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West Chester University of Pennsylvania  
Higher Education Policy and Student Affairs  
THESIS



AWAKENING THE STUDENT CONSCIOUSNESS  
TO NEOLIBERAL IDEOLOGIES

Logan Robert Houptley

May 2020

Awakening the Student Consciousness to Neoliberal Ideologies

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the  
Department of Educational Foundations & Policy Studies  
West Chester University of Pennsylvania  
West Chester, Pennsylvania

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of  
Master of Science

By

Logan Robert Houptley

May 2020

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Dedication

*For Mom and Dad. I hope that I made you proud.*

## Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the support and love that I received throughout this journey. I am eternally grateful to call you my good company (Baxter-Magolda, 2002) throughout my graduate studies: Dr. Jacqueline S. Hodes; Dr. Orkideh Mohajeri; Dr. Jason Wozniak; Chloe M. Webb-Barnes, M.S.; Tyler T. Goldstein, M.S.; Leah C. Paulson, M. Ed.; Sarah L. McGuckin, M.S.; Jordan N. Maxwell, M. Ed.; Jordan D. Burick; Brendan A. Morris. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to my forever friends, loving family, and fellow staff members who have pushed me to grow through life's challenges. Your unwavering support has meant more to me than you could ever imagine.

## Abstract

This thesis addresses the importance of creating a space where undergraduate students have the ability to have productive dialogue about the influences of a neoliberal society. More specifically, I address the awakening of the student consciousness to neoliberal ideologies set in place by systemic societal frameworks. I arrive at my programmatic intervention by using Critical Action Research in order to work in small pockets of the university to cultivate real change. To bring these critical conversations to light, I propose the creation of a two-day workshop for undergraduate student leaders that would help students “undo their own veil,” as student affairs educators have a responsibility for helping students recognize these barriers in these processes. An effective leader of this intervention would be someone who has the ability to be flexible in their presentation of the topic and can successfully facilitate the dialogue by welcoming all voices and experiences as valid. From recognizing these barriers, students can then organize systems of counter-conduct that push back against these dominant forms of power.

Keywords: Neoliberalism, Problem-Posing Education, Ideological State Apparatus, Critical Pedagogy, Ideology

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## Chapter 1

In this first chapter, I will introduce myself through my experiences that led me to address this thematic concern. I will approach this by introducing my frame of reference, expressing the reasoning behind my choosing this concern, and finally talking about my experiences and how they have shaped my vision of the concern. After I introduce myself, I will briefly touch upon what my thematic concern is and why student affairs professionals should be concerned about my topic. Lastly, I will provide a preview for Chapter 3.

### My Positionality

Ever since I was young, I dreamed of being a teacher. I can recall memories in third and fourth grade where I would play teacher where I crafted my own educational lessons and kept them in a binder, wrote daily agendas down on a five-foot long whiteboard that I had propped up on my closet door handles, and practiced teaching my imaginary students. This process eventually led me to hold my imaginary classroom with real-life students – my parents. I would travel home from elementary school with a new lesson waiting for my parents; these lessons coincidentally mirrored exactly what I had learned that day in class. Every so often, my parents indulge others in the story of when I sent a letter home with my dad given that he was being disruptive in class. Even though I never saw their expressions, I could imagine that my grandparents thoroughly enjoyed the day when they received that letter in their mailbox written in different colored markers.

My perspective changed as my surroundings and high school education directed me toward an alternate path. In January 2000, my father went into business with my grandfather and another business partner to expand on their already established automotive repair shop located in eastern Pennsylvania. As this is a family business, my mom, grandparents, aunts, uncles,

siblings, and other family members worked there at some point of their lives. My mom managed the office while my dad managed and oversaw the automotive aspect of the business. The business has been operated in this fashion for the past twenty years.

When it was time to start thinking about furthering my education after high school, I was conflicted for a variety of reasons. I was completely unsure of what direction to pursue in terms of field of study. I knew that I did not want to continue the family business as a mechanic because my natural skillset was not situated in a technical field; I did not consider myself to be mechanically inclined, nor did I hold interest in fixing cars. I can remember having conversations in high school with my family and school faculty as they told me to make sure to pick a field of study that could support me financially. I recall hearing from my family that the field of education was oversaturated, as teachers were not landing jobs after their four-year education.

As all of this was happening, I also was involved in the creation of a newly formed non-profit organization that was aimed at the inclusion of children with physical and intellectual disabilities in mainstream schooling. Established in 2010, this organization was extremely personal to me as the namesake of the organization was my best friend whom I had met in third grade when my parents moved to a small town in Northeast Pennsylvania. She had brain damage from birth and found herself in a wheelchair through her years in primary and secondary education. Her disabilities inhibited her to write her own autobiography in third grade, which was a class project assigned by the teacher. The third grade class wrote and illustrated this project about how we included her in class and everyday life. Through illustrations and dialogue, this story was published into a book. This book served as a catalyist for the non-profit organization's launch, as I proudly recognized its impact and message for those without a voice.

My involvement in the organization extended past its creation. I attended and participated in regular board meetings, served as a board member, wrote and published blog posts, aided in special projects, managed its social media accounts, and spearheaded an educational project that partnered with my student council in high school. This type of work was something that provided me a sense of accomplishment and meaning. I was able to contribute to a greater good; a series of moments that I was able to be a part of a positive change in my local community.

As deadlines for applying for colleges and universities approached, I felt the pressure to make a decision of what direction I wanted to pursue. During my junior year of high school, I had taken one marketing class that initially sparked my interest. I had a teacher that I really connected with, which opened the door for discussion if this was going to be my path. Upon initial inspection, this career path passed the test of financial stability. And I was mildly interested in learning more about this field; but, in retrospect, I was not in love with it at the time.

I half-heartedly chose marketing as my major because the clock was ticking when it came time to make a decision. Still being on the fence, marketing was a safe choice for me because the subject was open to possibilities after graduation; one could end up working and marketing for any type of business or industry type. This was a major pull for me because I was still undecided about where to go after graduation. This, in essence, bought me four more years of time to figure myself out during my undergraduate career. After committing to a four-year public institution in the Northeast, I eventually added management as a major – another broad topic that could be applied in a variety of work environments.

As a first-year undergraduate student, I was severely under-involved on campus. I was unsure of my major and questioning if I fit at the institution that I chose. Although not required to live on-campus as a first-year student, I lived in a newer residence hall in a two-person room.

My roommate, randomly selected by the third-party affiliated housing company, used marijuana and partied every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night. I did not consider my roommate my friend as we had a variety of noticeably different interests, I tried to make friends with some the residents on my floor. However, since the affiliated housing residence hall was so well equipped with everything one would need (a semi-private bathroom, ample space, self-closing and self-locking doors, mounted television screens on the walls), I did not have a reason to leave my room with the exception of attending class and to find food for the day. My living arrangement hindered my ability to make connections and foster a sense of community with other residents on my floor and in my building. Reflecting back on my experience, I believe that I would have had a much different and a more positive first year if I resided in a university-owned residence hall where the community was more likely to suit my needs. If I were placed in a traditional residence hall, I believe that I would benefit from seeing other students congregate and socialize in lounges and communal spaces as I would be more inclined to join social programming.

The only thing that was keeping me enrolled at my university was my job offer as a resident assistant (RA) for my second year. I initially applied for the RA position because I was looking for a sense of community. I wanted to be able to feel a sense of belonging as my first year did not meet these needs. Reflecting back on this, I think I would have had to transfer to a different school if I did not get offered the RA position; I felt depressed, isolated, and had an extreme lack of self-confidence.

My first year as a RA was a pivotal year for me; I found my people, my passion, and my sense of self. I was making friends, making connections on the floor with my residents, and building confidence again within myself. It took a little bit of time, but I thought as though I had finally arrived to college in the beginning of my second year.

Becoming involved with residence life was one of the most meaningful experiences that I have had in my undergraduate career. Even though it may sound cliché, becoming a RA saved me. Before becoming involved with residence life, I remember going home every weekend during my first and second semesters – running away from my opportunity to make my college experiences mine.

My good company (Baxter-Magolda, 2002), a term widely used to highlight those individuals that acted as mentors through undergraduate years, definitely included my fellow residence life staff members and friends. The amount of growth and development that I experienced in my three years as a RA really set the standard for the next years to come; and the reason for the personal growth was because of my good company.

My good company (Baxter-Magolda, 2002), definitely included my fellow staff members and friends. My supervisor at the time really encouraged me to take risks and volunteer for conferences and presentations that I would not have done on my own. They have encouraged me to facilitate a leadership series hosted in the residence halls. They also motivated me to journey outside of my comfort zone when I needed it the most. The amount of growth and development that I experienced in my first year as an RA really set the standard for the next years to come.

My other good company (Baxter-Magolda, 2002) came when my first supervisor had left their position to relocate to another state for work. My next residence life supervisor came in my life at the exact right time. During my second and third years as a RA, I was struggling with navigating my sexuality. While I understand that they were my boss, they were also my voice of reason. I contribute a lot of my coming out to them because they were there for most steps of the way for me, whether they realized it or not. In many ways I was drowning from letting my fears of coming out as gay consume many aspects of my life. Those conversations during those years

with my good company were crucial to me taking control and having the ability to own my sexuality – and thankfully not the other way around. I had the support system around me to make me feel comfortable where I could be myself. And that was a major contributor to my story and experiences as an undergraduate student as it pertains to my coming out. While my coming out story is an integral part of my current identity, which led me to where I am today, I am reserving the most intimate of details for those in my life who have the privilege of knowing my story as it pertains to my sexuality.

My residence life supervisor also helped me come to the conclusion that switching career paths, even though it was very late in the game, was ultimately the route that I wanted to take. They challenged and supported me and made me realize that working with college students is my passion. They even took the time out of her summer to talk to me in-person about applying for graduate school and to process my thoughts and feelings with them. She encouraged me to apply to a student affairs program that would best fit my needs as a student and a future professional.

My tenure as an undergraduate student meant a lot to me. I grew and developed into a person who is more confident in my skin, more knowledgeable in my abilities, and more comfortable being challenged and taken outside of my comfort zone. I believe that I am a student of life – always learning and practicing my skills on a daily basis.

### **Broad Introduction to the Thematic Concern**

As I just introduced my frame of reference, I will now broadly talk about my thematic concern. My thesis focuses on student affairs professionals helping undergraduate students identify and process the characteristics of neoliberalism and how it affects the society in which we all live in.

From the naked eye, colleges and universities are perceived to act in the best interest of its students, focusing on student success, holistic learning, and student development. This is the messaging that the U.S. higher education system often uses in the face of neoliberalism, and it is circulated through marketing materials, websites, and orientation programs. While this might be the mission or vision for the university, when closely analyzed, colleges and university structures are run as businesses that revolve around tuition dollars and funding for its doors to remain open. The U.S. higher education structure is built on the foundation of our capitalist society (Labaree, 2017), in which places a premium on money and economic growth. Since the university is structured in this way, higher education is vastly limiting students in which it serves in an undemocratic way (Derrida, 2002). Higher education, a so-called public good intended to provide students a period of time to think and reflect upon the world in which they study, has its roots reaching into the depths of capitalism, encouraging its students, its clients and consumers, to reproduce this structure of power.

Student affairs professionals can reshape power by helping students first realize the capitalist ideologies that are being reproduced through the means of the university. I reference this as students “undoing their own veil” to witness the forms of oppression that are reproducing neoliberal ideologies. The role of the student affairs professional is crucial because they have the responsibility, through my eyes, of helping students realize that there are these ideologies, these barriers, these walls pushing up against the student; I believe that student affairs professionals have a responsibility for helping students realize and recognize these walls and then organizing systems of counter-conduct that push back against the dominant forms of power. If student affairs professionals are aware of these oppressive ideologies that rule the university but do not



actively work to try to dismantle these forces, I believe that they hold a level of responsibility, as they would then be then complicit.

It is of the utmost importance to be able for these conversations to take place during the undergraduate years. I believe that student affairs professionals need to create the space in order for this dialogue to happen so that undergraduate students are aware of the invisible walls of neoliberalism and the effects of the capitalist ideology that is being reproduced in the university setting. As an undergraduate student studying business, these spaces and conversations did not exist for me. There was no single intervention that addressed this perspective; one that challenged the dominant ideology, the master narrative, to look at the university and the experiences of its students with a critical lens.

The need for students to understand this traces back to the notion of what the university is meant to be. Students need to understand how this impacts them because university is a time and a place to become more self-aware, to become more knowledgeable, and to learn about the world around them.

### **Preview of Thesis**

Chapter 2 introduces my use of Critical Action Research (CAR), the conceptual framework that I am using to analyze my thematic concern. In Chapter 3, I include five sections that outline the main narrative of my thematic concern. These five sections include my philosophical positionality, the historical context of my concern, the current state of my concern, the unique and relevant factors that frame my concern, and how my internship experiences impacted my perspective on this issue. Chapter 4 introduces my thematic intervention. Finally, Chapter 5 presents the leadership style that is needed to best implement this thematic intervention.

## Chapter 2

In this chapter, I am going to include four main sections. First, I will restate my thematic concern from my initial description in Chapter 1. Next, I will outline and explain CAR as my conceptual framework in this thesis. I will then provide a list of terms and their definitions used throughout this thesis. Finally, I identify two ACPA/NASPA competencies that best address my thematic intervention.

### **Thematic Concern Statement**

My thesis focuses on the awakening of the student consciousness to the neoliberal ideologies set in place by systemic societal frameworks. My intervention is comprised of a workshop for undergraduate student leaders to discover and to critique these ideologies with dialogue from their peers.

The hope is that this intervention will lead to authentic and critical spaces for dialogue between undergraduate students and their supervisors. While the intention of this intervention supports the groundwork for these critical dialogues to occur, it is important to highlight that this intervention is not a one-stop shop for all neoliberal solutions and remedies to the workings of neoliberal maladies. This intervention will not address the total breadth and depth of such ideologies; in fact, it will only brush the surface. Its intention is to lay the groundwork for initial dialogue that will spark further learning and processing with friends, peers, colleagues, supervisors, and oneself.

Having these critical conversations about neoliberal ideologies set forth by the institution is crucial. It is important for students to be able to have a space during their undergraduate career to critically think, observe, and reflect upon how these factors affect their lives and their paraprofessional positions. Additionally, it is imperative to allow students to draw their own

conclusions about how the university and, in turn, their overall identity and positionality within the institution, of how such power structures are reproduced in the university setting and beyond.

### **Conceptual Framework**

To analyze this concern, I will be using and incorporating action research. As described by Mary Brydon-Miller, Davydd Greenwood, and Patricia Maguire (2003) in their editorial *Action Research*, such research is meant to lead to an intervention as its aim is to challenge “unjust and democratic economic, social, and political systems” (Brydon-Miller, 2003, p. 11). Even though action research is meant to challenge these systems, the end goal of action research is not to result in a finite conclusion. Thus I am using action research to brush up against systemic pressures; there is no telling where these unanswered questions are going to lead.

Action researcher Robin McTaggart, along with other scholars such as Paulo Freire and John Dewey, has reached the conclusion that the purpose of action research is for the “improvement of social practice” (Brydon-Miller, 2003, p. 13). According to the text, theory and practice have to go hand-in-hand. In higher education and action research, theory without practice leaves the university empty, as there is no action; contrary, practice without theory leaves the university acting blindly with no intentional action. Therefore, both components are needed in action research. We need this structure to better understand our work so our intentional practice can be elevated.

But action research goes beyond the notion that theory can inform practice, to a recognition that theory can and should be generated through practice, and, as the earlier discussion of values would suggest, that theory is really only useful insofar as it is put in the service of a practice focused on achieving positive social change. (p. 15)

One of the challenges of action research is located in the execution and the resilience of those using this framework to tackle these systemic challenges in higher education. As the authors explain in this text, often times action researchers do not persist in their efforts within the university as defeat often looms when big measures are taken (Brydon-Miller, 2003, p. 23). I believe that student affairs professionals need to be resilient in our pockets of work so that we will create these avenues for students to carry the torch to continue the notion of action research. These gaps provide student affairs professionals the opportunity to use action research in daily work; creating the framework for change much occur in these pockets of work. This framework consists of having critical conversations regarding capitalist ideologies as I outline in Chapter 4.

My proposal for this intervention does not include a complete overhaul of the university structure. Although ideal, this approach is most likely unrealistic as action research takes large amounts of time to complete. It is best to work in small pockets of the university to cultivate real change at a pace that, while slow in nature, is effective in changing the way that the university is structured. Beginning to change the system starting from the outside of the university is not the most practical way of approaching this systemic concern. By changing the ways in which we operate and learn within the university, we can influence how we think and act outside of the university. By reframing the ways in which we think, we can begin to enact positive change for the education system as a whole.

This is why I have chosen to further analyze the concern of neoliberalism and higher education using critical theory as outlined by Christian Fuchs in *The International Encyclopedia of Political Communication*. Critical theory strongly contrasts with the business model of higher education. Fuchs (2015) explains: “Critical theory is an approach that studies society in a dialectical way by analyzing the political economy, domination, exploitation, and ideologies” (p.

1). Fuchs uses the term *dialectical* to indicate when there are opposing views that are brought into a conversation in which will cultivate an ending in truth or another idea uncovering the next step in the process. These opposing views are the very bedrock of what critical theory is about. Critical theory is used to reveal forms of domination through a dialectical lens. These contradictions, as outlined by Fuchs, act as the foundation of dialectics as capitalism “assures the continuity of domination and exploitation by changing the way that these phenomena are organized” (Fuchs, 2015, p. 5). Within this argument, capitalism naturally hosts a variety of contradictions that cause problems to the society in which it dominates. By analyzing this concern using critical lens, I can unveil dominations exposed by critical theory and intervene accordingly.

Critical theory also roots itself in the dimension of ontology. Ontology, a theory of being, addresses how reality is organized and developed over time. Fuchs states, “The goal of critical theory is the transformation of society as a whole so that a just society with peace, wealth, freedom, and self-fulfillment for all that can be achieved” (2015, p. 3). He also claims that all forms of domination must be dissolved in order to reach this ideal state. At its core, critical theory reveals forms of domination and talks about how to negate the negations that are pressing on our society and university structure today. These negations, or parallels with these forms of domination within the master narrative, must then be contradicted and denied.

Critical theory effectively provides a space and time for one to critically analyze concepts and systems that need refinement. With this being said, however, critical theory fails to launch any series of action that is required to cultivate real change. Action research aids in brushing up against these systemic frameworks by aiming toward a positive social change, but lacks an in-depth analysis of the merits of faults of the established structures. As a result of combining

critical theory and action research, there is a space where these critical concepts are mobilized into action. This conceptual framework, CAR, is a vehicle that provides the platform to cultivate change in this current university structure.

### **Definition of Terms**

Below are a series of words and phrases that I use throughout the remainder of this work. In some cases, I use literature and scholarship to define terms that root themselves in ideology and forms of power within the university. In other cases, I use terminology that describes intricate and complicated systems of political and economic functions, such as capitalism or neoliberalism. It is important to list and define these terms at the outset to ensure a mutual understanding of the terminology of these highly philosophical scholars and large systemic operations.

Term	Definition
Capitalism	An economic and political system that is dependent on private trade in order to produce a profit.
Counter-conduct	Michel Foucault (2009) describes this as the opportunity for alternatives; this action is the resistance against the dominant forces of power.
Dialectical Method	A term used by Christian Fuchs (2015) to indicate opposing views that are brought into a conversation. These two or more viewpoints are brought together to cultivate an ending in truth or another idea uncovering the next step in the process through reasoned arguments.
Ideological State Apparatus (ISA)	A term coined by Louis Althusser (1970) denoting a concrete place (church, school, home, etc.) where ideology influences action. This term, further elaborated on in Chapter 3, foreshadows where dominant power can be reproduced.
Neoliberalism	An institutional framework as described by David Harvey (2005) that has the qualities of free trade, free markets, and strong private property rights.
Reaganomics	The U.S. economic policy of the 1980's, named after President Ronald Reagan, that proposes heavy taxes on the wealthy and businesses should be lifted to a large degree, stimulating economic investment through society's hierarchy.
Repressive State Apparatus	A term coined by Louis Althusser (1970) describing a force in

(RSAs)	which interjects ensuring that the ISAs are protected, therefore preserving those with power. This term is also used in Chapter 3, which disciplines society in a way that reproduces the capitalist ideology.
Undoing the veil/discovering invisible walls	The notion of awakening the unconsciousness of the student to neoliberal ideologies

### **ACPA/NASPA Professional Competencies**

In this section, I will discuss two ACPA/NASPA competencies that align with my thematic concern and intervention. The first ACPA/NASPA competency that I identify is Social Justice and Inclusion. ACPA defines this competency as: “A process and a goal that includes knowledge, skill, and dispositions needed to create learning environments that foster equitable participation of all groups and seeks to address issues of oppression, privilege, and power” (ACPA, 2015). This competency leans on the dependence of student affairs educators and the agency that they have in order to enact change in their university setting. This, in essence, is the crux of my programmatic intervention as the workshops will hopefully spark discussion and deep thought around these areas. Through my intervention, students will be able to critically examine their own lens of power and how that influences their positionality within the university. This will contribute to the development of social justice by further raising societal consciousness of neoliberal and capitalist ideologies.

The second ACPA/NASPA competency that aligns with my thematic intervention is Leadership. ACPA/NASPA define this competency as involving “both the individual role of a leader and the leadership process of individuals working together to envision, plan, and affect change in organizations and respond to broad-based constituencies and issues” (ACPA, 2015). In other words, this competency addresses these qualities of a leader in order for student leaders to effectively enact change in their community. The programmatic intervention will shed light upon

the power structures within the university how those structures are reproduced inside and outside of the university through the lens of leadership. Students who advance this competency will then be able to articulate how institutional traditions and organizational structures influence others to act in the organization (ACPA, 2015).

The next chapter directly addresses my main thematic concern. In Chapter 3, I center my thematic concern with my philosophic positionality before addressing the historical context of neoliberalism. I also take a deeper dive into the current state of my concern while applying my field experience assistantship and internship to my thematic analysis.



### **Chapter 3**

Chapter 3 will consist of five sections that will thoroughly outline my thematic concern in detail. I will begin this chapter with a discussion of my philosophical positionality. After that section, I write about the historical context of my thematic concern. The third section will outline the current state of my concern. Fourth, I write about the unique and relevant factors that frame neoliberalism as it pertains to power within the university structure. Finally, I will describe how my graduate level experiences, via my assistantships and internships, inform this thematic concern.

#### **My Philosophical Positionality**

My philosophical positionality derives from the works of Paulo Freire, Michael Oakeshott, and Jacques Derrida. Through the works of these scholars, I develop my own perspective of what the purpose of higher education should entail. I draw from these three scholars as they all have positively influenced the inner workings of education. My philosophical positionality places emphasis on the student's holistic learning and development through problem-posing educative experiences. Through these educative experiences that I strive to integrate in my daily practice, and within my programmatic intervention, I challenge students to examine their own worldview. These scholars' ideologies toward education, in my view, provide the students that we serve the best opportunity to be challenged and supported through their higher education career and through my programmatic intervention.

#### ***Problem-Posing Education***

I believe that colleges and universities should provide an environment where problem-posing education is practiced. Educators should facilitate problem-posing education in order to challenge their students at their highest potential. Freire (2000) outlines this in his text: "The

teacher presents the material to the students for their consideration, and re-considers her earlier considerations as the students express their own. The role of the problem-posing educator is to create, together with the students” (p. 81). This idea of creating together is critical in his argument regarding the dynamic of the teacher and the student. Freire explains that the student-teacher and teacher-student relationship should be built simultaneously so that genuine and authentic learning that takes place. A similar dynamic can be replicated when students work together to complete a task or work toward a common goal. In my personal philosophy, learning is a two-way street where students can feel comfortable bringing their experiences to the table; and, on the flip side, be comfortable receiving feedback and learning from others’ experiences as well.

In addition to problem-posing education, students and teachers need to bring their whole selves to the classroom in order to learn from one another. Freire (2000) explains that “No one can be authentically human while he prevents others from doing so” (p. 85). Freire expresses that by limiting – and eventually oppressing – students in the classroom, teachers and students prevent each other from being more human. In other words, Freire views an oppressive version of education as one that does not highlight the oppression to the oppressed. Freire argues that this form of education should focus on answering the question of “why?” as that is a crucial question to gain a better understanding as a whole; non-problem-posing forms of education would never prompt this response.

I believe that education should be a process in which all participants are encouraged to contribute and create together through the vehicle of problem-posing education. As a result of using this method, students have a higher level of investment because they have a connection to their learning. My personal outlook on education runs parallel to the framework of Paulo Freire

(2000) which he outlined in Chapter 2 of the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. In Freire's chapter, he first addresses the fact that teachers use a "banking model" when it comes to their approach to teaching. In other words, teachers are trained to tend to "fill" their students with the knowledge that they think is pertinent (p. 72). Freire says that a student must take notes, memorize, and regurgitate information on an exam, or repeat phrases that will help the students obtain a passing grade. In order to help students become more critical thinkers, educators need to be able to start navigating Freire's ideology in every classroom before stepping foot in a college or university. The importance of critical thinking is imperative when undergraduate students are faced with difficult decisions or situations that they might be involved in; such as roommate disputes, ethical decisions, or independent problem solving.

This term further notes that students are like containers that need to be filled with information by the teacher. As Freire (2000) continues, he also states that banking education does not make students critical thinkers. To combat this, Freire calls for educators to pose questions to their students, rather to feed their students answers. By constantly providing answers to students, students are trained to be content with answers to solutions; in short, it stunts creativity and inhibits growth and potential.

### ***A Period for Reflection***

From my point of view, collegiate years are about finding oneself and being able to reflect upon one's experiences beside one another. Higher education should be a transformational experience where one has that opportunity to reflect and to grow at their own pace.

My views upon education and higher education's role in the U.S. education system line up with those of Michael Oakeshott (1989) in his text, *The Voice of Liberal Learning: Michael*

*Oakeshott on Education.* Oakeshott first explains that, “A University is not a machine for achieving a particular purpose or producing a particular result; it is a manner of human activity” (p. 24). Oakeshott claims that the physical structures do not make up the university; it is the people that make up the university. Without people, the university would just be an empty shell in which no learning would take place. I believe that institutions of higher education should not be for the sole purpose of producing students who are well-equipped for taking on professional roles in order to earn capital.

Oakeshott’s use of the words *producing* and *machine* incite an image of an automobile assembly line where the ideology suggests a quick and efficient process to put enough pieces together to build a vehicle. As future educators and student affairs professionals, we need to be mindful that university is not a transactional experience; we need to try to elevate students’ development and overall experience by challenging them during the course of their undergraduate journey. Oakeshott (1989) argues that, the scholars and the individuals that make up the university are, inherently, where the learning takes place in the university. This “conversation” that takes place in university should not be measured as asking what the conversation is “for” as that defeats the purpose of having a conversation.

Education should be a time and a place to think, as, no matter what stage of life one is in, it is imperative to take this opportunity. Oakeshott (1989) explains this ideology in his text:

Here is a break in the tyrannical course of irreparable events; a period in which to look round upon the world and upon oneself without the sense of an enemy at one’s back or the insistent pressure to make up one’s mind; a moment in which to taste the mystery without the necessity of at once seeking a solution. (p. 28)

He reiterates this while describing university as a break and a time for *scholé*, or leisure (Oakeshott, 1989). I agree that colleges and universities need to attempt to reclaim this groundwork. Universities and higher education have become very focused on catering to individuals that need education in order to get a better job to make more money. While gaining financial capital is important in today's society due to the neoliberal and capitalist ideologies, college should also be a time and an interval to study and to learn without the pressure to perform through competition.

### ***Challenging the Status Quo***

As there should be a period of time for critical reflection, students should be able to have an opportunity to freely challenge the status quo of the world around them without fear of negative consequence. Aiding in my philosophy of education is the works of Jacques Derrida (2002), who describes the importance of studying the humanities in today's society. He states that the "humanities (are) capable of taking on the tasks of deconstruction, beginning with the deconstruction of their own history and their own axioms" (p. 204). From this excerpt, Derrida argues that the humanities house the capability to destabilize or deconstruct accepted truths set forth by society. In other words, the humanities create that space for thought and questioning of "the other" (p. 205).

The college experience should bestow the possibility to question everything in hopes to gain a better understanding of the world. Derrida (2002) expresses that the university should be a safe haven to question everything – even that of the current layout and inner workings of democracy (p. 208). Derrida also outlines two words that hold a lot of gravity when talking about the university without condition: "as if" (p. 210). He emphasizes these words because he is saying "as if" is needed to have the option for the impossible to be possible. These words create

a crack or a void leaving further room for “the other” as outlined above. This opening is critical to my personal philosophy of education because I believe it represents room for growth, room for questioning, and room for challenging the status quo. All of these are crucial, in my scope of view, in establishing a healthy and holistic learning environment. We need colleges and universities to make room for “the other” conversation to occur because it shines light on student voices and the perpetual alternative that they may develop or offer.

These five ideas inform my philosophical approach in higher education: Problem-posing education, “conversation,” universities are not machines producing students, scholae, and “the other.” Problem-posing education creates the foundation in order to consider “the other” alternative. Critical conversations during a moment of reflection and the notion of challenging the status quo directly intersect each other as they are dependent one another; they both need to occur in order to create real transformative change within the current structures of higher education. Each aspect of my philosophical positionality is a critical part of what I believe the structure of learning should be in the world of higher education and student affairs.

### **Historical Context**

In this section, I root my historical framework in five different lenses surrounding my thematic concern. I draw from the works of David F. Labaree, David Harvey, Christopher Newfield, Wendy Brown, and Nancy Fraser. I first describe how the university operates as a business. After that, I define neoliberalism and outline its characteristics. While the historical context of my concern is broad, I narrowed the context of this concern through the U.S. economic policies of the 1980s, which I outline in the following section. I then explain the devolutionary cycle as it pertains to neoliberalism and its impacts on students in the university setting.

### *University Operating as a Business*

The end goal for colleges and universities has become clear as the messaging for higher education institutions is positioned toward student success after a four-year tenure as a college student. Over the years, student success and its definition have become a focal point for many researchers and scholars as it has been defined, shaped, and reflected by society. Colleges and universities are also under the umbrella of neoliberalist ideology thus often mirror each other; in essence, the ideologies that are shaping society also are embodied, portrayed, and reproduced in higher education institutions. When tying money, capitalism, and our current economic climate into the equation, it muddies the water from what I believe education, and in particular higher education, should be – a public good.

In his book, David F. Labaree (2017) dives into the notion that the U.S. education system is highly-stratified in a sense that a college essentially operates as a business; the president of the university is the CEO, the directors of different departments are managers, the faculty/staff of the departments are the ground employees, and the students are the consumers. Labaree states that, “A market-orientated system of higher education has a special dynamic that leads to a high degree of stratification” (p. 8). This market-oriented system is one that lends itself so that students (or consumers) attend college in order to gain an advantage on those who do not take the route of higher education. While there may be other internal reasons for individuals to attend college, the underlying reason for many is to land a job to make money in an area they have interest in. In essence, colleges and universities are a personal good in order to maximize potential of getting a better job and better compensation upon leaving the institution of higher education.

With this market-oriented system at play, there are also ways that universities are structured and stratified based on a number of factors. Labaree (2017) explains that the hierarchy is established in a pyramid sense, where the top of the pyramid is more exclusive (selective) and the bottom of the structure is more inclusive (not as selective). He further explains that the more inclusive the college or university, the less benefits it has in terms of opening doors for its students. This is not the way that it should be. One should attend college to learn about their field of study, to learn about themselves, to learn about others, and to experience things that they might not have had the opportunity to before they entered college.

### *Neoliberalism*

The historical root to this thematic concern of college operating as a business can be traced back to neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is a system of economic practices that depend on a very limited state intervention that promotes strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade (Harvey, 2005).

The notion of return on investment (ROI) is the utmost importance in the neoliberal ideology. This creates the framework for markets to flourish in the current economic system, which is highly based upon competition. Members of society, under strictly this format, are constantly reevaluating themselves in order to maximize profit and economic standing; under neoliberal ideologies, members of society have to continuously invest in themselves in order to turn a profit. Therefore, the furtherance of one's education becomes a top priority in order to accomplish this investment. Building this financial capital is essential under the master narrative, better known as the neoliberal ideology.

Wendy Brown (2015) examines the history and depths of neoliberalism – specifically how it relates to using human capital as an asset under the umbrella of the capitalist society. She



states: “Neoliberalism widely spreads to ‘every sphere of life and construes the human itself as *homo oeconomicus*” (p. 176). The term *homo oeconomicus* is used to describe the “economic man” in which describes someone who looks out for their own self-interest for power and wealth. One could argue that neoliberalism frames everything through the lens of capital investment, including that of humans.

Brown (2015) mentions that human capital, and the line of thinking that comprises the neoliberal ideologies, is sought after a net positive return-on-investment logic (Brown, 2015). This metric is used to rationalize an outcome where there is some type of economic return. Brown argues that because a neoliberal society is focused on a ROI ideology, that we automatically assign value to everything. In this model of neoliberalism, some thing only has value if it has adequate economic payback.

Given the ROI logic outlined by Brown, the modern United States university only has value should there be economic benefit; this economic return includes the skills needed to earn more financial capital and to gain wealth as a consumer in a neoliberal society. This is known as ROI education; in essence, education can be seen, observed, and experienced as a private good. The view of education in this light has been prevalent, especially since the era of Reaganomics, as described in the next session of this thesis, and increasingly so throughout the 2000’s as the push toward ROI logic has become stronger given economic hardships in the past decade. It has recently been studied that the next generation will be the first generation that will make less annual earnings than their parent’s generation overall; and through this time, students enrolled in four-year colleges and universities are feeling that pressure in order to exit their four-year institution with a career that will satisfy their need for having enough financial capital to survive and live comfortably.

David Harvey (2005) also describes that the role of the state is to “create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices” (p. 2). In this excerpt, Harvey (2005) explains:

State interventions in markets (once created) must be kept to a bare minimum because, according to the theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit. (p. 2)

In essence, the role of the state is to ensure that there are systems at play in order to protect and reproduce qualities of the main system that is neoliberalism.

### *Reaganomics*

According to David Harvey, neoliberal practices in the United States have been most prevalent in the era of President Ronald Reagan – as his two-term presidency lasted between 1981 until 1989. These neoliberal ideologies of the 40<sup>th</sup> President of the United States were greatly reflected in the economic policy of the 1980’s, and appropriately named after the leader of the free world, Reaganomics. A cornerstone of Reaganomics includes that of trickle-down economics, or otherwise known as supply-side economics. Trickle-down economics proposes that heavy taxes on the wealthy and businesses should be lifted to a large degree, stimulating economic investment through society’s hierarchy. The overall theory of trickle-down economics is supported by the notion that the short-term loss in governmental financial capital will produce a long-term gain in society through a more limited government lens.

Upon a closer look, one could draw the connection between Reaganomics and the neoliberal characteristics that David Harvey describes in his work studying neoliberal characteristics. The trickle-down economic theory, by nature, is one that places trust in the free

market in order to strengthen itself through the lens of neoliberalism. Through this economic policy, the neoliberal ideologies were strengthened and reinforced through the overall framework and structure of the Reagan Administration through his first and second term as President of the United States.

The trickle-down theory and policies kept, or repressed, the main goal of neoliberalism in the capitalist society of the 1980's. This is the essence of the policies outlined in the trickle-down theories of Reaganomics. The power, in the form of financial capital, is given away from the federal government and allocated more so that a stronger free market ideology is adopted and put into action by the members of its society. These members of society would be then playing their part in reproducing the same ideology that was promoted in the 1980's.

### *Devolutionary Cycle*

When analyzing the historical root and underlying cause as to what is driving the higher education system to exist the way it is currently, one must take a closer look at the devolutionary cycle as Christopher Newfield (2016) addresses. Neoliberalism is the catalyst to why this cycle is spinning in this direction, which does not fall in favor of students.

Newfield (2016) introduces a self-reinforcing cycle in his text called the devolutionary cycle (or the decline cycle). This cycle explains the historical roots and the cyclical pattern of events that are caused by the downward spinning of neoliberalism. Stage 1 outlines the "University's Retreat from the Public Good" (p. 37). In this phase, as similar to Harvey's point of view, Newfield says that there is an ideological shift that the university is a private good; this private good produces market value, which reinforces that education is a business. The third Stage, titled "Large, Regular Tuition Hikes," occurs when public colleges and universities raise tuition, thus comparing themselves to their private counterparts due to cuts and loses being

increased in Stage 2 (p. 41). The fourth Stage forecasts the continued cuts to public university funding. This has been evidenced across the U.S. in the past several decades at public institutions of varying sizes.

The decrease of public funding and increase in tuition rates causes dramatic rise in student debt, as outlined in Stage 5. It is in this stage that the student becomes the consumer and is focused on the return-on-investment logic as explained prior. Stage 6 outlines that these public universities are in debt as their balance sheets do not look promising. Stage 7 describes that U.S. education performance is decreasing while retention rates are decreasing as well. Finally, Stage 8 explains that individuals that would “increase their productivity through education did not receive market payment for that increase” since the 1970’s (p. 46). Said otherwise, the effectiveness and perceived value of a four-year degree decreased, leaving the cycle to forever spin due to education operating like a business.

Despite the ideologies surrounding the master narrative of capitalistic ideologies, student affairs professionals need to be able to work in pockets where this philosophy can take root. It is crucial for student affairs educators to be able to help students lift their own veil of these ideologies, so that they are aware of these oppressive systemic structures. Changing the system starting from the outside of the university, is not the most practical way of approaching this thematic concern. By changing the ways in which we operate and learn within the university, we can influence how we think outside of the university. By reframing the ways in which we think, with help from “the other,” we can begin to enact positive change.

### **Factors that Frame this Concern**

In this section, I will outline several factors that inform my thematic concern. These factors derive from the notion of power within the university and the importance of being aware

of such power structures. My analysis of these concerns derives from the works of Louis Althusser (2014) and Michel Foucault (2009). In this section, I first describe how power and ideology frame my thematic concern. After that, I outline the use of conduct and counter-conduct and how these actions create alternatives to the master narrative in neoliberal ideologies.

### ***Ideology and Power***

Throughout this section, I outline the influence of power that is interwoven through the neoliberal and capitalist ideologies of the university. When awakening the student to these ideologies, one must be careful in the ways in which these veils are removed. Should student affairs professionals take off the veil for the student, the professional might then be subject to forcing their own ideologies onto the student. Hence, they then would be reproducing power structures within the university. I believe that student affairs professionals must facilitate this learning in a way that first sheds light on the forces of neoliberal ideology without lifting the veil for the students themselves. While lifting the veil is an important first step to facilitate, this is purely the beginning of the process of counter-conduct. The lifting of the veil is a necessary step, but insufficient in nature.

Louis Althusser's (2014) introduces the effects and the importance of ideology in his works. He states that ideology is an imagined relation to real conditions. Ideology is everywhere – even by saying that one does not have an ideology is in and of itself an ideology. In any space, there are a variety of ideologies at play. Ideology relates to power in that it constantly reproduces social relations to help those in power remain in power. One of the main components of ideology is that it makes people act for themselves. Althusser (2014) states: “It is absolutely necessary to show, theoretically and politically, the mechanisms by means of which ideology makes people, that is, concrete individuals, ‘march’” (p. 180). In essence, ideology makes individuals *go* and

influences action. Althusser explains that ideologies exist in churches, schools, and families – all concrete places where ideology influences action. These places that ideology influences action are called Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA). Althusser uses this term to describe where such “beautiful lies talk to you” (p. 180). He describes “beautiful lies” as the ideologies that are put in place so that the dominant power can be reproduced. ISAs are a specific moment where this dominant ideology becomes the individual’s belief system.

Althusser also discusses the Repressive State Apparatus (RSA). The RSA is a force in which physically enters the space in order to protect and to make sure that the ISAs are protected. In essence, the RSA reinforces the neoliberal and capitalist ideologies – the master narrative. The RSA “functions by violence whereas the ISA functions by ideology” (p. 244). RSAs in order to protect the dominant force, the economy and the financial capital that make up neoliberalism, in order for this ideology to continue to be reproduced. This cyclical flow of events regarding the ISAs and the RSAs continue to discipline society in a way that reproduces the capitalist ideology; that is until another force of power ruptures this cycle enough to enact change.

Police intervention and suppression is a direct example of an RSA that is widely seen in today’s society regarding actions of racism, sexism, etc. Should there be a physical protest against these acts, the police are called to intervene and eventually suspend these acts with or without violence. The police act as an RSA in order to maintain order and protect these systems that perpetuate power structures that produce societal inequalities.

If one were to take the university and classify it as an ISA, one could also say that there would be examples of departments acting as RSAs to ensure that the power structures are being reinforced. For example, residence life offices are a prime example of a department acting as a

RSA to the university. If there were an uprising in a residence hall regarding social issues that may impede on the safety of other students, the residence life staff would then document the situation, and a report would funnel to an office of student conduct. The students would have to meet with a university hearing officer to ensure that the behavior is addressed and corrected via levels of sanctioning and conditions to those sanctions. In this seemingly small way, these departments are acting as a RSA in order to maintain order for the university. With this being said, safety and order are two essential priorities of a residence life office in order to provide an impactful residential experience. However, one must be aware of these power structures that appear in these small pockets of the university.

If one examines the main messaging that both academic affairs and student affairs uses, the reproduction of this ideology is automatically built in to the mission of most institutions. The mission and vision of the university equates back to student success. Success through the eyes of the university, and ideology that intersects the capitalist ideology, is usually defined as being able to collect and acquire capital in order to financially support oneself after four years of schooling.

### ***Conduct and Counter-conduct***

In this section, I use Michel Foucault's (2009) notion of counter-conduct in order to brush up against the dominant forms of power. I address the use of conduct and counter-conduct within the university that student affairs professionals can use in these marginal spaces. Student affairs professionals have the ability to aid in the attempts of counter-conduct in these arenas by helping students recongnize these invisible walls. Throughout this chapter, I referenced this as students "undoing their own veil" where the veil represents the master narrative of capital and neoliberal ideologies. These ideologies increasingly influence the university as student affairs

educators have a responsibility for helping students undo their veil in these processes. From recognizing these barriers, students can then organize systems of counter-conduct that push back against these dominant forms of power.

Michel Foucault (2009) explains that power is a force that affects peoples' actions. He mentions that the dominant force that governs people is that of *oikonomia*, or economy. Foucault states: "In other words, this Greek notion of economy... of its goods and wealth, the management or direction of slaves, of the wife, and of children, and possibly the *management*" (p. 257). He emphasizes that the capital economy is governing the souls of people and that this shapes individuals and their conduct. As a direct refusal of power, counter-conduct provides the opportunity for the alternative; individuals have the power and the choice to begin to resist the dominant forces of power that originates from the dominant force, the economy, and the financial wealth and capital.

According to Foucault (2009), to actively brush up against the dominant force and participate in counter-conduct, one must do so in the cracks of the discourse. Foucault explains: "How can we designate the type of revolts or rather the sort of specific web of resistance to forms of power that do not exercise sovereignty and do not exploit, but 'conduct'" (p. 266). Since power is in the extremities and is not centralized, student affairs professionals need to dismantle forms of power in the gaps of these ideologies.

### **Assistantships and Internships**

In this section, I share my experiences with my graduate assistantship in residence life and my graduate internship in the student union with a late night programming initiative. I find that current student affairs professionals reinforce these capitalist ideologies that do not benefit the student experience through their college years. As a future educator, we need to extend grace



and practice empathy as we know that financial challenges are mainly out of the students' control. I share these experiences that I have encountered as they hold weight in reproducing the neoliberal ideologies that negatively affect students.

In both my assistantship and my internship, I directly experienced the affects of my thematic concern in the wake of the neoliberal and capitalist framework. There are parallels between the corporate world and that of higher education as I have documented in previous sections throughout this chapter. While these challenges certainly do exist with the day-to-day operations of my roles, I focus my attention on the stories and experiences of the students who I interacted with who, whether knowingly or unknowingly, came up against these walls. While in my role as a graduate assistant in residence life, I have come across countless undergraduate students who hold a position as a RA because of their financial situation that they find themselves in within all four (or five, or six) years at the institution. I often ask paraprofessional students and candidates of the position why they would like to be involved within residence life. The most anticipated and expected interview response, as a soon-to-be full-time professional, would be to help their peers navigate their years living in a residence hall. Even in my relatively short stint in residence life, that narrative has began to change. In my experience, Generation Z has been most open and forward with their intentions and vocalizing their needs and expectations to professional staff. More and more responses revolve around that of finding affordable – and in this case, “free” – housing, and a paycheck. In many cases when talking with students, many of them have two or three jobs in addition to being a full-time student. This is no singular case as there are many students and paraprofessional students who fall in this same category.

At the university I have completed my graduate studies, our hiring processes and current mindset regarding staff selection often frown upon these responses when given by candidates or current residence life staff. For paraprofessionals, undergraduate students who work and serve as an extension of a student affairs department and/or the university, some may or may not work more than ten hours a week at another job or internship. And while some may work ten hours and live within the limit of that predetermined threshold, I found that it is up to the discretion of the department to whether or not the individual will be hired. In some cases, I have observed individuals meet all of the qualifications, have exceeded expectations in their current paraprofessional position, but have not be hired for the next academic year based on the fact that they have an internship that is perceived will interfere with the overall success and needs of the department.

The current mindset of some paraprofessional supervisors has informed and supported this current ideology of student affairs. I have worked with supervisors who will not re-hire or support students with the same capacity if they have stated that they need the residence life staff position due to financial remuneration of the position. But this is the reality in which we live. Undergraduate students are faced with the reality of financial burdens; pressures from departments, jobs, and careers to over perform at all costs; the need to gain excessive amounts of experience to add on a resume; the need to indulge in practices that reinforce and reproduce neoliberal ideologies.

### **The Need for an Intervention**

Undergraduate students currently have the need to get through college as fast as they can to save money and to start earning income to skirt the amount of debt that they might owe after their college experience. I have observed this story through my experience working with first-

year traditional undergraduate students living on campus. Many students who I have met have a similar outlook of how to approach their collegiate years as they are solely focused on their studies.

When I meet with students in conduct meetings, I make sure to ask them what their hobbies are, what clubs and organizations that they are involved in, and what their overall goals are after they graduate from college, regardless of their class standing. Overwhelmingly in my experience, I have observed that undergraduate students are not as interested in becoming overly involved in the co-curricular sphere as they are mainly focused on checking the boxes that they need in order to graduate. Additionally, these students also have several jobs or internships outside of campus that inherently make themselves more marketable to outside organizations as graduation approaches.

With this being said, I perceive a gap between student engagement in neoliberal logics and their understanding of the nature and dynamics of the neoliberalism that surrounds them. There is no formal class that discusses the connection between ideology and capitalism, or how these ideologies ultimately impact students and their learning. In the next section, I explore this gap and address the need for a programmatic intervention, which I outline in detail in Chapter 4.

Through my experience working in higher education and reflecting upon this thematic concern, I have come to a realization about my own practice surrounding these critical conversations. Despite having three different direct supervisors within my time within residence life, I found myself engaging in such conversations outside of the classroom. Most of these conversations happened organically through supervisor one-on-ones and random dialogue that stemmed from our passion for helping students.

Upon reflecting on this, my current supervisor has enrolled herself in classes at my institution to gain a better understanding of such issues that are rooted in higher education. Her previous degree that she obtained at a small private institution in Pennsylvania, while critical in nature, did not address higher education-specific issues surrounding the reproduction of power and capitalist ideologies that impact students. Additionally, I have engaged in such critical dialogue with some of my other good company (Baxter-Magolda, 2002) that also has enrolled themselves in the same program at my current institution.

My field experience, this has helped me realize that I am currently practicing what I am trying to accomplish in my programmatic intervention, that is, I am engaged in “lifting the veil” in my student affairs role. I am having those critical conversations with the people that I connect with on a daily basis. While these conversations are not comfortable by any means, it is merely a beginning step that will hopefully enact little pockets of change. The discomfort, as I have discovered through my own practice, is seemingly a mandatory part of the journey of counter-conduct (Foucault, 2009). Ideally, true change has to occur with a level of discomfort from all parties participating, which I explain in my programmatic intervention in the next chapter.

## Chapter 4

This chapter begins with a broad introduction of my programmatic intervention. After reviewing key aspects from the previous chapter, I outline the purpose, learning objectives, goals, and learning outcomes for my intervention. I then discuss theoretical frameworks that are reflected and embedded in my program. The next section includes a detailed proposal for the content portion of my intervention. Here, I outline the different activities and sessions that comprise my two-day workshop. In the final section, I discuss implementation of my program and any details surrounding my timeline, marketing materials, and the overall funding needed for this intervention.

### Overview

My thesis focuses on the awakening of the student consciousness to the neoliberal ideologies set in place by systemic societal frameworks. My programmatic intervention is comprised of a two-day workshop for undergraduate student leaders to discover and to critique these ideologies with dialogue with their peers. This workshop provides students the opportunity to discuss the effects of capitalist ideologies being reproduced in the university setting. My programmatic intervention is designed to be implemented as a professional development opportunity embedded in paraprofessional training, such as a mandatory residence life training, student union training, or other on-campus trainings during the beginning of an academic term.

This intervention would initially address the 7 C's Model of Leadership (Astin, 1996) in order to prompt an overall thinking about individual, group, and societal values. A few exercises follow this lecture including a case study and activities that address the characteristics of the neoliberalist ideology (such as competition/individualism, commodification and return-on-investment, debt and tuition increase, and human capital). Students would then be prompted to

identify how these characteristics arise in their daily lives as a student and as an employee of the university via activities and circle work through the facilitation of two trained professionals familiar with the field of student affairs. Processing questions would then follow this instruction before diving into how these ideologies are reproduced by the university. Participants will be given a journal with prompting questions to record any lingering thoughts before reconvening the next day and sharing what they have internally wrote via facilitated circle work.

This circle work is an essential part of CAR, which I outline in Chapter 2 of this document. A component of action research is collecting qualitative data, which is reflected in my programmatic intervention. Every participant is asked to bring their experiences and to critically think and reflect upon overarching societal values. Participant contribution and testimony is the cornerstone of this action research programmatic intervention.

### **Purpose**

In this section, I include goals, objectives, program content, learning outcomes, and the overall program outcome of my proposed intervention. The table below addresses the overall purpose of this program as it pertains to lifting the veil against neoliberal and capitalist ideologies.

**Table 1***Learning Goals and Objectives*

	Series One	Series Two
Goal	Awaken the student consciousness to neoliberal and capitalist ideologies and how they intersect with their personal value system	Address systemic oppression in the university as it pertains to power structures
Objective	Develop a workshop on the dominant ideologies that our current systems are rooted in	Develop a workshop on the dominant ideologies that our current systems are rooted in
Program Content Highlight	The facilitators will engage students in reflective and collaborative activities throughout the workshop, such as journaling during the course of these two workshops	The facilitators will engage students in reflective and collaborative activities throughout the workshop, such as journaling during the course of these two workshops
Learning Outcome 1	Students will be able to identify the components of the 7 C's Leadership Model	Student participants will be able to define neoliberalism as a result of attending the workshop
Learning Outcome 2	Students will be able to identify individual values, group values, and societal values based on the 7 C's Leadership Model	Student participants will be able to identify at least 2 characteristics of these dominant ideologies as a result of participating in this program
Learning Outcome 3	Students will be able to identify 2 benefits of collaboration and be able to apply them to their work environment	Student participants will be able to identify at least 2 real-life examples of these dominant ideologies as a result of participating in this program
Program Outcome	As a result of attending this program, students will be able to develop a personal action plan of how to best use this knowledge in the world in which they live	

**Theoretical Frameworks**

Baxter-Magolda's Self-Authorship Theory (2009) and Freire's Model of Critical Consciousness (2000) are both reflected in the inner workings of this proposed workshop, and I define and describe each herein. Additionally, I introduce theories of adult learning, known as

Andragogy (Knowles, 1980), and outline how they are employed in my program. I also describe how Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (1984) grounds my programmatic intervention as it is a model that facilitates personal growth.

### ***Baxter-Magolda's Self-Authorship Theory***

I begin with Baxter-Magolda's Self-Authorship Theory (2009). My intervention intersects with the notions of experiencing pain, gaining perspective, and strengthening relationships. Experiencing pain, as described by Baxter-Magolda, is necessary in order to find your internal voice:

Often, pain emerged in their lives as a result of the tension between these formulas and what actually happened in their lives. There is considerable evidence in today's world that competition for entrance to college and good jobs often has the unintended result of teaching young people how to follow formulas rather than to develop their internal voices. (p. 313)

These described formulas can be described as socialized ways of conducting a process, such as learning, work, or relationships. In order to break those external formulas as mentioned above, one of these strategies is to transition through a period of time where pain is experienced. This pain, while not intended to cause harm to the student, is used to fuel a time for critical reflection. Through this segment in self-authorship, Baxter-Magolda (2009) aims to uncover tension or pain, which restricts one's own internal voice.

The second nuance of Baxter-Magolda's Self-Authorship Theory (2009) consists of gaining perspective. This segment, notably on the path toward self-authorship, is mainly about reflecting upon one's own value system and how to position one within societal and group's value systems. Once someone encounters the initial shock of another's positionality, there is time



that should be built-in for critical reflection. I draw heavily on this portion of self-authorship theory as my proposed intervention emphasizes opportunities for sharing and reflection in one's own time and pace.

The final portion of this theory hinges on the importance of partners within the self-authorship (2009) journey. The journey toward self-authorship involves leaning on people that allow one to be themselves so that they can be fully vulnerable within their own process. This component is crucial in the self-authorship theory because having good company (Baxter-Magolda, 2002), when you are experiencing a level of growth helps by fostering genuine connections to in order to learn from and with one another. Creating partners is another cornerstone of my thematic intervention because levels of trust and vulnerability are needed in order to find one's internal voice so that one is more accepting and respectful of every voice.

### ***Freire's Model of Critical Consciousness***

Freire's Model of Critical Consciousness (2000) is another framework that is reflected in my programmatic intervention. Freire describes an awakening in his work: "A deepened consciousness of their situation leads people to apprehend that situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation" (p. 85). This awakening, or deepened consciousness, reflects an greater understanding of oneself and the world around them. Freire also states that, through this process of critical examination, that transformation of reality to become "more human" is possible (p. 85). By having problem-posing and critical educative experiences, such as my proposed intervention, this transformative experience is the basis of my programmatic intervention. The overall purpose is to awaken the student consciousness in order to critically examine the world.

## *Andragogy*

For my programmatic intervention, I use theories of adult learning, better known as andragogy (Knowles, 1980). Andragogy provides the best platform for CAR to occur for several reasons. Adults, as college students are, best learn when they are aware that the material is applicable; they need to know why the information is relevant. These theories of adult learning also suggest that adults learn best when the learning is experiential in nature. Additionally, adults inherently see the value in learning as long as the reasoning for the learning is clearly articulated and the climate for learning is most appropriate. Through my intervention, I display these characteristics of andragogy.

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (1984) further informs the theoretical framework that grounds this workshop. This cycle consists of four steps that best cater to adult learning: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. My intervention addresses each part of this cycle during the course of the two-day workshop.

Participants of this workshop enter this program with an experience. This experience and the scope of their worldview will certainly vary. But nonetheless, everyone has experience based on their current perspective and personal ideology toward this subject regardless if they realize it. The second step in the cycle is reflective observation. This directly informs my program as participants will be able to review and reflect upon their experiences and the perspective of others. This reflection comes in the form of journaling and sharing their realizations with others via circle work. The third step in Kolb's Experiential Cycle of Learning (1984) is abstract conceptualization. In this phase, participants in this program conclude what they have learned and comprise key takeaways in order to implement in their lives after the program has concluded. This will be reflected in my program by journal entries and sharing what they have

learned at the end of the workshop. The fourth aspect of this cycle is active experimentation. While this step is not exactly shown within my proposed intervention, my workshop will help participants brainstorm ways that they can apply this knowledge to their daily lives.

Kolb's Experiential Cycle of Learning (1984) is transformational and reflective in nature. It is a learning process for adult learners that hinges itself on cultivating positive change that these learners can directly apply in their own lives. Caffarella (2013) describes the notion of transformational learning as it intersects with these theories of adult learning: "Transformational learning is the process in which adult learners question their basic values, beliefs, and perspectives they hold about their own lives, and how they interact with the wider world in which they live" (p. 54).

Within my workshop, I utilize transformational learning techniques such as reflective writing, conversation, and storytelling. I have organized my workshop in this way because I want to be able to highlight students' individual experiences. Their testimony and experience is essential to the learning of every participant in the program. Students who attend this workshop are teaching each other just as much as they are learning from their peers; this reinforces Freire's opposition of the banking method that is outlined in the beginning of Chapter 3.

I have chosen these techniques because participants might not have the opportunity to think critically about these concepts and the wider world around them. This workshop is designed to take students outside of their comfort zone as they might encounter perspectives that are different from their own initial view of these ideologies and systemic structures. A level of vulnerability and open-mindedness is needed for all participants who enter this space due to the nature of my program.

## Program Proposal

This section outlines my program that I propose to effectively tackle my thematic concern. Within this section, I establish an exhaustive list of all materials that are needed to create and facilitate this program. After that list, I include an agenda for each day of the workshop that directly aligns with my Series One and Series Two of my overall purpose for the program.

**Table 2**

### *Pre-Materials*

Supplies	Space Requirements	Food/Drink
100 Pens	Non-stadium/theatre seating	Water
500 3x3" Sticky notes	100 Chairs	Juice
100 Spiral-bound notebooks	3 Tables for food/drink	Coffee
1 Talking piece	1 Projector	Coffee stirrers
4 Large presentation posters	1 Projection screen	Cream/milk/sugar
1 Roll painter's tape		2 Lunches
100 Paper plates		Utensils/Plates/Cups
2 facilitators		

This program will need an indoor space that is most suitable for circle work; therefore, I propose a space on campus that has a large enough space for all participants and the two facilitators. The pre-materials listed are designed and selected for a total of 100 participants, which includes the undergraduate student participants, student supervisors, and 2 facilitators.

### *Program Agenda*

The table below outlines the agenda for the two-day workshop. Day One focuses on the Series One goal outlined in the previous section. Day Two of the program focuses on meeting the Series Two goal. The workshop is designed to begin in the morning with breaks for lunch falling in the middle of both days.

**Table 3***Workshop Agenda*

Day	Activity	Time Allotted (minutes)	Program Goal
Day One	Welcome	5-10	Series One
	Ice Breaker	15	
	7 C's Model of Leadership	20	
	Breakout Sessions	60	
	Lunch	45-60	
	Neoliberalism and Characteristics	30-40	
	Break	10	
	Poster Activity	60	
	Take-home Journal Assignment	10	
Day Two	Ice Breaker	15	Series Two
	Re-welcome and Recap Day One	15	
	Circle Work Introduction	10	
	Needs Assessment	20	
	Circle Work	60-90	
	Lunch	45-60	
	Action Plan	30	
	Closing	10	

***Workshop: Day One***

The very beginning of this two-day workshop consists mostly of the prep work that is essential in order to lay the groundwork of the main discussion. I designed the first day to include a welcome period as well as an initial icebreaker. These components are included for proper introductions of who is in attendance in the space. The icebreaker is intentionally placed after the welcome in order to get the participants to know one another and to set the stage for the day's workshop.

After the initial welcome and icebreaker, the next step is for the facilitators to begin a mini lecture of the 7 C's Model of Leadership (Astin, 1996). This model serves as the vehicle to start the conversation about individual values, group process values, and community/society

values. The purpose of including this model is to allow the participants to reflect upon these value systems and how they intersect with each other. This model conveys the importance of identifying these values in order to better ourselves and to enact change for the betterment of society.

After this mini lecture, the facilitators break up the participants into seven even groups. These seven groups mirror the 7 C's Model of Leadership (Astin, 1996). The facilitators task the seven groups to interact with each of the 7 C's with the following guiding questions: what key words in the definition stand out; how does this show up in your personal lives; how does this show up in your work lives? After 20-25 minutes of brainstorming together in these breakout groups, the facilitators instruct each group to report out on their findings.

Following the initial breakout sessions, the facilitators pass out the journals where each participant will individually reflect upon their individual values. They record a couple of values that inform their day-to-day interactions. Participants then pair and share with members in their group. After recording and sharing these individual values, participants brainstorm the values that they think that their specific department has in their same assigned breakout groups; they then will take turns reporting out. The facilitators gather this data for the department. Lastly, each breakout group is tasked with brainstorming societal values before reporting out.

The facilitators allow ample time for catered lunch that is provided in this session. After an hour break for lunch, the facilitators bring the entire participant group together in order to provide a lecture on neoliberalism and its defining characteristics (competition/individualism, human capital, debt and tuition increase, commodification/return on investment). After this lecture, the facilitators post four large posters on the walls with each different characteristic at the top of each poster. Participants take sticky notes and write down how each characteristic is

displayed in their personal or professional life. After 20-30 minutes of individual and silent reflection, the facilitators prompt a processing session before tying these responses back to the change model discussed earlier in the workshop.

To end the first day of the workshop, the participants will be assigned a journal entry that is due at the beginning of Day Two. This journal entry provides the opportunity for participants to further reflect on the day's workshop. The journal entry will prompt the following: what is something new that you learned today before entering the workshop; what has surprised you; what has not surprised you; how can you apply this workshop to your position at this university/college; what are two benefits of collaboration while working in your position; what are you left wondering after this session?

Day One of the workshop directly correlates to Series One of my learning domains and outcomes for this programmatic intervention. Through the first portion of this workshop, each participant has the opportunity to connect their own personal value system and how there might be a disconnect with different master ideologies.

### ***Workshop: Day Two***

The second day of this workshop begins with an icebreaker and a recap of Day One's lectures and group activities. Before diving in to the assigned circle work activities, the facilitators must explain how circle work operates. Circle work, while different depending on the nature of the conversation, is intentionally added into this workshop because it provides each participant to have a voice in the conversation. The facilitators elaborate how the circle work will operate as everyone will sit in chairs in a circle formation. The facilitators break up all of the participants into groups of 10 and conduct a needs assessment. This needs assessment is important in order for all participants because they have a chance to vocalize what they need in

that space from their peers. The participants write on a plate what they are able to provide for the group; on the other side of the plate, they provide a few words that they need from their peers in the circle. For instance, a student might add that they are providing vulnerability for the group, and they are asking for an open-mind.

After all participants in the circle conduct their needs assessment, the circle work will commence. During this section, participants will take turns sharing their journal entries, should they feel comfortable in the space. Participants take turns holding the talking piece and sharing their thoughts on the discussion prompts.

After a break for lunch, the participants have the opportunity to create an action plan and to discuss takeaways from the workshop. The facilitators bring all of the participants together in order to discuss the following: In what ways can we implement what we have learned in our day-to-day interactions; how can we create a work environment that leverages cooperation instead of competition; what were your main takeaways from this session?

After two days of processing, the facilitators bring the workshop to a close. Day Two of the workshop directly correlates to Series Two of my learning domains and outcomes for this programmatic intervention. Through the second portion of this workshop, students will be able to develop an action plan in order to best implement what they have learned from their time in this workshop.

## **Implementation**

In this section, I outline implementation issues and concerns for my programmatic intervention. I first describe the planning timeline for this workshop. I then address marketing and recruiting methods of this two-day workshop. Next, I outline the funding for my proposed



workshop before I discuss any potential challenges that face the implementation of my programmatic intervention.

### ***Timeline***

From start to finish, I would recommend having a full twelve months to properly plan for the implementation of this program. One must arrange and reserve the physical space on campus to host this workshop which, depending on the demands of student groups and the university's needs, might require a full academic year to make those accommodations.

Once the program has been approved by a head student affairs administrator, a realistic timeline of three months is required: one month for advertisement and for departments to be exposed to this program; one month to develop the funds and to gather the required materials; one month for the facilitators to study and prepare for the proposed date of the training.

### ***Marketing***

In order to effectively market this program, I recommend having this workshop mandatory for undergraduate paraprofessionals working in a singular department. This workshop is best to embed and implement in a paraprofessional training session. For example: all resident assistants/advisors on campus; student union paraprofessionals; orientation leaders, etc. By centering this workshop in paraprofessional training, all participants have the opportunity to discuss these issues with their peers whom they trust.

In terms of marketing, I suggest having this training proposed to student affairs administrators. Through these marketing tactics, I suggest leading with content provided in the workshop and how this can benefit students' personal development as outlined by the specific division's learning pillars and outcomes.

## ***Funding***

**Table 4**

### *Workshop Budget*

Supplies	Food/Drink
100 Pens	Water
500 Sticky notes	Juice
100 Spiral-bound notebooks	Coffee
1 Talking piece	Coffee stirrers
4 Large presentation posters	Cream/milk/sugar
1 Roll painter's tape	2 Lunches for 100 people
100 Paper plates	Utensils/Plates/Cups
\$250.00	\$1,000.00
Grand Total: \$1,250.00	

**Table 5**

### *Workshop Needs*

Space Requirements	Miscellaneous Items
Non-stadium/theatre seating	1 Projector
100 Chairs	1 Projection screen
3 Tables for food/drink	
No cost likely associated	

## ***Potential Challenges***

A couple of challenges that might present themselves during implementation include finding the proper facilitators to deliver this workshop. These facilitators must be open to the dialogue to go in any direction, as the participants are the drivers of the workshop. I would recommend finding facilitators that have been in the field of student affairs that also have experience facilitating a program that often practices circle work, such as restorative justice or mediation practices.

Additionally, another challenge is pitching this workshop to student affairs administrators. Time is of utmost importance when paraprofessional training happens in the fall

and spring semester and the advertising for this workshop must address how this program will overall benefit the department and the students they represent. This is an unconventional workshop where this type of program is typically not seen embedded within a week of fall or spring training. These training periods are usually filled with back-to-back sessions where time limited for undergraduate student leaders.

Finally, the biggest challenge that I can foresee with this workshop would be the varying levels of student experience heading into this program. Students that would take part in this program, while suggested as a captive audience in a mandatory training, might not be ready to fully speak to their experiences because they might not have thought about these concepts prior to this intervention.

I recommend hosting this intervention as a pilot program in its first year because of the nature of this program being embedded during a mandatory training week for student leaders and being challenging for students with little exposure. From the pilot program, I would reassess the advantages and disadvantages of implementing this program in a mandatory training through qualitative data and feedback from its facilitators and participants. After the pilot program is completed, I would strongly advise to complete an assessment of this program as I describe further in the next chapter.

In Chapter 5, I explore the most effective leadership styles that would work best with the implementation of this programmatic intervention. I also examine how I assess this workshop and how assessment can aid in the future development of the intervention. Lastly, I describe some of the limitations regarding this workshop and how I plan to carry this knowledge through goal setting in my next phase as a full-time student affairs professional.

## Chapter 5

In this chapter, I first describe my perspective on the importance of effective leadership in higher education policy and student affairs. Secondly, I outline how leadership intersects with the implementation of my programmatic intervention in conjunction with Transformational Leadership Theory (Thompson, 2019). After that, I explain how I plan on evaluating the effectiveness of my program against its stated goals and objectives. In the final section of this chapter, I address limitations of my program and how I can implement this workshop through COVID-19 in my future positions within student affairs.

### **Effective Leadership as Student Affairs Educators**

Effective leadership in higher education is critical as student affairs educators often serve as role models for student leaders. As role models, student affairs educators have the ability to work closely with students on a daily basis and they can leave a positive impact on their students as they practice their leadership skills during and after their time in college.

During these formative years for many students, student leaders need a supervisor to not only help guide them in their journey, but also to inspire and empower them to do the same for the students that they lead. Effective leadership has to include a component of empowerment in order for students to feel as a motivated member of the team.

Leaders in higher education and student affairs also need to be able to lead through empathy. Student affairs educators should practice empathy in their roles, as students come from many walks of life with different challenges facing them. No one student has the same experience as another, and educators need to be able to connect to one's humanity in this way. Leading with humanity involves an awareness of each other's lives outside of work, sensitive to work-life balance, and compassionate understanding for any problems that arise. Navigating

collegiate years for any individual is both demanding and challenging; therefore student affairs educators should try to lead with empathy in this way.

### **Leadership and My Intervention**

Leadership within my intervention requires two facilitators that can operate the two-day workshop from start to finish. The dialogue from the workshop will ultimately steer the conversation as a large portion of the intervention requires circle work and sharing perspectives on ideologies. Therefore, the facilitators must have the ability to be flexible within their position as the leader of the programmatic intervention as the program, while consisting of a lesson plan, does not require scripted presentations.

Additionally, leadership within my intervention must incorporate deep levels of understanding and, thus, requires an empathetic approach. Empathy is the ability to understand the feelings and experiences of another person. The leadership that is required for my intervention must be rooted in empathy as the facilitators and all participants need to be able to respect and understand viewpoints that might be different from their own. In my role as a future full-time student affairs educator, I plan on modeling the leadership with this intervention through my next position at an institution of higher education with a transformational leadership style.

While leading with empathy informs my supervision and leadership style, one must also lead with the notion of facilitating positive change. Transformational Leadership Theory (Thompson, 2019) focuses on the notion that the leader of a group is responsible for transforming the organization. Additionally, this type of leadership also places the utmost importance on bringing in a new sense of direction and new ways of thinking. In this model, the leader also comprises and presents a vision for the organization in order to improve the overall

future and outlook of the organization or group. The opposite of Transformational Leadership Theory (Thompson, 2019) is being a transactional leader. A transactional leader uses styles that resemble or include micromanaging, while providing incentives or withholding rewards to their followers. A true transformational leader empowers their followers to motivate and inspire each other to reach the vision with trust and admiration from the followers of the organization.

### **Assessment and Evaluation**

Assessment and evaluation play a vital role within my programmatic intervention. As my proposed intervention is unconventional in nature, a pilot program of the intervention allows room for growth and feedback about the program for all participants, and is also a key component of a CAR framework. CAR requires data collection through evaluation in order to measure the effectiveness of this research proposal.

The quantitative and qualitative data that is collected through evaluation provides an opportunity to reflect upon the Series One and Series Two goals and the need for this intervention. The first part of my assessment and evaluation includes a pre-test that is required for all participants. This pre-test will have a mix of qualitative and quantitative questions that will effectively gauge thoughts, knowledge, beliefs, and feelings toward neoliberal ideologies and the change models used within the program. The table below shows a sample of questions that are found on the pre-test and the scale that the data is measured.

**Table 6***Pre-Test and Post-Test*

<i>Please rate your responses on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly disagree, 5 being strongly agree, and 3 being neutral.</i>					
Question	Response				
I am able to articulate how collaboration can benefit the department in which I work.	1	2	3	4	5
I have had conversations with my peers surrounding how collaboration can benefit my work.	1	2	3	4	5
I can articulate my department's values and how they correspond to my position.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to define neoliberalism.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to articulate the characteristics of neoliberalism/capitalism.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to articulate how collaboration can benefit the department in which I work.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to identify at least 2 characteristics of these dominant ideologies as a result of participating in this program.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to identify at least 2 real-life examples of these dominant ideologies as a result of participating in this program.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to identify the components of the 7 C's Leadership Model.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to identify individual values, group values, and societal values based on the 7 C's Leadership Model.	1	2	3	4	5

In addition to the pre-test, the participants will be given a post-test in order to accurately measure the thoughts, beliefs, and learning of each participant after the intervention. This post-test, with the same exact questions and scale as the pre-test, is given directly after the workshop

and is to be returned within 24 hours to maintain consistency with participant data. The table above outlines an example of post-test questions and the response scale that is used to measure the data. Both tests are designed to directly align with Series One and Series Two program goals and objectives outlined in the previous chapter.

In conjunction with the pre-test and post-test quantitative data, a qualitative section to the post-test allows participants to share their thoughts and feelings regarding the discussed topics of the two-day workshop. A sampling of the questions are in the table below as they would appear in the second section of the post-test.

**Table 7**

*Qualitative Post-Test Questions*

Question	Response
What is your main takeaway from this workshop?	
What section of the workshop did you find most helpful?	
What section of the workshop did you find least helpful?	
What would you change about this workshop if given the chance?	
How could the facilitators improve the overall workshop experience?	
In the space provided, please share any other comments that you may have about this workshop.	
What is one action you might take in the next two weeks that was inspired by your attendance at the workshop?	



## **Implementation through COVID-19**

Within my new role at another institution of higher education, I plan to collaborate with other staff members to implement this workshop. With that being said, I believe that I need to effectively gauge the culture of the institution before I begin proposing my programmatic intervention. Some institutions are vastly open to change as it is clearly articulated in their mission and vision statements, such as smaller and more progressive institutions versus larger institutions that have an established department of student affairs. I would feel most comfortable proposing this program at these institutions versus at institutions that are not as open to change.

I would be remiss if I did not address the impact of COVID-19 within my CAR proposal. The current U.S. political and economic policies simply do not have the capacity to support a national emergency of this magnitude. The healthcare systems, the stock market, institutions of education and higher education, and the overall global economy is failing. While there is no single remedy for this global crisis, my CAR proposal points to the same neoliberal and capitalist ideologies that are failing the current U.S. system. I believe that there will be a stronger and clearer need for my proposed intervention within the post-COVID-19 era due to these recent events.

Prior to beginning my graduate studies, I was unaware of neoliberalism and capitalism and how they affected the world around me. I was unaware of how deeply rooted these ideologies are within the innerworkings of our societal frameworks. It is imperative that student affairs professionals help college students understand these forces so that they can begin to confront and dismantle this oppression that exists in our world today.

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