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HOPES, MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND POSSIBILITIES OF NARRATING FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION[1]

ABSTRACT

This paper addresses two questions relevant to social inclusion in education and the role of narrative toward that end in research and practice: How might narrating be useful for participants' evaluation of higher education institutions claiming to be inclusive? How might those complex uses of narrating serve meaning making by diverse groups, in this case immigrant and native-born students in higher education? This study of narrating in the rapidly changing institution of the community college in the United States illustrates a dynamic theory of narrative, that narrating is an activity and means of making sense of experience, how one fits, and what might be important to change. We argue that research focused on social inclusion in education must design for complexity of meaning, as individuals' participation in institutions is likely to involve critique, as well as connection, and dilemmas that can usefully be raised toward improved social integration. After briefly discussing the foundational theory of narrating, this article presents the design and results of a study asking community college students to narrate their best ad worst experiences in college. Analyses of the 546 narratives revealed 4 major and 20 supporting categories of values students emphasized with their narratives. Results show that participants used the different narrative genres to express different meanings of the college and that U.S.-born and immigrant students oriented in some different ways to their colleges. These findings illustrate why researchers must approach narrating as a social process for interacting in the relevant world.

Key points:
-    Opportunities to narrate from different perspectives is important to research and practice on social inclusion.

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- – Students at four community colleges narrated best and worst experiences differently.
- – Narrative values analysis indicates shared and diverse interpretations of the college
- – Immigrant and American-born participants differed in their values of the college experience.
- – Participants' flexible uses of diverse narrative genres revealed complex information about benefits and issues of the college.

Key words:
social inclusion, narrative inquiry, mixed methods, narrative analysis, migrant students, native-born students

INTRODUCTION

Narrating can be a means of social inclusion, but educators and researchers seeking this result must address the social relational nature of the narrative process. This paper explains narrating as a social relational process in the context of a contemporary social inclusion project in the United States – the community college. After briefly presenting the dynamic theory of narrating (Daiute, 2014), we explain how the community college is involved in social inclusion practice and policy. We then present a study that invited students to share their interpretations of the college experience with a range of narratives as a way to evaluate the community college project and the complexity involved in gaining critical as well as supportive student perspectives.

NARRATING IS A SOCIAL PROCESS

For social inclusion, educators and researchers must extend hope with theory. Some common assumptions about narrative in education include that it is mostly valuable for sharing authentic personal experience (Graves, 1983), that it is a way to include and empower voices of minority students (Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2014), and that it is expressive more than reflective (Bruner, 1986). A misunderstanding is that narratives are welded to persons and groups in authentic, singular, essential ways. A full analysis of that approach is beyond the scope of this article (see Daiute, 2014 for a fuller discussion), but the major difference of that typical approach and the social definition of narrative is that one approach defines narratives as representations (of persons, their beliefs, and so on), while the other defines narratives as tools that people *use* to mediate situations, relationships, and purposes. Of course, each broad orientation to narrative inquiry is nuanced, but the general misconception we would like to point out, especially relevant to issues of diversity, is that persons do not report on firmly held views or identities but they

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use narratives actively to reflect on and make sense of their experiences as they recount them. In other words, a misconception is that the narrative is a vehicle for meanings residing elsewhere rather than that the narrative is a process that enacts meaning with the features of the narrative – *how* it is expressed -- in relation to the situation, purpose, and audience.

Personal stories can be compelling and revealing, yet the promise of narrating for inclusive education is that it is a social relational process. While narrative is a means of personal expression, it is also an activity. As an activity, the narrating process applies diverse qualities of narratives – genres (such as autobiography, fiction, positive mission statements, critiques, and so on) with sensitivity to the specific situations and audiences where they occur. We know, for example, that children, adolescents, and adults use narrative genres and features – character, plot, tense, values – flexibly to express diverse meanings in relation to situations and audiences (actual and imagined) (Daiute, 2014). Interestingly, a definition of narrating as a dynamic social process is especially relevant to endeavors requiring critique and change, such as education. When designing research and practice as social, educators can create inclusive thinking spaces (Perret-Clermont, 2004).

Several theoretical premises provide a foundation for considering narrating as a social developmental process. Language is the quintessential tool to "conduct human influence on the object of activity" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 55); Stories and other symbolic tools are "externally oriented … aimed at mastering and triumphing over nature" (ibid). Narrating engages diversity with audiences of others and within one's self. "Any utterance is a link in a very complexly organized chain of other utterances" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 69). "An essential (constitutive) marker of the utterance is its quality of being addressed to someone... The utterance has both an author… and an addressee" (p.95). This insight that even seemingly individual discourse – like the novel or a narrative account of an event in daily life – is an interaction in the social and physical world has been explored by philosophers (Austin, 1962; Wittgenstein, 1953), sociolinguists (Labov & Waletzky, 1997), and psychologists (Billig, 1994; Edwards, 2014), as well as by literary theorists. In brief, individual speakers and writers interact with the circumstances where they are narrating and with others – past, present, future audiences.

Extending that theoretical perspective, we explain that narrating in research and practice can elicit complex, critical, and creative interactions with the phenomena of interest. For example, an immigrant student brought to the United States illegally by parents shares certain values in public contexts – such as the importance of attending college to obtain language and vocational skills – while narrating in more secure contexts might elicit experiences of abuse by border control agents. In contrast, an American-born student might readily share critiques in a public context, while explaining resentment about remedial courses in a more private context. Such relevance to social context occurs, in fact, for all of us while not for those with certain socio-emotional disorders. Opportunities for students with such diverse histories to narrate from different positions they occupy in public life could provide a range of opportunities for sharing varied knowledge, experience, and goals. Complex meaning making about institutions, like the

community college, provides resources for the development of the institution as well as for the students and other participating individuals. Nevertheless, those with greatest insights also need support for critiquing as well as aligning with powerful institutions.

Dynamic Narrative Research Design

Consistent with the dynamic theory of narrative inquiry and practice, an emphasis on narrative shifts to narrating as a process. This shift from narrative to narrating is important as the active form – "narrating" – highlights the social, interactive, and dynamic nature of this meaning-making process. To account for the social quality of narrating, research and practice designs must at a minimum invite participants to share experiences, for example, from at least two relational perspectives, such as narrating best experiences which would understandably align with the setting and purpose and sharing worst experiences, which would open the possibility to critique or distance appropriately. Dynamic narrating designs with multiple genres have offered complex meanings – that is diverse knowledge and experience by a group of participants using different narrative genres to interact with the relevant phenomenon. These include (but are not limited to) narratives of personal experience compared to narratives focusing on others; autobiographical narratives compared to fictional narratives (Daiute, 2010; 2014); narrating with instructional media (Kreniske, 2012; 2014); re-narrating a text message among teenage peers for one's own and another cultural group (Lucic, 2013); narrating in professional development situations in Europe (Daiute, Todorova, & Kovacs-Cerovic, 2015) and South America (Daiute, Eisenberg, & Vasconcellos, 2015).

This article focuses on the context of the community college in the United States because it is at the center of contemporary issues of migration and attendant needs to educate a population that is increasingly diverse in ways that are unique to 21st century global situation.

THE MEANING OF THE CONTEMPORARY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The following excerpt from the website of a community college in New York City describes the student population from the institutional point of view.

> *"... Community College's students are increasingly diverse and non-traditional in nature. They enter with significant impediments to academic success. They are more likely to be older, educationally and economically disadvantaged, have experienced academic failure at another post-secondary institution, have a significant commute to and from school, have frequently not gone directly from high school to college, are un-or under-employed, and are caring for children and/or aged parents".*

This college statement indicates the potential for social integration, yet also describes the students in deficit terms, such as "disadvantaged," "academic failure"

and so on. Similar to the website excerpt, research on community colleges has focused on student demographics (Jehangir, 2009; Syed, 2010); student under-achievement, as only 30% graduate and 12% progress to four-year colleges (Brock, 2010; Porchea, Allen, Robbins, & Phelps, 2010); and remedial activities like learning communities (Browne & Minnick, 2005; Stebleton & Nownes, 2011). In the past two decades community college enrollment has skyrocketed with a high proportion of enrollees being ethnic minorities, immigrants, and students from families with low incomes (Mullin, 2011; Perlstein, 2011; Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001; 21st Century Commission on Community Colleges, 2012).

As the number of students attending community colleges has increased, so has popular discourse about the institution. A statement by President Barack Obama previewing his 2015 State of the United States Union address is an example of that high profile of the community college.

> *"I think everybody understands that education is the key to success in the 21st century. But what we also understand is that it's not just for kids. We also have to make sure that everybody has the opportunity to constantly train themselves for better jobs, better wages, better benefits. ... I'm going to be announcing a proposal ... to make the first two years of community college free for everybody who's willing to work for it. .... I hope we've got a chance to make sure that Congress will get behind these efforts to ensure that even as we rebound and grow in 2015, that it benefits everybody and not just some"* (President Obama Announces, 2015).

In spite of such attention, research on students' interpretations of the community college in their lives is scant. Given the demographic profiles of community colleges in the United States, country of origin seems a promising perspective for insights about the meaning of the community college and its role in human development. Gaining access to students' assessments of the colleges they are attending requires methods that foreground their perspectives.

NARRATING THE CONTEMPORARY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The premise of our research is that the community college is a system of purposes, activities, relationships, and resources, defined by participating stakeholders who interact in their mutual development. Students' narratives of their experiences in community college are developmental in several ways. The narrating process itself is relational and, thus, students' narratives are means of making sense of surrounding physical and symbolic environments. Narrating from diverse positions in the college, when it meets their needs and does not, such as in positive and negative experiences, involves different orientations to society and one's role in it. The following narratives by a student responding to an invitation to write about a best and a worst experience in community college offer personal details but also shine a light on the institution.

I'm an international student in LG College and my best experience so far on campus was in my urban sociology classes because it helped me to understand better how America is and why America became the country it is today. I've been taking good grades in this course and I feel really motivated to watch the classes since they are about what I see in real life.[1]

This student declares a personal stance ("international student"; "taking good grades" "feel motivated"), then broadening to a class, what it offered, and the relevance of that class for participating in society. The following narrative of a worst experience seizes an opportunity for critique.

Had some Financial aid issues which caused me to miss semesters in college. Another thing is Finding books for classes in lg library. Did not Happen in L College but in other college I attended. The Books that you may need to borrow for you to do your H.W. on projects may not be found in the school library.

Such dynamic narrating raises questions about the meaning of college from the participant perspective. The next section describes a case study of social narrating by several hundred students mediating social inclusion, among other endeavours, in the community college.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research questions guiding this inquiry include "With what shared and diverse values do participants organize narratives of their best and worst experiences at their colleges?" "How do students with diverse histories, in particular U.S.-born and immigrant students, interpret the community college?"; "How might the community college be functioning as an inclusive developmental space?" Students in the study had the opportunity to reflect from a range of positions on the college experience, thus constituting an experience-based evaluation of the institution.

Professors of English, Social Studies, and Psychology courses at four community colleges in a large urban university system responded to our email request to visit their classes, discuss the study, and invite students' participation for a class period to write narratives of their best and worst experiences in the college (in addition to completing a survey about goals and activities). Our statement of purpose to the faculty and students was that we were asking them to share their experiences at the college for a project that would eventually provide summaries of the anonymous findings to administrators and faculty for improved understandings of the purpose of the community college from students' perspectives. Narrating best and worst experiences is consistent with our theoretical orientation as this range of perspectives provides diverse opportunities for critiquing (sharing worst experiences), as well as for aligning (sharing best experiences). Students who volunteered to participate included 381 students identifying as born in the U.S. or as immigrants (61% and 39% respectively), roughly 50% male and female, ages 18

to 42, of diverse ethnicities, and linguistic backgrounds, including 111 participants speaking 2 languages, 138 speaking 3 or more languages, many with English as their third language). Participants wrote 546 narratives, 271 of best experiences and 275 of worst experiences in their colleges, thus most writing both.

Narrative Values Analysis with Mixed Methods

This mixed methods study of the best and worst experience narratives included qualitative analyses of the values organizing each narrative and quantitative compilations of values categories for the entire data set by narrative type and by country-of-origin group. Values analysis involved identifying organizing principles, beliefs, norms guiding what to say and what not to say (Daiute, 2014). Values analysis considers narratives as interactions among individuals and contexts by examining how people narrate issues in relevant circumstances, audiences, and purposes (Daiute, 2014; Daiute, et al, 2003; Kreniske, 2012, 2014; Messina, 2014; Ninkovic, 2012). The values analysis process involves at least two researchers reading each narrative several times, identifying a major guiding value of the narrative and subsequently identifying any related sub-values up to 2 sub-values. The iterative process of identifying values, applying those value categories to subsets of 20 randomly selected narratives, and after achieving 90% inter-relater reliability, coding the entire set of narratives (in this case 546) with that list of values. Throughout the process, the unit of analysis was the narrative, dependent variables were the values, and independent variables were the narrative genre (best and worst experience narratives) and groups (U.S.-born and immigrant).

 Considered for the pragmatic function of whole narrative, the first student narrative above indicates the importance of developing. The analytic focus of the narrative is indicated with its expression holistically from beginning to end, clued by specific features, such as process-oriented phrases like "so far," "helped me understand," "became," "I've been…," "motivated"; causal links "because" and "since", and the sequencing of elements toward predicates "…why America became the country it is today" and "motivated to watch the classes since they are about what I see in real life". Overall, as an utterance (in Bakhtin's sense), that narrative indicates the importance of the development of the society ("… why American became the country it is today") and the individual in relation to the institution ("I've been taking good grades in this course…" and "… motivated to watch … what I see in real life"). As in other studies, the values generated via multiple readings and applying those value codes to the data were summarized with frequencies and percentages of narratives conforming to each major and sub-value category. Patterns of values offer information about narrators' orientations in different narrative types and by the diverse relevant groups of participants.

RESULTS – THE VALUE OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The analysis of the 546 narratives yielded several findings as presented in more detail in the following sections. Four major values with 20 sub-values emerged

from the analysis. Most relevant to the argument in this article, students used the two narrative genres to share different meanings of the community college. Also indicative of the context sensitivity of the narrating process are the differences in values expressed by two focal groups of students who came to the community college with different histories.

Analyses of narratives revealed four major categories including "participating in academics is important" (with four sub-values), "connecting is important" (five sub-values values), "disconnecting is important to acknowledge" (six sub-values values), and "developing is important) (five sub-values values). The major value categories (doing academics, connecting, developing, disconnecting) were distributed quite evenly across the major categories, which ranged from 23% to 26% of the full narrative data set.

In addition to the major value guiding each narrative, we identified up to two sub-values, to address specific details relevant to that value. Specific values related to the importance of doing academics were "acknowledging academic struggles is important", "acknowledging struggles with academic requirements is important", "acknowledging academic success is important", and "acknowledging academic support is important". The following narrative by a student who chose the pseudonym Prince Adam is an example of a narrative emphasizing the value of doing academics, with sub-values emphasizing acknowledging academic struggles and acknowledging struggles with requirements.

> *The most difficult experience for me has been repeately failing the CatW. Despite having over a 3.9 GPA for my entire college experience, I'm unable to take freshmen English. As a result my graduation is in limbo until I pass the CatW.*

Students emphasized specific values of "connecting" in five specific ways, including the importance of "connecting with people who are different from themselves", "the importance of connecting with the institution", "the importance of connecting with the college lifestyle", "the importance of connecting with peers", and "the importance of connecting with professors and advisors". The following narrative by John Hancock[2] indicates the value of connecting, with sub-values emphasizing the importance of connecting with the college lifestyle and with peers.

> *My best experience in college so far was a very simple one, it wasn't much but it made me feel like a real college student was when I stayed with a group of friends and a professor that I wish I took a class with drinking coffee till 8 pm on the college campus. we were just talking and cracking jokes.*

While the best experience narrative genre provided a means of aligning with the college, the worst experience narrative provided a means for students to critique the college. Sub-values emphasizing the importance of disconnecting included "the importance of acknowledging disconnects with advisors", "…disconnects with

bureaucratic aspects of college", "…disconnects with essentials like finances", "…disconnects with the college lifestyle", "…disconnects with peers", and "…disconnects with professors". The following narrative by Kimberly acknowledges disconnecting specifically with the bureaucracy and with advisors.

> *The whole adjustment period. I don't feel like the financial aid office or academic advisement help us as much as they should. In my opinion, some of them are as clueless as the students. And it would be nice to not get an attitude when I ask questions. I also wish that they gave us more info on a smarter route to finish college on time.*

Students emphasized the value of the community college as a developmental space with five sub-values, including "developing one's self", "developing skills", "developing transformatively (becoming someone different)", "developing independence", and "developing collectively (that is with and/or for others)". The following example by Geold emphasizes the importance of transforming himself as a thinker, with the development of critical skills like asking himself "why" and explaining in great detail.

> *My best experience in L community college is taking critical thinking class. It was very helpful for me to think outside of the box. Also I feel as If that calls made me become a better writer. The reason why because now when I write papers I tend to ask myself questions like "why". I always tend to explain things in detail and I feel that this class helped me with That.*

As with all the narratives, the values analysis of Geold's account relies on the expression across the text to identify the apparent purpose of the narrative as an evaluation of the college experience. This narrative mentions an academic course, because values analysis focuses on the pragmatic purpose rather than only on specific words, the role of academics in changing the student's life emerges as prominent.

With that array of values having been identified with 90% reliability and the other 10% of the value coding resolved by us through discussion and consensus, we addressed the question of whether and how students used the different genres. The next section discusses those diverse uses of the two narrative genres.

Diverse Narrative Genres Afford Complex Meanings of the Community College

Students used the different narrative genres – best and worst experience narratives to express very different values. Table 1 presents percentages and frequencies of the major values across the two genres, narratives of best experiences and narratives of worst experiences in college. As shown on Table 1, a Chi-square test showed that values across the genres differed significantly.

Table 1. Percentages and Frequencies of Major Values by Genre

Genre	Doing academics is important	Connecting is important	Developing is important	Acknowledging disconnects is …	Total % (#)
Best	17 (43)	53 (135)	29 (74)	1 (2)	100 (254)
Worst	70 (91)	1 (2)	19 (53)	68 (129)	100 (275)
Chi-Squ.	272.50				
p < .001					

Note. Numbers in parentheses are the values guiding the narratives in each genre, numbers preceding the parenthesis represent percentages of the total genre.

The following narratives illustrate how participants used the different genres to address very different experience. In this narrative, a female student who chose the pseudonym Samantha and identified as Asian used the best experience narrative to emphasize importance of developing herself in several ways.

My best college experience was when I got all A's in my classes. It really motivated me to even further exceed, and helped with my self-esteem.

Samantha used the worst experience narrative to acknowledge disconnects with a bureaucracy and essentials like finances and grades.

The most difficult experience was when My GPA dropped below a 2. I lost my financial aid and had to pay $800 for 2 classes. I had no means to pay that money, I wish I could have gotten a temporary loan from the college, but they didn't really help with anything. It was really difficult for me to gather the money because I don't work because of school and a small child.

We now turn to the complexity afforded by narrating from the perspectives of different groups of students whose experiences of the community college are likely to differ.

Immigrant and U.S.-born Students Emphasized Diverse Meanings of the Community College

Addressing the question of whether diverse narrative opportunities would be useful for students of different backgrounds, a comparison of values by immigrant and U.S.-born students was especially relevant. Because community colleges present themselves as places that support students who need additional skills before attending a four-year college or university, immigrant students are a major group, 40% in our sample.

Table 2 presents percentages and frequencies of the value and sub-values emphasizing the importance of developing, which was enacted differently by immigrant and U.S.-born students in this study.

Table 2. Percentages and Frequencies of "Developing is Important" Values by Groups

Origin	Developing: transformatively…	collectively…	myself…	independence…	skills…	Total % (#)
Immig.	5 (9)	20 (12)	33 (20)	3 (2)	30 (18)	100 (61)
U.S.	27 (16)	14 (23)	38 (62)	18 (29)	15 (24)	100 (165)
Chi-Squ.	13.30					
p = .01						

Note. Numbers in parentheses are the number of sub-values guiding the narratives by each group of participants, numbers preceding the parenthesis are percentages of the total Developing sub value category.

As shown in Table 2, although US-born students organized their narratives around the importance of developing more than their immigrant peers, immigrant students emphasized the importance of developing with/for others – a collective – more than U.S.-born students. Immigrant students also emphasized developing skills more than U.S.-born students. On the other hand, U.S.-born students emphasized the importance of developing self more than immigrant students and developing independence.

For example, a female immigrant student who selected the pseudonym Anex wrote the following best and worst experience narratives.

> *The possibility to get to study after have came to the country not long ago and be eligible to financial aid.*

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> *My most difficult experience was to get enrolled after have studied before outside the country. It took more than a year between the process of submit all the documents in the way the college wanted and for them to review it, even though I did not want those credits transferred.*

An independent orientation was more prominent among American-born students. Differences had to do with their tending to emphasize the importance of developing one's self, developing independence, and transforming relatively completely as a person. The narrative above by Geold is characteristic of the way the U.S.-born students enacted developing, such as with an emphasis on transforming one's self. The following is another example emphasizing independence and self.

<div align="center">

The independence, new people…

… wish I made it to

a fouR yeaR school.

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  Whether diverse groups of students used the best and worst experience narratives differently is also a relevant question in this inquiry. Given the major differences in values emphasized across the narrative genres and across the country-of-origin groups, the interaction of genre by group was an analysis we considered. Nevertheless, the sample size in this study was not large enough to compare differences between genre for the immigrant and U.S. born students.

    In summary, the different narrative orientations by immigrant and by U.S.-born students reveal different purposes of the community college. Immigrants highlighted belonging to the college collective, even though the bureaucratic procedures are especially problematic for them, and American students oriented more toward social problems at the college, perhaps because they take their participation for granted. Considered together, the narratives offer complex understandings of the community college as a varied and changing institution from the perspectives of student stakeholders. Results of the values analysis indicate the potential of these community colleges for intercultural relations, as a majority of both immigrant and U.S.-born students valued their college experiences for connecting with those from different backgrounds, while also seeking to gain skills and possible employment. In addition to the importance of self-development, values guiding a majority of the narratives depicted the need for ongoing development of the institution.

    Given those differences across best and worst experience narratives by immigrant and American-born students, we learn how narrating positions (aligning versus distancing, by students with longer and shorter term histories in the society) allow for complex defining of the institution and its development. In brief, the

community college emerges as a system of challenges and resources that students use to mediate their participation.

THE MEANING OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE

This study has illustrated how the meaning of the community college is complex, interacting with the expressive genre and with the history and positions of stakeholders – in this case students. By asking for best and worst experiences of students with histories coming to the college, the study highlights diverse definitions of the community college – diversity both within and between groups of participants. With at least two different narrating positions, the study design distances from the assumption that any group of students would have one characteristic way of responding.

Relevant to differences of developing, we read students' value of developing – not only practically but also socially, intellectually, and politically in the society where they live. Analyses of values expressed in this relatively large database of student narratives highlight the importance of the community college as a unique space for interacting with people from different cultures, walks of life, experiences, and goals. This major social value co-occurs with valuing community college for developing skills – from "people skills" to English language skills, and strategies for engaging in democratic process. Results of such analyses of values organizing the narratives by American-born and immigrant students offer insights about social inclusion as a multi-directional process by diverse stakeholders rather than primarily a process of assimilating diverse students to a norm.

Sharing their best and worst experiences in community college, the participants in this study speak to President Obama's plan to expand American prosperity "for everyone, not just for some". Creating institutions for everyone in highly diverse and currently relatively discordant societies involves creating dialogues and taking seriously the complex and diverse values, especially by students. Even just two diverse narrating perspectives involved in the present study illustrated previously unrecognized values within and across groups of students, as well as the major shared value of the community college as an opportunity for human and institutional development. That insight wrought intensively in a large set of narratives and rigorous narrative analysis acknowledges students' alignment with stated values of some of the colleges to support skills relevant to communication, critical thinking, and vocations, not as ends in themselves or for creating a labor force, but for the intrinsic personal and collective development that tends to get lost in the often cynical public discourse. The immigrant students, in particular, narrate the hope to participate meaningfully in American public life, not only for self-development and job-related skills but also for collective understanding and development via purposeful critique.

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IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

An implication of these results is that research, practice, and policy with social inclusion programs should involve students in complex narrating about their experiences to expand the mission and activities of the college. Narrating that allows critique as well as aligning with the institution is, for example, an important interventionist strategy for inviting a range of orientations to the college, rather than only asking for one's story in a neutral way or even for narrating what you know. Other possible genres that previous research has indicated open unexpected nuances of meaning include asking students and others who are the subjects of policies to position as experts, such as by writing policies, curricula, or letters of advice to others in their role in the future, elicits additional values (Daiute, et al, 2015a & 2015b; Kreniske, 2014), as does writing fictional narratives, which provides a context for narrating about issues like discrimination and counter-conforming norms (Daiute, 2010).

Another implication of this study is to continue narrative inquiry with relatively large numbers of participants whose narratives can be examined rigorously for important patterns that advance across the qualitative/quantitative binary. The present study, for example, involves theory-based qualitative inquiry into values guiding narrative expressions, examined with rigorous methods and quantitative summaries and tests of the robustness of comparisons. This mixed methods approach presents patterns for ongoing research and practice about higher education. With an even larger sample, future research could, furthermore, examine relevant interactions, such as differences in the sub values across country-of-origin groups for details about the kinds of narratives that are especially amenable to discourse of different groups.

In conclusion, analysis presented here yielded several findings about a range of values guiding basic narratives whose meanings are amplified by appearing together, as differently positioned on the object of inquiry – the community college. Most relevant to the argument in this article, students used two narrative genres to share different meanings of the community college, thereby indicating that narrating is an interactive process with the features of narratives (such as the possible negative valence of narrating worst experiences and possible positive valence of narrating best experiences). In addition to participants' uses of these diverse kinds of narratives to share very different experiences and orientations to the college, the context-sensitive quality of narrating appears in the differences in meaning-making across two groups of students who came to the community college with different histories and, thus, different interactions with their colleges.

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NOTES

[1] All narrative examples maintain the original phrasing and spelling.
[2] Student names are all pseudonyms they chose.