students in the arts and design majors within the institute who have elected to take the HDA 394 course, approximately nineteen students in total from across disciplines and academic units. Sampling method for these populations will be addressed more fully in the following section. The course was seated for a total of 22 students and at the end of the add/drop period there were a total of nineteen students enrolled in the course. One student added the course after the initial week, resulting in a total of eighteen for the pre- test component of the study. In

terms of academic schools represented in the cross-disciplinary course, 29% were Design School students, 23% were from the School of Film, Dance, and Theatre, 18% represented the School of Music, 12% were from the School of Art, 12% were from Cross-Institute programs, and 6% were from the School of Arts, Media and Engineering. Looking at gender, 68% of the course participants were female, 21% male, and 11% were non-binary or transgender. Even though the course was placed at a 300 level, the majority of students were seniors with 58% of the class being at senior level with 32% as sophomores and only 10% at the junior level. For ethnicity, 61% of the course participants were white, 22% were LatinX, 11% had multiple backgrounds, and 6% were black/African American.

Sampling. Sampling encompasses the way by which individuals are selected from the whole of a population. As this study comprises both quantitative and qualitative approaches, sampling method as part of the research design illustrates an important step in the process. The quantitative questionnaire sample design will incorporate purposive sampling from the intervention course. For the qualitative sections of the study, sampling decisions will be much more geared toward substantive information. Therefore, I utilized purposive sampling for interviews and arts-based projects to add dimension and understanding to the quantitative responses. For this study, I am interested in maximal variation and intensity in the qualitative samples as I wish to disclose the range and variation within student experiences (Flick, 2014).

Table 10

Sampling Design

| Approach | Population | Sampling | Target | Actual |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Quantitative Questionnaire 1 | Intervention Course Students | Purposive Sampling | 15 | 18 |
| Qualitative Interviews | Intervention Course Students | Purposive Sampling | 10 | 9 |
| Arts-Based Projects | Intervention Course Students | Purposive Sampling | 16 | 18 |
| Quantitative Questionnaire 2 | Intervention Course Students | Purposive Sampling | 15 | 11 |

Intervention Course Overview.

Cycle one: Theory-to-practice and arts-based projects. For cycle one, Heywood and I collaboratively designed six course modules around the concepts of competencies and skills, belief systems, value decisions, inspiration and spark, resiliency and persistence, design thinking and risk, and critique. Students were asked to complete several arts-based projects, such as personifying their inner voice of judgement, writing poetry in response to the course content, and creating projects around their values, goals, and strengths.

Cycle two: Course proposal and design. For cycle two, Heywood and I proposed a course to the leadership team of HIDA and were approved to develop a Fall 2017 A Session one-unit course called HDA 394: Failure, Design, and the Arts. The course is coded as a special-topics, junior-level course, and was seated for 22 students from across all HIDA disciplines. Heywood and I worked over Summer 2017 to fine-tune and develop the eight-

week course for the fall, incorporating previous module content as well as developing the arts-based projects and overall course progression.

Cycle Three: Implementation of course and assessment. For the dissertation research cycles, Heywood and I co-instructed the HDA 394 course during the first eight weeks of the Fall 2017 semester. Students of the course were recruited and given the opportunity to participate in the research study after the first class session, sent the recruitment letter that outlines that participation is voluntary, that they can say no to involvement in the study at any time, and that there will be no negative affects given their level of participation. For the first week of the course, students who elected to participate in the study were asked to complete the pre- questionnaire that looks at the constructs of self-efficacy, mindset, grit, and persistence. At the end of the eight weeks, students were then given the chance to complete the post- questionnaire, the same exact survey, to determine whether the intervention course had any impact on their self-efficacy, mindset, grit, or persistence. Students were then asked after the conclusion of the course if they would like to participate in a qualitative interview around these same constructs as well as given an opportunity to submit creative work from both the course and their own portfolio around the concepts of persistence, grit, resiliency, failure, and their definition of success. Students were given the choice as to whether they would like their names credited to their work for the research study or if they would like to remain anonymous.

Research questions. Given that research methodology design needs to align to the objectives of the study, the chart on the following page illustrates how each research question corresponds to the method employed to answer that particular question (Leavy, 2015; Creswell, 2007; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). Given the adaptive aspect of action

research, I have included a chart below that details the research questions for the dissertation cycles with information on the data collection instrument, a description of their measure, and a very brief justification.

Table 11

Dissertation Cycles Research Questions, Data Collection Tools, and Justifications

| Research Question | Data Collection Instrument | Description | Justification |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| RQ1: To what extent do undergraduate students in design and the arts become more <i>efficacious</i>? | Quantitative Questionnaire | Questions on construct of self-efficacy (online survey) | Measure self-efficacy pre- and post- semester |
| Sub-RQ1: How do students make meaning through reflecting on their <i>self-efficacy</i>? | Qualitative Interviews | Questions on self-efficacy experiences, behaviors, and perceptions | Individual meaning-making through discussion and reflection |
| RQ2: To what extent do undergraduate students in design and the arts fall on the <i>fixed/growth mindset</i> continuum? | Quantitative Questionnaire | Questions on constructs of growth and fixed mindset (online survey) | Measure mindset pre- and post-semester |
| Sub-RQ2: How do students make meaning through reflecting on their <i>mindset</i>? | Qualitative Interviews | Questions on mindset experiences, behaviors, and perceptions | Individual meaning-making through discussion and reflection |
| RQ3: To what extent are undergraduate students in design and the arts <i>gritty</i>? | Quantitative Questionnaire | Questions on construct of grit | Measure grit pre- and post-semester |
| RQ4: How do undergraduate students in design and the arts negotiate <i>perceived failures</i>? | Qualitative Interviews | Questions on perceived past failures and navigation of future barriers | Individual meaning-making through discussion and reflection |
| RQ5/RQ6: How do undergraduate students in the design and the arts make meaning out of their <i>definition of success? Definition of failure</i>? | Qualitative Interviews | Questions on how they define and re-calculate success over time | Individual meaning-making through discussion and reflection |

Procedures. Students within the intervention course were informed of the study during the first course period and then supplied with the recruitment script and consent form for their consideration. They were informed their participation was completely voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time for any reason. For those that elected to take part in the study, nineteen of nineteen students, they were then sent the online survey link to participate in the pre- test questionnaire which included the same consent language and a confirmation of consent to participate in the online questionnaire. At the end of the eight-week course, students were sent the post- test questionnaire again with consent and confirmation language. After the conclusion of the semester, students were then contacted to inquire whether they would like to participate in the qualitative interview and/or submit a piece of creative work around the constructs of failure, grit, resiliency, persistence, or individual definitions of success. For the qualitative interviews, students were again supplied the recruitment and consent form as well as asked about their comfort level in sharing creative pieces from the course through the creative work consent process. Given that the study is using creative work that they may later want to use for their own purposes, students who consented to include their creative materials were then given the option to pick a pseudonym or retain their name to ensure future usage of their own materials in places outside of this study.

Quantitative data: Pre- and post- test survey. For Fall 2017, I distributed the survey to all the students who elected to participate in the study in the HDA 394 course during the first week of the academic year. At the end of the semester, those who elected to take the survey were contacted again to participate in the post- questionnaire in order to look

at any possible changes. The consent letter for the research cycles makes it clear that participation is voluntary.

Qualitative Data: Semi-structured interviews. Following the post- quantitative questionnaire and after the course concluded, I conducted nine semi-structured interviews with students recruited from the intervention course. Given the course was seated for the relatively small number of 22 students, I extended the opportunity to all students within the course with the expectation that approximately ten students would be interested in participating in an interview. In total, fourteen participants were interested in participating in interviews, but due to scheduling conflicts I was only able to conduct nine interviews in total. Interview transcripts, audio recordings, and descriptive notes from the interviews were compiled and reviewed. The interview protocol focused on the constructs of growth/fixed mindset, persistence, and how individuals navigate failure as well as define success. For the full interview protocol for participants after the intervention course, please see Appendix G.

Table 12

Dissertation Cycle Interviews Participant Overview

| n = 9 | | | | | | |
|-----------|--------|----------------|-----------|--------|-----------|-----|
| Name | School | Major | Year | Gender | Ethnicity | Age |
| Josephine | Art | Intermedia | Sophomore | Female | Latina | 20 |
| Cassie | Design | Architecture | Senior | Female | White | 21 |
| Claire | Design | Architecture | Senior | Female | White | 22 |
| Christina | Design | Architecture | Junior | Female | White | 20 |
| Dani | Design | Design Studies | Senior | Female | White | 22 |
| Jordan | Design | Envir. Design | Senior | Female | White | 23 |
| Molly | FDT | Theatre | Sophomore | Female | White | 19 |
| Shaynea | FDT | Film | Sophomore | Female | Black | 19 |
| Lauren | Music | Violin | Sophomore | Female | White | 21 |

Qualitative data: Arts-based creative projects. Students were given several arts-based projects during the course of the semester within their curriculum, and later asked if they would like to submit their work to the investigator of the research study for analysis. Additionally, students were given the opportunity to submit other creative works through the survey solicitation letter and process. For these projects, students were given the choice as to submit work anonymously or with their name publicly credited. Creative pieces were photographed and archived depending on the student's wish to be credited with their name or, should they want to remain uncredited, with the same convention they used for the survey. Artistic pieces were all digital in nature, so it was not necessary to coordinate any return of physical projects. For the purposes of this study, I elected to use only a portion of a student's consented creative work, pulling their Inner Voice of Judgement and Inner Voice of Persistence projects from the course curriculum. After arranging the two pieces together in a figure, I then sent the creative work to the students along with their initial narrative to fact-check with them for clarity and understanding as well as member-check for trustworthiness.

Instruments.

Pre- and post- questionnaire. The online questionnaire was comprised of 10 items on self-efficacy, 10-items on mindset, 12-items on grit, 11-items on academic persistence, and 16-items on demographics. The self-efficacy items were adapted from Schwarzer and Jerusalem's (1995) work on developing a generalized self-efficacy scale. The mindset items, five devoted to fixed mindset and five to growth mindset, were adapted from Dweck's (2006; 2012) mindset scale. The grit items were from Duckworth's 12-item Grit Scale (2015). The academic persistence items were adapted from Davidson, Beck, and Milligan's (2009)

work on the development and validation of an instrument that predicts student persistence and attrition, again adapted to “I can” statements to align with previous constructs and measure an individual’s judgement of capability. For the full questionnaire design, please see Appendix F. For more information on the scales as well as reliability, please see pages 62-65.

Interviews. Semi-structured interviews took place during the Fall 2017 and beginning of Spring 2018 semester. The interview protocol (see Appendix G) covered mindset, persistence, definitions of success, and how students define and navigate failure. Mirroring Cycle Two, the following are selected questions from the interview protocol:

- How do you feel about learning new things especially when they are challenging?
- How does learning new things impact talent? Can you provide an example?
- What do you consider barriers or roadblocks to success?
- How would you describe your state of mind after experiencing a challenge?
- How do you personally define success?
- How do you define failure? Has this changed?
- Can you give me an example of a time that you perceived that you had failed?
Did you learn from this experience?
- If you could give your future self advice on failure, what would you say?

Data Analysis.

Quantitative data analysis plan. Quantitative data was collected in two phases, after the first questionnaire in the first week of the Fall 2017 semester and again at the end of the academic term. Data was analyzed after each survey concluded and again at the end of the study timeline to compare answers. All data was entered into SPSS and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. I ran paired variable t-tests to determine if the two data sets were significantly different from one another. Additionally, I ran correlations between

the variables in order to understand how the degree by which the variables relate. Given the small sample size, I decided to not include regressions or other statistical analysis.

Qualitative data analysis through poetry. The interviews were initially reviewed for concepts, and then subsequent coding processes gathered these constructs into larger code categories. Quotes and statements were then fact checked with participants after establishing themes to ensure that their meanings had not been misinterpreted. I then utilized poetic transcription to analyze the interview data, developing code categories inductively out of the data (Leavy, 2015). In order to utilize poetic transcription, I first studied the interview transcripts, identified themes and recurring language, and then drew lines, phrases, or words out of the transcript to form poetry (Leavy, 2015). Given the creative context of the course, I decided to utilize poetry as method for data analysis as it can represent interview transcripts in a condensed yet creative format, inform the role of the researcher, and fully engage the participants in the “third voice” that develops from the conversation and interpretation process (Glesne, 1997; Leavy, 2015). Further, by utilizing poetry as method in my design, I hoped to make the data analysis process accessible to diverse audiences as well as to elicit empathetic responses to how students make meaning of their perceived failures and steps toward the future.

Qualitative data arts-based project analysis. For arts-based research to be useful or relevant, the produced works must be both trustworthy and authentic (Leavy, 2015). Leavy suggests that the works must answer the simple question of “does the work resonate?”, considering if it is believable, true, and echoing the concepts in play (p. 272). Arts-based works also support multiple meanings to emerge through the process and analysis as well as the engagement of audiences in meaning-making (Leavy, 2015). In terms

of data analysis of the creative arts-based projects, works were documented, analyzed, and coded for themes. Emergent themes were then member checked with the producer of the piece in order to member-check for understanding and validity. Additionally, I triangulated data in order to look for over-arching themes across qualitative data sources.

Trustworthiness of Data

After the data collection phases and initial analysis procedures, I triangulated the data from multiple measures to verify themes. Triangulation of data included considering how the multiple, mixed-method employed by the study consistently generated complementary data as well as how the varied data sources were within the same method over time. Triangulation of data is not needed to find consensus or agreement, but rather to give multiple, concise meanings to the data. In order to ensure the trustworthiness of data, I member-checked all interviews and arts-based project themes with participants to ensure accuracy of analysis, looking for negative and unexpected findings in order to better understand the typical response and utilizing independent peer review especially for the arts-based project analysis component.

Threats to Reliability and Validity

Validity in mixed-method research is the way the researcher checks for accuracy and fidelity through multiple measures and the design process (Creswell, 2009). Data triangulation is a method by which to consider data from various measures to justify emergent themes while member-checking quotes and themes with participants also ensures the accuracy of findings. There are, however, other threats to the validity of the study. In the

following section, I will address the possible threats of instrumentation, maturation, and history as well as the ways by which I hope to circumvent these issues.

Threat of instrumentation. The threat of instrumentation considers how the instrument and instrument users change which in turn may affect the data (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). For this study, I carefully considered how the instruments change over time (which they did not for the final pre- and post- questionnaires) as well as whether their results can be compared in different reiterations. I considered how multiple instruments aligned as well as how their specific approach should be used. In this study, I endeavored to use well-researched and validated scales around self-efficacy and grit as well as adapted scales around mindset and persistence, the latter two of which I worked with experts in those fields to determine the content validity. Piloting the instruments over time and in multiple cycles also allowed me to fine-tune the instruments for the final population during Fall 2017.

Threat of history. The threat of history considers that other events have taken place between the first and second measurement that may affect the response (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). In a one group design, alternate hypotheses also must be considered as valid as there is no way to tell which cause is sounder in the outcome. In my study, since I do not have a comparison group, through the interview process I investigated other experiences the students may have been experiencing in order to consider other factors influencing their responses. Though I cannot control everything that is going on in my context, I asked participants what is going on in their overall lives as well as account for other contextual issues in play.

Threat of maturation. Maturation in terms of validity considers the internal development of subjects over time. It is a threat to one group designs as there is no way to determine how a group changes over time unless there is a comparison group (Fraenkel & Wallen). In my study, I considered how the subjects are changing over time in the design, making sure to test the interventions in a timely manner to attempt to decrease the threat of maturation. As my participants are undergraduate students over a period of a semester, I must take into account what other changes or developments may be occurring over time.

Limitations

As this study focuses on the experiences of arts and design undergraduate students in a specific context, results and outcomes are limited in scope as well as in sample. Any emergent themes are very much explicit to the context. By surveying and interviewing numerous participants, I triangulated data to determine thematic materials. However, these experiences are personal and unique to the participants and therefore cannot be considered transferable to other circumstance. Further, as these experiences as specific to undergraduate students at this particular academic college, these experiences are not translatable to other venues, contexts, or student groups.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In the following chapter, I will detail the analysis and results for the quantitative and qualitative components of the research study. In an effort to answer the study research questions, there are three distinct research strands within this section: 1) The quantitative pre- and post- test questionnaire measuring the constructs of self-efficacy, mindset, grit, and persistence, 2.) Qualitative analysis of selected creative pieces from the intervention course, and 3.) qualitative analysis of the concluding semi-structured interviews from course participants. As previously discussed, the following research questions have served as a guide for this study:

RQ1: To what extent do undergraduate students in design and the arts become more *efficacious* after experiencing an intervention course on failure?

Sub-RQ1: How do students make meaning through reflecting on their own *self-efficacy*?

RQ2: To what extent do undergraduate students in design and the arts fall on the *fixed/growth mindset continuum*?

Sub-RQ2: How do students make meaning through reflecting on their *mindset*?

RQ3: To what extent are undergraduate students in design and the arts *gritty*?

RQ4: To what extent are undergraduate students in the design and the arts *academically persistent*?

Sub-RQ4: How do students make meaning through reflecting on their academic *persistence*?

RQ5: How do undergraduate students in design and the arts negotiate *perceived failures*?

RQ6: How do undergraduate students in design and the arts make meaning out of their *definition of success*?

Quantitative Results

After learning of the research study and consenting to participation, students were asked to complete the pre-test during the first week of the eight-week course and the post-test during the final week of the course. The two questionnaires were the same each time and are detailed in Appendix F. The survey instrument, administered as a pre- and post- test measure, included four constructs of 1.) general self-efficacy, 2.) mindset scale incorporating measures on both fixed and growth mindset, 3.) the 12-item grit scale, and 4.) the persistence scale considering academic persistence and degree commitment. The overall purpose of the survey was to measure students' perceptions of their confidence, their mindset, their overall grit, and persistence and then utilize the post-test to track any changes that may have occurred from the intervention course.

Reliability of quantitative measures. Reliability assessments conducted in SPSS 24 showed a generally high level of reliability in alignment with the original scales from the constructs. The full pre-test Cronbach's Alpha (α) was 0.77 while the post-test as a whole had an α of 0.84. In looking at reliability across both the pre- and post-tests the overall instrument α was 0.88. Overall, the surveys had a reliability over 0.70, meeting the generally accepted value for reliability. Interestingly, the lowest reliability measurements were within

the construct of grit, α equaling 0.30 for the pre-test and 0.70 for the post-test. As discussed in chapter two and three, the construct of grit is not designed for a pre- and post- test format according to its originating researchers as it is considered a stable characteristic over time. The following chart details the α for the pre-, post-, and combined tests by construct with a comparison to their original parameters.

Table 13

Internal Reliability of Questionnaire Scales Pre-, Post-, and Combined

| Scale | Researcher(s) | # of Items | Original Cronbach's Alpha (α) | Pre- Test Cronbach's Alpha (α) | Post- Test Cronbach's Alpha (α) | Combined Tests Cronbach's Alpha (α) |
|------------------------------------|---|------------|--|---|--|--|
| General Self-Efficacy (GSE) | Schwarzer & Jerusalem (1995) | 10 | Overall $\alpha=0.75$ to 0.95 | $\alpha=0.91$ | $\alpha=0.91$ | $\alpha=0.81$ |
| Mindset Scale | Dweck (2000); Dweck (2006) | 10 | Overall $\alpha=0.94$ | $\alpha=0.85$ | $\alpha=0.84$ | $\alpha=0.71$ |
| 12-Item Grit Scale | Duckworth et al. (2007); Duckworth & Quinn (2009) | 12 | Overall $\alpha=0.73$ to 0.87 | $\alpha=0.30$ | $\alpha=0.70$ | $\alpha=0.79$ |
| Persistence Scale | Davidson, Beck, & Milligan (2009) | 11 | Overall $\alpha= 0.75$ | $\alpha=0.81$ | $\alpha=0.86$ | $\alpha=0.79$ |
| Total | | | | $\alpha=0.77$ | $\alpha=0.84$ | $\alpha=0.88$ |

Findings. Students were asked to complete the pre- test survey at the beginning of the course and the post-test survey at the conclusion of the course. As previously detailed, the instrument incorporated measurements of the constructs of self-efficacy, mindset, grit,

and academic persistence as well as included demographic information questions. The following sections will overview the findings of the pre-test, post-test, and comparison of the two instruments by item with a concluding look at the means, standard deviations, and significance of the paired pre- and post-test variables. I have included the pre-test descriptive statistics for the entire sample of eighteen students. Please see Appendix I for the mean, medians, and standard deviations for the eleven students included in both the pre- and post-test measures.

Pre-test. The following table details the mean, medians, and standard deviations for the pre-test survey. For this questionnaire, eighteen of the nineteen total students completed the pre-test. However, for comparison, I have included the pre-test scores from only the eleven participants who also completed the post-test survey. For the pre-test measures for all original eighteen participants, please see Appendix I.

Table 14
Descriptives for Pre-Test by Construct

| n=11 | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Construct | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Self-Efficacy | 22.00 | 39.00 | 30.90 | 4.72 |
| Mindset Overall | 26.00 | 49.00 | 38.18 | 7.20 |
| Growth Mindset | 19.00 | 30.00 | 23.09 | 3.51 |
| Fixed Mindset | 5.00 | 20.00 | 15.09 | 4.87 |
| Grit | 38.00 | 51.00 | 43.81 | 3.67 |
| Persistence Overall | 30.00 | 43.00 | 36.55 | 4.74 |
| Persistence Academic Integration | 12.00 | 24.00 | 18.81 | 3.79 |
| Persistence Degree Commitment | 15.00 | 20.00 | 17.72 | 1.62 |

For general self-efficacy, a four-point scale, the overall mean was 30.90 and the standard deviation was 4.72. For growth mindset, a six-point scale, the mean was 38.18 and the overall standard deviation was 7.20. Fixed mindset, on the other hand, showcased a

lower overall mean and median with a standard deviation of 4.87. Grit, a five-point scale, had a mean of 43.81 and standard deviation of 3.67. Finally, persistence, here measured in two segments looking at academic integration and degree commitment, respectively had a mean of 36.55 with a standard deviation of 4.74. Taken separately, academic integration showed a mean of 18.81 and standard deviation of 3.79 while degree commitment was a mean of 17.72 and a standard deviation of 1.62. The following table then details the means, medians, and standard deviations by item by construct as well as notes the scales for each part of the survey.

Table 15
Frequencies and Descriptives for Pre-Test for Full Participation
n=11

| Item | Mean | Median | Std. D. |
|--|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>General Self-Efficacy</i> | | | |
| <i>(4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)</i> | | | |
| I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough. | 3.45 | 3.00 | 0.52 |
| If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want. | 3.45 | 3.00 | 0.52 |
| It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals. | 3.00 | 3.00 | 0.45 |
| I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events. | 2.72 | 3.00 | 0.65 |
| Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations. | 2.81 | 3.00 | 0.87 |
| I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort. | 3.63 | 4.00 | 0.79 |
| I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities. | 2.73 | 3.00 | 0.78 |
| When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 0.47 |
| If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution. | 3.18 | 3.00 | 0.40 |
| I can usually handle whatever comes my way. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.54 |
| <i>Growth Mindset (6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | |
| I can make mistakes and struggle while knowing it's okay. | 3.90 | 4.00 | 1.04 |
| I can work until I figure it out or understand it. | 4.63 | 4.00 | 0.81 |
| I can engage in new challenges especially when I learn new things. | 4.64 | 4.00 | 0.81 |
| I can complete challenges and tasks as long as I keep working through them. | 5.00 | 5.00 | 0.77 |
| I can keep working until I find out what works best for me. | 4.90 | 5.00 | 0.83 |
| <i>Fixed Mindset (Negative Worded Items on 6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | |
| I can feel bad about myself If I don't learn something quickly. | 2.27 | 2.00 | 1.01 |
| I can learn without studying. | 3.73 | 4.00 | 1.27 |
| I can think there is something wrong with me if I cannot learn through studying. | 2.64 | 2.00 | 1.36 |
| I can feel like giving up when I am learning something hard. | 3.00 | 3.00 | 1.26 |
| I feel like giving up when I cannot do something very well right away. | 3.46 | 4.00 | 1.57 |

Grit (5-point Likert Scale from 1. Not like me at all to 5. Very much like me)

| | | | |
|---|------|------|-------------|
| New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 1.17 |
| I have been obsessed with an idea, project, or pastime but later lost interest in it. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 1.17 |
| I often set goals but later choose to pursue something else. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 1.44 |
| I have difficulty maintaining my focus on a project. | 3.45 | 3.00 | 1.44 |
| My interests change over time. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 1.19 |
| Setbacks do not discourage me. | 2.81 | 3.00 | 0.75 |
| I do not give up easily. | 3.73 | 4.00 | 0.65 |
| I am a hard worker. | 4.36 | 4.00 | 0.50 |
| I finish whatever I begin. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.94 |
| I am diligent (industrious and hard-working in my pursuits). | 4.18 | 4.00 | 0.60 |
| I never give up. | 3.63 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I have overcome setbacks to conquer a challenge. | 4.27 | 4.00 | 0.65 |

Academic Persistence (Academic Integration) (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)

| | | | |
|---|------|------|-------------|
| I can see intellectual growth in myself as I progress in my degree. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 0.79 |
| I can reach out to my faculty members for help in my program. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.94 |
| I can reach out to my peers for help in my program. | 3.00 | 4.00 | 1.26 |
| I can see the connection between what I am learning and my future career possibilities. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 0.65 |
| I can advance new ideas related to degree program. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.53 |
| I can actively participate in discussions around my selected field. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.83 |

Academic Persistence (Degree Commitment) (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)

| | | | |
|---|------|------|------|
| I can earn a college degree. | 3.63 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I can commit to the work that it will take to earn a degree in my selected field. | 3.46 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I can persist in pursuing my chosen field. | 3.46 | 3.00 | 0.52 |
| I can become successful in my chosen field. | 3.46 | 3.00 | 0.52 |
| I can know that my family is supportive of my pursuit of my chosen field. | 3.72 | 4.00 | 0.47 |

Post-test. Below please find the means, medians, and standard deviations for the eleven post-test participants by constructs and items.

Table 16

Descriptives for Post-Test by Construct

| n=11 | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Construct | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Self-Efficacy | 26.00 | 40.00 | 34.09 | 4.28 |
| Mindset Overall | 28.00 | 51.00 | 42.90 | 7.13 |
| Growth Mindset | 20.00 | 30.00 | 26.18 | 3.92 |
| Fixed Mindset | 7.00 | 23.00 | 16.72 | 4.47 |
| Grit | 34.00 | 56.00 | 44.73 | 5.61 |
| Persistence Overall | 33.00 | 44.00 | 40.00 | 3.66 |
| Persistence – Academic Integration | 18.00 | 24.00 | 21.27 | 1.74 |
| Persistence – Degree Commitment | 15.00 | 20.00 | 18.73 | 5.61 |

For the post-test, the means increased over all constructs. Standard deviations overall decreased, minus the two constructs of grit and degree commitment. The mean for self-efficacy increased by 3.19 from 30.90 to 34.09 while the standard deviation lowered from 4.72 to 4.28. Mindset overall also had a mean increase of 4.72 with again a reduced standard deviation. Grit again was the most unpredictable construct as it has a very slight increase in mean yet the standard deviation rose by a total of 1.74. The following sections will discuss the data for the pre- and post-test more in full for comparison. The following chart details the means, medians, and standard deviations by construct item for the post-test.

Table 17
Frequencies and Descriptives for Post- Test for all Participants
n=11

| Item | Mean | Median | Std. D. |
|---|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>General Self-Efficacy</i> | | | |
| <i>(4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)</i> | | | |
| I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |
| If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want. | 3.18 | 3.00 | 0.40 |
| It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.67 |
| I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 0.65 |
| Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |
| I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort. | 3.72 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.67 |
| When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions. | 3.46 | 4.00 | 0.69 |
| If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution. | 3.64 | 4.00 | 0.50 |
| I can usually handle whatever comes my way. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.67 |
| <i>Growth Mindset (6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | |
| I can make mistakes and struggle while knowing it's okay. | 5.18 | 5.00 | 0.75 |
| I can work until I figure it out or understand it. | 4.82 | 5.00 | 0.87 |
| I can engage in new challenges especially when I learn new things. | 5.09 | 5.00 | 0.94 |
| I can complete challenges and tasks as long as I keep working through them. | 5.46 | 6.00 | 0.94 |
| I can keep working until I find out what works best for me. | 5.09 | 5.00 | 0.94 |
| <i>Fixed Mindset (Scale Switched for Items on 6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | |
| I can feel bad about myself If I don't learn something quickly. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 1.64 |
| I can learn without studying. | 3.46 | 3.00 | 0.82 |
| I can think there is something wrong with me if I cannot learn through studying. | 3.46 | 3.00 | 1.29 |
| I can feel like giving up when I am learning something hard. | 3.54 | 3.00 | 1.29 |
| I feel like giving up when I cannot do something very well right away. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 1.36 |

Grit (5-point Likert Scale from 1. Not like me at all to 5. Very much like me)

| | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 1.21 |
| I have been obsessed with an idea, project, or pastime but later lost interest in it. | 3.55 | 3.00 | 1.13 |
| I often set goals but later choose to pursue something else. | 3.18 | 3.00 | 0.87 |
| I have difficulty maintaining my focus on a project. | 2.82 | 2.00 | 1.16 |
| My interests change over time. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.81 |
| Setbacks do not discourage me. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.87 |
| I do not give up easily. | 4.19 | 4.00 | 0.87 |
| I am a hard worker. | 4.55 | 5.00 | 0.52 |
| I finish whatever I begin. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.92 |
| I am diligent (industrious and hard-working in my pursuits). | 4.36 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I never give up. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 0.79 |
| I have overcome setbacks to conquer a challenge. | 4.27 | 4.00 | 0.78 |

Academic Persistence (Academic Integration) (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)

| | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| I can see intellectual growth in myself as I progress in my degree. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 0.40 |
| I can reach out to my faculty members for help in my program. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.50 |
| I can reach out to my peers for help in my program. | 3.36 | 4.00 | 0.81 |
| I can see the connection between what I am learning and my future career possibilities. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |
| I can advance new ideas related to degree program. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |
| I can actively participate in discussions around my selected field. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |

Academic Persistence (Degree Commitment) (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)

| | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| I can earn a college degree. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 0.40 |
| I can commit to the work that it will take to earn a degree in my selected field. | 3.64 | 4.00 | 0.50 |
| I can persist in pursuing my chosen field. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 0.40 |
| I can become successful in my chosen field. | 3.64 | 4.00 | 0.50 |
| I can know that my family is supportive of my pursuit of my chosen field. | 3.72 | 4.00 | 0.47 |

Comparison. The following table overviews the descriptive statistics for both the pre- and post-test to look at minimums, maximums, means, and standard deviations.

Table 18

Descriptives for Pre-Test and Post-Test by Construct

| n=12 | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Construct | Minimum Pre-/Post- | Maximum Pre-/Post- | Mean Pre-/Post- | Std. Deviation Pre-/Post- |
| Self-Efficacy | 22.00/26.00 | 39.00/40.00 | 30.90/34.09 | 4.72/4.28 |
| Mindset Overall | 26.00/28.00 | 49.00/51.00 | 38.18/42.90 | 7.21/7.13 |
| Growth Mindset | 19.00/20.00 | 30.00/30.00 | 23.09/26.18 | 3.51/3.92 |
| Fixed Mindset | 5.00/7.00 | 20.00/23.00 | 15.09/16.72 | 4.87/4.47 |
| Grit | 38.00/34.00 | 51.00/56.00 | 43.81/44.73 | 3.87/5.61 |
| Persistence Overall | 30.00/33.00 | 43.00/44.00 | 36.55/40.00 | 4.74/3.66 |
| Persistence – Academic Integration | 12.00/18.00 | 24.00/24.00 | 18.81/21.27 | 3.79/1.74 |
| Persistence – Degree Commitment | 15.00/15.00 | 20.00/20.00 | 17.73/18.73 | 1.62/5.61 |

Paired sample t-tests with α set at 0.05 were conducted in order to compare the pre- and post- test scores for the constructs included in the quantitative instrument. In the below chart, the means, standard deviations, and paired t-test values to consider significance are outlined. Given the small number of participants, I elected to use the significant level of 0.05 (P value), denoting a 95% confidence level. I elected to not use the Bonferroni correction even with eight measurements due to the small sample size. If the P value is less than 0.05, I reject the null hypothesis to conclude that there was a significant difference. That said, some P values are stronger than others, self-efficacy at 0.015 and persistence as a whole at 0.008. Other variables are moderately significant as fixed mindset is at 0.023 and persistence in academic integration is 0.021. Mindset as a whole is barely significant at 0.043.

Table 19

Means, Standard Deviations, and Paired T-Tests

| n=11 | | Mean | Std. Deviation | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|--------|--|-------|----------------|-----------------|
| Pair 1 | Self-Efficacy Pre- | 30.91 | 4.72 | 0.015** |
| | Self-Efficacy Post- | 34.09 | 4.28 | |
| Pair 2 | Mindset Total Pre- | 38.18 | 7.21 | 0.043* |
| | Mindset Total Post- | 42.91 | 7.13 | |
| Pair 3 | Fixed Mindset Pre- | 23.09 | 3.51 | 0.023* |
| | Fixed Mindset Post- | 26.18 | 3.92 | |
| Pair 4 | Growth Mindset Pre- | 15.09 | 4.87 | 0.256 |
| | Growth Mindset Post- | 16.73 | 4.47 | |
| Pair 5 | Grit Pre- | 43.82 | 3.87 | 0.467 |
| | Grit Post- | 44.73 | 5.61 | |
| Pair 6 | Persistence Total Pre- | 36.55 | 4.74 | 0.008** |
| | Persistence Total Post- | 40.00 | 3.66 | |
| Pair 7 | Persistence Academic Integration Pre- | 18.82 | 3.79 | 0.021* |
| | Persistence Academic Integration Post- | 21.27 | 2.41 | |
| Pair 8 | Persistence Degree Commitment Pre- | 17.73 | 1.62 | 0.085 |
| | Persistence Degree Commitment Post- | 18.73 | 1.74 | |

For a full comparison for pre- and post- tests by item, please see Appendix K.

Qualitative Measures

In the following section, I will detail the qualitative components of the study, overviewing the participants, their creative project analysis and themes, and their semi-structured interview data, poetic analysis, and emergent themes. Final themes and assertions were found through data analysis from course components such as the weekly reflective

questions, semi-structured interviews, and creative arts-based work from the intervention course focused on the two core assignments asking participants to create representations of their inner voices of judgement and their inner voices of persistence.

Participant overview. Of the nineteen enrolled students in the course after the add/drop period, I interviewed nine participants after the course had concluded. A total of fourteen students indicated interest in interview participation, but due to scheduling conflicts I was able to only schedule the following nine participants for interview sessions. Of these nine participants, all were women and they represent four of the five academic schools within the institute. In terms of the entire course enrollment of the nineteen students, four were men and one student noted a non-binary identity so it was not surprising the interview participants skewed female in terms of sample as 68% of the course was female in terms of gender. For more information on the qualitative participants, please see the table below that overviews their school, major, academic standing, gender, ethnicity, and age.

Table 20

Dissertation Cycle Interview Participant Overview

| n = 9 | | | | | | |
|-----------|--------|----------------|-----------|--------|-----------|-----|
| Name | School | Major | Year | Gender | Ethnicity | Age |
| Josephine | Art | Intermedia | Sophomore | Female | Latina | 20 |
| Cassie | Design | Architecture | Senior | Female | White | 21 |
| Claire | Design | Architecture | Senior | Female | White | 22 |
| Christina | Design | Architecture | Junior | Female | White | 20 |
| Dani | Design | Design Studies | Senior | Female | White | 22 |
| Jordan | Design | Envir. Design | Senior | Female | White | 23 |
| Molly | FDT | Theatre | Sophomore | Female | White | 19 |
| Shayne | FDT | Film | Sophomore | Female | Black | 19 |
| Lauren | Music | Violin | Sophomore | Female | White | 21 |

Findings. The following sections address the findings from participant course components, arts-based projects, and the semi-structured interviews.

Participant constructed course components. Students within the intervention course were asked to fill out a weekly reflection tool at the conclusion of each session with the structure of 1.) Triangle – Name three things that they learned, 2.) Square – Name one thing that resonated with them, and 3.) Circle – Ask one question you have about the content or course. Weekly questions were compiled in a shared document for the entire class with all identifying information removed. My co-instructor Heywood and I then selected several questions to answer at the beginning of the next class in order to ensure the course participants had an additional opportunity to learn on any questions they submitted through the reflection tool. The following table details the weekly questions from the participants as they correspond to the topics covered in the eight-week course. The final week, week eight, was a slightly different reflective model as participants were asked to name their final question for the course in the framework of a larger question for their lives that they were interested in exploring while moving forward in their academic and professional lives.

Table 21
Summary of Weekly Reflection Questions by Course Participants

| Week and Topic Area | Class Questions |
|---------------------|--|
| Week 1 | Are we going to be presenting creative pieces? What am I doing? |
| Introduction | How to pick yourself up after failure? How do I reason with the voice of judgement? How develop the power to turn it down? What is my VOJ (Voice of Judgement)? Where is the Center? Is it available to any students? How do you recognize failure as being a fear or motivation? What if my VOJ doesn't have a face, just a feeling? How will I know when I've become fully aware? What do I look for? How do you address anxiety surrounding judgement? Or things outside of my control? After the VOJ is found, what should I name them? How do I push through failure? How can I make meditation something I want to do every day? |

What if your VOJ is a direct reflection of yourself, like looking in a mirror?
How do I make positivity the majority of my being?
How do you deal with the emotional toll of the VOJ?
How do I heighten the perception of my art and how I speak to myself?
How do I identify how my creative process works when I just visualize an idea and work with it?

Week 2

Voice of
Judgement
and the
Creative
Process

How do you make self-care more of a priority?
When your VOJ is present, but not a physical being, how do you acknowledge it?
Can you illuminate the VOJ/keep it at a healthy level during the creative process?
Can your VOJ change over time?
Will the VOJ ever stop coming at you?
What is the purpose of the VOJ? Can it be useful?
When insecurity and self-judgement is overwhelming, is passion truly enough to overcome it?
None! You guys are awesome!
Do I know my VOJ completely?
How do I not cry? (Not because I think anything is wrong with crying, but sometimes the setting is really inappropriate, like work)
Why is it easier/why do we not care so much as we get older?
How do we help other people, outside this class, to realize they have a VOJ?
My VOJ's voice is more of a white noise/hum. What are some ways I can drown it out?
Music? Mantras?
How do you reassure someone who is insecure with themselves and unsure that their own talent and beauty is unavoidable to them?
Is my VOJ more or less of me?
How can you forgive someone for things they don't recognize or care about? How do I stop caring?
How can I introduce this type of topic to my personal group of friends in an easy way?
How do you retrain your brain to auto-respond with positivity?

Week 3

Values,
Strengths,
Talents and
Purpose

If someone felt like they were good at 3/6 subcategories, but not all of them, would it be considered that they have that intelligence? Or do they have to resonate with all of the subcategories to really "have" that intelligence?
How do I tap into my intuition in order to find my vision/dream?
If your values conflict with those of your family members, how do you live by your own value system?
How do you recognize your values and strengths when you're overwhelmed with apathy?
How do I figure out what makes me feel the most like myself if I'm not that self-aware of "being myself"?
How can I differentiate what I want to be my intelligences versus what I have as my intelligences?
How often is it beneficial I retake these kinds of semi-formal self-examinations of my values/strengths/intelligences, etc?
How do I balance taking up space in class in terms of speaking out or letting others talk?
Why did I feel that my top three strengths were somewhat like me but not what I expected to be my top three?
How can I fully utilize all my intelligences?
How can I continue to apply my values in my creative practices?
Is there a certain limit of intelligence a person can have?
What are other ways you can practice curiosity?

Week 4

How can I combat feeling silly when reciting and feeling my affirmations?
How do we cultivate motivation in times of tiredness, stress, or anxiety?

| | |
|---|---|
| Defining Success and Creating Goals | <p>How can one take risks when their anxiety reigns supreme?</p> <p>Can you see your own blind spots?</p> <p>Is time a big factor on reaching your goals?</p> <p>How do you change a negative pattern like laziness/procrastination when you have been reinforcing it for years?</p> <p>Can you learn to control your reticulating/ activating system?</p> <p>How do you let affirmations change you?</p> <p>How do you get unstuck?</p> |
| Week 5 Failure, Feedback and Critique | <p>What are some other ways of asking open-ended questions?</p> <p>How do you constructively take in criticism at the moment?</p> <p>How can we learn to separate criticism from self? And, how can we help others do the same?</p> <p>How can I explain my process in a critique if I shut down?</p> <p>How can I figure out when and how to be blunt in a critique?</p> <p>How do you work on being critical and kind?</p> <p>How do you critique without being too harsh? Or, if the person is internalizing it, how do you measure judgement?</p> <p>How do we use Critical Response Process or other modes of feedback in the most effective way? (without beating around the bush)</p> <p>How do I learn from judgement?</p> <p>How do you know a friend is a good friend to ask for a critique?</p> <p>How do I become more accepting of critiques from people I do not personally like?</p> <p>Which critique do you follow through on? How do you make that choice?</p> <p>How can you learn to stop comparing yourself to others?</p> <p>How can you accept critique when it's about your identity?</p> |
| Week 6 Vulnerability and Fear | <p>How do you know if your emotions are balancing out?</p> <p>How do you practice affirmations?</p> <p>Do you have any tips for battling feelings of unworthiness?</p> <p>How can we allow fluidity of emotion?</p> <p>How to explore fear and vulnerability?</p> <p>If I don't turn in all the assignments and so, in essence, fail, will I actually pass because the class is about failure? :-)</p> <p>If many emotions are weighing you down and you have to express them, what are techniques for changing them from complaining to vulnerability?</p> <p>Can you have multiple voices of inner persistence?</p> <p>How do you turn a conversation that is filled with complaining into one in the present?</p> <p>How do you become comfortable with being yourself? Why is that the hardest?</p> <p>Can you think of vulnerability as something good instead of something negative?</p> <p>Is vulnerability baring my soul/wearing my heart on my sleeve?</p> |
| Week 7 Developing Resilience | <p>How can you learn to not numb your emotions?</p> <p>How can I work on building and developing reciprocal connections? Focusing on give and take?</p> <p>Can thinking style affect your physical conditions?</p> <p>How do you utilize your resilience to gain confidence tackling new challenges?</p> <p>Can people have a mix of thinking styles?</p> <p>Do you believe that anger is not its own emotion and actually others we can't or won't determine?</p> <p>Is religion a compulsion?</p> <p>Does not talking about problems backtrack resilience?</p> <p>When does resilience arise and how do we make it a part of our existence?</p> <p>Is there a good gauge for knowing when to slow down?</p> <p>Why does self-talk control my life?</p> <p>How can you strategize to avoid spending time in regret?</p> |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Week 8 | Am I free to be me? |
| | How can I practice the things I know that will make me feel better especially in a world that may not be helpful? |
| Continuing the Journey in Persistence | What does it mean to live a hope-filled life? |
| | How can I openly and loudly express my beliefs? |
| | How can I show the softer side of myself and feel genuinely kind when I'm vulnerable? |
| | How can I embrace joy and stress in the same stride? |
| | How can I take care? |
| | How do I stay on this path of growth? |
| | How can I be aware of who I am and who I want to be? |
| | How to live gracefully? |

In terms of the reflective questions, I see these moving through anxiety and uncertainty to processing toward motivation/action to active reflection then a clear development of emotional intelligence/awareness around week six and seven. The final week's questions were framed in a different manner as they were questions to live forward in an effort of persistence and active reflection. These questions are set-up to consider intention and future behavior, discussing participants' goals to live full, "hope-filled" and "genuinely kind" lives on their "path of growth."

Arts-based projects. As part of the course, students were asked to create projects around their inner voice of judgement and inner voice of persistence. They were able to pick any creative medium of their choice for the projects. In terms of the prompt for the assignment, we asked them to reflect on the negative internal dialogue that interferes with your creative process to create a piece that represents this inner voice of judgement. For the persistence piece, we asked students to reflect and then intentionally design an inner voice of persistence in an effort to interrupt their inner voice of judgement and support their personal creative process. As seen in the following pages, students provided narrative for their projects at some times and at other times made the decision for them to stand alone.

Figure 3. Creative Projects from Josephine. Sophomore, Art.

Inner Voice of Judgement

“For as long as I can remember, I’ve always seen my voice of judgement as a black cloud that hovers above me. It’s always present as a shapeless mass that can take up any amount of space it wants. When it’s idle, it’s out of my sight and I don’t notice it. I can go on with my day. But when I’m stressed, scared, or insecure, it notices. It becomes agitated and it gets thicker and darker as the cloud surrounds me. On days where



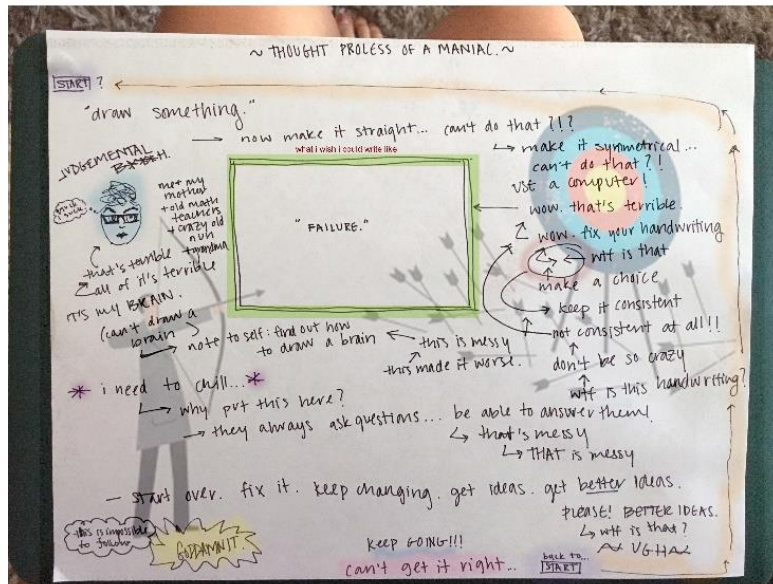
I am strong and confident, I can swat it away before it does this and it’ll dissipate away harmlessly. But when I am vulnerable and self-conscious, it grows. It manifests itself subtly at first as faint traces of self-doubt and insecurity. But it gets sharper and harder to ignore when enough time passes. It feels inescapable as it takes up all the space in my mind. Suddenly I’ll want to quit what I’m doing so I don’t have to subject anyone to my failures anymore. It twists my vision to show how terrible my mistakes are. It whispers to me and I hear nothing else. Not even white noise. The only thing I can hear, loud and clear, is, ‘You’re not good enough for this and you never will be.’”

Inner Voice of Persistence

“This is meant as a complement to my Voice of Judgement Piece. I’m going to hang this one up above the first one. I always felt my voice of persistence as a warm light that chases the black clouds away. It’s a positive, mirror image of my first piece. My eyes and face are hidden in the VOJ piece, and this one, only my eyes and face are visible, as an example. Thank you!”



Figure 4. Creative Projects from Cassie, Senior, Architecture.



Inner Voice of Judgement

“Thought process of a maniac. Draw something. Now make it straight. Can’t do that?! Make it symmetrical... Can’t do that?! Use a computer! Wow. That’s terrible. Wow. Fix your handwriting. WTF is that? Make a choice. Keep it consistent. Not consistent at all! Don’t be so crazy.

WTF is this handwriting? That’s terrible. All of it’s terrible. It’s my brain. (Can’t draw a brain.) Note to self: Find out how to draw a brain. This is messy. This made is worse. I need to chill. Why put this here? They always ask questions...be able to answer them. That’s messy. THAT’s messy. Start over. Fix it. Keep changing. Get ideas. Get better ideas. PLEASE! Keep going. Can’t get it right. This is impossible to follow. GODDAMNIT. Keep going!!! Can’t get it right. Back to start...”

Inner Voice of Persistence

“Instead of focusing on perfection, just try taking one step towards progress. Perfection is the least of your worries. Authenticity reigns supreme to hypercriticism. Though every task may feel like the challenge of a mountain, always remember that you can conquer even the largest. YOU CAN DO IT...just take the first step. Success will follow as long as it has a leader.”



Figure 5. Creative Projects from Claire, Senior, Architecture.



Inner Voice of Judgement

“To this day I have never forgotten that race. I remember it vividly, as if it were yesterday. I think about it when I fall just short of any goals I needed to accomplish, from school to personal projects. I think about it when I miss a deadline, when I was too slow. It haunts me. My inner voice of judgement became a clock that blinks ‘0.002’ in red, in perfect rhythm. It has never changed since.”



Inner Voice of Persistence

“We are here for you always, sissy. We support every decision you make. We love you unconditionally. Kick ass and take names. You are the architect of your own life.”

Figure 6. Creative Projects from Christina, Junior, Architecture.



Memo for your aching heart

you,
you are
strong.

an oak tree,
rooted and
grounded.

**broken down,
bleeding eyes,
behind—**

no.

that
is no longer
you.

you,
you are
strong,

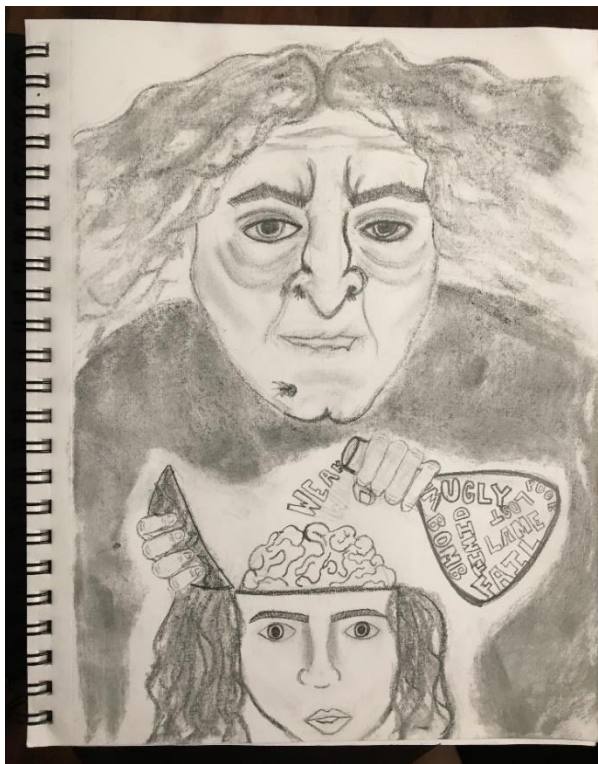
a light in your
eyes,
speaking only truth.

speaking softly,
speaking kindly,
speaking gently

watering
those
roots.

yes, you,
you are
strong

Figure 7. Creative Projects from Dani, Senior, Design Studies.



Inner Voice of Judgement

“My inner voice of judgement is based off a professor I had. I transformed her into a witch with ugly features...She plays with my mind and puts spells of negativity on it.”

Inner Voice of Persistence

“The idea for the persistence project was that when you are lost in the dark and at a mental standstill, words of encouragement are reaching out to you to be a reminder of your strengths.”

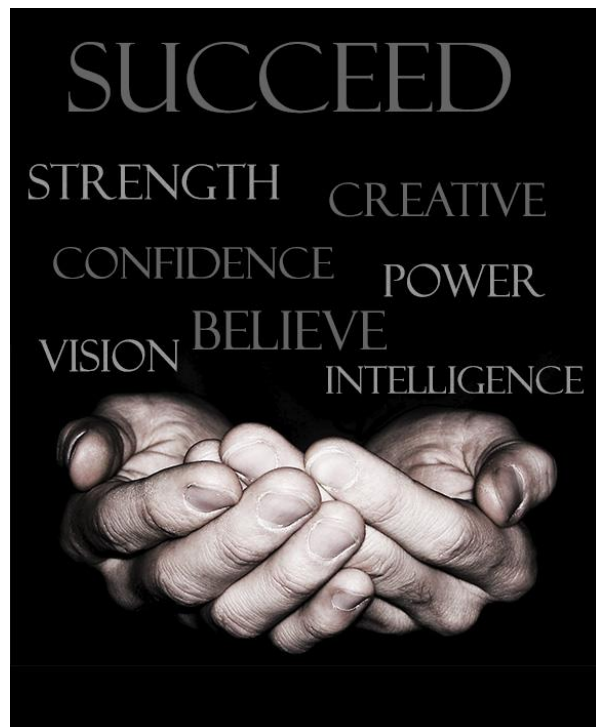
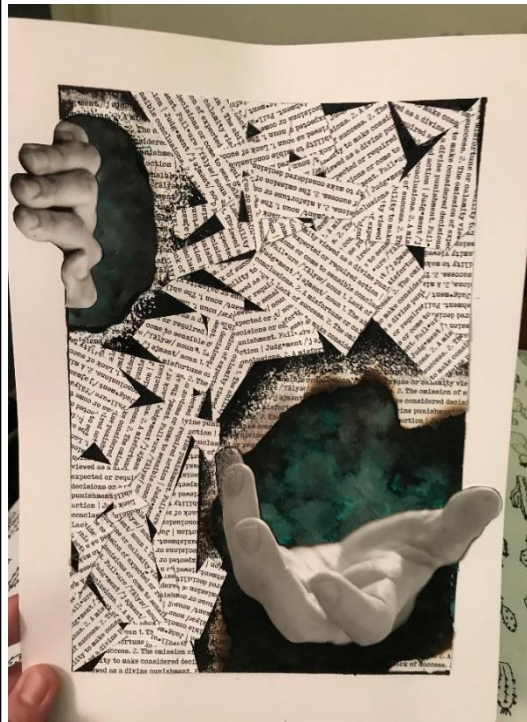
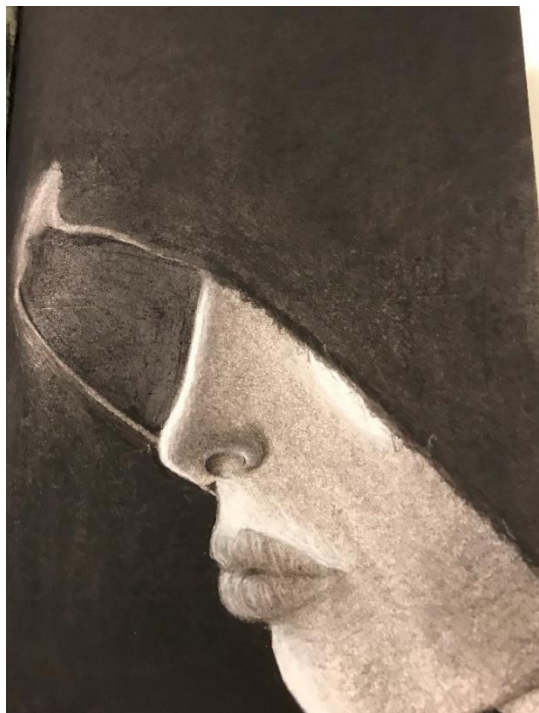


Figure 8. Creative Projects from Jordan, Senior, Environmental Design.



Inner Voice of Judgement

“I knew my inner voice of judgement didn't have a human-like form. It was more of an entity that formed an abyss. It's something that coaxes you in under the guise of comfort only to tell you you're a failure. I wanted to capture the sense of comfort by an outreached hand while simultaneously representing the depth and deception with my color scheme and definition scraps.”



Inner Voice of Persistence

“As for my inner voice of persistence, I pictured the opposite. She is in a human form with her only intention being perseverance in the face of failure. She's a huntress who is determined to fight for what she wants. I used pitch black charcoal contrasted with lighter grey tones to symbolize the both the power and the softness of my inner voice of persistence.”

Figure 9. Creative Projects from Molly, Sophomore, Theatre.

Inner Voice of Judgement

The Grim Reaper of My Aspirations (Judgement)

Flickering figure,
Sitting in the corner of the room,
Absence of light,
Wafting sickly sweet florals,
Luring me in.

Smiling haughtily,
Pretending to know me,
Or,
Knowing me better than anyone else.
I'm never really sure.

You,
The Thing that keeps me up at night,
When even my clock is yawning,
You,
Magnetic,
Miserable,
My unwanted company.

Inner Voice of Persistence

Persistence

When it whispered “stop”,
She told me “keep going”.
When it hissed “failure”
She stated “human being”
When it began to pull me into its corner,
She reached out a hand to hold
When it seemed all consuming,
She was the light at the end of the road.
When it sneered coldly,
She let her eyes warm my heart
When it said “no”
She said “most certainly”.

Figure 10. Creative Projects from Shaynea, Sophomore, Film.



Arts-based project themes. Two themes emerged from the creative arts-based pieces around the Inner Voice of Judgement (VOJ) and Inner Voice of Persistence (VOP) projects: 1.) The VOJ is steeped in history and is a familiar self-narrative of negativity and 2.) The VOP is focused much more on action and process to move forward to the future, usually based in practicing self-kindness, reflection on strengths/values, and considering the participant's support network. Simply, the VOJ reduces action through a narrative of inadequacy, fear, judgement, and uncertainty based on past experiences while the VOP spurs action onward through resiliency, light, encouragement, and offering an alternative pathway.

Theme 1: Inner voice of judgement narrative is familiar and historical.

Participants indicated that their VOJ projects were easily identifiable, based on past experiences or comments from others, and generally very familiar to them as a narrative they commonly heard within their heads. This familiarity, sometimes, made this narrative harder to disrupt as it was so common and accustomed. For instance, Lauren noted that the VOJ for her project is “all about blaming myself for everything that goes wrong...you should have done this or that, why didn't you do this or say that” (arts-based project narrative). She also added the following:

The scary thing is that it doesn't come from a horrible place. It comes from a very logical and believable place that sounds just like me. I chose an older lady to represent wisdom and experience pointing a finger at my foolishness, which is how my inner voice of judgement seems. (Lauren, arts-based project narrative).

Molly's poetry echoes this sentiment as she discusses her VOJ as a figure that knows her well, “smiling haughtily, pretending to know me...Or, knowing me better than anyone else” (arts-based project narrative). Jordan also remarked that her VOJ is “something that coaxes you in under the guise of comfort only to tell you you're a failure” (arts-based project narrative). Josephine's VOJ is more of a feeling, which she discussed as the following:

It manifests itself subtly at first as faint traces of self-doubt and insecurity. But it gets sharper and harder to ignore when enough time passes. It feels inescapable as it takes up all the space in my mind. Suddenly I'll want to quit what I'm doing so I don't have to subject anyone to my failures anymore. It twists my vision to show how terrible my mistakes are. It whispers to me and I hear nothing else. Not even white noise. The only thing I can hear, loud and clear, is, "You're not good enough for this and you never will be." (Josephine, personal communication).

The past also plays into the format of the VOJ as seen in Claire, Dani, and Cassie's works as they are all focused on past experiences. Claire's piece considered a former perceived failure in an athletic running competition as she was 0.002 seconds slower than the leader and thus perceived she failed:

I think about it when I fall just short of any goals I needed to accomplish, from school to personal projects. I think about it when I miss a deadline, when I was too slow. It haunts me. My inner voice of judgement became a clock that blinks '0.002' in red, in perfect rhythm. It has never changed since. (Claire, arts-based project narrative).

Dani's project was based on a former faculty member's critique of her work, as "she plays with my mind and puts spells of negativity on it" (arts-based project narrative). Cassie, meanwhile, focused more on her ongoing thought process, detailing her VOJ as the "Thought Process of a Maniac" as she worked through her design.

Theme 2: Inner voice of persistence focuses on action and reflection. The VOP project, presented as an alternative narrative by design to interrupt the VOJ, primarily focused on action toward the future while utilizing reflection to bolster the narrative with calls for kindness, connection to values and strengths, and considering support networks. Josephine noted her VOP project was a way to drive away the gloom of her VOJ, "a warm light that chases the black clouds away...It's a positive, mirror image of my first piece" (arts-based project narrative). Shaynea also designed her VOP to be in direct response to her VOJ, morphing her dark illustration into a colorful picture focusing on whimsy, color, and

kindness. Dani described her VOP process as reflecting on her own values and characteristics to be encouraged and move forward in life, stating “when you are lost in the dark and at a mental standstill, words of encouragement are reaching out to you to be a reminder of your strengths” (arts-based project narrative). Cassie, in response to her segmented thought process for her VOJ project, designed a journey up a mountainside to remind herself that perfectionism is not the answer. She wrote the following within her creative piece:

Instead of focusing on perfection, just try taking one step towards progress.
Perfection is the least of your worries. Authenticity reigns supreme to hypercriticism.
Though every task may feel like the challenge of a mountain, always remember that
you can conquer even the largest. (Cassie, arts-based project narrative).

Jordan designed her VOP to become human in form as a reminder of her intention showing perseverance and kindness in the face of failure, noting “she's a huntress who is determined to fight for what she wants... pitch black charcoal contrasted with lighter grey tones to symbolize both the power and the softness of my inner voice of persistence” (arts-based project narrative). Claire put together a contrasting piece reminding her of all her family and their support of her endeavors as she becomes an architect, reminding herself that she “is the architect of your own future” (arts-based project narrative). Christina responded to her initial VOJ project, a painting of dark tentacles, with a poem, reminding herself “you are strong” with a call to speak only truth, “speaking softly, speaking kindly, speaking gently, watering those roots... Yes, you, you are strong” (arts-based project narrative). Molly also selected to write in poetic format in response to her initial poem, writing the following:

When it whispered “stop”,
She told me “keep going”.
When it hissed “failure”
She stated “human being”
When it began to pull me into its corner,
She reached out a hand to hold

When it seemed all consuming,
She was the light at the end of the road.
When it sneered coldly,
She let her eyes warm my heart
When it said “no”
She said “most certainly”.
(Molly, arts-based project narrative).

The VOJ and VOP projects represent only a fraction of the arts-based works within the intervention course, but within the larger context of the class several other course components and assignments can be seen in the final VOP projects as they were put together after sections on strengths, values, goals, vulnerability, practicing self-kindness, and utilizing external support. Each participant showcased a slightly different aspect in their VOP design, but overall the projects tended to be much more positive in aesthetic and tone versus the VOJ project while also focusing on reframing their VOJ into just a challenge to overcome.

Semi-structured interviews. Participants were asked to engage in a semi-structured interview after the conclusion of the course. The interviews were recorded and transcribed with notes from the interviews being taken into account as well. As discussed in chapter three, I made the decision to code the interview transcripts in a poetic fashion, condensing longer interviews into stanzas around the constructs included in the interview protocol (see Appendix G for full protocol). The interview protocol covered 1.) where participants currently saw themselves on the mindset continuum, 2.) their perception of their own self-efficacy and how this has changed over time, 3.) what they consider current barriers to creative, personal and academic success, 4.) the process of creating their inner voice of judgement and inner voice of persistence arts-based projects, 5.) various perceptions of success from important people in their lives, their specific creative field, and what they have

learned about their own definition of success over time, and 6.) how they currently defined failure and how this has changed over time. After poetic analysis, the poems were then sent to the participants along with their full interview transcripts for review and member-checking. The following tables present each participant’s remarks condensed into the poetic stanzas by construct for ease of readability.

Mindset. Participants noted that they were generally excited about learning new things especially when they are challenging tasks. Some participants mentioned being cautious or hesitant at first when experiencing challenging new information, but after the initial hurdle they indicated they were able to achieve success and/or perform to their self-imposed standards. Several participants also discussed how learning new things enhances their natural talent, this process akin to adding “more paint to your palette” (Claire, personal communication). The following table presents each participant’s views on mindset in poetic stanza.

Table 22
Mindset Sections Post Intervention Course by Participant

| Name | Mindset Definition in Found Poetic Analysis |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Josephine Sophomore Art | Learning new things has always been a challenge for me, always an aversion. Fear of failure pretty much my entire life. If I try to do something new and I’m not immediately good at it, it can be very discouraging. Depends on the environment and the amount of pressure I put on myself. |
| Cassie Senior Architecture | I would say I like challenge. When it comes to my passions, I really like learning as much as I can. As many new things as I can push myself. Learning new things, it makes me question my talent. If there is a new concept I’m not familiar with, Or, someone else seems to know ten times more than me, It makes me question it. But, overall, The new subjects and topics I learn just adds to my knowledge base. |
| Christina Junior Architecture | Definitely eager, very eager to learn new things when they are a challenge. I used to be more timid about it. The idea of not succeeding right off the bat, always an uncomfortable thing, When things do not come very easily to you. Getting so frustrated when I would try new things or new hobbies or whatever. I carried that mentality for a while. |

Recently that's been something I've started to get over,
I feel a lot more eager to kind of put my hands in it,
Not so concerned anymore with the self-conscious aspect.
I've started to gain more confidence.
If you're not good at it, at least you know. You know?

Claire
Senior
Architecture
I'm very excited, kind of like anxious where you're a little bit scared
But definitely more ready to take it on than skittish about it.
General life experiences, you have to learn to not be scared of anything and just go for it.
Learning new things, it improves your talent,
Just constantly learning new things, getting new outlooks.
You add more paint to your palette.

Dani
Senior
Design
I enjoy a challenge because you get to reiterate it in different ways.
You learn at your own pace.
Whether it's a skill or a history element, it definitely impacts you.
It can even change what you want to do with your life, your work.

Jordan
Senior
Design
I'd like to say I like learning new things even when they are challenging
But, to be honest, it's a little bit of a deterrent sometimes.
After taking this course, I'm more open to stuff like that – I'm working on that.
A challenge doesn't necessarily mean you're going to fail,
It just means you got to push yourself a little bit harder.
I've struggled with that sometimes, facing challenges because they're scary, they are hard.
But, if people are giving me this challenge to learn new things
Obviously means they see that in me that I can.
So, what do I have to lose?
Being of an artistic background and being the creative soul that I am,
It's important to always learn new things, always incorporate new things into your works.
Learning new things really just enhances everything you are.

Molly
Sophomore
Theatre
Open, but cautious. Usually more the latter than the former.
I'm a very cautious person to begin with, I like having a plan
And I like knowing what I'm getting myself into
Usually when you try something new you don't always know that so it can be hard.
I'm a bit of a perfectionist so that's also part of it.
Learning new things literally heightens it.
Trying new things helps you learn new perspectives, add things to your toolkit,
All of those things definitely contribute to making you more talented.

Shaynea
Sophomore
Film
I'm excited by it. I like learning new things even though it's hard.
And, although it's frustrating when you don't click with it right away,
It makes it all the more satisfying when you do.
It expands my reach because I write stories.
It helps be broaden and develop richer worlds and stories to look through.

Lauren
Sophomore
Music
I think if I'm in a good place, mentally and emotionally, I feel really excited.
I often feel excited about learning new things.
If I feel overly inadequate or mentally exhausted, then I feel I don't have the motivation,
I just feel tired and I don't have the capacity to exert myself more.
It definitely expands my talents if I let it.
Branching out deepens what we can do,
Feels like I'm going backwards if you're stretching yourself.
But, eventually, capacity increases.

Self-efficacy. In considering their own self-efficacy or confidence, participants remarked that they were more confident in the year of the dissertation study than they were in earlier academic years or even the beginning of the semester. Participants noted that they were “confident enough to get through the average amount of challenges” (Cassie, personal communication) as well as “fairly confident...more confident than I used to be for sure” (Christina, personal communication). They talked about confidence as an ongoing process, noting “I’m getting pretty confident...I feel pretty confident going on with things and doing them” (Jordan, personal communication). Jordan (personal communication) added:

To be totally honest, I’ve faced a few difficult challenges. And, it’s been rough. But, I’ve noticed I have been genuinely happy and genuinely able to face things. They might be hard, and I might feel discouraged at some point, but I feel pretty confident going on with things and doing them. I’ve always been very critical of myself and set myself up for failure because I think like “Oh no, I can’t do that.” But throughout this semester, especially after the course, my outlook changed. (Jordan, personal communication)

Shaynea (personal communication) also added that she realized through the intervention course that she needs the support of others to feel confident in herself.

I know that if I try hard that I can get through things. But, also, learning that I also need to ask for help, too. I can’t do things on my own anymore. I realized that I can’t do it alone and I don’t have to. (Shaynea, personal communication)

Lauren also added her thoughts on the course helping her become more confident through self-awareness and reflection.

Depends on what they are, but overall, I’m pretty confident. As I’ve been getting to know myself more, I’m more aware of what I can do and how to push myself. A self-awareness especially is what I took away from the failure class. It was huge for me, really therapeutic. Things happening in my life were at a crisis point and the creative projects were me processing emotions and experiences. I learned so much about myself. (Lauren, personal communication)

The following table presents poetic stanzas on participants’ views of their own self-efficacy.

Table 23

Self-Efficacy Sections Post Intervention Course by Participant

| Name | Self-Efficacy Definition in Found Poetic Analysis |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Josephine Sophomore Art | As I've gained more experience creating artwork in different mediums, it gets a little easier, Even if it's challenging and very discouraging, the end result is almost always worth it. I really like being able to broaden my horizons and gain new experiences as a person. |
| Cassie Senior Architecture | It can go one or two ways, depending on my confidence level. I'm very stubborn, Confident enough to get through the average amount of challenges. Adamant about getting what I want done and at a level I feel is top-notch. I've always just been fiery, really sassy, questioning what was given to me Now anytime somebody puts a new challenge up, I'll take that and up you one. I'm just like, "I'm gonna show you..." I want to prove to everybody that I can be what I know I can be. |
| Christina Junior Architecture | Fairly confident, I would say that's always a struggle. I'm definitely more confident than I used to be, for sure. Entering college and feeling this expectation I had to fulfill, I really carried that with me, almost like some emotional baggage. But, now I just feel a lot more in control in a weird way, Relates back to feeling more self-aware of my habits, certain modes of thinking I can fall into, Whether it's good or bad, just knowing myself more clearly, Having the time to reflect on myself has made me more at ease with challenges and setbacks. |
| Claire Senior Architecture | Very confident. First year, I was still pretty confident, But it came more from naïve, "I'm going to go for it!" Now that I'm all weathered and tired, It's more like "I know I can do this, so do it." Time-management, self-management, being able to balance fun, work, school, family, friends, all that type of stuff. |
| Dani Senior Design | Overcoming setbacks, probably in the moment not that much confidence. Now that I look back, I've definitely grown. It's just something I have with stick with and remind myself it's temporary. You can always get yourself out and work hard until it's past you. The course helped me cope with that I think were my failures And, the pros and cons in how to work toward my future and how to avoid the same situation happening |
| Jordan Senior Design | I'm getting pretty confident. To be totally honest, I've faced a few difficult challenges. And, it's been rough. But, I've noticed I have been genuinely happy and genuinely able to face things. They might be hard and I might feel discouraged at some point, But I feel pretty confident going on with things and doing them. I've always been very critical of myself and set myself up for failure because I think like "Oh no, I can't do that." But throughout this semester, especially after the course, my outlook changed. I can just do stuff. It's great. I've changed so much as a person. I want to continue on truly being myself and not being afraid of messing up or asking for help. |
| Molly Sophomore Theatre | Fairly confident. I would definitely say I'm more confident. |

Shaynea I know that if I try hard that I can get through things.
 Sophomore But, also, learning that I also need to ask for help, too.
 Film I can't do things on my own anymore.
 I realized that I can't do it alone and I don't have to.

Lauren Depends on what they are, but overall, I'm pretty confident.
 Sophomore As I've been getting to know myself more, I'm more aware of what I can do
 Music And, how to push myself.
 A self-awareness especially is what I took away from the failure class.
 It was huge for me, really therapeutic.
 Things happening in my life were at a crisis point,
 And, the creative projects were me processing emotions and experiences.
 I learned so much about myself.

Perceived barriers. Participants were asked about what they perceived to be barriers at the time of the interview. They discussed communication, lack of knowledge, networking, embarrassment, inner judgement, fear of risk and failure, and mental creative block as barriers to their success. The majority felt that barriers to their own success were primarily mental in nature and based in their own thought process especially when experiencing fear and self-doubt. The following table details how each participant views their relation to barriers to success.

Table 24
Definitions of Barriers Post Intervention Course by Participant

| Name | Barriers Definition in Found Poetic Analysis |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Josephine Sophomore Art | A lot of times I just have to force myself to go through it. Always have that voice of judgement telling me what I'm doing it wrong, Embarrassing, that I should stop. Sometimes, I come really close to listening to it, I give up, I quit. Recently, more aware of it, I push my way past and tell myself to stick with it no matter what. It's usually been for the better when I do that. |
| Cassie Senior Architecture | Lack of communication is really hard, When people aren't really agreeable or if they are super one-sided, strict, Don't really give it their all. Closed off. I've gotten better, more agile in my approaches. I can adjust accordingly. I had never realized it before I took the class, just considered myself a perfectionist. I've learned I am my harshest critic, And, even when I do fulfill the requirements, it's hard for me to stop there. I just try really hard, and it's one of my things I just don't stop. |

Freshman year, I didn't feel confidence compared to other people.
I would stay up all night, put in ridiculous hours for very little return.
As I've gotten older, I've learned to say, "I'm done for now, come back to it later if I need,
But, it doesn't need to be *perfect*."
That's a hard things for me – I like everything to be done once, right.

Christina
Junior
Architecture
The biggest barrier to success is being afraid to take very bold risks.
It's one thing to be afraid to approach the problem.
Once you get past that, you can approach the problem, a matter of solving the problem.
And, how you go about solving the problem, stick to a very safe, easy way or
You just really want to throw yourself out there and try unfamiliar approaches,
It's not just about having the confidence to approach the problem, but
Also having the confidence in how you choose to solve your challenge.
The biggest barrier is being afraid of taking risk for the sake of success.

Claire
Senior
Architecture
Mental creative block. Other classes. Lack of knowledge.
Being able to have healthy brain breaks, and eat and sleep,
And get work from other classes done and power through studio.

Dani
Senior
Design
Network – You have to make sure you network with the right people
And, keep the relationship with them.
Don't just see them one time and think you don't need them in the future.
I've learned the hard way, you need that support.
I've definitely been reaching out more than I ever have before.
It's hard – But, what's the worst they could say? No?
I don't like change, but I'm getting there.

Jordan
Senior
Design
For me, it's just a mental thing.
I would set myself up for failure before I even tried because I was like
"Oh, well, as least if I just acknowledge that fact I knew I was going to fail,
It won't look as bad"
And, that looks terrible because to sabotage yourself.
The biggest barrier is just overcoming my own issues and my own fear.

Molly
Sophomore
Theatre
Self-doubt. Putting in the time and doing it even if it is a stretch,
Even if I don't know if I'll get in, even if I don't think it'll pan out,
Just giving myself the credit to try, take the chance.
Usually a little bit tired, immediately after I may feel more proud or excited,
Usually in the long term, whatever immediate emotion is there turns into
"Wow, we did that."
It becomes a little bit more analytical, what did we do well, what did I surprise myself with,
What did I surprise other people with in taking it on, what could I work on for next time.

Shaynea
Sophomore
Film
My laziness. I am lazy all the time, but I know it is a comfortable place,
Where, in a way, I am afraid to fail so I keep putting it off.
It's like a double-edged sword; I know I can't put it off forever,
But I also need to get out of it.
I can't power through things like I used to, I need that time to decompress.
And, also, I don't let it take over my life.
I have to stop running away from this.
I try to get up as soon as possible, looking for the next best thing.
There are good things and bad things, but I gotta keep going.

Lauren
Sophomore
Music
Probably mostly me. Fears.
Fear of not being able to manage my time right,
Or not going to the right people for help,

Or not having the right motivation.
Identifying them is huge, acknowledging what those blocks are.
And, then finding people, asking people that I trust, coming to you, being honest.
Identifying it, saying it out loud, being able to laugh at it.
One of the hardest times in my life, but the most excited about what I'm learning.
Because I care about learning these things.
There was a change and I felt invested in what I'm studying, applied myself a lot more,
Which is way more fulfilling.

Process of creating voice of judgement and voice of persistence. In reflecting on their processes of creating their own Inner Voice of Judgement and then designing the Inner Voice of Persistence projects for the course, students noted that self-awareness was the most salient component of these projects. The majority of students found judgement an easier process to create as it was familiar in tone while creating their inner voice of persistence required them to consider a new narrative. Josephine added the following:

For a while, I couldn't really visualize the absence of it, the disbursing of it.
After some time contemplating it, persistence felt more like light disbursing it.
It was a bit more of a process. Being able to shape something negative came easily,
but shaping something positive was a bit more difficult. I'm really glad I did it.
(Josephine, personal communication).

The inner voice of judgement was recognizable, especially in times of creativity. Christina noted the following:

My voice of judgement was really marked by feeling very inadequate. And, I think that's a common thing. And, would happen during my creative process...Caught up in worrying about other people judging, feeling very critical of myself. (Christina, personal communication)

Dani, having graduated after the course and reflecting on her time in college, illustrated how the voice of judgement has always been there for her and learning to interrupt it continues to be a struggle.

I don't think I'm as critical anymore...always been that person to compare myself to others in my work. But in the past semester, I've been blocking others out and getting my work complete in what I want to get out of it, more success that way. Interrupting the inner voice of judgement, it's really hard. You are just used to it and it's always been there. (Dani, personal communication)

Through the process of becoming self-aware of their own voice of judgement, participants also noted that they became more aware of that self-critical narrative in their friends. Molly noted that “it’s been difficult because now I also can see it in other people and that’s a whole new aspect of it, especially people you’re close to” (personal communication). Though participants were able to begin to recognize and become aware of self-criticism in narrative form, designing their voice of persistence was generally a very different process for them as they had to consider how they would change and design a different internal voice for themselves. Christina added the following:

When you realize I would never talk to someone the way I talk to myself. What do I need to say to myself instead? What would a friend say to me? It was a very meditative experience, positive, more self-love. The action of writing down what you would say instead, you retain it so much better and it becomes a real thing. A weirdly humbling experience, recognizing that you deserve more. (Christina, personal communication)

Molly noted that she had a harder time visualizing her voice of persistence but found it easier to talk about as it was based in positive emotions.

I don’t think the imagery came as quickly, but emotion-wise, the emotions connected to it are much easier to talk about so that made it more straightforward. It’s almost like the awareness of both voices in other people help me look at mine from a more objective view. As much as I have the one, I have the other. I need to keep that in mind and give it the opportunity to quiet noise and reassess. (Molly, personal communication).

Lauren found the process primarily about becoming more in tune with her emotions as they are happening: Lauren talked about the process of working through judgement and persistence narrative lens in the following quote:

The biggest things I needed to be aware of was my emotions. I’ve expected myself to be happy, strong, stable my whole life because I am a happy person. And, I feel my role is helping others and allowing myself to feel angry sometimes or to feel really sad and let that be real. That has been hard for me. I’ve deepened in important ways and that’s the only way you can really heal... But, I want to feel for a little bit and let

it be real. I just always think it's me – It's hard for me to separate that it would be a voice of judgement. It's hard to pin it down because it's so connected to me.

The following table presents the poetic stanzas on how participants approached the process of identifying and creating their inner voices of judgement and persistence.

Table 25
Judgement and Persistence Reflections Post Intervention Course by Participant

| Name | Judgement and Persistence Reflections Found Poetic Analysis |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Josephine Sophomore Art | <p>Through this course, we were able to kind of become more self-aware, Develop it more as its own entity. For me, abstract concepts have always been kind of difficult for me to understand. The fact we were able to put in a concrete form for ourselves And have a physical piece of art to look at and remind myself to look at, I found it a really valuable experience. I'm aware it's there – When I'm aware of something, I can take more steps around it, through it, under it, Learning that this isn't everything. My judgement isn't everything about me, there's so much more to me. I couldn't really put my voice of persistence in a concrete form for a while. My inner voice of judgement felt like a black cloud, For a while, I couldn't really visualize the absence of it, the disbursing of it. After some time contemplating it, persistence felt more like light disbursing it. It was a bit more of a process. Being able to shape something negative came easily, but shaping something positive was a bit more difficult. I'm really glad I did it. I keep both pieces next to my desk so whenever I'm working, And I feel myself start to get uncomfortable and self-conscious, I can look at them both and say to myself, "I've overcome this before and I've always been happy with the results, So I can do it again this time."</p> |
| Cassie Senior Architecture | <p>Judgement, it was a compilation of different experiences, And phrases stuck in my head, outside sources, not liking critiques. Persistence, it was more driven from myself and my ability to withstand the pressure And, keep going, and know the people I surround myself with do care about me Will not judge me for it. Hard to realize that someone like my mom, my dad, would be both. Hard to realize the difference is okay and I can move on, Not to place people in one phrase they might have said ten years ago, The deep set of my memory. It can just slowly fade away.</p> |
| Christina Junior Architecture | <p>Before taking the class, I didn't think of it in that light, Never able to actually pause and really analyze my modes of thinking Whenever I would find myself in very difficult situations and I would need to be resilient. My voice of judgement was really marked by feeling very inadequate. And, I think that's a common thing. And, would happen during my creative process. Caught up in worrying about other people judging, feeling very critical of myself. It's normal, but it's like "that's not a good thing and you can stop it." Realizing it was in my control, when I'm starting to talk to myself in negative ways, To stop it, to recognize it, so it won't get in the way of moving forward.</p> |

It's like a muscle – You have to constantly practice it when you feel like you are slipping.
Over time though, the more you are able to get to know yourself that way
And recognize ways to stop it, it gets easier.
It's a matter of practice and diligence.

Persistence, it was uplifting.
When you realize you I would never talk to someone the way I talk to myself.
What do I need to say to myself instead?
What would a friend say to me?
It was a very meditative experience, positive, more self-love.
The action of writing down what you would say instead, you retain it so much better,
And it becomes a real thing.
A weirdly humbling experience, recognizing that you deserve more.

Claire
Senior
Architecture
Drastic change. I definitely know I can feel it when it's about to come on and pop up.
And, when it's there I set everything down and go for a walk. A run.
I'm more aware of it and open to it than just taking it and getting frustrated.
It's interesting, I'm learning a lot about myself personally and I can tell it's been going well.
The inner voice of persistence is easier
Because I know it's more patient to find something that keeps you going
You're more open to thinking about what helps me, what pushes me.
For the inner voice of judgement, I had to dig down pretty far,
To figure out where that is actually coming from.

Dani
Senior
Design
I don't think I'm as critical anymore, but I'm very critical of myself.
Always been that person to compare myself to others in my work,
But in the past semester, I've been blocking others out and getting my work complete
In what I want to get out of it, more success that way.
Interrupting the inner voice of judgement, it's really hard.
You are just used to it and it's always been there.
I can feel it coming on and I'm just like, no, stop.
Just look at it. This is your piece. Don't compare it to anything else.
Block it out. Put black paper around it, don't let it influence a change of mind.

Jordan
Senior
Design
I used to just sit there and over and over constantly think "all my stuff is so bad."
I have completely abandoned that.
Every now and then it pops up, obviously,
It's always going to be a part of me which I accept,
But, I've learned that it's not healthy to just sit there and drag yourself through things.
It's just not okay.
I've become more aware of it and being more aware, I've realized I can push it aside,
And, be like, "Nope. I'm good in this moment. I'm fine."
If there's something I need to work on, I'll work on it.
I don't mind improving, but I don't need to criticize.
The whole voice of judgement was easier, super prominent in my life.
Coming up with my inner voice of persistence, I don't even know where to begin with that.
But, after doing it, I feel like it's been so positive.
Acknowledging the judgement but realizing that persistence is key.
And, you're not a failure.

Molly
Sophomore
Theatre
Just knowing that it's there and what form it likes to take is huge
Because I've never thought of it before, not in the sense of something
I could actively talk back to.
I mean, it's still doing its thing, but I am more aware.
It's been difficult because now I also can see it in other people
And that's a whole new aspect of it, especially people you're close to.

Persistence, as a whole it was easier.
I don't think the imagery came as quickly,
But emotion wise, the emotions connected to it are much easier to talk about
So, that made it more straightforward.
It's almost like the awareness of both voices in other people help me look at mine
From a more objective view.
As much as I have the one, I have the other,
I need to keep that in mind and give it the opportunity to quiet noise and reassess.

Shaynea
Sophomore
Film
I am able to pick it out more.
I know when I'm starting to get into the head space, "Okay, this is far beyond constructive..."
I'm just beating myself up at this point. "Okay, stop it."
I do that to just stop the train of thought.
I don't always catch it, but at least I know some steps I can take to dissuade it.
We are always so aware of our own faults and shortcomings
When you try to look for where your strengths is,
It always seemed to be undercut by your judgement.
But, you can still find it.
Persistence – I can use it to hype myself up.
It makes me feel like my mistakes are an actual adventure story.
As the heroine of your own story, you can't just stop here.

Lauren
Sophomore
Music
The biggest things I needed to be aware of was my emotions,
I've expected myself to be happy, strong, stable my whole life because I am a happy person.
And, I feel my role is helping others and allowing myself to feel angry sometimes
Or, to feel really sad and let that be real.
That has been hard for me.
I've deepened in important ways and that's the only way you can really heal.
Once I'm aware of what I'm feeling, I can always see why I shouldn't be feeling that –
I can talk myself out of it quite simply.
Sometimes I overanalyze it – Here's how I don't need to feel this, here's the pathway,
But, I want to feel for a little bit and let it be real.
I just always think it's me – It's hard for me to separate that it would be a voice of judgement.
It's hard to pin it down because it's so connected to me.
And, I'm not mean to myself, maybe that's why – It's not very harsh, just very real and honest.

Defining success. Participants had all experienced some struggle and conflict in their lives when it came to how they personally defined success, how their field defined success, and how important social influences such as their families defined success.

External definitions of success. When asked about how important people in their lives define success, all participants talked about their close family members, parents and occasionally siblings. Some students had families that valued financial stability while others had families that valued grades or personal fulfillment. Cassie mentions that her perception of her family's version of success "it was always get a job, successful in wealth, happiness,

family” (personal communication) as Claire echoed “success is a nine to five persistent job...Nice house, nice cars, successful kids” (personal communication). For Jordan and Shaynea, expectations of success as defined by their families was always more about getting good grades. Shaynea noted that coming from a very college-oriented family, “getting As and the degree was always the definition of success...For the longest time, if I got a C on my report card, I just felt horrible” (personal communication). On the other side, Christina and Molly both came from families that supported personal fulfilment and happiness as versions of success. Christina, when talking about her family, noted that “my parents, always instilled in me that success was just about happiness in life...Never felt like it was a matter of ‘you’re not doing as well because you didn’t take the same path’...Just different ways of achieving it, just your own happiness in your own life” (personal communication). Molly added that “people in my life describe success as very human-centric, the idea that growth or success is connected to awareness and self-improvement...Much less numbers based, much less like a tangible success” (personal communication).

Creative field definition of success. While external stakeholder views of success varied along several categories, students perceived their creative discipline’s definition of success in a much more narrowly defined way. In the field of architecture, Cassie noted that success is perceived to be the following:

... Money for sure, prestige, being on Pinterest. Amazing architects spend seven years on one project, but really, behind the scenes, there is like 4,000 people behind them. I don’t like our field’s version of success. It’s super limiting of what you can do and what you are expected to do. (Cassie, personal communication)

Other design majors such as Dani, Claire, and Christina had slightly differing views in similar fields, Dani noting that in her field success in interior design can be defined “by how the user can create a relationship with the space...something that can adapt through years and

years” (personal communication). Christina, a year behind Cassie in the same field, saw a change coming to design definitions of success as seen in the following statement:

My field defines success, probably kind of clear cut. Go to architecture school, get your master’s, get your licensure, go work at a firm, and do that forever. I think that’s actually starting to shift, this new generation starting to redefine it. It’s shifting this cut out sequence of events to be successful, now it’s becoming success is how you innovate and how you are wielding your powers and your talents to do good in the world. (Christina, personal communication)

Occupying a space in both design and art, Jordan discussed the two differing fields versions of success, design focusing on finding solutions for clients while art emphasizes exposure.

Jordan, on the two fields and success, said the following:

In the design field, there’s creativity but it’s strict, a lot of rules. And, I don’t always take too well to rules - I’ll listen, but I won’t be too happy about it. In design, success is more just like get the client, get the money, done. In the art world, it’s more like as long as you just get your stuff out and people know you, that’s success. (Jordan, personal communication).

In performance fields such as film and theatre, Molly and Shaynea offered that success was more about communication as a whole as well as creating new things. Shaynea offered about the field of film:

Filmmaking, it’s getting that picture out that wins you a billion dollars. But, it is also a bit of persistence in there. So, you’ve directed a flop, next time you just have to keep going until you build up your credit. You have to be okay with failing and working with other people who don’t see your vision. Or, you don’t really see their vision and you have to collaborate. Your success is contingent on your ability to not only express yourself, but to allow expression of others to come together and make art. (Shaynea, personal communication).

Molly also perceived theatre in a similar light as success to her was illuminating something that wasn’t there before, working, connecting with someone even if they might not like it” (personal communication).

Personal definition of success. Participants defined personal success much more in terms of personal and creative fulfilment especially in terms of generating new ideas or works to

move other people. Josephine defined success as “taking risks for things like art or storytelling, taking that leap and discovering something new...being able to overcome yourself for me anyway” (personal communication). Claire added that success was “happiness... I always define, feel successful, when I set personal goals for myself that will make me happy” (personal communication). Jordan added that success to her now was defined by “things to be learned in the process of failures and trying to come up with new creative ways to solve things...Success is more defined as the journey to get there rather than the destination” (personal communication). Dani noted that she defines “success as you’re enjoying what you do and it’s helping you grow...You learn how to think for yourself” (personal communication). Josephine and Shaynea share that success to them is creating meaningful stories and work that move other people as well as figuring out who they are as people. Shaynea concluded in talking about success with the following:

I’m always in my head and when I’m able to get what’s in my head out and have everyone see it, even if it’s really rough, it’s successful for me...That I at least tried to express myself. It did not make me happy to ace my classes, I wasn’t myself. I had to remind myself that I am also important. Whoever I am, I need to find that first. (Shaynea, personal communication).

Please see the following table for all participant views on differing definitions of success.

Table 26

Definitions of Success Post Intervention Course by Participant

| Name | Success Definition in Found Poetic Analysis |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Josephine Sophomore Art | <p>For a lot of people in my life, success is getting from point A, finding yourself at point B. Overcoming any obstacles that are in the way. Getting better results than anyone could have imagined. Getting huge, positive, tangible, outstanding results. Taking risks for things like art or storytelling. Taking that leap and discovering something new and being able to share with other people. Success is being able to overcome yourself, for me anyway. I am often the biggest obstacle for myself rather than any external variables. If I can get through something and finish and stand back, And say to myself “That didn’t exist before, but now it does because I created that.” That feels like success to me.</p> |
| Cassie Senior Architecture | <p>Growing up, it was always get a job, successful in wealth, happiness, family. But, there are people that just live in a van and travel around the world, And they are happy as hell. It’s really about what you want to do. [In architecture, success is] money for sure, prestige, being on Pinterest. Amazing architects spend seven years on one project, But really, behind the scenes, there is like 4,000 people behind them. I don’t like our field’s version of success, It’s super limiting of what you can do and what you are expected to do. What do I want to do? Taking a year off, applying to grad school, traveling and working between. Learn as much as I can, build buildings around the world, Marry a beautiful man that speaks a different language and have some cute kids Make our own dream houses in Italy or France or wherever. Bigger dreams than reality.</p> |
| Christina Junior Architecture | <p>My parents, always instilled in me that success was just about happiness in life. Never felt like it was a matter of “you’re not doing as well because you didn’t take the same path.” Just different ways of achieving it, just your own happiness in your own life. My field defines success, probably kind of clear cut. Go to architecture school, get your master’s, get your licensure, go work at a firm, And, do that forever. I think that’s actually starting to shift, this new generation starting to redefine it. It’s shifting this cut out sequence of events to be successful, Now it’s becoming success is how you innovate And how you are wielding your powers and your talents to do good in the world. It’s just figuring out what you really care about, and then pursuing that, And, pursuing a life that is going to make you happy.</p> |
| Claire Senior Architecture | <p>For [my family], success is a nine to five persistent job. Nice house, nice cars, successful kids, different from my view of success. Innovation would be the one term for success in architecture, Innovative. Creativity. Sustainability. Design. Building construction. All that kind of meshes under the umbrella of innovation. Happiness. I always define, feel successful, When I set personal goals for myself that will make me happy. Not following the norm and doing what I want to do despite what people think. Every semester since I started college has been progressively less about my friends want me to do, Less of what my grandparents want me to do, less of what everyone thinks I should do.</p> |

I'm going to live my life for a year and do all this stuff rather than what they want me to do.
I want to do everything!

Dani
Senior
Design
Doing that you want and loving it, no matter what it is.
As long as it's making you grow to be a better person or version of yourself.
My field, they define it by how the user can create a relationship with the space.
Something that can adapt through years and years.
I define success as you're enjoying what you do and it's helping you grow.
You learn how to think for yourself.
It's more than getting a basic degree and then you are done.
You keep going.

Jordan
Senior
Design
It started off as success is just reaching the A. That's it. Flat line.
But, I realize there's a lot of success and there's a lot of growth,
Things to be learned in the process of failures
And trying to come up with new creative ways to solve things.
Success is more defined as the journey to get there rather than the destination.
In the design field, there's creativity but it's strict, a lot of rules.
And, I don't always take too well to rules - I'll listen, but I won't be too happy about it.
In design, success is more just like get the client, get the money, done.
In the art world, it's more like as long as you just get your stuff out
And people know you, that's success.

Molly
Sophomore
Theatre
Growth, even in small cases.
Even if you're a little bit better than you were before,
Even if you surprise yourself a little bit with how something went.
When you take things and you let them be an opportunity to grow,
That's when you find success.
People in my life describe success as very human-centric,
The idea that growth or success is connected to awareness and self-improvement.
Much less numbers based, much less like a tangible success.
In theater, success is illuminating something that wasn't there before. Working.
Connecting with someone even if they might not like it.
Success was sharing one point, just a tiny shift I either hadn't thought of before
Or, I had known and I didn't care because it wasn't coming from a human being
I'm sitting right next to.

Shaynea
Sophomore
Film
College-oriented family, so getting As and the degree was always the definition of success.
For the longest time, if I got a C on my report card, I just felt horrible.
Filmmaking, it's getting that picture out that wins you a billion dollars.
But, it is also a bit of persistence in there,
So, you've directed a flop, next time you just have to keep going until you build up your credit.
You have to be okay with failing and working with other people who don't see your vision.
Or, you don't really see their vision and you have to collaborate.
Your success is contingent on your ability to, not only express yourself,
But to allow expression of others to come together and make art.
I'm always in my head and when I'm able to get what's in my head out
And have everyone see it, even if it's really rough, it's successful for me
That I at least tried to express myself.
It did not make me happy to ace my classes, I wasn't myself.
I had to remind myself that I am also important.
Whoever I am, I need to find that first.

Defining failure. The concept of failure changed for the participants over time and after the intervention course. Before and in earlier years within their academic progression, students indicated they perceived failure to be personal and full of self-criticism, self-doubt, and fear. Josephine noted that “I defined almost everything I did as a failure at one point just because of self-doubt and fear” while now she thinks “the only failure is just not doing anything at all or giving up entirely” (personal communication). Jordan used to see failure as something specific but has become more aware of the process of moving forward through failure as a process of learning.

Failure has definitely changed over time. Rather than something specific it has gone to something more general, a good thing. It used to be I’m not going to get a job, I’m not going to have money. That’s a fear in my head but that’s such a specific pinpoint of failure. My perception of failure now, I only see it as a challenge. I don’t see it as a stopping point. Over time, I’ve realized failure is just the chance to try something over again. (Jordan, personal communication).

Christina echoed this change in discussing how she has moved through considering failure in her life:

I think failure is missing out. I used to define failure as “Oh, you didn’t get the best grade or didn’t do as best as you are capable.” Now, it’s much more gray than that, not so black and white. Failure, isn’t about not succeeding in what you attempt, it’s just about whether or not you choose to attempt something in the first place. (Christina, personal communication).

Cassie no longer considered failure an end point, noting “I don’t really accept the word failure as much...Even when I feel like a failure, I know that’s its for a reason and I can look back and say, ‘I should have done that a little bit better’” (personal communication). Dani saw failure at this point in her life as not engaging or giving your all. For Dani, failure was “when you don’t put in all 110% and you don’t feel like you have a connection, then I think you’ve failed...Definitely something I changed in how I viewed the outcomes, some things you learn from...It’s not necessarily a bad thing” (personal communication). Shaynea viewed failure as not being herself. “Failure for me, before, was getting anything below a B...

Failure, now, is when I fail to be myself...” (Shaynea, personal communication). Lauren recognized that creative failure helps her grow artistically at this point but also added that time plays an important role in being able to reconceptualize and move through perceived failures.

Time is such an important part of the process of failure. You don’t have to immediately learn from it and be so excited, have a good outlook on your failure. It’s okay to get knocked down by it. And, that’s probably part of the important process of it. (Lauren, personal communication)

Molly noted that she previously viewed failure as “very pass-fail, yes or no, a binary essentially rather than an entire experience” while then reminding herself to “keep learning, keep growing... Hold the people around you close, and remember how you would feel if you looked at them with the same kind of standards and expectations you sometimes hold yourself to” (personal communication). Shaynea was able to reframe failure as the pursuit of greatness, adding the following:

It’s no longer an end of the world thing. Okay, so that didn’t work, got to try again. One failure doesn’t define who you are. It’s actually okay to fail, you’re expected to fail. You, in a way, have to fail to be great. (Shaynea, personal communication).

The following table overviews all participant views on failure after the intervention course.

Table 27

Definitions of Failure Post Intervention Course by Participant

| Name | Failure Definition in Found Poetic Analysis |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Josephine Sophomore Art | <p>I think the only failure is just not doing anything at all. Or, giving up entirely. Every failure is a learning experience, even it they are embarrassing. You never know when something you create could have a big impact on somebody else. I defined almost everything I did as a failure at one point, Just because of self-doubt and fear and things like that. Go easy on yourself. Don't beat yourself up over everything anymore because it's never worth it. Even if you feel discouraged now, Try to think about the effect this experience will have on your future. Keep that in mind to keep moving forward. Tell stories that mean something. Create an experience. I want to be able to know I made a positive different in somebody's day or life. I work hard to improve myself so I can get to that point for somebody else.</p> |
| Cassie Senior Architecture | <p>I don't really accept the word failure as much. It's just not an option for me. And, even when I feel like a failure, I know that it's for a reason. And, I can look back and say, "I should have done that a little bit better." Everything happens for a reason, so I don't like saying that failure marks an ending. There is always room for improvement. It doesn't define you. There are so many chance to redeem yourself. Nothing is ever set in stone and there is always a way to turn a failure into an opportunity.</p> |
| Christina Junior Architecture | <p>I think failure is missing out. I used to define failure as "Oh, you didn't get the best grade or didn't do as best as you are capable" Now it's much more gray than that, not so black and white. Failure, isn't about not succeeding in what you attempt, It's just about whether or not you choose to attempt something in the first place. Failure is being too stubborn, too stubborn to change, too stubborn to take risks. Do it anyways. Even if you are afraid of looking like an idiot or looking stupid, Or you are afraid of not fulfilling certain people's expectations. Just don't let that stop you, put yourself out there anyways. It's always better to at least try and make progress versus staying where you are at. Even putting yourself out there if it doesn't go well could lead to so many other opportunities, And, thoughts you have never had before.</p> |
| Claire Senior Architecture | <p>At this point, I would define it as a learning opportunity rather than just a complete failure. And, I don't like defining it, it's more of a learning opportunity than a road block or set back. I used to get super down when my school work wouldn't come out the way I wanted Or, I didn't quite reach the goal I set. But, now I definitely just take it, roll with it, and "What did I do?" "What can I do to avoid this in the future?" And keep rolling. Approach it with more of an open mind, just go with it. Keep doing what you're doing, don't be afraid. Embrace it. It's just learning.</p> |
| Dani Senior Design | <p>When you don't put in all 110% and you don't feel like you have a connection, Then I think you've failed. Definitely something I changed in how I viewed the outcomes, some things you learn from. It's not necessarily a bad thing. Just how my mind works, but I learned that I overthink a lot And, I judge myself before something even happens.</p> |

I'm trying to get out of this practice.
If I can do that, I feel like I've done a good job. What can I do better next time?
Don't second guess yourself. Just believe in it. And, hopefully, everything works out.

Jordan Senior Design Failure has definitely changed over time.
Rather than something specific it has gone to something more general, a good thing.
It used to be I'm not going to get a job, I'm not going to have money.
That's a fear in my head but that's such a specific pinpoint of failure.
My perception of failure now, I only see it as a challenge.
I don't see it as a stopping point.
Over time, I've realized failure is just the chance to try something over again.
Never view failure as the stopping point. Never let that take away from who you are.
And, never let anyone else define your success.
If they think it's a failure but you are proud of it, just a difference of opinion.
That doesn't mean there's wrong and right,
It just means that you need to keep persisting.

Molly Sophomore Theatre An opportunity to regroup and assess and grow.
I still harbor a little bit of that ideas that failure as unmet expectations,
But sometimes not meeting expectations can be helpful because you take a step back,
And look back at yourself and what's going on around you.
So, in that case, it becomes an opportunity.
I definitely had a one-dimensional opinion on failure, very pass-fail, yes or no,
A binary essentially rather than an entire experience.
It's going to happen so keep listening to my inner voice of persistence.
Keep learning, keep growing.
Hold the people around you close, and remember how you would feel if you looked at them
With the same kind of standards and expectations you sometimes hold yourself to.

Shaynea Sophomore Film Failure for me, before, was getting anything below a B.
Failure, now, is when I fail to be myself,
Or I fail to express what's going on with me, what's wrong with me,
My failure to communicate my struggles.
It's no longer an end of the world thing.
Okay, so that didn't work, got to try again.
One failure doesn't define who you are.
It's actually okay to fail, you're expected to fail,
You, in a way, have to fail to be great.
I'm still trying to find myself. I'm still trying to find where I am.
I define myself as a person exploring who she is
In that day, in that moment.

Lauren Sophomore Music In relationships, I'm harsher on myself in that area of failure.
Creatively, I'm excited by failure because I recognize it's going to help me grow.
But, when it's connected to people I really care about,
It's harder for me to approach it in healthy ways.
It's usually okay in the end.
Time is such an important part of the process of failure.
You don't have to immediately learn from it and be so excited,
have a good outlook on your failure.
It's okay to get knocked down by it,
And that's probably part of the important process of it.

Conclusion

Across qualitative data sources, participants reported being more confident in themselves as well as generally excited about learning new, challenging things especially when making it through their initial hesitation. They generally saw barriers to success primarily related to their own thought processes, specifically considering risk, fear, and self-doubt. Awareness of their own inner voice of judgement aided them in reflective practice while also giving them the opportunity to recognize their own critical narrative and practice interrupting it to dissuade the cyclical account. Some found designing their inner voice of persistence more challenging as it was previously unknown to them, but the process allowed them to change a known narrative based on previous experiences to a self-driven narrative based on their strengths. Participants viewed their Inner Voice of Judgement projects as narratives based in historical contexts as well as places where they felt inadequate while their final Voice of Inner Persistence projects focused on forward action to navigate barriers through reflective practices focusing on their individual strengths, values, passion areas, and goals. Participants were able to more easily distinguish between three levels of differing definitions of success, their family, their creative fields, and their own. Overall, they defined personal success as creative fulfilment and the ability to create new and innovative things within their field, considering success much more as an on-going process than a final destination.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to further examine how creative undergraduate students perceive and learn to navigate barriers to success while also exploring how once perceived failures can really be pivot points for further growth and exploration. These findings provide initial insights into the arts and design student experience with an intervention course designed around efforts to increase their self-efficacy, growth mindset, and academic persistence. The intervention was rooted in active reflection, mindfulness, and arts-based approaches to aid students in their exploration of personal values, strengths, insecurities, goals, past perceived failures, and future persistence. For this concluding chapter, I will discuss the complementarity of the data sources, results in relation to theoretical frameworks and supporting literature, themes across all research cycles, limitations of this project, implications for practice and future research, and lessons learned from this process.

Complementarity of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Complementary data illustrates how the quantitative and qualitative data sources led to similar and consistent conclusions while also deepening understanding of the study results (Greene, 2007). For this study, the quantitative pre- and post-test survey measured the extent of the change in students' self-efficacy, mindset, grit, and persistence while the qualitative data sources gave a richer view as to how students were making meaning out of these changes and growing in their individual ways. The quantitative data suggested a significant change in student self-efficacy, mindset, and persistence, and these findings were echoed within the interviews, course reflective questions, and the arts-based works. Students spoke at length on their changing approaches to challenges, noting they felt generally “pretty

confident” while also showcasing elements of confidence within their Inner Voice of Persistence projects and narratives. For mindset, participants talked in the interviews about their changing definitions of success/failure as being formerly grade-based, yet after the intervention course much more focused on learning for themselves and to better their creative craft, reflecting a change from fixed to growth mindset. Persistence as a whole was addressed in a variety of ways: student creative projects and narratives on their continued inner, positive voice moving toward action and persistence, their reflective weekly questions developing into questions about how to persist and practice in the future, and their interviews reframing perceived failures as future learning opportunities.

Results in Relation to Research Questions and Theoretical Frameworks

Theoretical frameworks. For this study, I utilized the theoretical frameworks of self-efficacy, mindset, grit, and persistence along with the secondary frameworks of resilience, theory of planned behavior, and mindfulness as detailed in chapter two. In the following section, I will connect the research results with each research question as well as further discussion to each theoretical framework along with relevant supporting literature.

RQ 1: To what extent do undergraduate students in design and the arts become more efficacious through experiences in an intervention course on failure? And, how do students make meaning through reflecting on their own self-efficacy?

In terms of self-efficacy, there was a significant positive change between pre- and post-test scores within the intervention course ($p = 0.015$). Reflecting the quantitative measures, the qualitative interviews echoed this data in that students reported feeling more confident in comparison to previous academic years through their intervention course experiences in reflection and self-awareness building. Participants noted through reflecting on their own

self-efficacy that they had grown over time and they were confident in their abilities to address future challenges.

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy, a component of Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, is an individual's belief that they are capable of performing the behaviors necessary for performance expectations. Self-efficacy is divided into the four following components: 1.) How positive or negative experiences influence how an individual is able to perform a task (performance outcomes), 2.) How people can develop self-efficacy through observing others (vicarious experiences), 3.) How self-efficacy is impacted by encouragement or discouragement from external sources (verbal persuasion), and 4.) How an individual's body sensations and emotion responses influence their beliefs (physiological feedback) (Bandura, 1977, 1997). The results from the quantitative pre- and post- test survey indicated the intervention course participants felt significantly more self-efficacious after experiencing the course, mirrored by the qualitative arts-based projects and interviews. On the qualitative side, participants indicated being more confident after the intervention course than in previous academic years, aided by reflection, self-awareness assignments, and classroom discussion. Assignments in the course addressed participant performance outcome expectations while the mindfulness components allowed them to engage in physiological feedback and emotional response. For the other two components of self-efficacy, students were able to engage in classroom conversation around navigating perceived failures (vicarious experiences) as well as discuss their designs of their Inner Voice of Persistence projects focused on creating an encouraging narrative (verbal persuasion).

RQ 2: To what extent do undergraduate students in design and the arts fall on the fixed/growth mindset continuum? How do students make meaning through reflecting on their mindset? On the quantitative side, students had a pre-test score for

mindset overall with a mean of 38.18 (standard deviation 7.21), growth mindset at 23.09 (standard deviation 3.51), and 15.09 for fixed mindset (standard deviation 4.87). In their post-test scores, the mean for overall mindset was 42.90 (standard deviation 7.13), growth mindset 26.18 (standard deviation 3.92), and fixed mindset 16.72 (standard deviation 4.47). There was a moderately significant positive change in fixed mindset and a barely significant positive change in overall mindset. That said, students measured higher overall in growth mindset at the beginning of the semester with the intervention course only moderately reducing their fixed mindset. In the qualitative components, students talked about their excitement when learning new things, and how over time they had come to understand that learning new things and hard work enhance their natural talent. At the conclusion of the intervention course, participants appeared less likely to approach a problem or challenge with a performance mindset, instead relying on their learning approach to fully investigate challenges in an effort to obtain new experiences and knowledge.

Mindset. Mindset has two components, fixed and growth (Dweck, 2006). Fixed mindset is the belief that talents, skills, and intelligences are fixed traits that bring about success without effort. Growth mindset, on the other hand, is the belief that these core abilities can develop over time and effort, leading to further learning and resilience. According to the quantitative surveys, participants experienced a moderately significant reduction in fixed mindset even though growth mindset did not increase (please note the fixed mindset scale was negatively coded so an increase, in the case, is a decrease in fixed mindset). Mindset overall, considering both sub-constructs, changed positively in a barely significant manner. That said, the initial measures on mindset, on a six-point Likert scale, were fairly high to begin. The qualitative interviews echoed these trends again in that students indicated they were excited about learning new, challenging things and that learning

new things increased their natural talents. Through reflection and goal setting, participants also noted they were willing to work hard to achieve their outcome goals while their motivation also increased to achieve their personal definitions of success. Overall, participants moved to a focus on perceived failures as times in which they did not try hard enough, extend enough effort, or use appropriate strategies to achieve their goals (positive failure attribution focused on internal control) versus their previously held beliefs that failures came about from not being skilled or talented enough to achieve their goals (negative failure attribution focused on external control).

RQ3: To what extent are undergraduate students in design and the arts gritty?

As grit as a construct is not intended to change in pre- and post-test settings, simply, the course participants are fairly gritty with a pre-test mean of 43.81 (standard deviation 3.87) and a post-test mean of 44.73 (standard deviation 5.61). There was no significant change between the two data sets.

Grit. Grit is considered to be the combination of perseverance of effort alongside consistency of interests/passions over time (Duckworth, 2016). Grit is a stable, non-cognitive personality trait that allows individuals to overcome barriers, obstacles, and distractions in achieving their goals. It is essentially the spirit of diligence. The grit scale for this study, the 12-Item Grit Scale on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1.) Not like me at all to 5.) Very much like me, is not designed for a pre- and post-test environment given it is considered a stable trait and therefore should not change over time. Thus, it was not surprising when there was not a significant change in grit. That said, it was the most unpredictable construct as the internal reliability moved from the pre- and post-tests. On the qualitative data side, I did not address grit directly rather focusing on perceived barriers and perseverance for the following construct given the following reasons. In a meta-analysis of

grit-related literature and work based on 584 effect sizes from 88 samples representing 66,807 individuals, Credé, Tynan, and Harms (2016) found that grit as a construct may not affect future performance and success while it also highly favors perseverance of effort over the other sub-scale of long-term interests. Based on their analysis, Credé, Tynan, and Harms challenge that grit is not a higher-order construct characterized by the two sub-constructs of perseverance of effort and consistency of interest. They found that grit highly favored perseverance, adding that “perseverance is a much better predictor of performance than either consistency or overall grit and should therefore probably be treated as a construct that is largely distinct from consistency to maximize its utility” (Credé, et al., p. 502) However, even as grit may not predict future performance or success, they did support grit as a modest measure for retention, noting that “grit predicts retention approximately as well as many more traditional predictors of retention such as cognitive ability and high school grades – although not as well as some other noncognitive predictors” such as study habits and skill acquisition (Credé et al., p. 502). So, grit may be applicable given the context of higher education in this study as it allows for the identification of students who may benefit the most from intervention strategies and support. Though grit did not respond to this particular intervention course, it remains inconclusive if grit can be a malleable construct to intervention strategies even as it gives a decent baseline for where students currently consider their perseverance of effort and, at a slightly reduced consideration, their consistency of interests over time. Therefore, I am interested in continuing to measure grit over time and with future larger samples to gain understanding of where arts and design students perceive themselves on the scale, utilizing the data to inform possible intervention strategies and approaches to improve retention.

RQ4: To what extent are undergraduate students in the design and the arts academically persistent? How do students make meaning through reflecting on their academic persistence? The intervention course significantly changed student academic persistence for the positive ($p = 0.008$) and moderately changed their persistence in terms of academic integration. There was no change in their persistence in terms of degree commitment. Students indicated that they perceived the greatest barriers to their persistence as mostly self-imposed in nature, related to their own self-confidence, fear of risk and failure, and self-doubt. They also indicated that through self-awareness and self-agency activities they were able to reflect on their own persistence to find a way forward toward their goals.

Persistence. Persistence is the willingness to continue onward (and hopefully upward) past barriers to achieve a goal such as earning a college degree or becoming a famous artist/successful designer. For college students, persistence is impacted by contextual influences, social influences, and overall academic engagement (Hadley et al., 2012). Contextual influences include financial support, institution selectivity and competition, and the overall size of the institution while social influences incorporate perceived social support, engagement, and involvement (Hadley et al.). Academic engagement considers academic integration, degree commitment, and commitment to the overall institution (Hadley et al.). Utilizing an adapted scale on student persistence, I rewrote components of Davidson, Beck, and Mulligan's (2009) college persistence scale to measure intention toward academic integration and degree commitment, solidly within the beforementioned academic engagement area of persistence. Given the chance to go back, I would also include their section on social integration to more fully explore the multiple facets of persistence and will do so in future research. Davidson, Beck, and Mulligan note that the differing components of their survey vary over institutions and may not be predictive given that specific

institutions and populations value different things. Thus, this survey may give further indication of a context's underlying values when taken as a whole. For instance, degree commitment may measure lower than expected at an institution with large populations of students considering transferring to another college and social integration may skew lower at an institution with a large commuting or non-traditional populations. These measures give context to how students perceive their own environments as well as provide guides by which to engage them in meaning-making. For the purposes of this particular study, it may simply be that students value academic integration more than degree commitment as they are from creative populations, areas that do not necessarily need degrees to work in their chosen fields.

Overall, after the intervention course, participants perceived barriers to be primarily self-inflicted and internally situated yet pulled upon their own self-efficacy, grit, and growth mindset to become more persistent over time. Persistence, like grit, is also related to student retention and these scores could also be utilized for future intervention strategies, comparing different populations, investigating individual cases of persistence, and looking at the whole of the measure to determine the unwritten institutional priorities as perceived by students.

RQ5: How do undergraduate students in design and the arts negotiate *perceived failures*? Study participants within the qualitative components of the study noted that their understanding of failure had changed over time, moving from a personal feeling of discontent to a more general sense of lack of action. After the intervention course, they discussed failure as a lack of trying, doing, or attempting, reframing failure as a way to help them grow as a person instead of a deeply personal failure. They spoke of failure previously being seen as a stopping point while after the course they were able to see it as an opportunity to pivot, learn, or grow in order to move forward in their learning.

RQ6: How do undergraduate students in the design and the arts make meaning out of their *definition of success*? Similarly to the cycle two participants, the intervention course participants saw differing versions of success in relation to their support network (most commonly parents and family members), their creative field, and their own sense of success. Participants discussed success as the process of finding fulfilment and meaning in their work. Several participants also noted they had previously defined success in terms of grades and academic achievement, but through their experiences had come to more define success as learning, creating, and embracing themselves as a full person.

Tying the Threads Together Across Cycles

This study comprised of several distinct sections and data sources ranging from exploratory interviews with alumni, faculty, and students around their perspectives on challenges, failures, and perseverance to the mixed-method dissertation cycles that incorporated a quantitative pre- and post-survey, course participant-constructed reflective questions, creative arts-based projects, and semi-structured interviews. Overall, this study incorporated a total of 71 different perspectives from all participants in all cycles from a variety of creative disciplines and diverse backgrounds. The cycle two research initial themes came from interviewing ten alumni, faculty, and students around their perceptions of barriers along with their definitions of failure and success, producing four core emergent themes: 1.) Reflection is an important tool for determining both the choice to pursue a creative degree path as well as a career in design and the arts, 2.) Creatives consider learning to be a life-long journey, 3.) Creatives experience differing perceptions of success from their fields, their families, and their own personal definitions of success, and 4.) Failure is an integral part of engaging in the creative process. In moving to the dissertation cycles of research, the quantitative pre- and post- survey found that participants who engaged in the

intervention course on failure experienced the following: 1.) Significant change in self-efficacy and persistence, 2.) Moderate significant change in fixed mindset and persistence in academic integration, 3.) Barely significant change in overall mindset, and 4.) No significant change in grit (which was to be expected), overall mindset, and persistence in degree commitment. Through looking at two creative arts-based course assignments, the Inner Voice of Judgement (VOJ) and Inner Voice of Persistence (VOP), two themes emerged as

- 1.) The Inner Voice of Judgement is a self-critical, internal narrative based in historical context that is also familiar and easily identified by participants and
- 2.) For Inner Voice of Persistence, participants utilized reflection to draw upon their strengths, values, and support systems to design an internal, positive narrative for future action and barrier navigation.

In the following semi-structured interviews with nine female intervention course participants, students discussed their approaches to their own self-efficacy, mindset, barriers, and the VOJ/VOP project design as well as contemplated their definitions of success and failure. For self-efficacy, intervention course participants were more confident after the course and in their current year of academic standing than in prior academic years. They also noted that the course provided active reflection opportunities and self-awareness development that aided in their confidence building. For mindset, participants indicated they were generally excited about learning new, challenging things even as they sometimes still felt cautious in their approach when they were unsure of expectations or results. Overall, they also indicated that they felt learning new things enhanced their natural talent as well, memorably quoted by Cassie as the act of “adding more paint to your palette” (personal communication) which emulated a previous comment by alumna Dolores in her statement “you only have one life to live and you don’t explore that passion, it’s like a waste of a palette” (personal communication). In discussing barriers, students specified that they perceived their primary

barriers to success to be predominately self-imposed in nature, stemming from their own fear of risk and self-doubt. When reflecting on their process of creating the VOJ/VOP, participants noted that self-awareness through reflection was the primary take-away from the projects and overall course. For participants, the VOJ was an easier project to create as it was based on lived and familiar experiences, while they also noted that the VOP project was easier to think about, talk about, or share given its basis in positive emotions. Participants discussed three distinct definitions of success: success as defined by themselves, their family, and their creative field. For personal definitions of success, participants focused on fulfilment, happiness, authenticity, and the creation of new, innovative works. Some, especially in design and fine art fields, found their creative field's definitions of success limiting while also remaining cognizant that these paradigms are also shifting and changing over time. Participants in the creative fields of theatre and film much more defined their creative field's definition of success in terms of collaboration, communication, and sharing new ideas with others. When discussing failure, participants detailed how their definitions of failure had changed over time and through the intervention course, moving from a binary concept of fail versus succeed, to more of an ongoing process of trial and error.

When looking at supporting literature around the concepts of failure and persistence, researchers looking at perceived academic control and failure found that students with higher levels of perceived control withdrew from fewer classes as well as performed at a higher level in terms of grades (Perry et al., 2005). They also found that the students who were fixated or concerned with academic failure also performed at higher grade levels than those who had a high level of control with less overall concern about failure (Perry et al.). However, the researchers added that even though the combination of high-control and failure-preoccupation may lead to higher grade point averages (GPA), “this success is in

contrast to the possibility that it may result from strategies that are not conducive to achievement striving overall” (Perry et al., p. 562). Essentially, in their effort to obtain a high GPA due to failure-preoccupation, students may not enroll in difficult courses, may withdraw completely from courses they perceive to be difficult or challenging, and focus on boosting their grades to the detriment of overall learning. Translated to the arts and design, students may not engage in creative risks within their academic courses due to the fear of failure and their focus on academic achievement, resulting in higher grades yet less innovative creative work. In another study looking at 153 undergraduate students at a large public university looking at Dweck’s implicit theory of intelligence, goal orientations, failure attributions, and optimism, Eppler, Carsen-Plentl, and Harju (2000) found that the groups with high performance orientation used negative failure attributions (*i.e.* “I do not have the ability to do this so it is out of my control if I fail”) while those students with high learning orientation focused much more on positive failure attributions (*i.e.* “I did not achieve this because I did not put in sufficient effort or I did not perhaps utilize the best strategies”). Students with higher levels of learning orientation, the belief that intelligence and ability are flexible and skill level can be increased through knowledge (really a theoretical precursor to growth mindset), had higher overall academic performance. On the other hand, the students focused much more on performance, even though they mostly maintained their academic achievement, were the most pessimistic and tended to attribute their failures to external factors. The researchers noted that “performance orientation may motivate students to perform well for extrinsic reasons, until they encounter failure situations” as student who are focused on a high level of performance tend to “utilize a set of attributions which has been linked to learned helplessness and depression” (Eppler et al., p. 368). Essentially, learning orientation and academic achievement are strongly linked, but layering the value of

performance on top of these two ideas becomes much more complex as students with this performance focus then tend much more toward negative failure attributions and pessimism (Eppler et al.). Thus, learning orientation, or growth mindset, not only contributes to academic achievement but it also fosters optimism and strategies that are likely to result in continued intrinsic motivation and persistence. The focus on high level performance in turn may result in high achievement but sometimes to the detriment of the individuals' coping skills, level of optimism, and overall mental health. Again, moved into the context of design and the arts, I suggest that performance orientation is likely much more prevalent than learning orientation as undergraduate students are focused on proving competence and avoiding negative critique in their creative work, as evidenced in the qualitative interviews during which students talked about previous definitions of failure and barriers to success. This orientation may foster high academic achievement, but when students in performance orientation are faced with challenge or perceived failure, they may retreat rather than put forth additional effort, attribute missteps to external factors, and suffer a sense of powerlessness. The fear of failure can be a strong motivator for academic achievement, but it does not foster the skills, beliefs, and attitudes that lead to longer-term resiliency and persistence. Flipping to strategies for identifying and supporting college students at risk for failure, Thompson and Geren (2002) suggest working on self-awareness, self-agency, and self-regulation as ways to support students, assisting students in the process of thinking of themselves as learners, giving them opportunities to think about how they think and learn, having them set specific goals, and then applying strategies to advance themselves toward their goals over time.

Overall emergent themes. Thus, I present three final themes from across all research cycles: 1.) Reflection is imperative for developing self-awareness and self-agency, 2.)

Self-awareness and self-agency in turn mitigate fear of failure, and 3.) Failure can and should be reframed as learning especially within the creative process.

Theme 1: Reflection is an important tool for self-awareness and self-agency.

The power of reflection and its impact on self-awareness is well-researched, and the findings of this action research study support other works in this area. An individual's capacity to actively and consciously reflect on their sense of self, a combination of traits, characteristics, and interactions that guide choices, behaviors, and social relations, is an important part of developing self-awareness (Johnson, Baxter, Wilder, Pipe, Heiserman, & Prigatano, 2002). Self-awareness, looping in the long-standing framework of the levels of consciousness (Duval & Wicklund, 1972), is the ability for an individual to focus on the internal, essentially becoming the object of their own attention (Morin, 2005). Self-awareness allows individuals to intentionally consider both their public and private selves, the former focusing on visible attributes, behaviors, and appearance while the latter emphasizes emotions, perceptions, values, goals, motives, and sensations (Morin). Morin argues that an individual's "private self-aspects ('private self-awareness') represents a higher form of self-awareness compared to attending to ones public self-dimensions ('public self-awareness'), because that kind of self-information is more conceptual (i.e., abstract) than public self-aspects" (p. 360). Self-coherence, the knowledge we are distinct from our external contexts, and self-agency, the idea that people construct their own thoughts, intentions, and actions (Morin, 2005; Kircher & David, 2003) interact with self-awareness to allow us to know we are ourselves over time, a fairly important part of being a functioning human. By internally focusing on themselves, individuals are able to self-evaluate by considering their current location based on their own self-imposed expectations and standards (Duval & Wickland; Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1987). The outcomes of this process are "when one exceeds the standard, self-focus

produces positive affect...When one falls short of the standard, however, self-focus produces negative affect, resulting in attempts either to reduce the negative discrepancy or to escape self-focus” (Pyszczynski & Greenberg, p. 125.) Hence, the Inner Voice of Judgement narrative comes from self-focus and self-evaluation that does not meet participant expectations or standards while the Inner Voice of Persistence is geared to reframe self-set standards in order to reduce rigidity and improve positive affect.

So, how does self-reflection as a practice fit into higher education? This action research study focused on arts-based approaches to aid students in self-reflection practices, but this is in no way a new way to incorporate reflective practices into intervention courses. Yet, there is a myriad of ways to encourage self-reflection in college experiences especially when considering the incorporation of different modalities of mindfulness and arts-based approaches. In a study looking at 82 medical students in an eleven-week course focusing on mind-body connection, vaguely similar to the intervention course within this study, researchers found that through utilizing relaxation techniques, mindfulness, breathing, guided imagery, and other forms of meditation, participants reported feeling more connected with the ability to express feelings, share attitudes, and develop relationships (Saunders et al., 2007). Additionally, students experienced self-discovery components, stress relief, and the ability to realize their academic program may not foster a healthy emotional life, leading to some changing priorities in their lives to focus more on self-care (Saunders et al, 2007). These findings parallel this study’s findings in that a short session intervention course related to mindfulness and self-awareness impacted students’ emotional life and personal viewpoints of how they would like to move forward in the pursuit of fulfilment. In a completely different arena in considering anger and verbal aggression in college students, Terry, Smith, and Donzella (2001), working from the idea that self-awareness is a way for people to detect

discomfort, found that a sense of awareness of body and internal states may prompt aggressiveness/anger if someone is experiencing a self-discrepant state. In summary, if students are self-aware and in a state of internal conflict, they are more likely to be angry or aggressive to others and to themselves. Allowing students to explore self-awareness and self-discrepancies with the goal of positive self-agency influences their thoughts, intentions, and actions. Therefore, I posit that intentionally incorporating these aspects, intentional mindfulness activities, arts-based creative projects focused on developing self-agency, and active self-reflection toward continued self-awareness, into courses as well as other intervention strategies (such as conflict resolution, peer mediation, and sexual violence prevention) will aid college students using active reflection to become more self-aware, cognizant of their own expectations and standards, and with the ability to craft their own thoughts of self-agency.

Theme 2: Self-awareness and self-agency mitigate fear of failure. Connecting back to the secondary supporting theoretical framework detailed in chapter two, the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), failure according to the participants for this study was when their behavioral beliefs and attitudes, norms, control beliefs and lack perceived control led to no intention for action or behavior. Failure was disengaging from the process of creation, the absence of trying, or not engaging fully due to lack of feelings of perceived behavioral or actual behavioral control, sometimes even going so far as to self-sabotage themselves in thought or action due to lack of perceived control even while considering failure as driven by external factors. By the end of the intervention course, participants indicated they were overall much more willing to engage in creative pursuits with a higher possibility of risk/failure as their control beliefs and attitudes had changed to allow them to reconceptualize barriers to performance and their own talents/strengths by which to achieve

their goals. By investigating their own self-awareness and self-agency, participants were able to reframe their own beliefs and attitudes toward intended behaviors, consider norms around their work as well as how important stakeholders define success in their fields, reflect on their ability to overcome challenges and barriers, and explore what resources, talents, and strengths they would need to be successful. Self-awareness, as previously discussed, allows individuals to regulate their thoughts and behaviors to reach a goal: the area in which definitions of success come into play as motivation to achieve self-set goals increases as self-regulation increases. This process is also a bit of a cycle as individuals internally set standards, practice self-awareness, increase salience of their own standards and expectations, reframe to consider successful performance, and then work to find resources to achieve their future goals. In a healthy cycle of self-awareness and self-regulation, this perhaps looks very akin to the reiterative model of design thinking with a focus on internal cycling forward through standard setting, empathy, determining a sense of control through reflection, prototyping corresponding behaviors geared toward achievement, and reassessing to begin anew.

In a study looking at 524 college students, Perry, Hladkyj, Pekrum, and Pelletier (2001) found surprising results in considering how students approached beliefs of academic control and failure. They divided students into two groups, one comprised of students with high academic control beliefs and the other group preoccupied with failure. Students with high academic control beliefs reported overall more motivation, less boredom and anxiety, more effort exerted toward achievement, more self-regulatory strategies, and more feelings of control over their entire lives and assignments. Students with a focus on failure reported less control over their life experiences, so they compensated with academic strategies such as note-taking and a renewed focus on grade achievement. In looking at final academic grades,

thus, failure-focused students performed at higher academic levels, receiving significantly higher grades by one to two letter grades.

And, this focus on academic achievement is where I see the direct conflict with ongoing student persistence. At face value, higher academic grades as an outcome appears to be vastly preferable to C-average students, yet through my experiences in this study and within higher education, I would offer an alternative: Would we like our students to get good grades sometimes to the detriment of their emotional health or would we like them to be more motivated, less bored, less anxious, more intentional in their efforts extended toward achievement, practicing more self-regulation and self-awareness, and feeling more control over their own lives? To me, this seems like a trade-off worth making, especially considering the fields of design and the arts as they are areas that value divergent thinking and creation. Self-awareness, self-agency, and self-regulation allow students to select, shape, and organize learning opportunities for themselves while also giving them chances to control their own learning over time. This process is especially important as creatives consider themselves life-long learners, so giving them the ways by which to continue the learning process after their academic program is key (see themes from Cycle Two on p. 75-78). Zimmerman (1990), in looking at self-regulated learning and academic achievement, noted the following:

All learners are responsive to some degree during instruction; however, students who display initiative, intrinsic motivation and personal responsibility achieve particular academic success...These self-regulated students are distinguished by their systematic use of metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral strategies; by their responsiveness to feedback regarding the effectiveness of their learning; and by their self-perceptions of academic accomplishment.

These components make me think of the interview with Shaynea, a sophomore film student, as she was discussing how getting anything less than an A previously made her feel horrible prior to the intervention course. She added the following:

It did not make me happy to ace my classes, I wasn't myself.
I had to remind myself that I am also important.
Whoever I am, I need to find that first...
I'm still trying to find myself.
I'm still trying to find where I am.
I define myself as a person exploring who she is
In that day, in that moment.
(Shaynea, personal communication).

It is imperative that we reframe academic success to incorporate more than just grades as a measure for success. In creative fields, we do and should emphasize a focus on student self-exploration, awareness, agency, and their ability to engage in self-directed learning as they prepare to move forward into creative careers.

Theme 3: Failure reframed as learning in creative process. The creative process is generative and exploratory in nature, incorporating idea invention and evaluation over time (Lubart, 2001; Finke, Ward, & Smith, 1992). Exploration encompasses the “interpretation of preinventive structures, hypothesis testing, and searching for limitations” (Lubart, p. 300). Mumford et al. (1991) also concluded that creative problem solving involves the following: 1.) Ill-defined problems with an emphasis on problem-construction as part of the work, 2.) Generation of new, alternative solutions that involved divergent and convergent thinking, 3.) Active, attention-demanding processing from multiple cycles of ideation, and 4.) The reorganization of information from existing category structures into new combinations or new categories. Yet, students within creative fields continue to be risk-averse and anxious about perceived failure in their fields. Risk-aversion is also a gendered behavior as women tend to be overall more averse to risk than men, though this predictor changes depending on specific context and has not been controlled for other factors such as demographics, socio-economic status, knowledge, and available support (Eckel & Grossman, 2008). In a completely different field of study looking at how people approach

risk and risk-avoidance in economic structures, Holt and Laury (2002) discuss that individuals, when faced with high-incentives and hypothetical choices, cannot imagine how they would actually behave while also underestimating how much they would avoid risk. Self-efficacy, leading back to the first supporting construct, helps alleviate risk-aversion while persistence provides a pathway to overcome perceived barriers. Given that academic training and future work within creative fields will likely require risk, include the possibility of high incentives (fame, exposure, monetary gain, power, etc.), and encourage reiterative problem solving, reframing perceived failure appears to be integral to creative educations. Therefore, it is imperative that we support the exploration of risk and failure within student learning experiences, providing the opportunities to try new, possibly risky approaches as well as utilizing perceived failures as pivot points for future creative work. It is easy to support these endeavors on a surface level, but it is much harder to truly embrace a culture that highly values the process of innovation as student academic performance in terms of grades might lessen even as actual learning increases. Yet, the context of design and the arts might be the perfect place to model these endeavors as the values of life-long learning, reiterative processes, and innovative work throughout a lifetime of labor are core components of successful creative career. Design and the arts, further, may be a method by which to teach and approach risk and failure in other contexts as it allows students the opportunity to explore, reflect, and create alternative narratives in their own journeys.

Limitations of Study

This study is limited due to the constrained time frame of the overall study, number of overall participants, and lack of substantial prior research in terms of the study population especially in relation to the selected theoretical constructs. As this was a mixed-method action research, the results are only truly geared to the specific context and institution where

it took place. Thus, this study is not generalizable or transferable in terms of findings as the intervention course presented at another context or with another population may not produce similar results.

The first limitation for this study is the overall study timeline as the primary dissertation research cycles occurred between August 2017 and January 2018 for a total of five months. Additionally, the intervention course was designed for short-session schedule with only eight total weeks of instruction for an hour and a half each week. This course began the conversation with students on how they approach risk, navigate barriers, and reconceptualize failure as part of their specific creative process, but it was in no way exhaustive in content. How students actually apply these course components to their daily, creative lives over a longer period of time was not addressed as part of this study though in terms of further research would be illuminating to discover.

The second limitation for this study is overall participation given the small number of students measured for this intervention course. With a total enrollment of nineteen students, the pre- test survey captured eighteen participants. Yet, by the end of the semester, a total of eleven students completed the post-test survey for comparison, bringing the total data used for comparison on the quantitative measures to eleven. Related to the first limitation, time, there was also only time to interview and select arts-based works from nine participants for the individual qualitative components of the study. The final sample for this intervention course was also entirely female in terms of participation, so thus it is limited to arts and design women's experiences.

The third limitation of this study is related to the body of literature from which I drew to put together this study. Though the theoretical constructs were all highly studied, there was a distinct gap in considering the specific population of undergraduate arts and

design students for this study. Creative student populations may or may not measure the same way as other student populations but given the gap in literature it is difficult to determine. Creative student populations within higher education remain an area for future research as the literature tends to only consider specific disciplines, earlier academic settings, or how arts alumni work in their respective careers.

Implications for Practice

The experience of collaborative inquiry, constructing, instructing, and measuring this intervention course geared toward developing student persistence and resiliency has and will continue to change my personal practice within higher education. Additionally, this research study was the first time I utilized action research (AR) within my own context in order to enact and measure change. Further, I employed a design thinking methodology as way by which to give structure to the cyclical AR process in order to determine the desirability, feasibility, and viability of the intervention course. In terms of my own personal practice, I fully see the benefits of this AR/design thinking pairing in that it allows for empathy and listening to define a problem of practice as well as encourages divergent thinking in order to explore possible solutions through ideation. The reiterative cycles of AR then allow for prototyping and testing in order to find creative solutions and further synthesis across multiple data sources and research cycles. As a method for inquiry to provide solutions grounded in the context's needs, I fully intend to further investigate this pairing as well as put into practice within my own future work. That said, there are some challenges from AR/design thinking process as this method takes time and space for cyclical and reiterative exploration, divergent and convergent thinking, analysis, and final synthesis. This process takes time and can seem sometimes vague and nebulous before there is a clear course toward a possible solution. Thus, it may be tempting to shortchange certain components due to the

necessity to move forward toward a proposed solution. I would simply add that taking time to work through the design thinking process in order to first truly define the problem of practice is paramount to constructing sustainable and creative context-specific interventions.

Results from this mixed-method action research study suggested several implications for practice. In this section, I will address the following implications for practice which are (a) the importance of reflective practice and mindfulness in curriculum design in the arts and design, (b) how arts-based projects allow students to create and engage in their personal development, and (c) how engaging students in discussion around topics of their values, goals, definitions of success, and definitions of failure can be transformational and empowering.

Importance of active reflection and self-awareness in academic settings. One of the take-aways from this course and study is how reflection and engaging in the process of self-awareness are truly important for learning experiences in design and the arts. I do think these processes are very much active and emphasized in the context of creative discipline instruction, but from talking to participants, they did not feel there was enough time spent consistently engaging them in these types of conversations. In my own instruction/work outside of this intervention course, I utilize some aspects of mindfulness, reflection, and self-agency-building, but not to the fullest extent possible. Therefore, it is my recommendation that when considering curriculum design, that practitioners incorporate specific learning outcomes and experiences directly related to self-awareness and self-agency.

Utilization of arts-based projects for student development. A second realization from this study is the importance of arts-based creative work when asking students to practice reflection and exploration of their own internal processes in the goal of student development. Students were asked to produce creative pieces around a variety of prompts in

the mediums of their choice, resulting in creative components in the forms of collage, word clouds, poetry, paintings, drawings, sculptures, film, original compositions, choreographed dance, animations, and narratives. Most students created pieces in their primary medium for the majority of the course, but after a class conversation around risk and vulnerability, they then synthesized their learning into a final piece in a medium that they perceived to be riskier or out of their regular sense of control as a way to practice interrupting their VOJ. Several participants in the interviews mentioned this process as one of the most resonant of the course while also offering that if given the ability to go back and re-do anything, they would select more challenging mediums more outside their perceived control in order to practice exploration and positive self-agency. These creative projects allowed students to engage at their own level, share with others, and learn from each other while also giving them a creative outlet and artifacts to keep along the journey.

Transformational approaches to student learning. Discussing vulnerable and sometimes scary topics such a risk, failure, and internal processes within an interdisciplinary course appeared to be meaningful and transformational to participants. In discussing the intervention course as a whole, Christina added the following:

...Through the very reflective creative exercises and not feeling like there were these guideline specifications of how it need to be done, that was really relaxing to me because it was like for once I could finally do something that I would have normally been very self-conscious...just doing it in a way that I wanted to do it and just having the full freedom to be expressive in that way, which is not something I ever really get a chance to do. (Christina, personal communication).

Dani and Molly stated they did not see the course as truly having an end, Molly likening the overall experience to being at the “training wheel stage” before moving forward with improved skills of persistence and Dani noting it was “not really a beginning and end type of

class” as she continued using skills from the course. Lauren remembered feeling touched by another participants’ willingness to share and be vulnerable as seen in the following quote:

She shared her inner voice of judgement and cried and it was so ... I just saw myself in her, but it was amazing for someone else to express that. And, the way that she described hers, made clear how mine was. And, I never could've had that just on my own. It's like the idea of collaboration and working together. When someone is willing to be vulnerable, you can understand yourself in new ways. And I just really looked up to everyone else in the class who was willing to be vulnerable and share. (Lauren, personal communication).

Molly talked about missing the course when it was complete:

It became a part of the week I didn't know I needed. With meditating and just kind of unpacking after whatever the week threw at me, knowing that I got to be creative and have to make that time because it's a class, but then be able to talk about it and present it and just have a chance to grow... A much-needed reminder of the things I value and my beliefs. As well as my strengths and weaknesses.... I definitely pulled away the ability to remind myself of the bigger picture in that sense, and a stronger growth mindset, because I was definitely feeling myself fall back into the fixed, if you're not meeting expectations, you're failing and if you're failing, you're lagging behind. So, it was nice to also have that and re-explore what failure actually means. (Molly, personal communication).

Participants overall remarked they were able to apply knowledge and skills from the course to their personal and creative lives, Jordan mentioning, “Just the idea that failure doesn’t define you...That’s the biggest thing I got from the course, and that has, like I said, completely changed my outlook on things which is good” (personal communication).

As an educator, these are the important components of education: skill acquisition, deeper knowledge and understanding, and the ability to apply concepts to other facets of life with a goal of persistence and resiliency. The course served as a reminder of the importance of the things students valued, their unique skills and viewpoints, and how they were able to transform their own thought-processes toward a kinder, positive form of self-agency. As a practitioner in education, the implications of this study lead to an emphasis on curriculums

focused on student transformational learning through self-reflection, self-awareness, and creative approaches.

Implications for Research

Results from this study suggest numerous areas for future research and exploration. The results of this study show that an arts-based intervention course focusing on self-awareness and self-agency positively moved the dial on student self-efficacy, mindset, and academic persistence. Thus, when discussing student persistence and retention, these may be important variables when working toward improving student learning and engagement. Though this intervention existed within a course structure, a well-studied area in terms of interventions with college student populations, I would also be interested in how similar approaches impact student populations in extra-curricular settings such as workshops, lectures, or other experiential learning opportunities.

More research should be conducted to better understand how students in creative disciplines incorporate failure into their learning processes as well as how they become less-risk adverse (if at all) over their academic programs and future careers. Additionally, future research should also consider how the different creative disciplines approach and navigate reiterative learning and failure from their unique cultures. Given the population for this study, it was a brief look into a few individuals' lives, but even given that small sample there appeared to be distinct lines between certain academic disciplines and how much they encourage self-reflection, self-awareness, and learning through reiterative failure.

In terms of next steps related to this study, I am interested in the following research questions, though they are in no way exhaustive in their approach:

Table 28

Future Research Questions

| Suggested Questions for Future Research |
|--|
| Q1: How and to what extent does participation in a course on failure change students' intentions? |
| Q2: How and to what extent does participation in a course on failure change students' behaviors? And, for how long? |
| Q3: How and to what extent does an arts-based curriculum on failure and persistence impact students in other academic disciplines? |
| Q4: How and to what extent does a student's support network change their behaviors around perceived failures? |
| Q5: How and to what extent does an intervention course on failure and persistence vary in terms of results across class size/in-person or online platform/short or long academic sessions/academic year? |
| Q6: How and to what extent does inspiration relate to self-motivation and self-regulation? |
| Q7: How and to what extent does curiosity relate to self-awareness and self-agency? |

Lessons Learned and Closing Thoughts

Teaching this course with Dr. Heywood and getting to know the students on such a personal, vulnerable, and individual level was life-changing for me. When I started the process, I knew I would be spending years reading relevant literature, designing all my approaches to hopefully come up with a fully realized study, and immersing myself in a variety of data sets in the hope of finding some semblance of meaning. I mostly hoped that it would work in some way as a study on failure resulting in failure is perhaps too satirical even for me. I did not truly foresee how engaging in this process of active reflection on perceived failures and utilizing arts-based strategies to become more self-aware would impact both the participants as well as myself. Throughout these past years, the process of writing

the above document has made me feel like a true failure at times, a complex struggle in figuring out where I was and where I wanted to go. Yet, I would frequently find myself muttering, “Take some of your own advice...How do you interrupt that inner voice of judgement and replace it with the light...How do you make decisions based on your values...How do you practice kindness, curiosity, and love toward yourself.” These are not easy journeys, for the students with whom I spent many months or myself, with whom I get to spend the rest of my life. These journeys are full of tears and doubts, risks and misses, barriers and unexpected detours, vulnerabilities and failures. They are also full of creative work, kindness, hope, self-love, and the ability to become the author of your own intentional thoughts. But, mostly, they are *journeys*, an ongoing process in figuring out how to live your best and most fulfilled life, full of struggle and learning and love. And, I hope for the students within the class and myself, to quote my own preface, it is about disappointment and hope sometimes both living in the same place and knowing that is okay. I hope it is about curiosity and inspiration, courage and risk, despair and grit, refreshing and creating. And, I know it is the beginning of a long perseverance, the pursuit of future dreams, and knowing that fear is just that temporary moment before you step on stage.

REFERENCES

- Ajzen, I. (1987). Attitudes, traits, and actions: Dispositional prediction of behavior in social psychology. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 20, 1-63.
- Ajzen, I. (1991). Theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50, 179-211.
- Alberts, H. J., Martijn, C., & De Vries, N. K. (2011). Fighting self-control failure: Overcoming ego depletion by increasing self-awareness. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 47(1), 58-62.
- Allen, J. S. (1992). Educating performers. *American Scholar*, 61, 197-212.
- Amabile, T. M. (1988). A model of creativity and innovation in organizations. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 10, 123-167.
- Amabile, T. M. (1996). *Creativity in context*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Asmus, E. P. (1986). Student beliefs about the causes of success and failure in music: A study of achievement motivation. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 34(4), 262-278.
- Aspinwall, L. G., & Taylor, S. E. (1992). Modeling cognitive adaptation: A longitudinal investigation of the impact of individual differences and coping on college adjustment and performance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 61, 755-765.
- Arizona Department of Education. (2015). Colleges/universities. Retrieved from <http://www.azed.gov/resource-center/colleges-universities/>.
- Arizona State University. (2015a). ASU charter and goals: 2015 and beyond. Retrieved from <https://president.asu.edu/about/asucharter>.
- Arizona State University. (2015b). Design aspirations. Retrieved from <https://live-newamericanuniversity.ws.asu.edu/about/design-aspirations>.
- Arizona State University. (2015c). Fall 2014 facts. Retrieved from <http://about.asu.edu/facts.html>.
- Arizona State University. (2015d). New American university. Retrieved from <https://newamericanuniversity.asu.edu/>.
- Bagozzi, R., Baumgartner, H., & Yi, Y. (1989). An investigation into the role of intentions as mediators of the attitude-behavior relationship. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 10, 35-62.
- Baer, R. A. (2003). Mindfulness training as a clinical intervention: A conceptual and empirical review. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 10, 125-143.

- Ball, L. J., & Christensen, B. T. (2009). Analogical reasoning and mental simulation in design: two strategies linked to uncertainty resolution. *Design Studies*, 30(2), 169-186.
- Ball, L. J., Onarheim, B., & Christensen, B. T. (2010). Design requirements, epistemic uncertainty and solution development strategies in software design. *Design Studies*, 31(6), 567-589.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84, 191-215.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bandura, A. (Ed.). (1995). *Self-efficacy in changing societies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: Freeman.
- Bandura, A. (2000). Exercise of human agency through collective efficacy. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9, 75-78.
- Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. *Annual review of psychology* (Vol. 52, pp. 1-26). Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews.
- Bandura, A. (2006). *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents*. Information Age Publishing.
- Beddoe, A. E., & Murphy, S. O. (2004). Does mindfulness decrease stress and foster empathy among nursing students?. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 43(7), 305-312.
- Bong, M. (2001). Role of self-efficacy and task-value in predicting college students' course performance and future enrollment intentions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 26(4), 553-570.
- Brinkman, S. & Kvale, S. (2014). *InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing (third edition)*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE.
- Brown, B. (2006). Shame resilience theory: A grounded theory study on women and shame. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, 87(1), 43-52.
- Brown, B. (2012). *Daring greatly: How the courage to be vulnerable transforms the way we live, love, parent, and lead*. Gotham.
- Brown, B. (2017). *Rising strong*. Random House Trade Paperbacks.
- Brown, T. (2007). *Change by design*. New York; HarperCollins.

- Brown, T., & Wyatt, J. (2015). Design thinking for social innovation. *Annual Review of Policy Design*, 3(1), 1-10.
- Caldwell, K., Harrison, M., Adams, M., Quin, R. H., & Greeson, J. (2010). Developing mindfulness in college students through movement-based courses: effects on self-regulatory self-efficacy, mood, stress, and sleep quality. *Journal of American College Health*, 58(5), 433-442.
- Cammarota, J., & Romero, A. (2010). Participatory action research for high school students: Transforming policy, practice, and the personal with social justice education. *Educational Policy*, 25(3), 488-506.
- Cash, M., & Whittingham, K. (2010). What facets of mindfulness contribute to psychological well-being and depressive, anxious, and stress-related symptomatology?. *Mindfulness*, 1(3), 177-182.
- Catterall, J.S., Chapleau, R., & Iwanaga, J. (1999). Involvement in the arts and human development: General involvement and intensive involvement in music and theatre arts. *The Imagination Project at UCLA*, 1-19.
- Carini, R. M. & Kuh, G. D. (2006). Student engagement and student learning: Testing the linkages. *Research in Higher Education*, 47(1), 1-32.
- Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. (2015). Arizona State University. Retrieved from http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/lookup_listings.
- Chemers, M. M., Hu, L., & Garcia, B. F. (2001). Academic self-efficacy and first-year college student performance adjustment. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93, 55-64.
- Chicago Architecture Foundation. (2016). What is design process? Why is it helpful?. Retrieved at <https://www.discoverdesign.org/handbook> on March 25, 2016.
- Chickering, A. W., & Gamson, Z. F. (1987). Seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. *AAHE Bulletin*, March, 3-7.
- Connaughton, D., Wadey, R., Hanton, S., & Jones, G. (2008). The development and maintenance of mental toughness: Perceptions of elite performers. *Journal of Sport Sciences*, 26(1), 83-95.
- Credé, M., Tynan, M. C., & Harms, P. D. (2017). Much ado about grit: A meta-analytic synthesis of the grit literature. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 113(3), 492.
- Creswell, J. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publishers.

- Covington, M. V., & Omelich, C. L. (1986). Ability and effort valuation among failure-avoiding and failure-accepting students. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 77(4), 446-459.
- Cowan, S. (2004). Informing visual poetry: Information needs and sources of artists. *Art Documentation*, 23(2), 14-20.
- Cullen, M. (2011). Mindfulness-based interventions: An emerging phenomenon. *Mindfulness*, 2(3), 186-193.
- Dall'Alba, G. (2009). Learning professional ways of being: Ambiguities of becoming. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 41(1), 34-45.
- David, S. (2016). *Emotional Agility: Get Unstuck, Embrace Change, and Thrive in Work and Life*. Penguin.
- Davidson, W. B., Beck, H. P., & Milligan, M. (2009). The college persistence questionnaire: Development and validation of an instrument that predicts student attrition. *Journal of College Student Development*, 50(4): 373-390.
- Deasy, R.J. (2002). Critical links: Learning in the arts and student academic and social development. *Department of Education*. Washington, D.C.
- de Bruin, E. I., Meppelink, R., & Bögels, S. M. (2015). Mindfulness in higher education: Awareness and attention in university students increase during and after participation in a mindfulness curriculum course. *Mindfulness*, 6(5), 1137-1142.
- Deckro, G. R., Ballinger, K. M., Hoyt, M., Wilcher, M., Dusek, J., Myers, P., ... & Benson, H. (2002). The evaluation of a mind/body intervention to reduce psychological distress and perceived stress in college students. *Journal of American College Health*, 50(6), 281-287.
- Dobrow, S. R. (2012). Dynamics of calling: A longitudinal study of musicians. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 34(40), 431-452.
- Dohmen, T., Falk, A., Huffman, D., & Sunde, U. (2010). Are risk aversion and impatience related to cognitive ability?. *American Economic Review*, 100(3), 1238-60.
- Duckworth, A., & Eskreis-Winkler, L. (2013). Grit. *Observer*, 26, (4).
- Duckworth, A. L., & Quinn, P. D. (2009). Development and validation of the Short Grit Scale (GRIT-S). *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 91(2), 166-174.

- Duckworth, A. L., Peterson, C., Matthews, M. D., & Kelly, D. R. (2007). Grit: Perseverance and passion for long-term goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *92*(6), 1087–1101.
- Duckworth, A. L., Tsukayama, E., & May, H. (2010). Establishing causality using longitudinal hierarchical linear modeling: An illustration predicting achievement from self-control. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, *1*(4), 311–317.
- Duckworth, A. (2016). *Grit: The power of passion and perseverance*. New York; Simon & Schuster, Inc.
- Duval, S., & Wicklund, R. A. (1972). *A theory of objective self awareness*. New York: Academic Press.
- Dweck, C. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. New York; Ballantine Books.
- Dweck, C. (2015). Carol Dweck revises the “growth mindset.” *Education Week*. Retrieved from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2015/09/23/carol-dweck-revisits-the-growth-mindset.html> on February 1, 2017.
- Eberth, J., & Sedlmeier, P. (2012). The effects of mindfulness meditation: a meta-analysis. *Mindfulness*, *3*(3), 174-189.
- Eckel, C. C., & Grossman, P. J. (2008). Men, women and risk aversion: Experimental evidence. *Handbook of Experimental Economics Results*, *1*, 1061-1073.
- Eppler, M. A., Carsen-Plentl, C., & Harju, B. L. (2000). Achievement goals, failure attributions, and academic performance in nontraditional and traditional college students. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*, *15*(3), 353.
- Ericsson, K.A. Deliberate practice and acquisition of expert performance: A general overview. *Academic Emergency Medicine*, *15*(11), 988-994.
- Ericsson, K.A., Krampe, R.T., & Tesch-Romer, C. (1993). The role of deliberate practice in the acquisition of expert performance. *Psychological Review*, *100*(3), 363-406.
- Ericsson, K.A. (2006). The influence of experience and deliberate practice on the development of superior expert performance. *The Cambridge Handbook of Expertise and Expert Performance*, *6*, 685-705.
- Emerson, R.M, Fretz, R.I., & Shaw, L.L. (2011). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes (Second Edition)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Finke, R. A., Ward, T. B., & Smith, S. M. (1992). *Creative cognition: Theory, research, and applications*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

- Flick, U. (2014). *Introduction to Qualitative Research (5th Edition)*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publishers.
- Förster, J., Grant, H., Idson, L. C., & Higgins, E. T. (2001). Success/failure feedback, expectancies, and approach/avoidance motivation: How regulatory focus moderates classic relations. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 37*(3), 253-260.
- Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change*. Routledge.
- Fraenkel, J. R. & Wallen, N. E. (2006). Validity and reliability. *How to design and evaluate research in education* (6th ed., pp.168-186). New York: McGraw Hill.
- Garland, E. L., Gaylord, S. A., & Fredrickson, B. L. (2011). Positive reappraisal mediates the stress-reductive effects of mindfulness: An upward spiral process. *Mindfulness, 2*(1), 59-67.
- Green, S. B. & Salkind, N. J. (2014). *Using SPSS for Windows and Macintosh: Analyzing and understanding data (7th Ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Greene, J. C. (2007). *Mixed methods in social inquiry*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Glesne, C. (1997). That rare feeling: Re-presenting research through poetic transcription. *Qualitative Inquiry, 3*, 202– 222.
- Gloria, A. M., & Ho, T. A. (2003). Environmental, social, and psychological experiences of Asian American undergraduates: Examining issues of academic persistence. *Journal of Counseling and Development: JCD, 81*(1), 93.
- Guilford, J. P. (1950). Creativity. *American Psychologist, 5*, 444–454.
- Habley, W. R., Bloom, J. L., & Robbins, S. (2012). *Increasing persistence: Research-based strategies for college student success*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Hamilton, N. A., Kitzman, H., & Guyotte, S. (2006). Enhancing health and emotion: Mindfulness as a missing link between cognitive therapy and positive psychology. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy, 20*(2), 123.
- Hargreaves, D.J., Miell, D., & MacDonald, R. (2002). What are musical identities, and why are they important?. In *Musical Identities*, 1-19. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hart, T. (1998). Inspiration: Exploring the experience and its meaning. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 38*, 7–35.
- Harford, T. (2011). *Adapt: Why success always starts with failure*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

- Hemmig, W. S. (2008). The information-seeking behavior of visual artists: A literature review. *Journal of Documentation*, 64(3), 343-362.
- Herberger Institute for the Design and the Arts. (2015). Facts. Retrieved from <http://herbergerinstitute.asu.edu/institute/facts.php>.
- Hesse-Biber, S.N., & Leavy, P. (2010). *The practice of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA; Sage Press.
- Hesse-Biber, S. N., & Leavy, P. (2006). *Emergent methods in social research*. Thousand Oaks, CA; Sage Press.
- Holt, C. A., & Laury, S. K. (2002). Risk aversion and incentive effects. *American Economic Review*, 92(5), 1644-1655.
- Ivankova, N. I. (2015). *Mixed methods applications in action research: From methods to community action*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publishers.
- Jansson, D. G., & Smith, S. M. (1991). Design fixation. *Design Studies*, 12(1), 3-11.
- Johnson, S. C., Baxter, L. C., Wilder, L. S., Pipe, J. G., Heiserman, J. E., & Prigatano, G. P. (2002). Neural correlates of self-reflection. *Brain*, 125(8), 1808-1814.
- Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher*, 33(7), 14-26.
- Jones, G., Hanton, S., & Connaughton, D. (2002). What is this thing called mental toughness? An investigation of elite sports performers. *Journal of Applied Sports Psychology*, 14, 205-218.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (1994). *Wherever you go, there you are: Mindfulness meditation in everyday life*. New York, NY: Hyperion.
- Keup, J. R. (2005). The impact of curricular interventions on intended second year re-enrollment. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 7(1), 61-89.
- Kinney, T. A., Smith, B. A., & Donzella, B. (2001). The influence of sex, gender, self-discrepancies, and self-awareness on anger and verbal aggressiveness among US college students. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 141(2), 245-275.
- Kircher, T., & David, A. S. (2003). Self consciousness: An integrative approach from philosophy, psychopathology and the neurosciences. In T. Kircher & A. S. David (Eds.), *The Self in Neuroscience and Psychiatry* (pp. 445-474). Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

- Klibert, J., Lamis, D. A., Collins, W., Smalley, K. B., Warren, J. C., Yancey, C. T., & Winterowd, C. (2014). Resilience mediates the relations between perfectionism and college student distress. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 92*(1), 75-82.
- Kogan, N. (2010). Careers in the performing arts: A psychological perspective. *Creativity Research Journal, 14*, 1-16.
- Kostka, M.J. (2002). Practice expectations and attitudes: A survey of college-level music teachers and students. *Journal of Research in Music Education, 50*(2), 145-154.
- Krueger, N. (1993). Impact of prior entrepreneurial exposure on perceptions of new venture feasibility and desirability. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 18*(1), 5-21.
- Krueger, N. F., Reilly, M. D., & Carsrud, A. L. (2000). Competing models of entrepreneurial intentions. *Journal of Business Venturing, 15*, 411-432.
- Larabee, D. F. (1997). Public goods, private goods: The American struggle over educational goals. *American Educational Research Journal, 34*(1), 39-81.
- LaRoche, G. A. (2013). *The role of the mentor and disciple relationship in the development of artists* (Order No. 3590828). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1432193230). Retrieved from <http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/1432193230?accountid=4485>.
- Leary, K. A., & DeRosier, M. E. (2012). Factors promoting positive adaptation and resilience during the transition to college. *Psychology, 3*(12), 1215.
- Leavy, P. (2015). *Method meets art: Arts-based research practice*. New York, New York: Guilford Press.
- Leganger, A., Kraft, P., & Røysamb, E. (2000). Perceived self-efficacy in health behaviour research: Conceptualisation, measurement and correlates. *Psychology and Health, 15*(1), 51-69.
- Lockwood, P., & Kunda, Z. (1997). Superstars and me: Predicting the impact of role models on the self. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 73*(1), 91-103
- Lockwood, P., Jordan, C. H., & Kunda, Z. (2002). Motivation by positive or negative role models: Regulatory focus determines who will best inspire us. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 83*(4), 854.
- Lubart, T. I. (2001). Models of the creative process: Past, present and future. *Creativity Research Journal, 13*(3-4), 295-308.

- Luszczynska, A., Scholz, U., & Schwarzer, R. (2005). The general self-efficacy scale: Multicultural validation studies. *The Journal of Psychology, 139*(5), 439-457.
- Maddi, S. R., Matthews, M. D., Kelly, D. R., Villarreal, B., & White, M. (2012). The role of hardiness and grit in predicting performance and retention of USMA cadets. *Military Psychology, 24*(1), 19–28.
- Manders, E., & Chilton, G. (2013). Translating the essence of the dance: Rendering meaning in artistic inquiry of the creative arts therapies. *International Review of Qualitative Research, 14*(16).
- MacCann, C., & Roberts, R. (2010). Do time management, grit, and self-control relate to academic achievement independently of conscientiousness? In R. Hicks (Ed.), *Personality and individual differences: Current directions* (pp. 79–90). Bowen Hills, QLD, AUS: Australian Academic Press.
- Manturzewka, M. (1990). A biographical study of the life-span development of professional musicians. *Psychology of Music, 18*, 112-139.
- McPherson, G.E. & McCormick, J. (2006). Self-efficacy and music performance. *Psychology of Music, 34*, 322-336.
- Mednick, S. (1962). The associative basis of the creative process. *Psychological Review, 69*(3), 220.
- Mills, G. E. (2011). *Action research: A guide for the teacher researcher*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- Morgan, D. (2003). Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for depression: A new approach to preventing relapse. *Psychotherapy Research, 13*, 123-125.
- Morin, A. (2006). Levels of consciousness and self-awareness: A comparison and integration of various neurocognitive views. *Consciousness and Cognition, 15*(2), 358-371.
- Mumford, M. D., Baughman, W. A., Maher, M. A., Costanza, D. P., & Supinski, E. P. (1997). Process-based measures of creative problem-solving skills: IV. Category combination. *Creativity Research Journal, 10*, 59–71.
- Mumford, M. D., Baughman, W. A., Supinski, E. P., & Maher, M. A. (1996). Process-based measures of creative problem-solving skills: II. Information encoding. *Creativity Research Journal, 9*, 77–88.
- Mumford, M. D., Baughman, W. A., Threlfall, K. V., Supinski, E. P., & Costanza, D. P. (1996). Process-based measures of creative problem-solving skills: I. Problem construction. *Creativity Research Journal, 9*, 63–76.

- Mumford, M. D., Mobley, M. I., Uhlman, C. E., Reiter-Palmon, R., & Doares, L. M. (1991). Process analytic models of creative capacities. *Creativity Research Journal*, 4, 91–122.
- Mumford, M. D., Supinski, E. P., Baughman, W. A., Costanza, D. P., & Threlfall, V. (1997). Process-based measures of creative problem-solving skills: V. Overall prediction. *Creativity Research Journal*, 10, 73–85.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). Highest enrollment. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=74>.
- Neely, M. E., Schallert, D. L., Mohammed, S. S., Roberts, R. M., & Chen, Y. J. (2009). Self-kindness when facing stress: The role of self-compassion, goal regulation, and support in college students' well-being. *Motivation and Emotion*, 33(1), 88-97.
- Neenan, M. (2009). *Developing resilience: A cognitive-behavioural approach*. Routledge.
- Neff, K. D., Hsieh, Y. P., & Dejitterat, K. (2005). Self-compassion, achievement goals, and coping with academic failure. *Self and Identity*, 4(3), 263-287.
- Nicpon, M. F., Huser, L., Blanks, E. H., Sollenberger, S., Befort, C., & Kurpius, S. E. R. (2006). The relationship of loneliness and social support with college freshmen's academic performance and persistence. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 8(3), 345-358.
- Nielsen, S.G. (2004). Strategies and self-efficacy beliefs in instrumental and vocal individual practice: A study of students in higher music education. *Psychology of Music*, 32(4), 418-431.
- Nonis, S. A., & Wright, D. (2003). Moderating effects of achievement striving and situational optimism on the relationship between ability and performance outcomes of college students. *Research in Higher Education*, 44(3), 327-346.
- Oman, D., Shapiro, S. L., Thoresen, C. E., Plante, T. G., & Flinders, T. (2008). Meditation lowers stress and supports forgiveness among college students: A randomized controlled trial. *Journal of American College Health*, 56(5), 569-578.
- Perry, R. P., Hladkyj, S., Pekrun, R. H., Clifton, R. A., & Chipperfield, J. G. (2005). Perceived academic control and failure in college students: A three-year study of scholastic attainment. *Research in Higher Education*, 46(5), 535-569.
- Pettigrew, A. M. (1990). Longitudinal field research on change: Theory and practice. *Organization Science*, 1(3), 267-292.
- Plano Clark, V. L., & Creswell, J. W. (2010). *Understanding research: A consumer's guide*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

- Positive Psychology Institute. (2012). What is positive psychology? Retrieved from http://www.positivepsychologyinstitute.com.au/what_is_positive_psychology.html.
- Pyszczynski, T., & Greenberg, J. (1987). Self-regulatory perseveration and the depressive self-focusing style: A self-awareness theory of reactive depression. *Psychological Bulletin*, 102(1), 122.
- Reed, J., Pritschet, B. L., & Cutton, D. M. (2013). Grit, conscientiousness, and the transtheoretical model of change for exercise behavior. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 18(5), 612–619.
- Richardson, G. E. (2002). The metatheory of resilience and resiliency. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 58(3), 307-321.
- Rudolph, S. G., Flett, G. L., & Hewitt, P. L. (2007). Perfectionism and deficits in cognitive emotion regulation. *Journal of Rational-Emotive & Cognitive-Behavior Therapy*, 25(4), 343-357.
- Saldana, J. (2012). *The Coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publishers.
- Saunders, P. A., Tractenberg, R. E., Chaterji, R., Amri, H., Harazduk, N., Gordon, J. S., ... & Haramati, A. (2007). Promoting self-awareness and reflection through an experiential mind-body skills course for first year medical students. *Medical Teacher*, 29(8), 778-784.
- Schonert-Reichl, K. A., & Lawlor, M. S. (2010). The effects of a mindfulness-based education program on pre-and early adolescents' well-being and social and emotional competence. *Mindfulness*, 1(3), 137-151.
- Schulman, L. S. (2002). Making difference: A table of learning. *Change*, 34(6), 36-45.
- Schwarzer, R., & Jerusalem, M. (1995). Generalized self-efficacy scale. In J. Weinman, S. Wright, & M. Johnston, *Measures in health psychology: A user's portfolio*. Causal and control beliefs (pp. 35-37). Windsor, UK: NFER-NELSON.
- Segal, Z. V., Williams, J. G., & Teasdale, J. D. (2002). Review of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for depression. *Journal of Psychiatry & Law*, 30, 271–274.
- Segerstrom, S. C., Taylor, S. E., Kemeny, M. E., & Fahey, J. L. (1998). Optimism is associated with mood, coping, and immune change in response to stress. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(6), 1646.
- Seligman, M. (1990). *Learned Optimism*. New York, NY: Knopf.
- Seligman, M. E. (2002). Positive psychology, positive prevention, and positive therapy. *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, 2, 3-12.

- Seligman, M. E. (2002). *Authentic happiness: Using the new positive psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Sherry, S. B., Hewitt, P. L., Flett, G. L., & Harvey, M. (2003). Perfectionism dimensions, perfectionistic attitudes, dependent attitudes, and depression in psychiatric patients and university students. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 50*(3), 373.
- Smith, B. P. (2005). Goal orientation, implicit theory of ability, and collegiate instrumental music practice. *Psychology of Music, 33*, 36-57.
- Souitaris, V., Zerbinati, S., & Al-Laham, A. (2007). Do entrepreneurship programmes raise entrepreneurial intention of science and engineering students? The effect of learning, inspiration and resources. *Journal of Business Venturing, 22*, 566-591.
- Sriram, R. (2010). *Rethinking intelligence: The role of mindset in promoting success for academically high-risk college students* (Doctoral dissertation, Azusa Pacific University).
- Stallman, H. M. (2011). Embedding resilience within the tertiary curriculum: A feasibility study. *Higher Education Research & Development, 30*(2), 121-133.
- Stanford Design School. (2016). An introduction to design thinking process guide. Retrieved from <https://dschool.stanford.edu/sandbox/groups/dresources/wiki/welcome/attachments/8e447/d.school%27s%20Design%20Thinking%20Process%20Mode%20Guide.pdf?sessionID=91a6b0deaf14ba5026f099987029b41b4e07eb55>.
- Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP). (2013). SNAAPshot. Retrieved from <http://snaap.indiana.edu/snaapshot>.
- Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP). (2014). Making it work: The education and employment of recent arts graduates. Retrieved from http://snaap.indiana.edu/pdf/2014/SNAAP_AR_2014.pdf.
- Strayhorn, T. L. (2013). What role does grit play in the academic success of black male collegians at predominantly white institutions? *Journal of African American Studies, 1*–10.
- Steinhardt, M., & Dolbier, C. (2008). Evaluation of a resilience intervention to enhance coping strategies and protective factors and decrease symptomatology. *Journal of American College Health, 56*(4), 445-453.
- Stephenson, B. W., & Hunt, C. (1977). Intellectual and ethical development: A dualistic curriculum intervention for college students. *The Counseling Psychologist, 6*(4), 39-42.
- Sternberg, R. J. (1999). *Thinking styles*. Cambridge University Press.

- Strum, J. (2014). Where do we go from here? A crossroads of cost and content for the arts in higher education. *Journal of Performing Arts Leadership in Higher Education*, 5, 45-56.
- Sutton, R. I., & Rao, H. (2014). *Scaling up excellence: Getting to more without settling for less*. New York, NY: Crown Business.
- Taylor, S. E., & Gollwitzer, P. M. (1995). Effects of mindset on positive illusions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69(2), 213.
- Thompson, B. R., & Geren, P. R. (2002). Classroom strategies for identifying and helping college students at risk for academic failure. *College Student Journal*, 36(3), 398-403.
- Thrash, T. M., & Elliot, A. J. (2003). Inspiration as a psychological construct. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(4), 871-889.
- Tracy, M. W., & Hutschinson, A. (2016). Uncertainty, reflection, and designer identity development. *Design Studies*, 42, 86-109.
- Tugade, M. M., & Fredrickson, B. L. (2007). Regulation of positive emotions: Emotion regulation strategies that promote resilience. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 8(3), 311-333.
- U.S. News. (2015). Most innovative schools. Retrieved from <http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/rankings/national-universities/innovative>.
- Van Dam, N. T., Sheppard, S. C., Forsyth, J. P., & Earleywine, M. (2011). Self-compassion is a better predictor than mindfulness of symptom severity and quality of life in mixed anxiety and depression. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 25(1), 123-130.
- Vasconcelos, L. A., & Crilly, N. (2015). Inspiration and fixation: Questions, methods, findings, and challenges. *Design Studies*, 42, 1-32.
- Waterman, A. S., Schwartz, S. J., & Conti, R. (2008). The implications of two conceptions of happiness for understanding intrinsic motivation. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 9, 41-79.
- Weick, K. E. (1976). Educational organizations as loosely coupled systems. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 21(1), 1-19.
- Wolters, C. A. & Hussain, M. (2015). Investigating grit and its relations with college students' self-regulated learning and academic achievement. *Metacognition Learning*, 10, 293-311.
- Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). Mindsets that promote resilience: When students believe that personal characteristics can be developed. *Educational Psychologist*, 47(4), 302-314.

Zimmerman, B. J. (1990). Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: An overview. *Educational Psychologist*, 25(1), 3-17.

APPENDIX A
RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

I am a graduate student under the direction of Professor Pamela Kulinna in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. I am conducting a research study to examine how undergraduate arts and design student define success and navigate failure as part of their learning process.

I am recruiting people to participate in a study of the ways you define success, how you navigate perceived failures, and how you make meaning through this process. This study will occur over the course of the fall semester, approximately five months. If you choose to participate, you will first be asked to participate in an online survey. Subsequently, you will be asked if you would like to participate in an interview and/or submit a piece of your creative work. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you have any questions concerning the research study, please call me at (480) 727-9693.

Megan Workmon

Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts

Dean's Office of Student Success

APPENDIX B
CONSENT LETTER

Dear participant,

We are conducting a research study on the student experience within the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts at Arizona State University (ASU). The purpose of these surveys and interviews is to better understand how you approach challenges, define successes, and move around perceived barriers in your academic field.

We are asking for your help, which will involve your participation in a survey and an interview concerning your knowledge, experiences, attitudes, and beliefs about these issues. We anticipate your participation in these events to take approximately 30-60 minutes total for both portions.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty whatsoever.

The benefit to participation is the expansion of student opportunities and experiences at ASU. Survey and interview responses will also inform future iterations of the study and program development. Thus, there is potential to enhance the experiences that are provided to art and design students. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation.

Your responses will be confidential. Results from this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be known. If you select to share any creative pieces, music, or artwork as part of the study process, you will be given the choice whether to be credited or remain anonymous. Your name will be recorded and coded in a password protected database for the survey, interview, and arts-based portion of this project, but it will only be known to the research team unless you should elect to attach your name to your creative piece of work.

Please read the following consent statement, and if you agree, please sign at the bottom. If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team – Dr. Pamela Kulinna at pkulinna@asu.edu or (480) 727-1767 or Megan Workmon at megan.workmon@asu.edu or (480) 727-9693. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

Thank you,
Megan Workmon and Pamela Kulinna (Co-PIs)

RESEARCHER

ASU Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts staff (Megan Workmon) and ASU Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College faculty (Pamela Kulinna) at Arizona State University, have invited your participation in a research study.

STUDY PURPOSE

The purpose of these surveys and interviews is to better understand how you approach challenges, define successes, and move around perceived barriers in your academic field.

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY

If you decide to participate in this study, you will join a study involving research of art and design undergraduate student experiences and attitudes. If you say YES, then you will begin by participating in a survey. Subsequently, you will be asked if you want to participate in an interview and/or if you would like to show your creative work. Your participation in the interview and survey portions of the study will be approximately 30-60 minutes total.

RISKS

There are no foreseeable risks for taking part in this study.

BENEFITS

There is no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. Possible overall benefits include the development and improvement of student experiences.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential. The results of this research study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications, but the researcher will not identify individuals. No one will be able to link any responses to individual study participants. If you select to share any creative pieces, music, or artwork as part of the study process, you will be given the choice whether to be credited or remain anonymous.

WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. It is okay for you to say no. Even if you say yes now, you are free to say no later and withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of support. Your decision will not affect your relationship with Arizona State University or otherwise cause a loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled.

COSTS AND PAYMENTS

There is no compensation for participating in this study.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

Any questions you have concerning the research study or your participation in the study, before or after your consent, will be answered by: Dr. Pamela Kulinna at pkulinna@asu.edu or (480) 727-1767 or Megan Workmon at megan.workmon@asu.edu or (480) 727-9693.

If you have questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk; you can Dr. Pamela Kulinna at pkulinna@asu.edu or (480) 727-

1767 or the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788.

Your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in the survey, interview and be audio recorded during the interview session, and allow photographs of any work you share.

Participant's Signature

Printed Name

APPENDIX C

SURVEY RECRUITMENT LETTER

Dear participant,

We are conducting a research study on the student experience within the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts at Arizona State University (ASU). The purpose of this is to better understand how you approach challenges, define successes, and move around perceived barriers in your academic field.

We are asking for your help, which will involve your participation in a survey concerning your knowledge, experiences, attitudes, and beliefs about these issues.

We anticipate your participation in these events to take approximately 10 minutes.

The link to the survey is here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HIDASurvey>

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty whatsoever. The benefit to participation is the expansion of student opportunities and experiences at ASU. Survey and interview responses will also inform future iterations of the study and program development. Thus, there is potential to enhance the experiences that are provided to art and design students. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation.

Your responses will be confidential. For the survey, use the following process to create a unique identifier known only to you: Use the first four letters of your mother's maiden name and the last four digits of your phone number. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team – Dr. Pamela Kulinna at pkulinna@asu.edu or (480) 727-1767 or Megan Workmon at megan.workmon@asu.edu or (480) 727-9693. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

For the questionnaire, clicking the button below to complete the survey will be considered your consent to participate. The link to the survey is <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HIDASurvey>.

Thank you,
Megan Workmon and Pamela Kulinna (Co-PIs)

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR CYCLE TWO

Mindset

1. How do you feel about learning new things especially when they are challenging?
2. Do you think you can change your own intelligence level? How?
3. If you wanted to increase your intelligence level, what would you do?
4. When you consider the word “talent,” what does that mean to you?
5. In your opinion, can you change your level of talent?
6. How does learning new things impact talent? Can you provide an example?

Barriers, Challenges, and Persistence

1. What do you consider barriers or roadblocks to success? Academically? Creatively?
2. After a setback, what happens first?
3. How quickly do you adapt to setbacks?
4. How would you describe your state of mind after experiencing a challenge?
5. Have you ever used humor to respond to a challenge? Can you give me an example?
6. When was a time you learned something from a perceived setback or challenge?

Success and Failure

1. How do you personally define success?
2. How would you say important people in your life define success? Academic success? Creative success?
3. How does society define success? Your creative field?
4. How would you define failure?
5. Can you give me an example of a time that you perceived that you had failed? Did you learn from this experience?
6. How do you approach failure now?
7. What steps do you take after failing?
8. Have you ever limited your participation in something to avoid failing? What did you do?
9. If you could give your future self advice on failure, what would you say?

APPENDIX E

SURVEY PILOT: GRIT AND MINDSET

Survey on Grit and Mindset

Likert Scale for Part I and Part II

- 5 Very Much Like Me
- 4 Mostly Like Me
- 3 Sometimes Like Me
- 2 Not Much Like Me
- 1 Not Like Me at All

Part I: Grit

Part I adapted from Duckworth, A. (2016). *Grit: The power of passion and perseverance*. New York; Simon & Schuster, Inc.

1. New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones.
2. I have been obsessed with an idea, project, or pastime but later lost interest in it.
3. I often set goals but later choose to pursue something else.
4. I have difficulty maintaining my focus on a project.
5. My interests change over time.
6. Setbacks do not discourage me.
7. I do not give up easily.
8. I am a hard worker.
9. I finish whatever I begin.
10. I am diligent.
11. I never give up.
12. I have overcome setbacks to conquer a challenge.

Part 2: Mindset

Part II adapted from Dweck, C. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. New York; Ballantine Books.

Growth

1. I think it is okay to make mistakes and struggle.
2. I work until I figure it out or understand it.
3. I engage in new challenges especially when I learn new things.
4. I can complete challenges and tasks as long as I keep working through them.
5. I sometimes need to keep working until I find out what works best for me.

Fixed

1. If I don't learn something quickly, I feel bad about myself.
2. I think I should be able to learn without studying.
3. If I cannot learn through studying, I think there is something wrong with me.
4. I feel like giving up when I am learning something hard.
5. I feel like giving up when I cannot do something very well right away.

Part III: Demographics

- 1. Gender**
 - 1 Female
 - 0 Male
 - 2 Transgender
 - 3 Non-binary
- 2. Ethnicity/Race**
 1. African American/Black
 2. Asian
 3. Pacific Islander
 4. Latino/Hispanic
 5. Native American
 6. White
 7. Multiple backgrounds
 8. Other (please define)
- 3. Current Academic Standing**
 - 1 First Year Student
 - 2 Sophomore
 - 3 Junior
 - 4 Senior
 - 5 Transfer
 - 6 Graduate, Master
 - 7 Graduate, Doctoral
- 4. Primary Academic School in Herberger Institute**
 - 1 School of Art
 - 2 School of Arts, Media + Engineering
 - 3 The Design School
 - 4 School of Film, Dance and Theatre
 - 5 School of Music
 - 6 Cross-Institute
 - 7 Other
- 5. Age**
 - Write in Age
- 6. Are you considered an in-state or out-of-state student for tuition purposes?**
 - 1 In-State
 - 2 Out-of-State
- 7. Do you live on-campus or off-campus?**
 - 1 On-Campus
 - 2 Off-Campus
- 8. In how many credit hours are you currently enrolled?**
 - 1 Under 9

- 2 9-11
- 3 12-13
- 4 14-16
- 5 17-19
- 6 20-22
- 7 23 and above

9. How many hours do you realistically estimate you study on an average week?

- 1 None
- 2 1-5
- 3 6-9
- 4 10-14
- 5 15-19
- 6 20-24
- 7 25-30
- 8 More than 30

10. How many hours do you realistically estimate you practice on an average week?

- 1 None
- 2 1-5
- 3 6-9
- 4 10-14
- 5 15-19
- 6 20-24
- 7 25-30
- 8 More than 30

APPENDIX F

SURVEY PILOT TWO: SELF-EFFICACY, MINDSET, GRIT AND PERSISTENCE

Constructs: General Self-Efficacy Scale, Mindset, Grit and Academic Persistence

Part I: General Self-Efficacy

Prompt

The following survey lists different activities and actions. Please rate how confident you are that you can do them as of now.

Scale

- 1 Cannot do at all
- 2 Hardly can do
- 3 Moderately can do
- 4 Highly certain can do

Items

1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.
2. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.
3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.
4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.
5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.
6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.
7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.
8. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.
9. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.
10. I can usually handle whatever comes my way.

Part II: Self-Efficacy and Mindset

Prompt

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each following statement.

Scale

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Mostly Disagree
- 4 Mostly Agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree

Items: Growth Mindset

1. I can make mistakes and struggle while knowing it's okay. (Positive)
2. I can work until I figure it out or understand it. (Positive)
3. I can engage in new challenges especially when I learn new things. (Positive)
4. I can complete challenges and tasks as long as I keep working through them. (Positive)
5. I can keep working until I find out what works best for me. (Positive)

Items: Fixed Mindset (Negative Statements so Scale Reserved)

- 6 Strongly Disagree

- 5 Disagree
 - 4 Mostly Disagree
 - 3 Mostly Agree
 - 2 Agree
 - 1 Strongly Agree
6. I can feel bad about myself If I don't learn something quickly. (Negative)
 7. I can learn without studying. (Negative)
 8. I can think there is something wrong with me if I cannot learn through studying. (Negative)
 9. I can feel like giving up when I am learning something hard. (Negative)
 10. I feel like giving up when I cannot do something very well right away. (Negative)

Reference: Part II adapted from Dweck, C. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. New York; Ballantine Books. Prompts were rewritten to incorporate “can” as a judgement of capability versus intention.

Part III: Grit

Prompt

The following statements may or may not apply to you. Please consider how you compare to most other people when selecting a response.

Scale

- 1 Not like me at all
- 2 Not much like me
- 3 Somewhat like me
- 4 Mostly like me
- 5 Very much like me

Items

1. New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones.
2. I have been obsessed with an idea, project, or pastime but later lost interest in it.
3. I often set goals but later choose to pursue something else.
4. I have difficulty maintaining my focus on a project.
5. My interests change over time.
6. Setbacks do not discourage me.
7. I do not give up easily.
8. I am a hard worker.
9. I finish whatever I begin.
10. I am diligent (industrious and hard-working in my pursuits).
11. I never give up.
12. I have overcome setbacks to conquer a challenge.

Reference: Part III adapted from Duckworth, A. (2016). *Grit: The power of passion and perseverance*. New York; Simon & Schuster, Inc. and Duckworth, A. L., Peterson, C., Matthews, M. D., &

Kelly, D. R. (2007). Grit: perseverance and passion for long-term goals. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 92(6), 1087.

Part IV: Self-Efficacy and Academic Persistence

Prompt

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each following statement.

Scale

- 1 Cannot do at all
- 2 Hardly can do
- 3 Moderately can do
- 4 Highly certain can do

Items: Persistence in Academic Integration

1. I can see intellectual growth in myself as I progress in my degree. (Positive)
2. I can reach out to my faculty members for help in my program. (Positive)
3. I can reach out to my peers for help in my program. (Positive)
4. I can see the connection between what I am learning and my future career possibilities. (Positive)
5. I can advance new ideas related to degree program. (Positive)
6. I can actively participate in discussions around my selected field. (Positive)

Items: Persistence in Degree Commitment

1. I can earn a college degree. (Positive)
2. I can commit to the work that it will take to earn a degree in my selected field. (Positive)
3. I can persist in pursuing my chosen field. (Positive)
4. I can become successful in my chosen field. (Positive)
5. I can know that my family is supportive of my pursuit of my chosen field. (Positive)

Reference: Part III adapted from Davidson, W. B., Beck, H. P., & Milligan, M. (2009). The college persistence questionnaire: Development and validation of an instrument that predicts student attrition. *Journal of College Student Development*, 50(4): 373-390. Prompts were rewritten to incorporate “can” as a judgement of capability versus intention.

Part IV: Demographics

As a participant, you will be given a unique identifier based on the first three items to compare your survey items over time. This identifier will only be known to the research team and will be kept in a password protected database.

- 1. First Four Letters of Mother’s Maiden Name:**
- 2. Last Four Digits of Your Cell Phone:**
- 3. Primary Academic School in Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts**
 1. School of Art
 2. School of Arts, Media + Engineering
 3. The Design School

4. School of Film, Dance, and Theatre
5. School of Music
6. Cross-Institute
7. Other

4. Age

- Drop down from 18-75

5. Are you considered an in-state or out-of-state student for tuition purposes?

1. In-State
2. Out-of-State

6. Are you an international student?

- 1 No
- 2 Yes

7. Gender

- 1 Male
- 2 Female
- 3 Transgender
- 4 Other (please define)

8. Ethnicity/Race

1. African American/Black
2. Asian
3. Pacific Islander
4. Latino/Hispanic
5. Native American
6. White
7. Multiple backgrounds
8. Other (please define)

9. Parents' Highest Level of Education

1. Some High School
2. High School Diploma
3. Some College
4. Technical School Degree
5. Associate's Degree
6. Bachelor's Degree
7. Master's Degree
8. Doctoral Degree

10. Are you the first in your family to attend college?

1. Yes
2. No

11. Current Academic Standing

1. First Year Student
2. Sophomore
3. Junior

4. Senior
 5. Transfer
 6. Graduate, Master
 7. Graduate, Doctoral
- 12. Do you live on-campus or off-campus?**
1. On-Campus
 2. Off-Campus
- 13. Were you a transfer student?**
1. Yes
 2. No
- 14. In how many credit hours are you currently enrolled?**
1. Drop down 1-30
- 15. How many hours do you realistically estimate you study on an average week?**
1. Drop down 0-40
- 16. How many hours do you realistically estimate you practice on an average week?**
1. Drop down 0-40

Survey Resources

- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84, 191-215.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bandura, A. (Ed.). (1995). *Self-efficacy in changing societies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: Freeman.
- Bandura, A. (2000). Exercise of human agency through collective efficacy. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9, 75-78
- Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. *Annual review of psychology* (Vol. 52, pp. 1-26). Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews.
- Bandura, A. (2006). *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents*. Information Age Publishing.
- Davidson, W. B., Beck, H. P., & Milligan, M. (2009). The college persistence questionnaire: Development and validation of an instrument that predicts student attrition. *Journal of College Student Development*, 50(4): 373-390.
- Duckworth, A. (2016). *Grit: The power of passion and perseverance*. New York; Simon & Schuster, Inc.
- Duckworth, A. L., Peterson, C., Matthews, M. D., & Kelly, D. R. (2007). Grit: perseverance and passion for long-term goals. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 92(6), 1087.
- Dweck, C. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. New York; Ballantine Books.
- Schwarzer, R., & Jerusalem, M. (1995). Generalized Self-Efficacy scale. In J. Weinman, S. Wright, & M. Johnston, Measures in health psychology: A user's portfolio. Causal and control beliefs (pp. 35-37). Windsor, UK: NFER-NELSON.

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR DISSERTATION CYCLE

Mindset and Self-Efficacy

1. How do you feel about learning new things especially when they are challenging?
2. How does learning new things impact your talent? Can you provide an example?
3. How confident are you that you can overcome setbacks or challenges?

Barriers, Challenges, and Persistence

1. What do you currently consider barriers or roadblocks to success? Has this changed?
2. How quickly do you adapt to setbacks? Has this changed over time?
3. How would you describe your state of mind after experiencing a challenge?
4. Has your awareness of your Inner Voice of Judgement changed? How?
5. How has it been learning to interrupt your Inner Voice of Judgement?

Success and Failure

1. How would you say important people in your life define success? How does your field define success?
2. How do you personally define success? Has this changed over time?
3. How would you define failure? Has this changed over time?
4. Can you give me an example of a time that you perceived that you had failed? Did you learn from this experience?
5. How do you approach failure now after taking the class?
6. If you could give your future self advice on failure, what would you say?

Intervention Course Reflection

1. How was the length of the course?
2. Were there any components that really resonated with you?
3. Were there any sections you did not understand?
4. If you could go back and do anything again, what would you do?
5. Any suggestions for the future of the course?
6. Any questions?

APPENDIX H

FOUND POEMS FROM CYCLE TWO INTERVIEWS

Beatrice – A Found Poem
Alumna
The Design School, Graphic Design

Creative. Artistic. A passionate person.

I have been doing things, design and marketing related,
since I was about 18, so about 20 years.
Initially, I went to school for pre-veterinary medicine,
I had this entire plan worked out.
“All right, I’m going to go to college. I’m going to be a vet.
And, then I will work in rural South Carolina.”
Then, I was going to be an English major.
I took this class, humanities, English, writing, and a computer credit all in one.
We read books, watched movies, wrote papers,
and learned how to post them on the internet
In the days of animated gifs, so mine had stars and aliens,
And it was really, really bad.
Then I started taking classes on html, desktop publishing.
I changed to Graphic Design.
It just had never occurred to me that it could be a profession,
Or that I could have an outlet in that way, as a creative person.
I waited five years to go to graduate school. That was not ever the plan, a gap.
And I started to realize if I don’t do it, it’s going to slip away from me.
I was struggling in a job where no one was validating my technical experience.
They saw me as a designer who made pretty things.
I felt like I needed to get a piece of paper to be like,
“No, really, I’ve been doing this for many years. I know how to do this.”
That’s what drove me to get my master’s degree.

Creative. Anxious. A dork in the best way possible.

I’m more okay with it all than I was as an undergraduate student.
Similar, but my knowledge of myself, what I’m comfortable with,
What I care about, how I think about the way others think about me,
Which I care a lot less about than I used to,
Just more comfortable being myself than I ever was before.
I know I can figure anything out, resourceful.
I can be easily overwhelmed as I look at all the possibilities,
Because I want to pick the *right* decision, the *right* method.
I see fifty options in front of me. I just need to pick one and run with it.
But, there is that fear of spending a lot of time and effort on one decision,
And figuring out I shouldn’t have gone that way.
I am very much worried about things that are an inefficient use of time and effort.
I have to make containers, and groups, build a structure, my own way of coping.
We learn so much about process in our undergraduate programs,
Planning and thinking about bigger projects.
I was curious about everything, asking questions, wanting to know how it all worked.
I love to learn, a life-long learner, really excited about learning new stuff.

I had an undergraduate professor who was fancier than I realized he was at the time,
because what do you know when you're an undergraduate?
But, who actually was telling me, "You can't rely on your talent alone.
You have to do X, Y, and Z as well."
That's the first time I really realized that there is that natural talent that can be cultivated
and that sometimes you have to apply assistance or continue to grow
and continue to learn around those talents.
Then sometimes your life is easier and you are happier,
if you work within those talents and cultivate them, versus fighting it.

Creative. Ornerly. A deep dive into who I am.

A lot of my choices in life have been driven by feeling like I'm not good enough.
I would do things and tackle things because somebody said I couldn't do it.
Or, I thought I couldn't do it.
I got very ornerly about it, "I'll show you."
I was so insecure in my own way of trying to figure out how to be like people I admired.
"Wow, they're good. They're doing well. What could I be doing better?
Am I trying hard enough?"
Or, I'd take it personally. It's just a core rule, you're just not good enough.
That's just kind of how I operated for a long time.
Now I realize those are just talents that other people have,
It doesn't mean other people cannot build those.
As I near forty, I've done a deep dive into who I am,
What makes me tick, what matters to me, talking to counselors.
I fully believe sometimes you just don't have the tool in your kit,
And you need to go to the store and get the tool.
I realized that I have gotten to the point in my career, where I'm at,
Just because somebody told me that I couldn't.
I just hinged who I was going to be and what would make me matter,
And what would make me good enough.
Then once I got there, "What now?"
Now I realize I care less about all that.
I've settled instead of looking for the next thing, to being able to look
At being happy where I'm at and analyzing where I want to be.
I'm really bad at balance, but I'm learning.
I've been looking at myself a lot lately, asking "What do I need?
What am I working my butt off for? What is that going to look like when I'm 75?
Will I have killed myself trying to get there?
What will I have and what will matter?"
I think it's more of a failure to not try to explore and to be frozen,
than to not at least make an effort.
It makes me appreciate how far I've come.
The freedom of not caring what other people think,
Allows you to be more creative and more confident in sharing that creativity.
You have to be creating for yourself in order to fill your creative cup.
I'm glad to be where I'm at. I'm really happy where I'm at.

Brittany – A Found Poem
Student, Senior
School of Music, Trombone Performance

Hard work, teams, art, artist, planning, nonprofits, things like that.
Challenge.

I feel a lot more capable now, now that I know more people,
Exposed to so many different things, I feel like I'm still growing.
There's not really anything where I feel like,
"Yes, I got this one hundred percent, I'm the expert in this area..."
I want to explore, becoming more well-rounded, discover my artistic side.
I know that I have that inside of myself.

That's something I've been thinking a lot about lately.
Especially, musicians, we don't consider ourselves artists.
Or, no one tells you that you're an artist.
There are a lot of things I didn't think I could do,
Make posters, talk to artists, understand where they are coming from,
Work at an art museum.
Just doing those things are kind of little signs along the way,
"I am an artist, too – I can do these things."

Learning new things, it's really frustrating.
I want to be at the same level, not going back and relearning,
It really depends on the expectations I'm setting for myself
And, the goals I have in mind for whatever the new thing is.
My expectations are existential.
I want my goals to be more intrinsic, set by myself, more internal.
Being in school, a lot of them are external.
My goals are more important, but it's hard to see that sometimes.
At the end of the day, it's more satisfying when you've achieved a goal,
Something you actually wanted and the goal was something that you've said.

"Talent" gets thrown around a lot in music,
And, it just means you are good. But, they don't actually mean talented.
Naturally apt at something, the way your brain works,
maybe a little bit better suited for something,
It's kind of an annoying word for me because I think people say it,
But, they don't think about how they've actually worked really hard.
Hard work is more important to me.
My brother was always smarter than me – It really bothered me.
But, I worked harder than he did.
Talent is seen as glamorous, extra special.
But, hard work, it's going to get you more of where you want to go.

The big thing I've been struggling with is that I don't know

What kind of path I want to go down
And I don't know what that path looks like.
I knew the path and what I was doing before, I knew exactly what I wanted to do.
Now, I don't know as much.
And, the roadblocks are just myself, going in weird directions and turning around in circles,
Not being focused on an actual path or going straight down it anymore.
I recognize there's value in things that you learn going in loops, weird pathways.
And, I've definitely learned a lot of things about myself,
But, I'm worried that I'm not setting myself up well enough,
I won't be prepared enough.
Setbacks, you see the end in sight, but then the path is actually longer.
And, there's something else.
Maybe it's more of a path with checkpoints.
I don't think you should ever just get somewhere and say, "I'm done. This is it."

I really like to be challenged, do things outside of my normal.
When finished, I would feel relieved, a little bit excited, frustrated,
I'm not necessarily done with it, continuing, learning, doing new things.
A people person, it's really interesting when people are different than me.
They have a lot to offer, harder in the beginning to figure everything out,
Trying to teach people things, trying to balance.
In music, we recognize we are different and yet we think that we are the same,
Both working toward something together, also recognizing we're different.
My definition of success is always changing, specific to what I'm doing.
If you get an A, if I'm doing a job that I really love,
Making enough money to support myself and my family, being challenged.
For my parents, it's financial stability.
I think that they want me to be happy, but it's very much financial.
For music, they are open-minded, different careers in different fields.
For society, if you're making money, you are "successful."

If you have a deadline, if you are setting out to do something,
And you don't complete it, you can always try something else.
It's not linear, it's not black and white.
Sometimes, that turns into something else.
I decided I didn't want to be an orchestral musician anymore,
There was almost this switch, something went off,
I just felt really fragile about my playing.
So, I just didn't do it, play in front of everyone. I just avoided it.
I wished that I could have played at the beginning of the year.
Sometimes I do feel like I need to protect myself,
If I'm not ready for it or prepared emotionally, I need to respect it.
It's not as scary as I thought – It seems like a big deal now,
But, in hindsight, in the future, no one is going to remember, going to care.

Fear can hinder your creativity.
If you're afraid to fail, you aren't going to take risks.

And, in a bad situation, sometimes the best art comes out of that place.
My best art is when I'm collaborating with other people, doing it for myself.
I just loved hearing everyone's stories and what they are passionate about.
You discover things along the way.
Different words coming into my head;

**Hard work, teams, art, artist, planning, nonprofits, things like that.
Challenge.**

**CJ – A Found Poem
Alumnus
School of Art, Ceramics, Photography, and Museum Studies**

There are gray lines and different versions.
I'm still a practicing artist. I think that's fine, in the context.
Like most of my classmates, we saw ourselves as artists
And, that's what we wanted to be, the studio artist that made their cache.
I saw arts administration and visual arts being in the same career.
Now that I've done it for x number of years, I now see them almost as separate.

I started off as pre-med, all intention of becoming a doctor.
It turns out being a doctor is really hard, and I got really disheartened
Primarily based on the culture, everyone wanted to be on top of the curve.
I then realized you could actually do a degree in the arts. I had no idea.
I was interested in combining two disciplines, saw it as a challenge.
Probably, a few times, I might have introduced myself as, "Oh, I'm an artist,"
But, primarily, it was, "I'm an art student."

You have a degree, you can start calling yourself that profession.
That was the mindset.
But, I didn't have a job. I wanted to be in my backyard, making art.
I would call myself an artist.
I had gained the skills required to call myself that,
Which is, of course, complete nonsense.
You don't need formal training to be an artist or a creative in any manner.
It's totally a construct,
"You're not good enough till you have this piece of paper, finish all your classes."

Before, if a pot cracked or a glaze didn't come out right, I saw that as a throwaway.
I could just throw it away and start over.
And try it again, and try it again, and try it again.
The mistakes became successes, informing the next trial.
Art school was the complete rejection of a rigid process.

Failure is a little bit based on perspective and what I'm trying to accomplish.
On a baseline level, attempting something and it not working.

If you try at a relationship, a program, if you try getting to work on time,
It's successful if you accomplish it, and you are rewarded.
But, reward is not the right word, makes it seem impersonal.
A reward can just be a smile, an internal feeling.

Now, I approach failure like it's the end of the world.
It's like being able to see the reverberations of failure, mistakes coming with repercussions.
In school and art making, there not a whole lot of mistakes
that are the downfall of your career, your relationships.
It's much more difficult to pick yourself back up after a failure.
Failure in art is an experiment,
Failure in life can be shattering.

Success is probably defined as this push to continue to be an artist,
and call yourself an artist, create work consistently.
Success is this perseverance.
In the art world, I'm not successful. I haven't persevered. I switched fields.
People don't consider me to be an artist anymore.
When I introduce myself as an artist, usually they don't know me
So they don't believe me.

I don't see myself as a failure. I feel my own reward as success.
But, I don't necessarily see myself as successful right now.
There are gray lines and different versions.
A matter of trust, trusting yourself, trusting others, and understanding trust comes in many
forms.
Don't let the failures define your success as
Failures in life do not need to define next steps.

I remember as a student, one of my professors, the first day of class.
"Look to your left, look to your right.
If you're one of the few that make it as a living artist,
those people will not be with you at the top."
I remember being livid at that.
I remember at the time just being like, "You're an asshole.
How dare you step on our dreams of being artists.
Why am I even here if you don't believe in me or believe in my peers?"
Looking back on that, it's the best advice a professor can give you
Be prepared to fail, and at the same time,
be prepared to be successful and not have a support group around you.

Courtney – A Found Poem
Alumna
School of Arts, Media + Engineering, Digital Culture

I am an experimental musician and generally a person
Who likes doing weird things about town.
I work with undergraduates, essentially guiding them through the same process I went
through.
Hopefully in a way that is unterrifying.
I'm not going to say it's always delightful, but just in a way that isn't soul-crushing.

I'm pretty sure I can do something until it's proven otherwise.
It's always better to be a loser than a spectator.
You just try things and then it works. Or, then it doesn't.
If it doesn't, you try to realize that quickly and then bail.
Entering into this school, it's the first thing you talk about.
To fail up, fail forward, root.

In public school and then high school, I was rated as gifted really early.
One of the things they do with gifted kids, in order to make them not be so hard on
themselves,
They try to frame everything as a growing experience.
Gifted students know they get really down on themselves real easy.
I think they set their own expectations too high.
That they're going to be perfect at everything all the time.
I generally sort of assume that I'm okay to moderately okay.
All things are doable if you look at them in the right way.

It's a healing process.
It just sort of feels like if I'm not getting things done in the way that up-and-comers do,
I have over-committed myself as one does when you're so excited about stuff.
If I don't get a thing done, then the rest starts kind of snowballing.
That can feel very pressuring, and scary, and terrible.
When you're in school, the things you're doing is your whole life instead of being a person.
You're just a bunch of components, as opposed to a realized person who does things.

I try really hard not to define myself by my job because that's a boring thing to do.
The thing they literally have to pay you money to do, should not be the thing to define
yourself. No offense to actual working artists or whatever.
I'm of the opinion that having a 9:00 - 5:00 is great,
but it's also sort of separate from yourself as a person.
When I decided I was a success is when I got dental insurance
Because I officially was more adult than my parents. Neither of them do. There's that win.
I feel like a lot of the things that would be failures aren't necessarily failures.
They're just not constructive uses of time.

My family is all working class, working-poor sorts.

You're paying your own rent, and your lights are on consistently,
and you have a nice boyfriend, and you have a nice job. And, actually finished your degree.
To my parents always, I am a shocking success.
But, my partner, his family is all wealthy.
So, every time that you sort of show up with new weird ideas,
Or when I'm showing them my art or my work,
or telling them about the things I'm doing,
There's always this like, "Well, how are you going to make money off that?"
Money doesn't actually equal happiness. I mean, security does.
To the people who are really important to me,
success is more about consistently being happy enough.
To definitely have more blessings than trials.

We have a bunch of students who are unafraid, but they also don't have safety nets.
It's not that people don't want to help them. It's a wider societal problem.
It prevents some of the truly cooler things for happening just because
If you can't afford to keep your apartment, what are you going to do?
If it doesn't work out, it could actually be catastrophic.

Failure feels like such a negative,
But not being able to do things or not being great at something,
Doesn't automatically mean you suck as a person.
I fail at stuff all the time.
Failure is more just like a swing and a miss.
Just one fact of life.

It's very important to be as flexible as you can but to know your own limits.
And that a win for someone else, is not a fail for you.
Document each step of your process with what's working and what's not in each one.
That way you can go back and sort of have an almost linear path.
When you're in the middle of doing things, it's hard to remember
to take photos and to write stuff down, and do all that.
Because you're doing it and you'd rather be doing it than talking about doing it.

I've always been really into perseverance.
As the showing up is half the battle with anything.
I feel like I'm just talking in cliches but whatever - I can never be a translator.
If you go and do enough things, then things happen for you.
When the thing that you're doing isn't working, identify what's not working about it,
And, then have that be the thing you change to move forward, go better.
Do that sort of thing.

Dolores – A Found Poem
Alumna
School of Art, Painting

I am a great artist.

Born in Mexico with three beautiful children.
I have been a painter most of my life, my passion.
The career I wanted for the rest of my life.
Deviated at the beginning of my story,
I have a degree in linguistics and German studies.
But, I feel that if you only have one life to live,
And you don't explore that passion,
it's like a waste of a palette.

My creative work focuses on symbols, the way we express,
Our beliefs, the healing aspects of human life.
I had some prior artistic knowledge, it helped me grow and explore.
It helped me understand different processes.
The business aspect of it, very little was done.

I am a great creator.

My art skills come with this creative mind.
I sometimes tend to fly solo and stay away from institutions
I am trying to be better at that.

I see it through my professional career,
people compromising their values
Their ethics, even their morality.
I can see the impact, the devastating effects.
If you teach people, overall, that they have to stay whole,
Be strong and firm in their decisions.
Teach them to be more centered.
Stay loyal to their intuition.
I think we have an inner compass that tells us all
If we are being honest and truthful
To ourselves or not.

I love new challenges,

it's like a new game to me.
I'm one of those children that when they get a new game,
I read all the instructions and start playing right away.
The more I learn, the more interesting it becomes.

I was so assured about my talent, all I needed to do was work.

Because of my principles, I work a lot of extra hours.
I always want to do my best.
Self-imposed, self-created barriers, socially imposed or created,

The key might be to identify them clearly
So you can actually get them out of your way.

I was not really sure I would have the guts, as a student,
To go and do my own thing.
It became a totally different scenario once I decided to own,
To become an entrepreneur.
I came to understand that unless you take a big challenge,
You will never see big results.
If you choose to be working for someone for the rest of your life,
No matter how great the job is,
You're working for somebody.
When you decide to start your own business,
You are creating something
Hopefully that has a lot of value for many people.

Trust that everything is perfect.

There are no mistakes.
Failure is stopped living.
The belief that you are meaningful
And, everything you do has great impact on others, the planet.
Failure, to me, doesn't really exist.
It's just a perception, a label somebody can give somebody else
Without really understanding their life plan,
What's intended for them at the moment,
That is can change at any moment.

I almost touched bottom when I had to leave my house,
Living with an abusive person and feared for my life.
I had to get out of that situation with three children
And, ended up with nothing.
I had lost it all.
All I had was two hundred dollars in my pocket.
And, I had to take care of everything,
From immigration documents to get a driver's license.
I didn't know how to drive at the time,
So I had to do it all, all over again.
I went through the challenges and the processes, creating a new life.
I realized that you don't really lose anything.
You just get an opportunity to create it all again.
And, once you learn that, nobody can take it away.

When you are living your dream,
When you have all the elements to feel absolutely happy
And content with your accomplishments.
My life is perfect the way it is.
All I can do is explore more, play more, have more fun,

To me, that is the great success.
When you come to the realization that you're standing,
You're sitting, you're breathing in the right place.

It's not easy.
A lot of painful and harsh experiences.
The hardest rules to follow are the rules of limitation.
When people tell me no, you can't do this, you can't do that,
There are certain implicit rules that put blockages
I just don't understand.
Everybody can succeed if they put their mind to it.
But, people produce enough thoughts on failure, their fears get in the way.
It's like that little voice inside your head.
They have to let go of that.
You have to understand you are living your life as your own.

Juniper – A Found Poem
Faculty
The Design School

Remain joyful in your work. Continue to be intellectually stimulated.
Define your discipline.
That process of not knowing and being driven to figure it out -- It's success.
You can't do that unless you've fallen down.

I grew up in the south, Alabama, North Carolina.
Kind of like *Fame*, that TV show from the 80s, for high school.
Then university for graphic design. Then my graduate degree.
Then LA after that and worked as a designer.
I've lived in nine different states, two master's degrees.
Now, I am trying to broaden what people think of as visual communication design,
To try to remove the word "visual" from the lexicon.
Make public art as a tool in public environments to impact everyday people's lives
In ways that are not commercial or commercially oriented.

We communicate through all our senses.
And, anything we experience is communicating to us in one way or another.
We can have a much bigger understanding of how we relate to one another
As people, if we open up the possibilities of what we think about communication.
I realized that even though I'm making public art, public art is really a design process.
It became clear to me that there are lots of different things to communicate.
We can get pigeonholed sometimes and put ourselves in silos.

After working for a while, I wanted to quit design all together.
I felt I wasn't contributing to the world in the way that I wanted to.
I got cancer.

Through that experience, I just was thinking about what was I doing.
How was I really contributing my creative talent to the world.
I felt like I could be doing something more important, but I didn't know what.
To the extreme, and say I'm going to quit altogether.
But, then went through this whole process of coming back.
I just completely stopped thinking about design, doing sculpture.
And, that also felt meaningless to me -- What was I making this stuff for?
It was cool – It looked great. It was fun to explore.
But, then I realized to bring public art and design together,
it becomes a practice that has a purpose.

I knew I wanted to be a maker since the time I was seven years old.
I always just did art.
I wanted to work at an art museum, that was what I was going to do. And, I did.
I went straight to grad school after, probably a mistake,
Where I ended up floundering because I was young and didn't understand the difference.
I felt like I was just going on a path of what you're supposed to do
Instead of really being able to reflect on what was really right for me.
In undergrad it's not necessarily important to develop your own point of view
About the discipline or about how you want to impact the world.
You're just kind of sucking in all the information, a sponge,
So you can get out into the world and do it.
As a grad student, it's really important to contribute back to that body of knowledge
That allows the discipline to shift and change over time.

Talent and desire are really related.
But, it's also about practice, about enjoyment.
You're not going to spend time doing something you don't enjoy.
When learning new things, some students buckle down and power through.
Other students panic and don't get anything done. They just stop working.
Other students get mad and try to cast blame around. It's not one universal response.
They try hard, but are not certain anything is going to really happen right now.
Then, three quarters of the way through the semester, a light bulb goes off
And, they just completely turn into a different creator.
Or, students who find the challenge exciting and then they get the rest excited, too.
Those are the best times.

Many of them are conditioned to see education as black and white.
And, creative disciplines are not black and white, so they get really confused
And flustered when there's no wrong answer,
And, there are many right answers.
The culture of test taking and authority doesn't set them up to function independently
As a learner, and without a foundation to trust themselves and their own ideas,
They have only been taught to regurgitate someone else's ideas.
I think everyone is their own worst critic.
It just takes practice.

I tell students about my folder of rejections.
You can't be a creative professional and not get rejected more than you get accepted.
People who can't let that stuff roll off, end up changing careers.
When teaching, I don't have the right answer.
So, I try to give them strategies in checklist form they could possibly try.

I think a lot of people see failure as this end point,
Over, the end, everything is done.
But, to me, I think failure is an indication of a pivot point.
There are moments where I really struggled, it didn't work, I tried different things,
I backtracked and started over. I had conversations about why we were going this way.
I banged my head against the wall, trying new things every week.
This is the hand you are dealt, and you get to it the best you can.
But, it's an opportunity to see how I can change my approach,
See these strategies that I've always used, suddenly not work anymore.
To me, failure is a moment, but it isn't the end of the story.

Remain joyful in your work. Continue to be intellectually stimulated.
Define your discipline.
That process of not knowing and being driven to figure it out -- It's success.
You can't do that unless you've fallen down.

Molly – A Found Poem
Alumna
School of Music & School of Film, Dance, and Theatre

I consider myself an empathetic person, probably too much.
But, I try to use that in my work, music and film.
I am a very competitive person, not even against someone else. It's just myself.
It's important for me to keep motivated, writing down to-do lists,
Goals, checking things off.

Family.

My parents were never, you know, pushy.
I have a twin brother, interesting comparing myself to him and his successes.
I'm a little bit of the opinion that he kind of gets things handed to him in a silver platter.
He is also a white man growing up in this society.
As a woman, I have had very different experiences.
I always got good grades, he always needed help, so I would always help him.
My parents were never rewarding good grades.
I just did it for myself.

Competition.

Competing against other people, using other people's successes as fuel for your own.
I want to be able to celebrate a friend's success, then use that as motivation.

It might be more of an unspoken competitiveness is more common,
But then the feeling of failure is more common rather than competing against yourself.

Failure.

Definitely makes you more resilient, which is really important in the arts.
The way you are going to redefine success is also true with failure.
Because maybe not getting the position you wanted, or getting published,
Or what have you, can be seen as failure.
But, there are so many different ways you can fail or succeed.
They're almost interchangeable sometimes.

Success.

It goes back to that self of self. We're all on different paths, so it's hard to compare to others,
And say, "This is success compared to this external factor."
It's more about meeting goals for myself. That feels successful.
Other creatives on the front of my field, agree that success is very narrowly defined.
But, some people have a hard time changing the definition of what it should be.
Usually tie it to a personal sense of fulfillment,
But if they are being honest with themselves,
Will use success as a marker for social status.
"Look at my successes" rather than "I made this goal."
When I was a student, I had a very similar view,
But, it did have the added pressure of what my professors perceived as success.
I thought they defined success a certain way.

Music.

In the music world, it was very specific, so I knew I wasn't meeting those goals.
And, I knew that I wasn't necessarily pleasing them.
So, a similar point of view, but I just felt a little bit guilty about it.
I really looked up to peers who had different goals than I did,
They were still very successful in music, practicing all the time,
The motivation to compose every day, which I didn't.

Film.

If you're making films, it's an unspoken thing that's you're perceived as successful.
"Look at you, you're going out and you're making really great production work."
If you're making a high level of work, getting work shown,
You're contributing to the community, I think that was success.
I again would have this sense of guilt,
"I'm not making enough, I'm not writing enough, I'm not on enough sets."

Dual Fields.

Musicians who were so stoic in their ideas of what success was,
It was difficult to talk to them about my music success, because they wouldn't understand.
Composers would just eat, sleep, breathe, live composition,
And, I was the only dual major. And, it was even difficult to get allowed to do a dual major.

It felt a bit that I would be ostracized, which is a bit dramatic.
If you look at just the math, all the people in all the conservatories and universities,
Versus how many orchestra jobs there are, you gotta have a different plan, my friend.

Career Path.

We all have this ideal for the paths of our career, what we would like to achieve.
It's a very narrow window, and it puts a little bit of pressure.
Which is something I never had to do in the past,
"I'm gonna do everything; I'm a renaissance woman."
Which is great, but you can't make a career out of everything.
There's markers I would like to happen,
Get a book published, go into production on my own feature film,
If they didn't by this point in my life, I would feel like I had failed.
And, it always feels like a failure when you've gone through so many steps,
So many processes of being close to achievement, and, then not reaching it.
Of course, every audition you go on, every callback you get, is a success.
But, it felt like a failure when you go through all the hard work,
And you don't actually reach that goal in the end.

Balance and Identity.

It's more about weighing the balances of the positives versus the negatives.
"Do I like acting? Do I like going to auditions? Do I like getting callbacks?"
I think I will never be an LA professional actress in the way that I had dreamed,
And, I'm more okay with that.
I like doing it in a smaller market, and in the capacity I'm doing it right now.
But, to put all that energy into something that is only a small part of my identity,
When it's been a small part, I have music and film, or academia,
I'm okay with letting that just be that small part.

Advice.

Something I did as a freshman was to say "yes" to a lot of things, take opportunities.
I studied abroad, opened up my world of ethnomusicology and musicology.
I started looking more into research, academia, applying for grants,
And, while I didn't get a travel grant, it's prepared me more for how to write grants,
Really defining who you are as an artist, who you are as a researcher.
I would say to freshmen, "It's all gonna change, and take experiences as they come,
Embrace them. And, practice. But, don't practice too much. Keep a healthy balance in life."
These degrees can really take a toll on your mental health and your physical health.
You have to have a balance of knowing yourself and knowing other students,
Trying to be your best while still celebrating successes.
Embrace experiences, but also be a person.

Ollie - A Found Poem
Alumna
School of Arts, Media + Engineering, Digital Culture

I do lots of art, really weird stuff.
I make vagina art, mostly.
I saw my worth in mine.
An artist, sometimes that's a little pretentious. But, yeah, it's art.
One of the most important things to me is my culture, Native American.
If there's any problem in the world, there is a spiritual solution.
But I struggle with anxiety,
Thoughts like, "Oh my gosh, I don't have enough time. I'm missing things..."
Positive affirmations and rising to the challenge, I tell myself "I can do everything."
And, then I go down into a valley and I come back out.

I'm pretty filled with emotions and things. A Pisces.
I like to go with my gut.
I like to express myself and that even comes with when I am having a problem.
I feel like people are there to help you and fulfill those pieces of you.
Merging together. Reaching out to people.
Enjoying the arts where you just sit and do them, not consciously thinking.
But, they do come to me. A new perspective.

I do get a little sassy.
"Ugh, this is going to be hard work, but I have to do it."
That's when I'm finally not as combative to it. Immerse myself in it.
A perfectionist background, things have to be this way.
And, if I don't achieve it in that way, I have failed somehow.
I didn't live up to my own expectations, which are actually other peoples' expectations.
Pulling away from that and saying,
It doesn't have to be perfect every time. I don't have to achieve every time.
Go down into a valley and come back out.

As I've gotten older I've come to understand my culture a lot more
And, I've come a lot closer to it, more confident in a lot of ways.
If you are nervous because you don't feel like you have the knowledge, who cares?
If you have questions, ask them. Do it.
Awful things will always happen.
Things will always pop up, but they will always get better.
You will get it done despite setbacks. Don't let it upset you. You'll get there.
A combination of using your talent to your advantage,
Your knowledge to your advantage, accepting it.
You'll get better.

My dad, very different than me, defines success as money and material things,
being able to pay your bills.
Mine is more based on happiness.

Culturally, if you're successful, there's something you reaped that you share with others,
Your ability to give back.
I grew up with a lot of people there.
We didn't know anything about college, so thinking about going is scary, the unknown.
That reassurance, that failure happens.
Even if they make, what they perceive, as a misstep during their academic progression.
It's still going to be okay.
They still are going to have the skills to turn into something new.
Go down into a valley and come back out.

Winnie – A Found Poem
Student, Senior
School of Art, Photography and Museum Studies

My mom had a camera, and I thought "Oh, I'll just take pictures."
Take a photo, whatever.
That was the first time I think anybody had really said
"You're very good at something..."
Without much practice or development.
It was the only thing that made me excited.
To do life, to grow up.

Just because you have talent
doesn't mean you're excellent in something.
It just means that you are inherently good at something.
But you can develop your talent, cultivate different skills to make you better.
I thought "Oh, I'm good at this."
I don't really have to change what I'm doing, and I'll succeed."
And, then I had a professor tell me
that he didn't like my work.

"How do you not like my work? I'm excellent!"
It made me realize that just because
I did have natural talent,
People around me who are working really hard,
they can still surpass me.
It kicked me into gear, and made me realize
I needed to work really hard, being in that zone of creativity.

I was really afraid of critique, always nervous.
In art, it's so emotional, tied to who you are.
You feel like you're being personally attacked.
I just had to realize that it's not, even though it is.
It's only going to help you get better.
And, so now I'm actually really excited for critique,

I need some other people's perspectives.
“How do they see this? How successful is this piece?”
Because it's not just about how I feel about it.
I'm showing them my art.

It's always daunting to learn new things,
You only see how challenging it is.
You don't see the actual thing itself.
But love of learning kicks in, and I just eat that up.
The challenges drop away.
But, if I fail, I am still going to be upset,
Weary in that part of it.
But, I know I can adapt. I can overcome.
I just have to get out of that emotional sense.
I feel confident I can figure this out,
And, if not, I know people who can help me.

Your mind is the way that you view something, a perspective.
If you have a bad attitude, if you aren't very confident in yourself,
If you just aren't in the right mindset to face something new,
Because you can stand in the way of yourself so much easier than another person can,
because you have to live with yourself all the time.

I try to at least let myself feel the failure, the setback,
I take a few days to be sad, or upset, and to be mad about it,
and let myself feel those emotions,
because I realize that if I just try to step over that step,
it usually just comes up in other places.
It's gone from the point from just letting it out, to wallowing in it.
But now I try to move on, and actually make the step in a different direction.

Failure, it's not usually ever about what other people want of you.
I always set myself up higher,
For some people, my failure might be success, but to me
It's just when you don't meet your own expectations.
And, being overconfident is a thing.

It's kind of cheesy, but I know who I am.
I know that I'm going to succeed in something.
It's not about who you are at the end of your life.
It's what you've done in between,
and that just says everything about anything.
When you're doing art, yes, the final product means something.
But, how you got there, and the challenges you overcome,
and the thought process you have,
it's so much more meaningful.

To do life, to grow up, to show them my art.

APPENDIX I

QUANTTTATIVE MEASUREMENTS PRE-TEST BY ITEM

Frequencies and Descriptives for Pre- Test for all Participants

| n=18 | | | |
|--|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| Item | Mean | Median | Std. D. |
| <i>General Self-Efficacy (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)</i> | | | |
| I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough. | 3.39 | 3.00 | 0.50 |
| If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want. | 3.39 | 3.00 | 0.50 |
| It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals. | 2.83 | 3.00 | 0.51 |
| I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events. | 2.89 | 3.00 | 0.68 |
| Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations. | 2.83 | 3.00 | 0.76 |
| I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort. | 3.56 | 4.00 | 0.51 |
| I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities. | 2.56 | 3.00 | 0.78 |
| When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions. | 3.01 | 3.00 | 0.64 |
| If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution. | 3.17 | 3.00 | 0.38 |
| I can usually handle whatever comes my way. | 3.00 | 3.00 | 0.59 |
| <i>Growth Mindset (6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | |
| I can make mistakes and struggle while knowing it's okay. | 4.44 | 4.00 | 0.92 |
| I can work until I figure it out or understand it. | 4.50 | 4.00 | 0.71 |
| I can engage in new challenges especially when I learn new things. | 4.44 | 4.00 | 0.92 |
| I can complete challenges and tasks as long as I keep working through them. | 4.89 | 5.00 | 0.68 |
| I can keep working until I find out what works best for me. | 4.56 | 4.00 | 0.86 |
| <i>Fixed Mindset (Negative Worded Items on 6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | |
| I can feel bad about myself If I don't learn something quickly. | 2.11 | 2.00 | 0.90 |

| | | | |
|--|------|------|-------------|
| I can learn without studying. | 3.44 | 4.00 | 1.25 |
| I can think there is something wrong with me if I cannot learn through studying. | 2.39 | 2.00 | 1.29 |
| I can feel like giving up when I am learning something hard. | 3.06 | 3.00 | 1.35 |
| I feel like giving up when I cannot do something very well right away. | 3.28 | 4.00 | 1.36 |

Grit (5-point Likert Scale from 1. Not like me at all to 5. Very much like me)

| | | | |
|---|------|------|-------------|
| New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones. | 3.95 | 4.00 | 1.06 |
| I have been obsessed with an idea, project, or pastime but later lost interest in it. | 4.11 | 4.50 | 1.11 |
| I often set goals but later choose to pursue something else. | 3.78 | 3.50 | 1.11 |
| I have difficulty maintaining my focus on a project. | 3.72 | 4.00 | 1.36 |
| My interests change over time. | 3.44 | 3.00 | 1.10 |
| Setbacks do not discourage me. | 2.50 | 2.50 | 0.86 |
| I do not give up easily. | 3.56 | 3.50 | 0.78 |
| I am a hard worker. | 4.44 | 4.50 | 0.62 |
| I finish whatever I begin. | 3.06 | 3.00 | 1.11 |
| I am diligent (industrious and hard-working in my pursuits). | 4.06 | 4.00 | 1.04 |
| I never give up. | 3.44 | 4.00 | 1.04 |
| I have overcome setbacks to conquer a challenge. | 4.11 | 4.00 | 0.68 |

Academic Persistence (Academic Integration) (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)

| | | | |
|---|------|------|-------------|
| I can see intellectual growth in myself as I progress in my degree. | 3.17 | 3.00 | 0.92 |
| I can reach out to my faculty members for help in my program. | 3.11 | 3.00 | 1.02 |
| I can reach out to my peers for help in my program. | 2.94 | 3.00 | 1.11 |
| I can see the connection between what I am learning and my future career possibilities. | 2.94 | 3.00 | 1.06 |
| I can advance new ideas related to degree program. | 2.83 | 3.00 | 0.94 |

| | | | |
|--|------|------|------|
| I can actively participate in discussions around my selected field. | 2.94 | 3.00 | 0.94 |
| <i>Academic Persistence (Degree Commitment) (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)</i> | | | |
| I can earn a college degree. | 3.50 | 4.00 | 0.86 |
| I can commit to the work that it will take to earn a degree in my selected field. | 3.44 | 3.50 | 0.62 |
| I can persist in pursuing my chosen field. | 3.33 | 3.00 | 0.69 |
| I can become successful in my chosen field. | 3.17 | 3.00 | 0.86 |
| I can know that my family is supportive of my pursuit of my chosen field. | 3.44 | 4.00 | 0.78 |

Frequencies and Descriptives for Pre- Test for Participants Who Participated in Pre- and Post-

| n=11 | | | |
|--|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| Item | Mean | Median | Std. D. |
| <i>General Self-Efficacy (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)</i> | | | |
| I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough. | 3.45 | 3.00 | 0.52 |
| If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want. | 3.45 | 3.00 | 0.52 |
| It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals. | 3.00 | 3.00 | 0.45 |
| I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events. | 2.72 | 3.00 | 0.65 |
| Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations. | 2.81 | 3.00 | 0.87 |
| I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort. | 3.63 | 4.00 | 0.79 |
| I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities. | 2.73 | 3.00 | 0.78 |
| When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 0.47 |
| If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution. | 3.18 | 3.00 | 0.40 |
| I can usually handle whatever comes my way. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.54 |
| <i>Growth Mindset (6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | |
| I can make mistakes and struggle while knowing it's okay. | 3.90 | 4.00 | 1.04 |
| I can work until I figure it out or understand it. | 4.63 | 4.00 | 0.81 |
| I can engage in new challenges especially when I learn new things. | 4.64 | 4.00 | 0.81 |
| I can complete challenges and tasks as long as I keep working through them. | 5.00 | 5.00 | 0.77 |
| I can keep working until I find out what works best for me. | 4.90 | 5.00 | 0.83 |
| <i>Fixed Mindset (Negative Worded Items on 6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | |
| I can feel bad about myself If I don't learn something quickly. | 2.27 | 2.00 | 1.01 |
| I can learn without studying. | 3.73 | 4.00 | 1.27 |

| | | | |
|--|------|------|-------------|
| I can think there is something wrong with me if I cannot learn through studying. | 2.64 | 2.00 | 1.36 |
| I can feel like giving up when I am learning something hard. | 3.00 | 3.00 | 1.26 |
| I feel like giving up when I cannot do something very well right away. | 3.46 | 4.00 | 1.57 |

Grit (5-point Likert Scale from 1. Not like me at all to 5. Very much like me)

| | | | |
|---|------|------|-------------|
| New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 1.17 |
| I have been obsessed with an idea, project, or pastime but later lost interest in it. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 1.17 |
| I often set goals but later choose to pursue something else. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 1.44 |
| I have difficulty maintaining my focus on a project. | 3.45 | 3.00 | 1.44 |
| My interests change over time. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 1.19 |
| Setbacks do not discourage me. | 2.81 | 3.00 | 0.75 |
| I do not give up easily. | 3.73 | 4.00 | 0.65 |
| I am a hard worker. | 4.36 | 4.00 | 0.50 |
| I finish whatever I begin. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.94 |
| I am diligent (industrious and hard-working in my pursuits). | 4.18 | 4.00 | 0.60 |
| I never give up. | 3.63 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I have overcome setbacks to conquer a challenge. | 4.27 | 4.00 | 0.65 |

Academic Persistence (Academic Integration) (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)

| | | | |
|---|------|------|-------------|
| I can see intellectual growth in myself as I progress in my degree. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 0.79 |
| I can reach out to my faculty members for help in my program. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.94 |
| I can reach out to my peers for help in my program. | 3.00 | 4.00 | 1.26 |
| I can see the connection between what I am learning and my future career possibilities. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 0.65 |
| I can advance new ideas related to degree program. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.53 |
| I can actively participate in discussions around my selected field. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.83 |

Academic Persistence (Degree Commitment) (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)

| | | | |
|---|------|------|------|
| I can earn a college degree. | 3.63 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I can commit to the work that it will take to earn a degree in my selected field. | 3.46 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I can persist in pursuing my chosen field. | 3.46 | 3.00 | 0.52 |
| I can become successful in my chosen field. | 3.46 | 3.00 | 0.52 |
| I can know that my family is supportive of my pursuit of my chosen field. | 3.72 | 4.00 | 0.47 |

APPENDIX J

QUANTITATIVE MEASUREMENTS POST-TEST BY ITEM

Frequencies and Descriptives for Post- Test for all Participants

| n=11 | | | |
|--|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| Item | Mean | Median | Std. D. |
| <i>General Self-Efficacy (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)</i> | | | |
| I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |
| If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want. | 3.18 | 3.00 | 0.40 |
| It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.67 |
| I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 0.65 |
| Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |
| I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort. | 3.72 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.67 |
| When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions. | 3.46 | 4.00 | 0.69 |
| If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution. | 3.64 | 4.00 | 0.50 |
| I can usually handle whatever comes my way. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.67 |
| <i>Growth Mindset (6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | |
| I can make mistakes and struggle while knowing it's okay. | 5.18 | 5.00 | 0.75 |
| I can work until I figure it out or understand it. | 4.82 | 5.00 | 0.87 |
| I can engage in new challenges especially when I learn new things. | 5.09 | 5.00 | 0.94 |
| I can complete challenges and tasks as long as I keep working through them. | 5.46 | 6.00 | 0.94 |
| I can keep working until I find out what works best for me. | 5.09 | 5.00 | 0.94 |
| <i>Fixed Mindset (Negative Worded Items on 6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | |
| I can feel bad about myself If I don't learn something quickly. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 1.64 |
| I can learn without studying. | 3.46 | 3.00 | 0.82 |

| | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| I can think there is something wrong with me if I cannot learn through studying. | 3.46 | 3.00 | 1.29 |
| I can feel like giving up when I am learning something hard. | 3.54 | 3.00 | 1.29 |
| I feel like giving up when I cannot do something very well right away. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 1.36 |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <i>Grit (5-point Likert Scale from 1. Not like me at all to 5. Very much like me)</i> | | | |
| New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 1.21 |
| I have been obsessed with an idea, project, or pastime but later lost interest in it. | 3.55 | 3.00 | 1.13 |
| I often set goals but later choose to pursue something else. | 3.18 | 3.00 | 0.87 |
| I have difficulty maintaining my focus on a project. | 2.82 | 2.00 | 1.16 |
| My interests change over time. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.81 |
| Setbacks do not discourage me. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.87 |
| I do not give up easily. | 4.19 | 4.00 | 0.87 |
| I am a hard worker. | 4.55 | 5.00 | 0.52 |
| I finish whatever I begin. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.92 |
| I am diligent (industrious and hard-working in my pursuits). | 4.36 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I never give up. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 0.79 |
| I have overcome setbacks to conquer a challenge. | 4.27 | 4.00 | 0.78 |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <i>Academic Persistence (Academic Integration) (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)</i> | | | |
| I can see intellectual growth in myself as I progress in my degree. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 0.40 |
| I can reach out to my faculty members for help in my program. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.50 |
| I can reach out to my peers for help in my program. | 3.36 | 4.00 | 0.81 |
| I can see the connection between what I am learning and my future career possibilities. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |
| I can advance new ideas related to degree program. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |
| I can actively participate in discussions around my selected field. | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |

Academic Persistence (Degree Commitment) (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)

| | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| I can earn a college degree. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 0.40 |
| I can commit to the work that it will take to earn a degree in my selected field. | 3.64 | 4.00 | 0.50 |
| I can persist in pursuing my chosen field. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 0.40 |
| I can become successful in my chosen field. | 3.64 | 4.00 | 0.50 |
| I can know that my family is supportive of my pursuit of my chosen field. | 3.72 | 4.00 | 0.47 |

APPENDIX K

QUANTTTATIVE MEASUREMENTS COMPARISON BY ITEM

Frequencies and Descriptives for Pre- Test for Participants Who Participated in Pre- and Post-

| n=11 | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Item | Pre-Mean | Pre-Median | Pre-Std. D. | Post-Mean | Post-Median | Post-Std. D. |
| <i>General Self-Efficacy (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)</i> | | | | | | |
| I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough. | 3.45 | 3.00 | 0.52 | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |
| If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want. | 3.45 | 3.00 | 0.52 | 3.18 | 3.00 | 0.40 |
| It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals. | 3.00 | 3.00 | 0.45 | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.67 |
| I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events. | 2.72 | 3.00 | 0.65 | 3.27 | 3.00 | 0.65 |
| Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations. | 2.81 | 3.00 | 0.87 | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |
| I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort. | 3.63 | 4.00 | 0.79 | 3.72 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities. | 2.73 | 3.00 | 0.78 | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.67 |
| When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 0.47 | 3.46 | 4.00 | 0.69 |
| If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution. | 3.18 | 3.00 | 0.40 | 3.64 | 4.00 | 0.50 |
| I can usually handle whatever comes my way. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.54 | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.67 |
| <i>Growth Mindset (6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | | | | |
| I can make mistakes and struggle while knowing it's okay. | 3.90 | 4.00 | 1.04 | 5.18 | 5.00 | 0.75 |
| I can work until I figure it out or understand it. | 4.63 | 4.00 | 0.81 | 4.82 | 5.00 | 0.87 |
| I can engage in new challenges especially when I learn new things. | 4.64 | 4.00 | 0.81 | 5.09 | 5.00 | 0.94 |
| I can complete challenges and tasks as long as I keep working through them. | 5.00 | 5.00 | 0.77 | 5.46 | 6.00 | 0.94 |
| I can keep working until I find out what works best for me. | 4.90 | 5.00 | 0.83 | 5.09 | 5.00 | 0.94 |
| <i>Fixed Mindset (Negative Worded Items on 6-point Likert Scale from 1. Strongly Disagree to 6. Strongly Agree)</i> | | | | | | |
| I can feel bad about myself If I don't learn something quickly. | 2.27 | 2.00 | 1.01 | 3.09 | 3.00 | 1.64 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| I can learn without studying. | 3.73 | 4.00 | 1.27 | 3.46 | 3.00 | 0.82 |
| I can think there is something wrong with me if I cannot learn through studying. | 2.64 | 2.00 | 1.36 | 3.46 | 3.00 | 1.29 |
| I can feel like giving up when I am learning something hard. | 3.00 | 3.00 | 1.26 | 3.54 | 3.00 | 1.29 |
| I feel like giving up when I cannot do something very well right away. | 3.46 | 4.00 | 1.57 | 3.36 | 3.00 | 1.36 |

Grit (5-point Likert Scale from 1. Not like me at all to 5. Very much like me)

| | | | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 1.17 | 3.55 | 4.00 | 1.21 |
| I have been obsessed with an idea, project, or pastime but later lost interest in it. | 3.82 | 4.00 | 1.17 | 3.55 | 3.00 | 1.13 |
| I often set goals but later choose to pursue something else. | 3.36 | 3.00 | 1.44 | 3.18 | 3.00 | 0.87 |
| I have difficulty maintaining my focus on a project. | 3.45 | 3.00 | 1.44 | 2.82 | 2.00 | 1.16 |
| My interests change over time. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 1.19 | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.81 |
| Setbacks do not discourage me. | 2.81 | 3.00 | 0.75 | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.87 |
| I do not give up easily. | 3.73 | 4.00 | 0.65 | 4.19 | 4.00 | 0.87 |
| I am a hard worker. | 4.36 | 4.00 | 0.50 | 4.55 | 5.00 | 0.52 |
| I finish whatever I begin. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.94 | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.92 |
| I am diligent (industrious and hard-working in my pursuits). | 4.18 | 4.00 | 0.60 | 4.36 | 4.00 | 0.67 |
| I never give up. | 3.63 | 4.00 | 0.67 | 3.82 | 4.00 | 0.79 |
| I have overcome setbacks to conquer a challenge. | 4.27 | 4.00 | 0.65 | 4.27 | 4.00 | 0.78 |

Academic Persistence (Academic Integration) (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)

| | | | | | | |
|---|------|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| I can see intellectual growth in myself as I progress in my degree. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 0.79 | 3.82 | 4.00 | 0.40 |
| I can reach out to my faculty members for help in my program. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.94 | 3.36 | 3.00 | 0.50 |
| I can reach out to my peers for help in my program. | 3.00 | 4.00 | 1.26 | 3.36 | 4.00 | 0.81 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| I can see the connection between what I am learning and my future career possibilities. | 3.27 | 3.00 | 0.65 | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |
| I can advance new ideas related to degree program. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.53 | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |
| I can actively participate in discussions around my selected field. | 3.09 | 3.00 | 0.83 | 3.55 | 4.00 | 0.52 |
| <i>Academic Persistence (Degree Commitment) (4-point Likert Scale from 1. Cannot do at all to 4. Highly certain can do)</i> | | | | | | |
| I can earn a college degree. | 3.63 | 4.00 | 0.67 | 3.82 | 4.00 | 0.40 |
| I can commit to the work that it will take to earn a degree in my selected field. | 3.46 | 4.00 | 0.67 | 3.64 | 4.00 | 0.50 |
| I can persist in pursuing my chosen field. | 3.46 | 3.00 | 0.52 | 3.82 | 4.00 | 0.40 |
| I can become successful in my chosen field. | 3.46 | 3.00 | 0.52 | 3.64 | 4.00 | 0.50 |
| I can know that my family is supportive of my pursuit of my chosen field. | 3.72 | 4.00 | 0.47 | 3.72 | 4.00 | 0.47 |

APPENDIX L

FOUND POEMS FROM DISSERTATION CYCLE INTERVIEWS

Josephine – A Found Poem
Student, Sophomore
School of Art, Art Studies (Intermedia)

Mindset and Self-Efficacy

Learning new things has always been a challenge for me, always an aversion.
Fear of failure pretty much my entire life.
If I try to do something new and I'm not immediately good at it, it can be very discouraging.
Depends on the environment and the amount of pressure I put on myself.
As I've gained more experience creating artwork in different mediums, it gets a little easier,
Even if it's challenging and very discouraging, the end result is almost always worth it.
I really like being able to broaden my horizons and gain new experiences as a person.

Barriers.

A lot of times I just have to force myself to go through it.
Always have that voice of judgement telling me what I'm doing it wrong,
Embarrassing, that I should stop.
Sometimes, I come really close to listening to it, I give up, I quit.
Recently, more aware of it, I push my way past and tell myself to stick with it no matter
what.
It's usually been for the better when I do that.

Judgement and Persistence.

Through this course, we were able to kind of become more self-aware,
Develop it more as its own entity.
For me, abstract concepts have always been kind of difficult for me to understand.
The fact we were able to put in a concrete form for ourselves
And have a physical piece of art to look at and remind myself to look at,
I found it a really valuable experience.
I'm aware it's there –
When I'm aware of something, I can take more steps around it, through it, under it,
Learning that this isn't everything.
My judgement isn't everything about me, there's so much more to me.
I couldn't really put my voice of persistence in a concrete form for a while.
My inner voice of judgement felt like a black cloud,
For a while, I couldn't really visualize the absence of it, the disbursing of it.
After some time contemplating it, persistence felt more like light disbursing it.
It was a bit more of a process.
Being able to shape something negative came easily,
but shaping something positive was a bit more difficult.
I'm really glad I did it.
I keep both pieces next to my desk so whenever I'm working,
And I feel myself start to get uncomfortable and self-conscious,
I can look at them both and say to myself,
"I'm overcome this before and I've always been happy with the results,
So I can do it again this time."

Success.

For a lot of people in my life, success is getting from point A, finding yourself at point B.
Overcoming any obstacles that are in the way.
Getting better results than anyone could have imagined.
Getting huge, positive, tangible, outstanding results.
Taking risks for things like art or storytelling.
Taking that leap and discovering something new and being able to share with other people.
Success is being able to overcome yourself, for me anyway.
I am often the biggest obstacle for myself rather than any external variables.
If I can get through something and finish and stand back,
And say to myself “That didn’t exist before, but now it does because I created that.”
That feels like success to me.

Failure.

For a really long time, being able to just create something wasn’t enough for me.
It didn’t feel like anything I did was enough a lot of the time.
It wasn’t up to some internal standard I had.
Trying to be easier on myself, take everything as learning experiences, celebrate every success.
They don’t have to be huge and outstanding, but every success matters to me now.
I think the only failure is just not doing anything at all.
Or, giving up entirely.
Every failure is a learning experience, even if they are embarrassing.
You never know when something you create could have a big impact on somebody else.
I defined almost everything I did as a failure at one point,
Just because of self-doubt and fear and things like that.
Go easy on yourself.
Don’t beat yourself up over everything anymore because it’s never worth it.
Even if you feel discouraged now,
Try to think about the effect this experience will have on your future.
Keep that in mind to keep moving forward.
Tell stories that mean something. Create an experience.
I want to be able to know I made a positive difference in somebody’s day or life.
I work hard to improve myself so I can get to that point for somebody else.

Cassie – A Found Poem
Student, Senior
The Design School, Architecture

Mindset.

I would say I like challenge.
When it comes to my passions, I really like learning as much as I can.
As many new things as I can push myself.
Learning new things, it makes me question my talent.
If there is a new concept I’m not familiar with,
Or, someone else seems to know ten times more than me,
It makes me question it. But, overall,

The new subjects and topics I learn just adds to my knowledge base.

Self-Efficacy.

It can go one or two ways, depending on my confidence level.

I'm very stubborn,

Confident enough to get through the average amount of challenges.

Adamant about getting what I want done and at a level I feel is top-notch.

I've always just been fiery, really sassy, questioning what was given to me

Now anytime somebody puts a new challenge up, I'll take that and up you one.

I'm just like, "I'm gonna show you..."

I want to prove to everybody that I can be what I know I can be.

Barriers.

Lack of communication is really hard,

When people aren't really agreeable or if they are super one-sided, strict,

Don't really give it their all. Closed off.

I've gotten better, more agile in my approaches.

I can adjust accordingly.

I had never realized it before I took the class, just considered myself a perfectionist.

I've learned I am my harshest critic,

And, even when I do fulfill the requirements, it's hard for me to stop there.

I just try really hard, and it's one of my things I just don't stop.

Freshman year, I didn't feel confidence compared to other people.

I would stay up all night, put in ridiculous hours for very little return.

As I've gotten older, I've learned to say, "I'm done for now, come back to it later if I need,

But, it doesn't need to be *perfect*."

That's a hard thing for me – I like everything to be done once, right.

Judgement and Persistence.

Judgement, it was a compilation of different experiences

and phrases stuck in my head, outside sources, not liking critiques.

Persistence, it was more driven from myself and my ability to withstand the pressure

And, keep going, and know the people I surround myself with do care about me

Will not judge me for it.

Hard to realize that someone like my mom, my dad, would be both.

Hard to realize the difference is okay and I can move on,

Not to place people in one phrase they might have said ten years ago,

The deep set of my memory.

It can just slowly fade away.

Success.

Growing up, it was always get a job, successful in wealth, happiness, family.

But, there are people that just live in a van and travel around the world,

And they are happy as hell. It's really about what you want to do.

[In architecture, success is] money for sure, prestige, being on Pinterest.

Amazing architects spend seven years on one project,

But really, behind the scenes, there is like 4,000 people behind them.

I don't like our field's version of success,
It's super limiting of what you can do and what you are expected to do.
What do I want to do?
Taking a year off, applying to grad school, traveling and working between.
Learn as much as I can, build buildings around the world,
Marry a beautiful man that speaks a different language and have some cute kids
Make our own dream houses in Italy or France or wherever.
Bigger dreams than reality.

Failure.

I don't really accept the word failure as much.
It's just not an option for me.
And, even when I feel like a failure, I know that it's for a reason.
And, I can look back and say, "I should have done that a little bit better."
Everything happens for a reason, so I don't like saying that failure marks an ending.
There is always room for improvement.
It doesn't define you.
There are so many chance to redeem yourself.
Nothing is ever set in stone and there is always a way
To turn a failure into an opportunity.

Claire – A Found Poem Student, Senior The Design School, Architecture

Mindset.

Learning new things, I'm very excited, kind of like anxious where you're a little bit scared
But definitely more ready to take it on than skittish about it.
General life experiences, you have to learn to not be scared of anything and just go for it.
Learning new things, it improves your talent,
Just constantly learning new things, getting new outlooks.
You add more paint to your palette.

Self-Efficacy.

Very confident.
First year, I was still pretty confident,
But it came more from naïve, "I'm going to go for it!"
Now that I'm all weathered and tired,
It's more like "I know I can do this, so do it."
Time-management, self-management,
being able to balance fun, work, school, family, friends, all that type of stuff.

Barriers.

Mental creative block. Other classes. Lack of knowledge.
Being able to have healthy brain breaks, and eat and sleep,
And get work from other classes done and power through studio.

Judgement and Persistence.

Drastic change. I definitely know I can feel it when it's about to come on and pop up.
And, when it's there I set everything down and go for a walk. A run.
I'm more aware of it and open to it than just taking it and getting frustrated.
It's interesting, I'm learning a lot about myself personally and I can tell it's been going well.
The inner voice of persistence is easier
Because I know it's more patient to find something that keeps you going
You're more open to thinking about what helps me, what pushes me.
For the inner voice of judgement, I had to dig down pretty far,
To figure out where that is actually coming from.

Success.

For them, success is a nine to five persistent job.
Nice house, nice cars, successful kids, different from my view of success.
Innovation would be the one term for success in architecture,
Innovative. Creativity. Sustainability. Design. Building construction.
All that kind of meshes under the umbrella of innovation.
Happiness. I always define, feel successful,
When I set personal goals for myself that will make me happy.
Not following the norm and doing what I want to do despite what people think.
Every semester since I started college has been progressively less about my friends want me to do,
Less of what my grandparents want me to do, less of what everyone thinks I should do.
I'm going to live my life for a year and do all this stuff rather than what they want me to do.
I want to do everything!

Failure.

At this point, I would define it as a learning opportunity rather than just a complete failure.
And, I don't like defining it, it's more of a learning opportunity than a road block or set back.
I used to get super down when my school work wouldn't come out the way I wanted
Or, I didn't quite reach the goal I set.
But, now I definitely just take it, roll with it, and "What did I do?"
"What can I do to avoid this in the future?"
And keep rolling.
Approach it with more of an open mind, just go with it.
Keep doing what you're doing, don't be afraid.
Embrace it. It's just learning.

Christina – A Found Poem
Student, Junior
The Design School, Architecture

Mindset.

Definitely eager, very eager to learn new things when they are a challenge.
I used to be more timid about it.
The idea of not succeeding right off the bat, always an uncomfortable thing,
When things do not come very easily to you.
Getting so frustrated when I would try new things or new hobbies or whatever.
I carried that mentality for a while.
Recently that's been something I've started to get over,
I feel a lot more eager to kind of put my hands in it,
Not so concerned anymore with the self-conscious aspect.
I've started to gain more confidence.
If you're not good at it, at least you know. You know?

The course, it forced me to reflect on some of my habits, sit back and take a moment
To consider the mentality I had.
I'm not a very self-reflective person. I'm very extroverted toward the world.
Very reflective, creative exercises,
Not feeling like there were these guidelines on how it needed to be done
It was really relaxing for me, I could finally do something I was very self-conscious at
And, then doing it to get great, or to be good at it,
Having the full freedom to be expressive in that way,
Is not something I ever really get a chance to do.

Self-Efficacy.

Fairly confident, I would say that's always a struggle.
I'm definitely more confident than I used to be, for sure.
Entering college and feeling this expectation I had to fulfill,
I really carried that with me, almost like some emotional baggage.
But, now I just feel a lot more in control in a weird way,
Relates back to feeling more self-aware of my habits, certain modes of thinking I can fall
into,
Whether it's good or bad, just knowing myself more clearly,
Having the time to reflect on myself has made me more at ease with challenges and setbacks.

Barriers.

As much as I feel more confident than I was, I am not 100% there yet.
And, I don't think anyone really can be.
It takes a very certain type of person to be like "I don't care even if I fail"
I think everyone still has a bit of inhibition about that.
The biggest barrier to success is being afraid to take very bold risks.
It's one thing to be afraid to approach the problem.
Once you get past that, you can approach the problem, a matter of solving the problem.
And, how you go about solving the problem, stick to a very safe, easy way or

You just really want to throw yourself out there and try unfamiliar approaches,
It's not just about having the confidence to approach the problem, but
Also having the confidence in how you choose to solve your challenge.
The biggest barrier is being afraid of taking risk for the sake of success.

Judgement and Persistence.

Before taking the class, I didn't think of it in that light,
Never able to actually pause and really analyze my modes of thinking
Whenever I would find myself in very difficult situations and I would need to be resilient.
My voice of judgement was really marked by feeling very inadequate.
And, I think that's a common thing. And, would happen during my creative process.
Caught up in worrying about other people judging, feeling very critical of myself.
It's normal, but it's like "that's not a good thing and you can stop it."
Realizing it was in my control, when I'm starting to talk to myself in negative ways,
To stop it, to recognize it, so it won't get in the way of moving forward.
It's like a muscle – You have to constantly practice it when you feel like you are slipping.
Over time though, the more you are able to get to know yourself that way
And recognize ways to stop it, it gets easier.
It's a matter of practice and diligence.

Persistence, it was uplifting.
When you realize you I would never talk to someone the way I talk to myself.
What do I need to say to myself instead?
What would a friend say to me?
It was a very meditative experience, positive, more self-love.
The action of writing down what you would say instead, you retain it so much better,
And it becomes a real thing.
A weirdly humbling experience, recognizing that you deserve more.

Success.

My parents, always instilled in me that success was just about happiness in life.
Never felt like it was a matter of "you're not doing as well because you didn't take the same
path."
Just different ways of achieving it, just your own happiness in your own life.
My field defines success, probably kind of my clear cut.
Go to architecture school, get your master's, get your licensure, go work at a firm,
And, do that forever.
I think that's actually starting to shift, this new generation starting to redefine it.
It's shifting this cut out sequence of events to be successful,
Now it's becoming success is how you innovate
And how you are wielding your powers and your talents to do good in the world.
It's just figuring out what you really care about, and then pursuing that,
And, pursuing a life that is going to make you happy.

Failure.

I think failure is missing out.

I used to define failure as “Oh, you didn’t get the best grade or didn’t do as best as you are capable”

Now it’s much more gray than that, not so black and white.

Failure, isn’t about not succeeding in what you attempt,

It’s just about whether or not you choose to attempt something in the first place.

Failure is being too stubborn, too stubborn to change, too stubborn to take risks.

Do it anyways.

Even if you are afraid of looking like an idiot or looking stupid,

Or you are afraid of not fulfilling certain people’s expectations.

Just don’t let that stop you, put yourself out there anyways.

It’s always better to at least try and make progress versus staying where you are at.

Even putting yourself out there if it doesn’t go well could lead to so many other opportunities,

And, thoughts you have never had before.

Dani – A Found Poem
Student, Senior
The Design School, Design Studies

Mindset.

I enjoy a challenge because you get to reiterate it in different ways.

You learn at your own pace.

Whether it’s a skill or a history element, it definitely impacts you.

It can even change what you want to do with your life, your work.

Self-Efficacy.

Overcoming setbacks, probably in the moment not that much confidence.

Now that I look back, I’ve definitely grown.

It’s just something I have with stick with and remind myself it’s temporary.

You can always get yourself out and work hard until it’s past you.

The course helped me cope with that I think were my failures

And, the pros and cons in how to work toward my future

and how to avoid the same situation happening

Barriers.

Network – You have to make sure you network with the right people

And, keep the relationship with them.

Don’t just see them one time and think you don’t need them in the future.

I’ve learned the hard way, you need that support.

I’ve definitely been reaching out more than I ever have before.

It’s hard – But, what’s the worst they could say? No?

I don’t like change, but I’m getting there.

Judgement and Persistence.

I don’t think I’m as critical anymore, but I’m very critical of myself.

Always been that person to compare myself to others in my work,

But in the past semester, I've been blocking others out and getting my work complete
In what I want to get out of it, more success that way.
Interrupting the inner voice of judgement, it's really hard.
You are just used to it and it's always been there.
I can feel it coming on and I'm just like, no, stop.
Just look at it. This is your piece. Don't compare it to anything else.
Block it out. Put black paper around it, don't let it influence a change of mind.

Success.

Doing that you want and loving it, no matter what it is.
As long as it's making you grow to be a better person or version of yourself.
My field, they define it by how the user can create a relationship with the space.
Something that can adapt through years and years.
I define success as you're enjoying what you do and it's helping you grow.
You learn how to think for yourself.
It's more than getting a basic degree and then you are done.
You keep going.

Failure.

When you don't put in all 110% and you don't feel like you have a connection,
Then I think you've failed.
Definitely something I changed in how I viewed the outcomes, some things you learn from.
It's not necessarily a bad thing.
Just how my mind works, but I learned that I overthink a lot
And, I judge myself before something even happens.
I'm trying to get out of this practice.
If I can do that, I feel like I've done a good job.
What can I do better next time?
Don't second guess yourself. Just believe in it.
And, hopefully, everything works out.

Jordan – A Found Poem Student, Senior The Design School, Environmental Design

Mindset.

I'd like to say I like learning new things even when they are challenging
But, to be honest, it's a little bit of a deterrent sometimes.
After taking this course, I'm more open to stuff like that – I'm working on that.
A challenge doesn't necessarily mean you're going to fail,
It just means you got to push yourself a little bit harder.
I've struggled with that sometimes, facing challenges because they're scary, they are hard.
But, if people are giving me this challenge to learn new things
Obviously means they see that in me that I can.
So, what do I have to lose?
Being of an artistic background and being the creative soul that I am,

It's important to always learn new things, always incorporate new things into your works. Learning new things really just enhances everything you are.

Self-Efficacy.

I'm getting pretty confident.

To be totally honest, I've faced a few difficult challenges.

And, it's been rough.

But, I've noticed I have been genuinely happy and genuinely able to face things.

They might be hard and I might feel discouraged at some point,

But I feel pretty confident going on with things and doing them.

I've always been very critical of myself and set myself up for failure because I think like "Oh no, I can't do that."

But throughout this semester, especially after the course, my outlook changed.

I can just do stuff. It's great. I've changed so much as a person.

I want to continue on truly being myself and not being afraid of messing up or asking for help.

That's more where I see myself in the future, especially if I get hired by someone.

You know, I want to be able to go to my boss and be like,

"I don't know how to do this," or "Can you help me?"

And to not feel like that's defining my talent or anything.

Barriers.

For me, it's just a mental thing.

I would set myself up for failure before I even tried because I was like

"Oh, well, at least if I just acknowledge that fact I knew I was going to fail, it won't look as bad"

And, that looks terrible because to sabotage yourself.

The biggest barrier is just overcoming my own issues and my own fear.

Judgement and Persistence.

I used to just sit there and over and over constantly think "all my stuff is so bad."

I have completely abandoned that.

Every now and then it pops up, obviously,

It's always going to be a part of me which I accept,

But, I've learned that it's not healthy to just sit there and drag yourself through things.

It's just not okay.

I've become more aware of it and being more aware, I've realized I can push it aside,

And, be like, "Nope. I'm good in this moment. I'm fine."

If there's something I need to work on, I'll work on it.

I don't mind improving, but I don't need to criticize.

The whole voice of judgement was easier, super prominent in my life.

Coming up with my inner voice of persistence, I don't even know where to begin with that.

But, after doing it, I feel like it's been so positive.

Acknowledging the judgement but realizing that persistence is key.

And, you're not a failure.

Success.

It started off as success is just reaching the A. That's it. Flat line.
But, I realize there's a lot of success and there's a lot of growth,
Things to be learned in the process of failures
And trying to come up with new creative ways to solve things.
Success is more defined as the journey to get there rather than the destination.
In the design field, there's creativity but it's strict, a lot of rules.
And, I don't always take too well to rules - I'll listen, but I won't be too happy about it.
In design, success is more just like get the client, get the money, done.
In the art world, it's more like as long as you just get your stuff out
And people know you, that's success.

Failure.

Failure has definitely changed over time.
Rather than something specific it has gone to something more general, a good thing.
It used to be I'm not going to get a job, I'm not going to have money.
That's a fear in my head but that's such a specific pinpoint of failure.
My perception of failure now, I only see it as a challenge.
I don't see it as a stopping point.
Over time, I've realized failure is just the chance to try something over again.
Never view failure as the stopping point. Never let that take away from who you are.
And, never let anyone else define your success.
If they think it's a failure but you are proud of it, just a difference of opinion.
That doesn't mean there's wrong and right,
It just means that you need to keep persisting.

Molly – A Found Poem Student, Sophomore School of Film, Dance, and Theatre, Theatre

Mindset.

Open, but cautious. Usually more the latter than the former.
I'm a very cautious person to begin with, I like having a plan
And I like knowing what I'm getting myself into
Usually when you try something new you don't always know that so it can be hard.
I'm a bit of a perfectionist so that's also part of it.
Learning new things literally heightens it.
Trying new things helps you learn new perspectives, add things to your toolkit,
All of those things definitely contribute to making you more talented.

Self-Efficacy.

Fairly confident. I would definitely say I'm more confident.

Barriers.

Self-doubt. Putting in the time and doing it even if it is a stretch,
Even if I don't know if I'll get in, even if I don't think it'll pan out,
Just giving myself the credit to try, take the chance.
Usually a little bit tired, immediately after I may feel more proud or excited,

Usually in the long term, whatever immediate emotion is there turns into
“Wow, we did that.”

It becomes a little bit more analytical, what did we do well, what did I surprise myself with,
What did I surprise other people with in taking it on, what could I work on for next time.

Judgement and Persistence.

Just knowing that it's there and what form it likes to take is huge
Because I've never thought of it before, not in the sense of something
I could actively talk back to.

I mean, it's still doing its thing, but I am more aware.

It's been difficult because now I also can see it in other people

And that's a whole new aspect of it, especially people you're close to.

Persistence, as a whole is was easier.

I don't think the imagery came as quickly,

But emotion wise, the emotions connected to it are much easier to talk about

So, that made it more straightforward.

It's almost like the awareness of both voices in other people help me look at mine

From a more objective view.

As much as I have the one, I have the other,

I need to keep that in mind and give it the opportunity to quiet noise and reassess.

Success.

Growth, even in small cases.

Even if you're a little bit better than you were before,

Even if you surprise yourself a little bit with how something went.

When you take things and you let them be an opportunity to grow,

That's when you find success.

People in my life describe success as very human-centric,

The idea that growth or success is connected to awareness and self-improvement.

Much less numbers based, much less like a tangible success.

In theater, success is illuminating something that wasn't there before. Working.

Connecting with someone even if they might not like it.

Success was sharing one point, just a tiny shift I either hadn't thought of before

Or, I had known and I didn't care because it wasn't coming from a human being

I'm sitting right next to.

Failure.

An opportunity to regroup and assess, and grow.

I still harbor a little bit of that ideas that failure as unmet expectations,

But sometimes not meeting expectations can be helpful because you take a step back,

And look back at yourself and what's going on around you.

So, in that case, it becomes an opportunity.

I definitely had a one-dimensional opinion on failure, very pass-fail, yes or no,

A binary essentially rather than an entire experience.

It's going to happen so keep listening to my inner voice of persistence.

Keep learning, keep growing.

Hold the people around you close,

And remember how you would feel if you looked at them
With the same kind of standards and expectations you sometimes hold yourself to.

Shaynea – A Found Poem
Student, Sophomore
School of Film, Dance, and Theatre, Film

Mindset.

I'm excited by it. I like learning new things even though it's hard.
And, although it's frustrating when you don't click with it right away,
It makes it all the more satisfying when you do.
It expands my reach because I write stories.
It helps be broaden and develop richer worlds and stories to look through.

Self-Efficacy.

I know that if I try hard that I can get through things.
But, also, learning that I also need to ask for help, too.
I can't do things on my own anymore.
I realized that I can't do it alone and I don't have to.

Barriers.

My laziness. I am lazy all the time, but I know it is a comfortable place,
Where, in a way, I am afraid to fail so I keep putting it off.
It's like a double-edged sword; I know I can't put it off forever,
But I also need to get out of it.
I can't power through things like I used to, I need that time to decompress.
And, also, I don't let it take over my life.
I have to stop running away from this.
I try to get up as soon as possible, looking for the next best thing.
There are good things and bad things, but I gotta keep going.

Judgement and Persistence.

I am able to pick it out more.
I know when I'm starting to get into the head space,
"Okay, this is far beyond constructive..."
I'm just beating myself up at this point.
"Okay, stop it."
I do that to just stop the train of thought.
I don't always catch it, but at least I know some steps I can take to dissuade it.
We are always so aware of our own faults and shortcomings
When you try to look for where your strengths is,
It always seemed to be undercut by your judgement.
But, you can still find it.
Persistence – I can use it to hype myself up.
It makes me feel like my mistakes are an actual adventure story.
As the heroine of your own story, you can't just stop here.

Success.

College-oriented family, so getting As and the degree was always the definition of success to me.

For the longest time, if I got a C on my report card, I just felt horrible.

Filmmaking, it's getting that picture out that wins you a billion dollars.

But, it is also a bit of persistence in there,

So, you've directed a flop, next time you just have to keep going until you build up your credit.

You have to be okay with failing and working with other people who don't see your vision.

Or, you don't really see their vision and you have to collaborate.

Your success is contingent on your ability to, not only express yourself,

But to allow expression of others to come together and make art.

I'm always in my head and when I'm able to get what's in my head out

And have everyone see it, even if it's really rough, it's successful for me

That I at least tried to express myself.

It did not make me happy to ace my classes, I wasn't myself.

I had to remind myself that I am also important.

Whoever I am, I need to find that first.

Failure.

Failure for me, before, was getting anything below a B.

Failure, now, is when I fail to be myself,

Or I fail to express what's going on with me, what's wrong with me..

My failure to communicate my struggles.

It's no longer an end of the world thing.

Okay, so that didn't work, got to try again.

One failure doesn't define who you are.

It's actually okay to fail, you're expected to fail,

You, in a way, have to fail to be great.

I'm still trying to find myself.

I'm still trying to find where I am.

I define myself as a person exploring who she is

In that day, in that moment.

**Lauren – A Found Poem
Student, Sophomore
School of Music, Violin Performance**

Mindset.

I think if I'm in a good place, mentally and emotionally, I feel really excited.

I often feel excited about learning new things.

If I feel overly inadequate or mentally exhausted, then I feel I don't have the motivation,

I just feel tired and I don't have the capacity to exert myself more.

It definitely expands my talents if I let it.

Branching out deepens what we can do,

Feels like I'm going backwards if you you're stretching yourself.

But, eventually, capacity increases.

Self-Efficacy.

Depends on what they are, but overall, I'm pretty confident.
As I've been getting to know myself more, I'm more aware of what I can do
And, how to push myself.
A self-awareness especially is what I took away from the failure class.
It was huge for me, really therapeutic.
Things happening in my life were at a crisis point,
And, the creative projects were me processing emotions and experiences.
I learned so much about myself.

Barriers.

Probably mostly me. Fears.
Fear of not being able to manage my time right,
Or not going to the right people for help,
Or not having the right motivation.
Identifying them is huge, acknowledging what those blocks are.
And, then finding people, asking people that I trust, coming to you, being honest.
Identifying it, saying it out loud, being able to laugh at it.
One of the hardest times in my life, but the most excited about what I'm learning.
Because I care about learning these things.
There was a change and I felt invested in what I'm studying, applied myself a lot more,
Which is way more fulfilling.

Judgement and Persistence.

Becoming more aware of it over past couple of years.
The biggest things I needed to be aware of was my emotions,
I've expected myself to be happy, strong, stable my whole life because I am a happy person.
And, I feel my role is helping others and allowing myself to feel angry sometimes
Or, to feel really sad and let that be real.
That has been hard for me.
I've deepened in important ways and that's the only way you can really heal.
Once I'm aware of what I'm feeling, I can always see why I shouldn't be feeling that –
I can talk myself out of it quite simply.
Sometimes I overanalyze it – Here's how I don't need to feel this, here's the pathway,
But, I want to feel for a little bit and let it be real.
I just always think it's me – It's hard for me to separate that it would be a voice of
judgement.
It's hard to pin it down because it's so connected to me.
And, I'm not mean to myself, maybe that's why – It's not very harsh, just very real and
honest.

Failure.

In relationships, I'm harsher on myself in that area of failure.
Creatively, I'm excited by failure because I recognize it's going to help me grow.
But, when it's connected to people I really care about,

It's harder for me to approach it in healthy ways.

It's usually okay in the end.

Time is such an important part of the process of failure.

You don't have to immediately learn from it and be so excited, have a good outlook on your failure.

It's okay to get knocked down by it,

And that's probably part of the important process of it.

APPENDIX M
IRB APPROVAL LETTER

EXEMPTION GRANTED

Pamela Kulinna
 Division of Educational Leadership and Innovation - Polytechnic
 480/727-1767
 Pamela.Kulinna@asu.edu
 Dear Pamela Kulinna:
 On 11/15/2017 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Type of Review: | Modification |
| Title: | The Failure Project: Self-Efficacy, Mindset, Grit, and Persistence in Design and the Arts |
| Investigator: | Pamela Kulinna |
| IRB ID: | STUDY00005350 |
| Funding: | None |
| Grant Title: | None |
| Grant ID: | None |
| Documents Reviewed: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention Course Recruitment Script, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Questionnaire on Self-Efficacy, Mindset, Grit, and Persistence, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Interview Questions, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Interview Questions Cycle Three, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Failed Dissertation Recruitment Script, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Survey Only Recruitment Email, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Failed Dissertation Letter and Consent Form, Category: Consent Form; • Failed Project Protocol , Category: IRB Protocol; |

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (1) Educational settings, (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation on 11/15/2017.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,
 IRB Administrator

cc: Megan Workmon