

ANALYSIS OF DISCOURSE AND RHETORIC IN PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR
RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS IN KANSAS

by

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B.A., Kansas State University, 2007
M.S., Kansas State University, 2011

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education

Department of Educational Leadership
College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

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Abstract

This qualitative discourse analysis examines discourse related to performance-based measures such as, state of the state speeches, policy documents, reports, and other discourse to explore the purpose(s) higher education has in Kansas, as manifested in discourse from 1997 to 2015. The research explores discourse produced by elected and appointed state level officials' related to higher education policy, purpose, and governance, with a specific focus on performance-based measures in Kansas. The purpose of this research was to understand more fully how discourse shapes and reflects understanding of the role and purpose of higher education in the state of Kansas. This study explored the power of discourse to shape a narrative in a state and influence policy and governance. Using discourse analysis as the methodological framework, this qualitative study included analysis of policy documents, speeches, reports, budgets, and other discourse related to performance-measures in Kansas. Discourse analysis, informed by political and critical discourse analysis were the primary approach to this research. Using a multiperspective approach to data analysis and coding, data was examined for themes of power, social, economic, and political influences. The study has implications for higher education policy and for policymakers, administrators, and other actors in higher education in Kansas.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family. To my parents and sisters, your example and ability to ground me is how I ended up here in the first place. Thank you for instilling a passion for education in my heart from a young age.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

This study is inspired by my position as an educator, a political actor, a mother of three young children, and the partner of a middle school teacher, and as someone who is connected daily to the purposes and process of education and democracy. The nexus of education and democracy compels me to understand how educators, policy makers, and political actors understand and explain these constructs and articulate the purposes of education. Parker Palmer (2011), an educational philosopher wrote,

When we forget that politics is about weaving a fabric of compassion and justice on which everyone can depend, the first to suffer are the most vulnerable among us – our children, the elderly, the mentally ill, the poor, and the homeless. As they suffer, so does the integrity of our democracy (p. 4).

In this study, I seek to understand more fully the fabric we are weaving when we discuss and enact policy in higher education. I will begin this work through sharing my subjectivity statement to explore my positionality and to document its influences on the study.

Researcher Subjectivity

This subjectivity statement explains me as researcher, political actor, and as someone complicit in building, reifying, and benefitting from systems of power. Qualitative research traditions may therefore provide best insight into my goals, as I seek to explore and explain more than I seek to measure static or quantifiable benchmarks. Qualitative inquiry calls on researchers to explore their subjectivities throughout their studies (Creswell, 2012; Peshkin, 1988, 1993). Discourse analysis, the methodological approach chosen in this study, relies on a careful examination of the power in relationships and actors engaging in discourse (Gee, 2014; Van

Dijk, 2003). Understanding my subjectivities is critical to exploring my role as researcher (Creswell, 2012; Edelman, 2013; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Van Dijk, 2003). Subjectivities examine the background, history, values, and ideologies that researchers bring to their work (Creswell, 2012; Peshkin, 1988, 1993). First, I will briefly explore my own subjectivities, then I will discuss my professional connection to education. Finally, I will introduce educational influences on my approach to this present study.

My subjectivities include influences from and commitments to public education as it is facilitated and practiced through public structures and institutions. Born of my own experience, my commitment to public education was fostered by being raised in a family of educators, with both parents employed in education, and grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins involved in teaching and learning in public and private schools. I attended a strong publicly funded school. Stemming from a belief that education should be at the core of the community, I am committed to strong system of public education. Public education is how we build and add to the strong foundation of our democracy. Educators and activists like John Dewey (2004), Henry Giroux (2006, 2002, 2013), Parker Palmer (2011), and Jane Addams (1964) have shaped my belief in the power and necessity of accessible public education. The role the state plays in supporting and governing education, K–12 and postsecondary, is pivotal to strong communities and a strong democracy. These systems invite the public to consider the wellbeing of each citizen alongside democratic structures and social institutions. This can happen and has happened through systems of public education. This belief system has led me to a study focused on understanding how publicly elected officials talk about higher education and how those words reflect and bear out perceptions and actions. Next, I will discuss my own professional role in education.

I have invested the first ten years of my professional career in higher education and aspire to stay in this field. This shapes how I understand the value and the impact that higher education can have in shaping society. I am complicit in an educational system that privileges students who can move through pre-fabricated measures of accountability and success. Students are rewarded for having the social knowledge of how to navigate successfully educational systems. While social construction informs success in educational systems, it can also deter those without normative educational experiences from navigating these systems successfully (Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Ravitch, 2013). I benefitted from systems that privilege those with money and access. As a middle-class, English speaking, white female, and the child of two college-educated parents, the publicly funded schools I attended met state mandated standards with ease. They had the cash flow to bankroll additional public school programs when needed. I am driven by a belief that access to a strong educational system should not be limited based on income, geographical location, or family history. Constructed socially, politically, and economically, the educational experiences of my life are embedded with power. Through public education, systems of power are reified and can impact, change, and re-establish systems of power. All of these truths compel me to engage questions related to higher education from multiple perspectives (Creswell, 2012; Van Dijk, 2003). Rooted in discourse analysis, my research methodology includes a process that accounts for these positions, experiences, and beliefs about education as it links to the data in this study. This will be discussed further in the research design and trustworthiness section of this work. Next, I will talk about the philosophical influences reflected in my subjectivities.

I borrowed from scholars and philosophers who influence my work: Addams, Dewey, Giroux, Palmer, and Pichardo Alemonte. These individuals pushed me to remember the human beings at the center of this educational system. In particular, Angel Pichardo Alemonte (2015), a

Dominican scholar, activist, and educator, reminded me to consider first and throughout this study that human beings are not machines. I engage this study with the belief that we must not be fragmented and stripped down for the sake of fitting into a pre-fabricated model of learning. We are not machines; we are not to be measured, tinkered with, fragmented for repair, replaced, and expectorated when the newest version hits the market. I reject the idea that we treat our community members, our learners, as anything less than the living, breathing, miraculous beings they are – this positionality informs my research and interest in this study.

These subjectivities are built from personal experiences, values and beliefs. They represent my professional aspirations and experiences, and they reflect the scholars and philosophers who have shaped my approach to this study and education. In the next section of this paper I will introduce the context for the study, frame the rationale for the research, and outline the research purpose and questions.

Context for the Study

Understanding the positionality of this study within higher education provides important background and context for this research. To start, I will introduce historical conceptions of the role and identity of the public research institution. Then, I will introduce shifting institutional identities and I will discuss challenges to the civic identity of higher education, next I will introduce arguments about the neoliberalization of higher education. To begin, this work, here is a brief overview of the historical conceptions of higher education.

Scholars assert that the context in which U.S. research universities were established was with an explicit civic mission to prepare students for active participation in democracy (Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Checkoway, 2001). In this assertion, the context for this democracy was understood to be diverse in scope and the civic mission of these institutions was as an incubator

for students, preparing them for engaged participation in a democratic community (Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Checkoway, 2001; Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003; Kurth-Schai, 2014). Higher education is situated for civic engagement and civic education with universities serving as conveners and models of the community. Today, this civic mission is shifting (Boyer, 1994, 2014; Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Kennedy, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Neoliberal ideologies present a mission with a changing focus distinct from what Checkoway (2001) and colleagues identified as the civic identity of higher education (Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Colby et al., 2003). Scholars cite higher education institutions as struggling with civic identity, pointing to administrators and publicly elected officials who have declared competing understanding of the meaning of public serving (Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Public universities as educational and therefore social institutions are continually engaged in a process of creating and driving change and policy that impacts social systems (Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Checkoway, 2001; Dewey, 2004; Kennedy, 1997). A variation in how the public engages with institutions of higher learning may impact their power to drive change in communities. Has university growth and movement toward becoming research engines de-emphasized civic missions? Is the primary role of the university understood to be a vehicle for economic production? How do we maintain a focus on student learning and growth in the face of an increasing demand for accountability measures? These questions expose the changing purpose of the U.S. research institution and the challenges that surround its public identity. If higher education institutions are not the think tanks of democracy, what are the purposes of these institutions and how are they understood by the public that governs them?

Public institutions of higher education, not only face shifting identities, but are also in the crosshairs of critics concerned with their current approaches and purposes. Critics of current

national approaches to public systems charge that the classroom does not in fact develop civically competent individuals and that research done in the academy does not serve the public good (Boyer, 2014; Huntington, 2004; Kennedy, 1997). Critics have ventured to suggest higher education institutions themselves have lost their sense of public purpose (Boyer, 1994; Giroux, 2013; Kennedy, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Pointing to this loss of direction and movement away from higher education as a central force in community, Ernest Boyer (1994) stated that perhaps higher education had lost its way. Exploration of how the purposes of these systems, specifically higher education, are understood, explained, and manifested in discourse is an important consideration.

Next, a brief introduction to the neoliberalization of education provides additional important context. Giroux (2006, 2002, 2013) identifies a neoliberal ideology that has moved discourse around public higher education from that of public good and public serving to that of commodified discourse that reflects a market-based approach to education. This market-based approach includes a focus in policy, budgeting, and rhetoric, on programs that produce skilled workers as the primary purpose of higher education. Programs positioned in the liberal arts or areas of the university deemed as the “soft skills” are seen as less valuable to society economically and otherwise than programs focused on “hard skills” or clear skill training pathways. This is a hallmark of market-based approaches (Ravitch, 2013; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Exploring the discourse of publicly elected officials related to institutions of higher education could shed light onto the changing conception of these institutions as incubators for democratic citizens. Further understanding how these perceptions align (or not) with those of administrators at research institutions in Kansas, and how this is reflected in written policy, rhetoric, and ultimately discourse, can shed important light on the future of higher education in

the state. It could also expose new understanding about the influences on the construction of policy. If higher education institutions are not the think tanks of democracy, what are the purposes of these higher education institutions and how are they understood by publicly elected officials who govern them?

The context of the study includes understanding what and how the identity of public research institutions is shared and shaped. Context includes an explanation of the changing identities, and finally, an introduction to the neoliberal ideology shaping new identities in higher education. This provides an overview of the context for this study. In the next section of this paper, I will discuss the rationale for the study.

Rationale for the Study

The work of public education institutions is changing and the discourse surrounding the purposes of these institutions continues to evolve (Boyer, 2014; Checkoway, 1997; Giroux, 2002; Giroux, 2013; Kennedy, 1997; Kenny et al., 1998; Selingo, 2015; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Education policy, such as the move toward accountability and the development of performance-based measures to assess and govern institutions can provide insight as to how officials understand and articulate the purposes of higher education (Alexander, 2000; Burke, Minassians, & Nelson, 2002; Gaither & Others, 1994). This discourse analysis seeks to explore how discourse reflects the purposes of higher education in Kansas, through examination of documents connected to performance-based reporting in the state. Through this research, I will work to understand how higher education actors articulate the purposes of higher education in the state in discourse. Further, I will examine how ideas about the purpose of higher education are produced and reflected, (or not), in state policy and legislation. Looking specifically at how

actors communicate publicly about the purposes of higher education in the state of Kansas, this study will explore how rhetoric aligns with written policy documents for the state.

Boyer (1994, 2014), Checkoway (2001) and Schneider (2012) assert that U.S. research universities were established with a civic mission intact that was designed to prepare students for active civic participation in democracy. Public institutions understood to be diverse in scope were to be incubators of the civic mission of education; protected spaces for developing citizens to practice engaged participation in a democratic community. This democratic community is under attack in public education systems through what Giroux (2002), Harvey (2005), Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) call neoliberalism. Giroux (2012) identified neoliberal ideology applied to public schools as a dangerous trend reshaping public institutions, and aligning them primarily with production of economic interests in the state. Shifting ideology reflected in changing higher education policy from a self-governing structure for accountability, to nationally measured standards for performance has been proposed (Alexander, 2000). Performance-based policy and governance in higher education is reshaping how higher education institutions communicate the purposes of their work, Kansas has been in the midst of this reformation since performance-based measures were introduced in the 90s (Alexander, 2000; Burke et al., 2002; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

Performance-based measures (PBMs), a policy effort aimed at linking funding to specific indicators, are connected to a national trend to funding policy based on enrollment and persistence in higher education (Klien, 2005). Kansas is one of 30 states in which performance measures are connected to funding policy for two and four year institutions. PBMs are a policy manifestation of what AAC&U President, Carol Geary Schneider (2012) and education scholars and critics like Giroux (2001), Boyer (1994, 2014), Checkoway (2001), and others pointed to as

movement toward a commodification of public education (Hursh, 2007; Kurth-Schai, 2014). Representing the nexus of education policy and models, performance-based funding (PBFs) center the discussion of education as a commodity and a public good. To understand how PBMs in higher education connect to one state's governance of higher education, more should be learned about how publicly elected officials conceptualize higher education and how higher education administrators and institutions communicate their work with these officials and with constituents.

I have introduced the rationale for this study by highlighting the methodological frameworks used in this study, by rationalizing the focus on higher education and actors in Kansas, and finally, by explaining the focus on PBMs. The next section will outline clearly the research purpose and questions for this study.

Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this research is to explore publicly elected state level officials' discourse related to higher education policy, purpose, and governance. Through the study, I will aim to understand how higher education actors and public officials conceive of the purpose(s) of higher education as manifested in written policy, discourse, and other expressions of their work as policy makers. I will look specifically at policy in Kansas connected to higher education performance-based outcomes and the rhetoric surrounding them. The research questions guiding this qualitative study will include:

1. What is the policy rhetoric around the purposes of public higher education in Kansas?
2. How are performance-based measures for higher education reflected in policy and public discourse?
 - a. What is communicated as the most significant goals to be achieved by higher education and how should they be measured?

3. How do the above-mentioned discourses reflect neoliberal ideologies and rationalities in relation to budgetary and policy decisions?
4. How does discourse in policy reduce or reify existing structures of power in higher education in Kansas?

Methodological Framework

I will first provide an overview of qualitative research as a methodology and the qualitative influences on this study. Then I will talk more about discourse analysis, and the roots of this methodological approach including philosophical influences on the methodology. Next, I will discuss critical and political discourse analysis. Finally, I will explore the substantive framework and limitations for this research.

Qualitative Approaches to Discourse Analysis

Organized as a qualitative discourse analysis, in this study, I have used the work of Creswell (2012), Saldaña (2013), Gee (2014) and other discourse scholars to guide the design of the methodology. Qualitative research can shed light onto a phenomenon by exploring and analyzing the narratives and spaces surrounding that situation (Creswell, 2012; Gee, 2014). Focused on texts including written and spoken language, discourse analysis seeks to make meaning of systems and structures and to understand how they are shaped and reshaped through discourse (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Rogers, 2011). For this discourse analysis, discourse along with the process and theory that underpins discourse analysis will be used to examine patterns of language that undergird and build personal, professional, and community lives, are studied and understood (Gee, 1989, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Schiffrin, Tannen, & Hamilton, 2008). The assumption that relationships between language result from the socially agreed upon values of language is part of discourse analysis. This approach to research

goes on to examine how those values are assigned and played out, and how ideas are furthered through discussions of social construction. It is not assumed however, that these values are virtues, but instead that they communicate a commitment of sorts to something. All of these components underpin the frameworks in this study (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Rogers, 2011). Discourse analysis is expressed in and through language as a way of understanding the world or a component of the world such as written policy, (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

Discourse analysis is both a theory and methodology with the basic premise that language is a tool that can create and deconstruct social, political, economic and other structures that shape society (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Rogers, 2011). By understanding the frameworks around language in higher education, this study can shed light on the ideologies, values, and beliefs guiding the systems or power around higher education in Kansas.

The word discourse has Latin roots and means connected language (written, spoken, or otherwise) that is longer than a sentence (Gee, 2014). People are able to communicate ideas, values, and connect knowledge to be shared through discourse (Gee, 2014; Schiffrin et al., 2008). The details of the language are important and have bearing on how the analyst makes sense of social, cultural, and political components of the data (Gee, 1989, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Organized through a multi-perspective approach, various ways of understanding and speaking about an issue come into play through discourse (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Multiperspectivism in discourse analysis calls on the researcher to weigh the approach next to other approaches and identify what kind of knowledge each approach can supply and in turn, what modifications are required in light of this new knowledge. Using tools and strategies from various methodological approaches for data analysis and to engage

multiple perspectives is part of a multiperspective approach. Conversely, eclectic coding, is a more random approach to gathering data related to a topic (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Saldaña, 2013). Multiperspectivism can be a valuable approach to a discourse analysis that focuses on elements of local discourse analysis strategy as specific tools to make sense in a particular study (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

In this study, multiperspective approaches emerged during the data coding cycle because of the diverse sources from which data was collected. This can present multiple perspectives for consideration. These sources, as framed in chapter three, include a diversity in political orientation and role. These perspectives may be varied and as researcher, I honored the data and maintained a narrow enough focus to complete this present study.

This discourse analysis included the examination of documents to seek understanding of how actors (publicly elected and appointed officials, administrators in higher education research institutions, and other actors) articulate the purpose(s) of higher education in the state. Through this study, I explored what the discourse reveals and how these ideas become manifested in public discourse and through discursive expressions of the purposes of higher education. Using strategies from critical and political discourse analysis I worked to understand the systems and structures of power and privilege present in the data (Edelman, 2013; Fairclough, Mulderrig, & Wodak, 2011; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Rogers, 2011; Van Dijk, 2003). Next, I will explore the philosophical influences on discourse analysis.

Discursive psychology influences discourse analysis by exploring the everyday use and practice of discourse to draw on and implicate macro-level social structures from which people make meaning (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Laclau and Mouffe,(2014) scholars in this field, use a ‘depersonalized’ approach to discourse in which discourse exists through daily practices,

behaviors, actions, and systems that are understood as part of the theory and indicate larger systems at play (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). The focus here is on instances of language used in social interaction. These interactions include both overt and covert language and communications meant to express a social, political, economic, or other power structure. Discursive psychology however looks at how actors use available, existing discourses to navigate how they create and represent the world and the social consequences of existing discourses (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Applying this to how actors in higher education co-opt phrases like outcomes-based for instance, to move policy around education funding is one way this approach might be used. Social construction is an important concept for framing this study; next I will discuss social construction as a framework in this discourse analysis.

Social Construction

The framework for this study is built upon the nexus of social construction of language and discourse analysis. Informing the philosophical and methodological approach for this study, social construction is core to this framework. Discourse analysis as socially constructed knowledge was explained by Jørgensen & Phillips (2002) and is paraphrased here as: 1) language is not a reflection of a pre-existing reality but instead is structured in patterns of discourses; 2) there is not one general system of meaning but a series of systems or discourses, whereby meanings change from discourse to discourse; 3) discursive patterns are maintained and transformed in discursive practices; and 4) the maintenance and transformation of discursive patterns should be explored through analysis of the contexts in which language is in action (p. 15). Attention is paid in this framework as to the way in which language is used, who is using the language, and in what context. This is part of the social construction of discourse. Social construction frames and explains discourse as an inherent element in the construction and

development of knowledge and shared understanding (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Socially constructed discourse is understood to be multiperspective in nature. Gee (2014) forwards discourse as socially constructed. Focusing on the multiple perspectives and influences at play in discourse, the presence of social construction in critical and political approaches to discourse analysis strategy allows for full examination of the context of the discourse (Fairclough et al., 2011; Rogers, 2011; Schifffrin et al., 2008).

Discourse analysis influenced by social construction includes several considerations and premises embraced widely by scholars. Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) explained them and I have paraphrased them below as philosophical framing for discourse analysis as the methodological approach in this study. Social constructionists take a critical approach to taken-for-granted knowledge, treating an individual's knowledge of the world as one lens, not as an objective truth. Social constructionists understand the idea that knowledge of the world is situated in a specific historical and cultural identity. A different set of cultural and historical indicators, results in a totally different understanding of the world. This is a contingent view of the world and of how knowledge is constructed that rejects the positivist (absolutist), approach to knowledge. Social constructionists see the link between knowledge and social processes. Knowledge is constructed and managed through social interactions through which we build common truths. The idea that how we understand the world impacts how we act in the world results in a link between knowledge and social action. Different conceptions of knowledge and truth lead to different, and differently accepted, sets of actions and behaviors to accompany that knowledge. As explained by Jørgensen and Phillips (2002): “What is to be analyzed is the discursive processes through which discourses are constructed in ways that give the impression that they represent true or

false pictures of reality” (p. 18). Discourse has the power to shape truth or fallacy. The social construction of discourse and the impact it has on power is central to this study.

Phillips and Hardy (2002, p. 2) wrote about the power of discourse in social construction, “without discourse, there is no social reality, and without understanding discourse, we cannot understand our reality, our experiences, or ourselves.” Thus they forward the idea that discourse is constructive in nature holding the power to shape reality, experiences, and the individuals involved in and impacted by the discourse. In discourse analysis, researchers return to discourse focusing on the constructive role it plays in society and in this study, on social and educational institutions and policies (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Power and discourse as constructive factors are central concepts in this study and are explored further through Critical Discourse Analysis.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Within the field of discourse analysis, a focus particularly on power and privilege can take place through critical discourse analysis (CDA). A type of research that studies how power (social and other forms) and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by speech in social and political contexts (Fairclough et al., 2011; Van Dijk, 2003). Critical discourse analysis examines structures of power and ideology that underpin data (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). This form of discourse analysis operates with several main tenets: 1) CDA addresses social problems, 2) power relations are discursive, 3) discourse constitutes society and culture, 4) discourse does ideological work, 5) discourse is historical, 6) the link between text and society is mediated, 7) discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory, 8) discourse is a form of social action (Van Dijk, 2003). Underpinning critical discourse analysis, these tenets focus on social and political issues as the lens through which to explore text. The lens is inherently multidisciplinary and

requires the researcher to describe patterns of discourse and explain those patterns through social structures and interactions. Critical discourse analysis examines how discourse structures reify, legitimize, and reproduce — or possibly challenge and confront — power, dominance, and their relationship in society (Van Dijk, 2003). Political discourse analysis is also an influence on this study.

Political Discourse Analysis

Political discourse analysts examine systems of political actors and power and they understand it by examining: 1) overtly political messages, 2) pieces of political discourse (a speech, quotation, white paper, for instance,) without a particular reference to politics (Wilson in Schiffrin, Tannen, & Hamilton, 2008). Discourse analysis is a political process, embedded with power, conflict, and control. In political discourse analysis, the researcher acknowledges self as a political actor – one engaged in the construction or deconstruction of systems of power through the use of language (Edelman, 2013; Gee, 2014; Rogers, 2011; Van Dijk, 2003). With this comes the understanding that discourse has the power also to transform systems and structures (Gee, 2014). In political discourse analysis, words and phrases come to life with the context of the actor who is sharing them through the framing of political ideology (Edelman, 2013; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Transformation and representation, how actors use language to represent and shape understanding of and in the world, go hand in hand. Through this approach, discourse is understood as not just an object, but an actor with power to shape, build, push, recreate, and rewrite social and political structures (Edelman, 2013; Gee, 2014; Luke, 1995; Van Dijk, 2003). When discourse shifts, this can be an indicator that power, social structure, and the context through and in which the language is used, can also shift (Gee, 2014; Luke, 1995; Van Dijk, 2003).

The approach to discourse I used for this study is about the ideas, issues, power, and themes expressed through written and spoken language (Gee, 2014). The constructs and approaches identified above, including critical and political discourse, and social construction, guide design of this study and data analysis. Examining discourse (written and spoken) through applied discourse analysis can create a more complete understanding of the social, cultural, and political implications of the language used in discourse around the purposes of higher education in Kansas. The inquiry of this study can advance understanding of the cultural, social, and political issues that surround public higher education as currently situated in the state. This focus leaves room for the learning that is generated from this research to be put into action, classified by Gee (2014) as an applied approach to discourse analysis. In this tradition, discourse in the educational setting provides a lens to connect the relationship between theory and practice. Educational research is part of this “complex political economy” that exists between institutions, government agencies, corporations, and the actors within those entities who are constantly engaged in creating discourse (Rogers, 2011). The substantive framework explains in more detail, how these considerations came to life through practice in this study.

Substantive Framework

Discourse analysis is the substantive framework for this study. This substantive framework includes an introduction to the tools of discourse analysis that were used in this research. Then an outline of approaches to discourse as text, and as a system of power. As theory and methodology, discourse analysis includes an approach to the research and a set of tools to inform the data analysis process.

Gee (2014) offers a specific tool in his approach to discourse analysis called “context as tool” which works to classify how language is used as “building things in the world.” Context is

the way through which words and phrases can be leveraged to build institutions and create structures of meaning and knowledge that become systems and institutions (Gee, 2014). When ideas and values take shape as laws and policies, discourse becomes a tool through which social institutions are shaped.

Understanding the context through which these institutions are shaped is important to this study as the discourse around institutions shapes circumstances that have allowed values, beliefs, and ideologies around them to come to life. Context as a tool in discourse analysis is an approach to examining the entire setting of the communication. This includes shared knowledge, cultural knowledge, or other information that may be relevant to the setting and place in which the discourse developed. In this case that includes the historical and philosophical frameworks from which discourse about higher education's purpose has developed. Context by Gee's (2014) definition includes understanding the ideological underpinnings and cultural, political, and social knowledge shared by the actors creating the discourse. For this study, that includes the beliefs and values that the Kansas Board of Regents, political actors, administrators, students, and staff impacted by decisions made about and around higher education share.

Spoken and written language is used to build the world through activities, institutions, and identities. Creating dialogue, writing policy, interpreting policy, and building it into our systems of practice and organizational operation is how discourse moves values, ideologies, and beliefs into actions. Gee (1989, 2014) explains this through the concept of "Discourses" big "d". Big "d" discourse refers to a way of being in the world that reflects identities as socially constructed. As a way of displaying membership (or not) Gee explains (1989, 2014) in a group, this discourse is exhibited through words, and through behaviors, actions, beliefs. Big "d" discourse refers to how discourse is socially constructed and constructs social reality. The

context as a tool approach to discourse analysis, reflects discourse as politically, socially, economically, and otherwise a player in structures and systems of power (Gee, 2014).

Context is a tool for explaining how beliefs are reified as realities (Gee, 2014). Understanding the history and evolution of the performance-based movement in higher education can provide insight as to how discourse around these policies is taking shape today. Understanding the intersection of historical and social context (the historical purposes of higher education and neoliberal ideologies surrounding it today) of current discourse on higher education in order to locate gaps in the conversation is critical to this work (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Rogers, 2011). As researcher, it is my hope that this research process, and through the practice of this study, we will be better prepared to make decisions and communicate about the future of higher education in Kansas.

I leaned on qualitative research frameworks and discourse data analysis tools to revisit and challenge my own subjectivities in this study (Charmaz, 2006; Creswell, 2012; Gee, 2014; Schiffrin et al., 2008). Discourse analysis relies on a careful examination of the power in relationships and actors engaging in the discourse; thus understanding my own subjectivities was central to my role as researcher in working to contribute meaningful and rigorous qualitative research to the field (Creswell, 2012; Gee, 2014; Peshkin, 1993; Rogers, 2011; Tracy, 2010). I have used a discourse analysis methodology to craft a process that accounts for these subjectivities and that challenged my assumptions and beliefs about education in relationship to this study.

Limitations

Limitations to this study included potentially limited access to the documents needed for analysis. I collected documents through publicly accessible state databases, university and state

offices, and by making records requests. Any documents the state had misplaced or did not have in electronic format could have limited the study. Given that documents were from several pools over time, some may have had more limited availability than others may; this could have been a factor in the data pool, resulting in an adjusted data pool. This study reflects my ability to work with state offices and higher education institutions to collect the documents for the data. I anticipated challenges as a new researcher to this process. I have engaged the consultation and support of mentors and my committee to navigate these challenges. The amount of time and resources available also limited the amount of data analysis I have accomplished during the timeline allotted for this dissertation study. There was more data for analysis than I had time to complete in this study. These data will be available for future studies.

Significance of the Study

Education has the capacity to shape and reshape the democratic structures and systems that are the lifeblood of our communities (Addams, 1964; Dewey, 2004; Kennedy, 1997; Ravitch, 2013). In this study, I will focus on shedding light onto how actors involved in higher education policy understand the purposes and practices of this work. Through a deeper exploration of how discourse today is used to build and shape systems of power and policy around education, this study may offer insight to future steps institutions and the state might take toward building healthier, better-educated communities.

Barnett (1994) wrote about the role of education to create people capable of knowing, being, and doing. This study can generate new knowledge around how policy in the state is impacting higher education institutions work of developing whole beings, capable of knowing, being, and doing for the wellbeing of the world. It could point back to the core of education and

reminding readers what policy, funding, process, and purpose can and should look like for strong educational systems and ultimately community-engaged citizens to fuel democracy.

Conversely, this study has the potential to shed light onto areas of ignorance related to current funding and governance practices in higher education. This study could advance information that demonstrates gaps in current discourses that is stratifying social systems or privileging certain ways of knowing, being, and doing, above others. Research could result in a need to reexamine and rewrite existing structures around higher education and revisit how we as a society define, and support through actions, our definition of public education.

Ultimately the significance of this study will not be understood fully until the study is completed. However, strong systems of public education, focused on individuals and democratic processes are represented in educational scholarship for centuries. This study will aim to contribute to that work by understanding more fully the discourse around the purposes of higher education in Kansas, as shared through documents.

Operationalization of Constructs

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions will apply:

1. *Discourse* — The word discourse has Latin roots and means connected language (written, spoken, or otherwise) that is longer than a sentence. Discourse allows people to communicate ideas, values, and connect knowledge to be shared (Gee, 2014; Schiffrin et al., 2008).
2. *Performance- Based Measures* — Referred to in this paper as PBMs, these include performance reports, budgets, and funding. Performance-based measures (sometimes referred to as models and used interchangeably in this research) are part of higher education policy related to a funding system in which specific indicators are the

- benchmarks for the allocation of resources (Layzell, 1999; McKeown-Moak, 2013; McLendon, Hearn, & Deaton, 2006; Miao, 2012).
3. *Neoliberalism* – An ideology prevalent in policy and political economic practice, “that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade (Harvey, 2005, p. 2)
 4. *Academic Capitalism* — The process by which colleges and universities become integrated into the new (neoliberal) economy (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).
 5. *Actors* — Sometimes referred to as political actors in this study, refers to those involved with creating and responding to existing and emerging discourse. CDA identifies actors in the discursive process with the power to shape and deconstruct existing structures through discourse. In this study, actors refers to elected and appointed officials, higher education administrators, and other individuals involved in creating discourse around higher education policy. Understood through CDA as an inherently political process, actors are referred to as political actors (Fairclough et al., 2011; Gee, 2014; Luke, 1995; Rogers, 2011; Van Dijk, 2003).
 6. *Qualitative Inquiry* — Qualitative inquiry is a form of academic research that can shed light onto a phenomenon by exploring and analyzing the narratives and spaces surrounding that situation (Creswell, 2012; Gee, 2014). Qualitative inquiry in this study has been done through a discourse analysis.
 7. *Complicit* — In this study, I have referred to the role of actors in the study, including me as researcher, as complicit in the processes and practices of neoliberalism. The term complicit refers to the role of the actors in benefitting and reifying systems,

- structures, and policies that support the current way of operating and potentially harm or limit those un or underrepresented in the current way or operating.
8. *Research Institutions* – This designation is given to a particular classification of universities based on research productivity and funding. The universities in this study both qualify as research institutions.
 9. *K – 20* — Refers to the kindergarten through higher education (undergraduate education) timespan.

Summary

My position as an educator, a political actor, a mother of three young children, the partner of a middle school teacher, and someone who is connected daily to the purposes and process of education and democracy is what catalyzes this study. I have examined my own subjectivities; I have highlighted the methodological framework for this study and introduced the theoretical underpinnings of this work. I have explored the potential significance of the study and provided a set of key terms that I have operationalized throughout this work. In this study, I sought to understand more fully the discourse and resulting ideologies, systems, and structures that emerge from higher education policy in Kansas. Chapter Two, the literature review, will provide greater background and context for this study.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

In this review of the current literature, I first introduce the historical and philosophical framing of higher education as holding a civic and democratic purpose. I will then shift to the philosophical framework of neoliberalism, an ideology that is prevalent today in the discourse around social institutions and particularly the purposes of higher education. Finally, I will explore specific policies introduced by neoliberal ideology like performance-based funding, budgeting, and reporting, processes rooted in state (Kansas) and federal policy. I will outline a history of performance-based measures in higher education, including a movement toward accountability and introduce a metaphor to frame the intersection of discourse, policy, and the actors involved. This literature review will frame how the discourse around performance-based models/ measures (PBMs) currently exist, and how the actors involved in shaping and implementing policy for higher education (legislators, higher education officials, and others) understand the purposes of higher education. I will conclude by making some connections between the methodology for this study and the data as they relate to current literature.

Public institutions of higher education as state agencies have gained responsibility to account for the operation and achievement of their efforts and for taxpayer dollars (Alexander, 2000; Astin, 1985; Burke, 2002). Scholars point to this turn in scrutiny and accountability as part of an international neoliberal trend that has impacted state and federally-funded institutions (Giroux, 2002; Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). As a result, higher education has become the target of critics who charge that much classroom teaching does not develop civic competencies, that much academically-based research does not serve community needs, and that universities have lost their sense of civic purpose (Boyer, 2014; Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Huntington, 2004; Kennedy, 1997). Ernest Boyer (1994) identified that higher education had

perhaps lost its way altogether and needed to reconsider its mission and practice in total. Critics credit neoliberalism for this ideological shift. They also point to neoliberal ideologies as influential on the resulting institutional identity crisis caused by the introduction of performance measures meant to test the effectiveness and efficiency of publicly funded programs. The movement to performance measures in higher education (funding, budgeting, reporting and what is today called outcomes-based policy) is part of an international shift to increase accountability for the public sector, in this case specifically the accountability of higher education (Burke, Minassians, & Nelson, 2003; Klein, 2005; Layzell, 1999; McLendon et al., 2006; Miao, 2012). This shift as it is interpreted and implemented in Kansas will shape future dialogue around the purposes of higher education and its relationship with the state government.

The Public Purposes of Higher Education

The history and evolution of higher education builds context for how discourse around the purpose of higher education is shaped through institutions and policies (Gee, 2014; Rogers, 2011). Historically, higher education had multiple purposes including as a means for preparing informed and engaged citizens, and as central to the backbone for growing a strong and healthy democracy (Boyer, 1994, 2014; Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Cress & Donahue, 2011). Scholars have emphasized the role of research universities, with a clear civic mission, in preparing students for active participation in democracy, citizenship, and for society (Addams, 1964; Checkoway, 2001; Dewey, 2004, 2013). It was expected that through public education, individuals could grow to understand their role and responsibility to the broader community through active participation in democracy (Addams, 1964; Dewey, 2004, 2013).

Education scholars shared widely the benefits of the public and civic purposes of higher education (Addams, 1964; Colby et al., 2003; Dewey, 2004). Democracy and the practice of

civic engagement were central concepts used to teach students about the social good of the community, state, and nation and to develop a collective ethos of care and concern for their neighbors (Addams, 1964; Dewey, 2013). Through higher education learners would be challenged to develop their moral and critical reasoning skills by engaging the processes and principles of democracy (Colby et al., 2003). More than a credentialing body, higher education would be an incubator for democracy, to establish institutions as the place to develop graduates capable of participating in their communities, engaging diverse perspectives, values, and ideas, and advancing productive dialogue for decision making and ultimately democratic governance (Dewey, 2004). Palmer (2011) elevates this purpose, stating, “No educational task is more important than helping students reflect on realities larger than their own egos – and learn how to find meaning and purpose by connecting with realities that bring life, not death” (p. 125). Connecting purpose to the role that higher education plays in providing a safe space to educate citizens on their role in community is part of the educational mission historically.

These benefits of a civically focused higher education system became embedded in how American research universities were established and grew with missions to prepare students for democratic engagement (Boyer, 1994; Boyte & Hollander, 1999). Public research institutions expressed strong public purposes focusing research efforts on local issues and catalyzing change in their regions and states through their community-centered approach to education (Addams, 1964; Checkoway, 2001; Dewey, 2004). With their close connection to community, a change in the orientation of these research institutions also meant a change in how they are situated publicly, and their community identity (Checkoway, 1991, 2001). Further, a change in institutional orientation could shift how generations understand the purposes of education and social institutions, and how they prioritize governance of these things (Boyer, 2014; Checkoway,

1991; Dewey, 2004). The ideological underpinnings of public research universities matter to society. Barnett (1994) called on higher education to focus on the knowing, being, and doing components of whole learner development, warning off the production model that concerned Pichardo Alemonte (2014) and Dewey (2013). Whether defined by the presence or absence of a strong civic purpose, public U.S. institutions of higher education have the power to shape entire generations and impact broadly how communities operate and how democracy, its purposes, and practices are understood or abandoned (Addams, 1964; Checkoway, 2001; Dewey, 2004).

Shifting Identities of Public Higher Education

Higher education institutions struggle with their identity as civic institutions (Boyte & Hollander, 1999). The idea of educating for the purposes and process of democratic engagement or community is held up in competition with the institution's ability to attract extramural funds and publish scholarly products (Boyer, 2014; Giroux, 2002; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Weil, 2010). Scholars have documented the change in how internal and external actors understand the role of higher education (Checkoway, 2001; Gaither & Others, 1994; Kogan & Bauer, 2006). Citing a New York Times article that paints clearly the difference in how internal and external actors understand higher education as evidence, Kennedy (1997) chronicles public mistrust of higher education:

Whereas those within the system generally believe that their mission is to produce graduates who can think well and work effectively, and who are able to understand, analyze, and reflect upon their culture and upon the natural world, much of the world outside sees higher education as a credentialing device: a way of estimating, for employment or other purposes, the comparative worth of individuals (p. 7).

Kennedy's assessment of the disparate understandings from those internal and external to higher education of the role it plays (and ought to play) in society persists in discussions about the purposes of higher education today (Gaither & Others, 1994; Selingo, 2015). He examines the idea of the academy of today through exploring the concept of academic duty and by unpacking these disparate understandings of the form and function of higher education through distinct lenses. Specifically, Kennedy addresses the purposes of higher education from the lenses of university role in service, research and discovery. The purpose includes higher education institutions as units of outreach and engagement in and with communities. As developers of citizens and professionals through work with students, as entities obligated to teach content and ways of being in community, and finally, as bound with the duty to call for and initiate important social change (1997). Kennedy calls on faculty, institutions, and the higher education system to take on their academic duty and to recreate clear understanding of the purposes of higher education. Kennedy tasks institutions and the actors that shape them with making clear the case (public, social, economic, or otherwise) for higher education in a way that individuals, legislators, communities, and society writ large can understand (1997).

Nonetheless, scholars' (Gaither & Others, 1994; Kennedy, 1997; Kogan & Bauer, 2006) assessment of these disparate interpretations of the work of higher education are stated clearly in Selingo's (2015) question, "What's the purpose of college: A job, or an education?" An evolution is taking place in how the mission and role of higher education is understood in society; this impacts how federal and state governance and funding takes place. Institutional priorities will shift in response to the questions of the public (workforce development or education for the sake of education for instance). This can cause the centrality of democratic ideals in institutions of higher education to compete with ideologies that center the university as

an economic commodity and as a financial driver for the community first and foremost (Boyer, 1994, 2014; Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Gaither & Others, 1994; Kennedy, 1997).

Finally, Kennedy and others (Checkoway, 1997; Gaither & Others, 1994; Giroux, 2013; 1997; Selingo, 2015) highlight the categorization of the higher education institution as part of this complex challenge. Higher education today, consists of for-profit universities, community colleges, public, private, two and four-year institutions and dozens of other qualifiers as to what and how an institution operates and what is core to its mission. For the purposes of this work, the focus is on the role of public research institutions in Kansas, specifically Kansas State University and the University of Kansas. Both institutions share a research and public serving mandate as part of their funding and organizational mission and purpose through their classification as public research institutions (Colby et al., 2003). In the case of Kansas State University, this is also through its classification as a land-grant institution. This classification historically indicates a public commitment to education and in return, a commitment from institutions of higher education to the public good (Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Colby et al., 2003).

The Intersection of Public Good and Neoliberalism in Education

The conception of higher education has shifted from the place where democracy and its processes and principles are cultivated to an economic opportunity for communities and states. Institutions have become experts in turning knowledge into capital through patent law and copyright, and through marketing education as an investment opportunity, a place to grow personal and community wealth (Giroux, 2002; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Weil, 2010). The values proposition of higher education in the ideological structure of today is through its commodification (Giroux, 2002, 2006; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). The narrative of education for social responsibility, critical thinking, or for the development of values like justice,

democracy and freewill become vulnerable unless those things can be placed clearly in a formula benchmarked for achievement including financial gain (Giroux, 2002, 2006; Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). The shift from institutions as incubators for democratic thinking and processing to the economic drivers is part of a larger ideological movement happening across public sector institutions called neoliberalism (Giroux, 2002, 2006; Harvey, 2005).

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is a driving ideology for educational policy today and a defining economic paradigm of the time (McChesney in Chomsky, 1999). Neoliberalism is the way in which policies and processes driven through private interests have gained access and permission to control social and public life through institutions, maximizing personal profit (Chomsky, 1999). A complex political and economic theory, neoliberalism has greatly influenced higher education policy globally (Auranen & Nieminen, 2010; Harvey, 2005; Jongbloed & Vossensteyn, 2001; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Harvey (2005) explained neoliberalism as a political economic practice that claims to advance the wellbeing of people (individually and in communities) by freeing entrepreneurial opportunities and by changing existing institutional frameworks. Neoliberal frameworks are characterized by free markets and free trade, strong individual liberties, and privileging private property rights (Giroux, 2002; Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). From this framework, the state would then work to create and protect institutions and expand individual freedoms (Harvey, 2005). This comes to light through social institutions and collaborative community endeavors like public higher education.

The emergence of neoliberal ideology and policy is associated with the administrations of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher and continues to dominate global political and economic trends today (Chomsky, 1999; Harvey, 2005). The hallmark of neoliberal policy is the

commodification of everything which presumes that the market is the best determinant from which to make decisions (Harvey, 2005). When applied to social institutions, this approach has moved state and local institutions and programs from the public to the private domain (Giroux, 2002; Harvey, 2005; Weil, 2010). Redefining public spaces as primarily investment opportunities is central to neoliberalism. The sentiment of the public good, for example, public schools, public transportation, or public parks, becomes synonymous with disrepair, danger, and financial risk without return (Harvey, 2005). Within this discourse, individuals who do not believe that free market capitalism is the road to freedom and a healthy society risk losing voice (Harvey, 2005). “Neoliberalism empties the public treasury, hollows out public services, and limits the vocabulary and imagery available to recognize non-commercialized public space, antidemocratic forms of power, and narrow models of individual agency” (Giroux, 2002, p. 429). This perspective when applied to public institutions of higher education results in a new orientation toward the higher education endeavor completely. Renegotiation of public expectations and understandings around the purposes of higher education is a guiding orientation of neoliberalism (Giroux, 2002, 2006, 2013; Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

Challenges of Neoliberalism in Education

Neoliberal ideology has been adopted by political parties across the spectrum and enacted through policy in education broadly (Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). The relationship between public morality and civic responsibility are in flux when financial capital becomes the primary goal and driver through which policymakers understand and shape higher education policy (Ravitch, 2013). Scholars and political theorists have raised concerns about the challenges of neoliberal ideology, warning that societies defined through neoliberal values run the risk of sacrificing public morality, civic responsibility, education, and pathways to the

development of an engaged citizenry in the name of financial gain (Giroux, 2002, 2006, 2013; Harvey, 2005). Neoliberalism as an ideology and organizing economic and political system bears out the monetary proposition against public good, reducing sometimes complex systems (education for instance) to basic business principles of investments and returns. One challenge of neoliberalism is the impact this ideology has on the heart and creative endeavors of humans and communities (Harvey, 2005).

Neoliberalism forces a market structure onto organized communities and their institutions and as such, has the capacity to take even the most creative avenues of human behavior and turn them into something that requires a contractual structure (Harvey, 2005). Social good, organized by this framework, is no longer the purpose of an educational system, but instead may only be possible through maximizing and incentivizing the market and market trends (Giroux, 2002, 2006; Harvey, 2005). A neoliberal structure overlaid on university functions has changed institutions. Scholars note changes as: 1) research and knowledge are exchanged for financial reward (copyright and patent laws) and, 2) communication about the purposes of higher education shift to branded models (marketing firms to brand institutions and attract new students), 3) actors internal and external to the institutions understand their role in the public and society broadly differently (Checkoway, 2001; Kennedy, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Institutions as commodities have become accessible to corporate influence which is demonstrated in research agendas built with corporate influence and priority, curricula developed not only for specific industry but for specific corporations, and with other university efforts to attract corporate dollars (Giroux, 2002, 2006; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). While this is not damaging on its face, it moves the focus of the public institution from serving overtly the public good, to focus more on the priorities of private entities. A values proposition ensues in which

public service and public good play second fiddle to private needs (Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). This movement permeates beyond higher education institutions. Institutions like city and public government are approached and depicted through an entrepreneurial rather than social, democratic, or managerial nature, shifting their outcomes away from public good and to profit first and above all else (Chomsky, 1999; Harvey, 2005). A shift toward neoliberal approaches to governance of public space is part of a larger social, political, and economic shift that poses a challenging values proposition for communities, and for how economic, social, and political systems operate in communities.

Another shift in public higher education as a result of neoliberal ideology is the development of a social and economic hierarchy based on individual ability to develop and grow personal capital (Giroux, 2002, 2006; Harvey, 2005). Personal capital becomes linked to political power in that those with wealth have the power to make political decisions for the state (Giroux, 2006). This is evidenced by current lobbying efforts through which individuals can influence government through the use of private funds, invest in public action committees, or become appointed to political committees or boards like the Kansas Board of Regents – through leveraging financial capital in their efforts (Giroux, 2002, 2006; Harvey, 2005; Ravitch, 2013; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). In neoliberalism social, economic, and political systems can be commodified and when applied to higher education, this means that those with money can influence what is researched, how it is done, and who has access to that information (Giroux, 2006; Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Shifting away from an open source or extension model that shares and distributes knowledge resultant from university research efforts widely with taxpayers and citizens of the state, neoliberalism represents significant change

(Kennedy, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Scholars call this movement academic capitalism and the new economy (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

Academic Capitalism and the New Economy

A neoliberal approach to policy will work to establish legal structures and frameworks meant to guarantee the proper function of state markets (Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). In the state, this effort leads to education as a piece of the economic market (Ravitch, 2013; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Graduation becomes a commodity that leads to a skilled workforce that can then drive other economic markets in the state (Harvey, 2005). Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) term this approach to higher education academic capitalism, the process by which colleges and universities become integrated into the new (neoliberal) economy. Academic capitalism does not see the university as co-opted by corporations or external actors with neoliberal agendas. Instead, academic capitalism positions actors, including taxpayers, students, faculty, staff, administrators, academic professionals, legislators, policymakers, and other governmental officials as complicit in leveraging state resources to develop new avenues of knowledge that bridge higher education and the new economy (Kurth-Schai, 2014; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Zacharakis, Tolar, & Collins, 2014). This interpretation introduces academic capitalism as a reality of today's higher education system. Scholars call this reality the new economy; this is the current economic structure in which institutions are operating (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

The new economy is an economic system that higher education and its actors engage, create, and benefit from (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Zacharakis et al., 2014). Academic capitalism and the new economy accept knowledge as a raw material that can be treated as a good to be marketed, produced, owned, and ultimately profited from (Harvey, 2005; Slaughter &

Rhoades, 2004). Kurth-Schai (2014) wrote, “corporations have aggressively pursued financial gain and political influence in the education marketplace” documenting how the new economy is influenced by corporate actors (p. 421). Higher education and its network of actors (faculty, staff, administrators, and students), and services (teaching, research, athletics, residential living, to name a few) are engaged in crafting this political and economic climate that advances policy like performance-measures in higher education and responds to corporate, public, political, and social powers (Layzell, 1999; McLendon et al., 2006; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

Neoliberalism and Education Policy

Neoliberal ideology and approaches to higher education is perhaps most noted in the shift in education funding. A once largely publicly funded system of higher education is today dwindling and tightly monitored through performance-measures attributed to neoliberal ideology (Giroux, 2002; Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Neoliberal approaches to educational reform, including the accountability movement, are presented as the best, and the only option for improving the education system (Hursh, 2007). This approach seamlessly moves the system more closely toward a market-based approach to education (Hursh, 2007; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Funding models upon which higher education allocations depend upon are market driven leaving educational scholars in fear that neoliberal policy will reduce higher education to a pawn in the ideological movement (Giroux, 2002, 2006; Harvey, 2005; Ravitch, 2013; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). This logic has resulted in the commodification of knowledge and the introduction of performance-based measures as the market indicators to best determine the future of institutions and programs (Gaither & Others, 1994; Giroux, 2002, 2006; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

Kurth-Schai (2014) points to the accountability movements in education research as a growing and supported direction in scholarship so long as the research is quickly and readily applied to measurement of short-term and clear results instead of sustained or long term impacts of educational policy. Gaither and associates (1994) discuss this as a move toward quality (in addition to accountability). Aimed toward getting ahead of legislation that impacts higher education, this was one attempted response to public concern and mistrust of the higher education system. Movements toward quality, accountability, and a general push toward a market-based approach in education continue to grow (Gaither & Others, 1994; Kogan & Bauer, 2006) and are evidence of the neoliberalization of education and education policy (Harvey, 2005; Kurth-Schai, 2014; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Performance-based measures, discussed in the next section of this literature review, will be the focus of policy in this research.

Performance-Based Measures

Performance-based measures (PBMs) are part of an education funding system in which specific indicators are the benchmarks for the allocation of resources (Layzell, 1999; McKeown-Moak, 2013; McLendon et al., 2006; Miao, 2012). Rooted in the need for accountability in state systems and monitored through the tracking of specific goals and objectives, in a performance-based funding system, a portion of the state's budget for higher education is allocated based on institutional performance measured against specific indicators (Miao, 2012). Indicators can include measures of credits, courses, or degrees completed and measurement on these indicators is a shift away from allocation of resources based strictly on enrollment numbers (Miao, 2012). Funding models have historically served to provide formulas and guidelines for public higher education so that funds may be distributed for institutions using a rational and equitable process

(McKeown-Moak, 2013). Within this policy movement, there is performance-based funding, performance-based budgeting, and performance-based reporting.

Performance-based funding is an approach to funding that ties state dollars directly to the performance of public campuses and is based on specific indicators (Burke, 2002; McLendon, Deaton, & Hearn, 2007; McLendon et al., 2006). The relationships between funding and institutional performance is prescribed by the state in partnership with higher education. Institutions receive funding based on their ability to meet predetermined indicators (Burke, 2002; Burke et al., 2003). Performance funding focuses most closely on distribution of funds (Burke & Minassians, 2002; Burke & Minassians, 2003; McLendon, Hearn, & Deaton, 2006).

Performance-based budgeting is a related strategy that allows state officials, (governors, legislators, and education coordinating bodies like the Kansas Board of Regents), to use institutional progress as determined by the prescribed indicators as a factor when allocating resources (Burke, 2002; Burke et al., 2003). This model empowers governors, legislators, and the state coordinating body (in Kansas, the Kansas Board of Regents,) to take institutional performance on indicators as one level of achievement to support resource allocation (Burke et al., 2003, 2003; Layzell, 1999). Budgeting puts most attention at the preparation and presentation of information (Burke & Minassians, 2002; McLendon, Hearn, & Deaton, 2006). The preparation and presentation of information is discourse that reflects how preparers and recipients of the information justify and explain the value of their institutions through response to mandated benchmarks (Burke et al., 2002, 2003). Studying this discourse may shed light onto how and where institutions place resources in order to meet these benchmarks.

Performance policies in higher education often result in performance-based reporting. These reports are typically shared with policymakers and the public and share institutional and

statewide performance based on the prescribed indicators (Burke, 2002; Burke et al., 2003). Reports do not result in formal allocation of resources like performance-funding and budgeting do; however, they serve as a way to use information to inform others of the work happening at institutions and encourage institutions to increase their achievement of the prescribed indicators (Burke et al., 2002, 2003; McKeown-Moak, 2013). Shared with legislators, campus administration, and public through media, reports are used for public relations and are meant to encourage institutions to increase their efforts (Burke & Minassians, 2002; McLendon, Hearn, & Deaton, 2006).

Approaches to performance-based models for higher education are designed to work together (Burke et al., 2002, 2003; Layzell, 1999). Burke & Minassians (2002) state that in performance funding, “the relationship between funding and performance is tight, automatic, and formulaic” (p. 3). In performance budgeting however, there exists the possibility that additional funding may be awarded to an institution based on performance, a decision left to the discretion of that coordinating body and state policymakers. Budgeting in this system, as a result, is a flexible but uncertain process because funding in this system is certain but inflexible (Burke et al., 2002, 2003). Performance reporting is accepted as the preferred approach to gaining accountability (Burke et al., 2002). It is understood as a less expensive and polarizing approach to accountability than funding and budgeting (Burke & Minassians, 2002; Burke & Minassians, 2003).

Performance measures are used to allocate resources to institutions based on their ability to achieve a set of goals and outcomes approved by and built in consultation with the state (Gaither et al., 1994). Performance budgeting and funding are an additive to traditional measures like current cost, enrollment, and cost of living adjustments, for the state allocation processes for

public universities (Burke & Minassians, 2002). The purposes of performance measures were explained in detail by Sizer, Spee, and Bormans (1992) as: 1) promoting ongoing assessment of programs and institutions, 2) enabling the measurement of goal attainment, 3) establishing a basis for communication about policy, concepts, and goals, 4) rationalizing the policy making processes, and 5) allocating resources based on a solid and measurable rationale (as cited in Burke & Minassians, 2002). Performance measures in Kansas include funding, budgeting, and reporting, and are connected to accountability measures through indicators evaluated annually.

A Brief History of Performance-Measures

The development of performance-based measures for higher education funding is not a recent trend. Policymakers at the state level (legislators, governors, and regents), have been exploring the performance of publicly funded institutions since the 1960s. States have moved from policies that invite voluntary participation in the performance-measures to mandatory, state instituted programs (Alexander, 2000; Layzell, 1998, 1999). The movement of the policies of the 1960s to those of today has followed the development of neoliberal ideology, mapped most heavily through the Regan administration (Harvey, 2005).

Performance measures have evolved alongside the development of neoliberal ideology since their introduction into higher education in the 1960s (McKeown-Moak, 2013). At that time, the federal government began experimenting with report cards meant to drive funding formulas and accountability measures for education (McKeown-Moak, 2013; McLendon et al., 2006). Tennessee was one of the first states to make the report card process a funding model for higher education in 1979, their model sparked national attention with states looking to Tennessee as a test for how PBMs could change higher education policy (McKeown-Moak, 2013).

Historically higher education funding has been done on the basis of enrollment numbers (Miao, 2012). The process has been one, “that reinforces their commitment to college accessibility and ensures a relatively equitable distribution of per-student spending across the institutions” (Miao, 2012). Enrollment in higher education however, is not an indicator of successful completion. One goal of PBMs is to move institutions from an enrollment model to a model that includes enrollment through completion in addition to measurement of other targeted indicators (Miao, 2012). Focused on enrollment, persistence, and completion, this movement prioritizes learning and skill development throughout an educational career.

A different initial aspiration for the role of PBMs in education policy included the development of an algorithm that would allow states to use a formula to crunch numbers from reporting institutions and use that to develop the annual funding allocations (Sizer, Spee, & Bormans, 1992). This was a market-driven process for funding higher education. This included an outline of the challenges to this process, such as the lack of uniform agreements about what and how data would be included and measured, and discussions about the pros and cons of a formula to inform distribution of resources. A uniform formula could lead to the detrimental redistribution of funds from institution to institution in a state with fluctuating dollars for higher education (Ashworth, 1994; Burke et al., 2002). While institutions did not adopt a universal algorithm for PBMs, their introduction and adoption across levels of policy continued throughout the U.S. (Layzell, 1998; McLendon et al., 2006). The algorithm approach was an attempt to simplify and make uniform the process of using PBMs as a measurement through which to determine success and ultimately funding for higher education institutions on the state and federal levels (Ashworth, 1994; Burke et al., 2002; Layzell, 1998; McLendon et al., 2006; Sizer et al., 1992).

In the 1980s — with neoliberalism presenting strongly in public policy and governance through the Thatcher and Regan administrations — policymakers introduced performance-reporting systems to track how publicly funded institutions were operated (Burke et al., 2002; Harvey, 2005; McLendon et al., 2007). This required public agencies to report their performance and achievements annually based on state identified indicators (Burke et al., 2002, 2003; McLendon et al., 2006). Seen in policies like the Federal Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 through which federal agencies were required to review and clarify their mission and identify and share their organizational goals, this movement grew publicly (Klein, 2005). Adoption of these measures across state agencies, state level departments of education and coordinating bodies responsible for higher education (the Kansas Board of Regents) were scrutinized for their costs and outputs. Operational efficiency, student enrollment, retention, and attrition became part of the public discourse on the effectiveness of higher education (Klein, 2005; McLendon et al., 2006). During the 1990s states adopted performance-based measures for higher education in the form of performance-based funding, budgeting, and reporting. By the late 1990s PBMs were well integrated into the funding mechanisms for higher education nationally (Ashworth, 1994; Burke et al., 2002, 2003; Klein, 2005; Layzell, 1998; McKeown-Moak, 2013; McLendon et al., 2006).

Performance-based models have positive contributions to higher education policy, documented by Ashworth as the “margins of the funding process,” a means to bring about positive change in higher education using accountability measures (1994). Using these models at the margins, however, does not suggest that the state push all of the funding processes through a performance-based model, but that a small measure of rewards-based incentivizing of higher education be put in place. In 1994 Ashworth called attention to growing national support for

PBMs urging higher education to get ahead of the movement. He suggested institutions take lead on initiating methods for using performance-based funding by developing models that include “availability of data, simplicity, and flexibility to measure performance by different kinds of colleges and universities” (1994, p. 11). These models could allow states to demonstrate to policymakers and constituents the value and process of the work taking place in higher education. Participation in terms that are appropriate and representative of the needs and processes of diverse institutions (community colleges, technical schools, and research institutions for instance) became the hallmark of this approach (Ashworth, 1994). Regardless of participation, the movement toward adoption of PBMs continued.

Challenges to Performance-Based Outcomes

Ideology about public funding, particularly for education, has shifted significantly over the past five decades (Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). The move toward stricter accountability for all agencies receiving public funding has been contested and met with challenges (Ashworth, 1994; Gaither & Others, 1994). Ashworth (1994) cautioned higher education to be careful, and critical of what is encouraged through a rewards system of funding like PBMs. What is encouraged, Ashworth warned will be exactly what higher education gets – no more, and no less. Ashworth’s warning has proven true as states like Kansas have annually shrunk budgets for higher education (Johnson, Oliff, & Williams, 2011; Lowry, 2015; Marso, 2015). PBMs relieve states of the ‘burden’ of funding higher education publicly when accountability measures become the states proof that the system can function well without state or federal support. Similarly, when measures make the case for a misuse of funds – when they demonstrate an inefficiency in the system, they make the case for states to decrease public funding (Ashworth, 1994; Gaither & Others, 1994). Citing Tennessee and Texas as two historical

instances of PBMs defunding higher education, Ashworth (1994) suggests any performance program should be additive of new funds above and beyond the base funding from the state (Ashworth, 1994; Gaither & Others, 1994). A structure in which funds are base, not additive is risky as states that fail to meet indicators can lose base funding. In Kansas, budgets for higher education have reduced consistently over the past decade as base funding gets smaller and smaller (Eligon, 2015; Marso, 2015).

Performance-based outcomes face challenges due to shifting political and higher education actors. PBMs and their impacts on the state can destabilize when the political support from players in state governance (legislators, appointed boards, and governors for instance) change. With the change of elected officials comes shifts in state priorities (Gaither & Others, 1994). Navigating tough issues like the limited funds available to higher education makes for a tense political landscape. The stakes become even higher when elected officials are confronted with choices between funding and accountability measures and satisfying voters (McKeown-Moak, 2013). These challenges are part of the system of power that impact how decisions are made and influence decision makers.

Another persistent challenge to performance-based policy occurs when states attempt to fund institutions completely using performance-based outcomes rather than funding items at the margins (McKeown-Moak, 2013). Scholars cited this strategy as too high stakes for institutions to function well and be appropriately funded year to year (Ashworth, 1994; McKeown-Moak, 2013). Placing too much pressure on a singular year of institutional performance, an approach to performance-based models, sways significant funds possibly at the detriment of the institution. To offset internally, some states have moved toward identifying grants and private funds to support their effort, a movement on trend with the neoliberal ideology (Giroux, 2002, 2006;

Harvey, 2005; Ravitch, 2013; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). States have leaned on the National Governors' Association Complete College America initiative through which foundations like Gates and Lumina provided money to catalyze performance funding. By developing programs focused on college completion, funded programs in turn produce workers to grow the economy (McKeown-Moak, 2013).

Finally, selecting the indicators and identifying the benchmarks for success have been consistent challenges to advancing PBMs. States, Kansas included, adjust measures to reflect changing landscapes. Since the introduction of the most recent PBMs, Foresight 2020 in Kansas (in 2010), higher education institutions can amend goals and benchmarks on a three year cycle (Kansas Board of Regents, n.d.). Institutions can revisit plans and strategies for achievement to work toward the articulated goals for progress and adjust plans when necessary without losing funding or other support (Gaither & Others, 1994).

Adjustments notwithstanding, the elephant still in the room with performance-based measures is the question of do they work. Maio (2012) calls on a deeper look into performance-based funding 2.0, the reemergence of national movement toward a performance-based funding model in higher education. Looking specifically at discourse around the performance-based funding movement in Kansas can provide insight into the impact of the movement in one state.

This policy shift for higher education may be the result of economic demands and changing economic frames that challenge higher education to do more with less (Ashworth, 1994; McLendon et al., 2006). In 1997 the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) issued a U.S. survey that looked to account for the shift toward these policies. The survey indicated that three quarters of U.S. states (38) were using performance indicators for higher education in some format (Russell, 1998). This included the reporting of “consumer

information,” or performance-based reports that were primarily received by the state governors and legislative body to increase understanding of the work happening across higher education (Russell, 1998). Along with the introduction of performance-based reports distributed publicly, and the development of strong policy resulting from PBMs internationally, publicly funded higher education was being called on heavily to demonstrate, validate, and explain its value and justify performance to constituents including students, parents, publicly elected officials, employers, and taxpayers (McKeown-Moak, 2013; Ashworth, 1994; Layzell, 1999). McKeown-Moak (2013) sought to explain factors that have contributed to the move toward higher education funding through PBMs. They identified the following factors as contributors to the movement:

- 1) The national economic crisis for state funding of education and widely held beliefs that the state budgets would not recover.
- 2) The increasingly intense competition within states for a shrinking pool of tax dollars that were to be stretched across all areas of government.
- 3) An increased need and expectation for the outcomes of public higher education – particularly to drive state workforce and economic markets.
- 4) Finally, a general increase in the skepticism and scrutiny around the value of all public institutions (McKeown-Moak, 2013).

While PBMs emerged in the 1960s, they developed capacity and popularity throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, and conditions of the early 2000s locked them tightly into the policy and philosophical structures that govern higher education today (McKeown-Moak, 2013). The trend toward a closely monitored and funded system does not appear to be reversing in the near future. As such, institutions are called upon to justify their value through compliance to state mandated performance measures (Ashworth, 1994; Layzell, 1999; McKeown-Moak, 2013).

Scholars have identified similar shifts in policy toward the influence of economic drivers in Europe. Kogan and Bauer (2006) cite the contributions of regional political climates and ideologies surrounding public funding of higher education as a variable to funding and policy models. The parallel development of PBMs in Europe and the U.S. indicate a change in the approach to higher education funding and the ideological underpinnings of the institutions that grows in scope and impact (Jongbloed & Vossensteyn, 2001; Kogan & Bauer, 2006; Layzell, 1998). This ideological and ultimately policy development is not unique to higher education but is embedded throughout the U.S. education system (Ravitch, 2013)

PBMs in K – 20

The move toward performance-based measures in education likely began with the K-12 sector (Ravitch, 2013). Ravitch (2013) chronicles the privatization and reform movement in K-12 education. Writing, “You think of public education as an institution that educates citizens, future voters, members of your community,” Ravitch, expresses a pro-public approach to education (2013, p. 311). This ideological approach is closely connected to what Dewey, Addams, and others conceptualized as the public or civic purposes of education (Addams, 1964; Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Dewey, 2004, 2013). Introducing important considerations for scholars studying the shift in higher education policy as the introduction, adoption, Ravitch offers an assessment of K-12 that as a permanent place of PBMs that closely resembles current shifts in higher education.

In K-12 recent school reform movements are privatization movements that like neoliberal ideology, exist in and stem from both sides politically and have been underwritten by corporate sponsors (Harvey, 2005; Ravitch, 2013). Corporations and foundations like Gates and Walton are supporters of the privatization movement (Harvey, 2005; Ravitch, 2013; Slaughter &

Rhoades, 2004). Ravitch, like scholars looking at higher education performance, is not opposed to public school reforms. She warns that the current reform movement in K-12 and higher education, however, is not a public movement, but a corporate reform movement, based off principles and practices that work for a corporate sector. This is what Harvey, Slaughter, Rhoades, and Giroux would call the neoliberalization of academy – across all levels of education (Giroux, 2002, 2006; Harvey, 2005; Ravitch, 2013; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

Corporate Influence in Education

Proponents of public education see these types of reform efforts as undermining the social and democratic values of the public education system by removing the funding mechanism from the public arena (Boyer, 1994; Checkoway, 1991; Ravitch, 2013). Corporate sponsorships have flooded state and federal government with billions of dollars to privatize K-20 education through programs like Teach for America, special interests lobbies, and private, profit driven models of higher education like the University of Phoenix. Stricter accountability and privatization of higher education can work with proper oversight, but using policy like performance-based measures to make the case for the privatization of public education is a dangerous game (Ravitch, 2013; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). The accountability movement in higher education is closely linked to these efforts (Alexander, 2000; McLendon et al., 2006; Ravitch, 2013). This movement is forwarded as a pro citizen public choice movement, ramping up effectiveness of public institutions by monitoring closely taxpayer investments. This approach to education efforts and funding across K-20 has broadly become known as an accountability movement meant to tightly monitor education in a similar manor as one would measure production quality of a corporation (Burke et al., 2002, 2003; McLendon et al., 2006). This

movement toward accountability frames the nexus of neoliberalism and educational reform in the k-20 sector as they have come to exist today.

The Movement for Accountability

PBMs are surrounded by the discourse of accountability, a concept that has shifted from the traditional focus oriented toward inputs into the system (resources for instance), to the rhetoric of today which focuses heavily on the outcomes and outputs of the campus and its activities (McLendon et al., 2006). Accountability is an education policy and funding strategy (Alexander, 2000; Burke et al., 2003; McLendon et al., 2006). It refers to a state structure meant to maintain the autonomy of individual institutions and provide measured external oversight of campus decision-making processes and state dollars (McLendon, Hearn, & Deaton, 2006). Accountability measures can raise questions about which activities and functions of public colleges and universities (e.g., academic programs, budgets, tuition setting, for instance) should be dictated by the state. Conversely, they can also raise questions as to which activities remain at the discretion of campus officials, and what process is maximally effective and efficient for resource flow and regulation (Berdahl, 1971; McLendon, 2003; Volkwein, 1987 as cited in McLendon, Hearn, & Deaton, 2006).

Shifting understanding of higher education is demonstrative of the shift in focus from prioritization of student needs in allocation strategies (Gaither & Others, 1994; McKeown-Moak, 2013). Indicating state mistrust of higher education and demonstrating an emerging belief system from state officials, this shows that the primary purposes of higher education should be to meet the economic needs of the state (Gaither & Others, 1994; McKeown-Moak, 2013).

“Policymakers appear to believe that higher education budgets are not aligned with state or local priorities and want institutions to produce graduates in high-demand fields like nursing or

teachers” (McKeown-Moak, 2013, p. 4). Accountability measures standardize pressure on higher education to support the state by producing more workers, taxpayers, and new areas of economic growth. These measures work to distill assessments of products and services to quantitative measures, and have become a tool of the accountability movement (Hursh, 2007). Increasing use of PBMs to fund education is evidence of this structural pressure to distill data and tell a clear story of the value or impact of public higher education (Gaither & Others, 1994; Hursh, 2007; Kennedy, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Slaughter and Rhoades count this as movement toward the neoliberalization of public higher education (2004). The evolution of funding models from institution centered to student centered has resulted in the models that reflect the needs of the state, citizens of the state, students, and the institution. PBMs focus on driving the state and the state economy over serving students, the university, or the civic purposes of public education (McKeown-Moak, 2013, p. 4). Today’s policies are comprehensive in nature (particularly compared to those of the past that may have focused strictly on enrollment numbers) and hold institutions accountable at multiple levels. The use of benchmarks and indicators to make funding decisions has brought accountability measures in performance-based funding, budgeting, and reporting to new levels (Layzell, 1998).

Movement from the initial waves of adoption in the 1980s and 1990s to the performance-based funding 2.0 movement of today means that institutions and state governments ought to establish their own best practices in adopting these measures. As higher education institutions become increasingly more stretched for the allocation of state funds, they must become clearer in articulating their needs and accomplishments. Language used to explain this should be easy for politicians and taxpayers to understand, and should be a process that that these institutions can manage (Ashworth, 1994; Layzell, 1998; Miao, 2012). Discourse analysis of the existing

priorities and purposes along with the narrative around the purpose of higher education in the state can shed light onto this process.

Scholars have outlined a comprehensive approach for funding through performance-based measures to include the following: 1) Stakeholders from government and higher education would engage in co-writing the measures and accountability plans, 2) Institutions of higher education would be able to focus on unique goals based upon mission, strategic plan, and role, 3) There would be enough money appointed at the base level to incentivize institutional change, 4) There would be a state formula with integrated not additive measures for funding, 5) There would be a focus on incremental progress instead of total completion of an indicator to benchmark progress, 6) There would be stop loss provisions in place in case an institution has a particularly bad year, serving to prevent a total loss of funds, and 7) Finally, the system should have a constant review and evaluation process to consider new measures and cycle out old ones as needed. Throughout the process communication across institutions, government officials, and constituents should be done clearly and regularly (Ashworth, 1994; Layzell, 1998; Miao, 2012).

Methods of Initiation

There are three primary ways that performance-based funding, budgeting, and reporting are initiated:

- Mandated or prescribed through which the legislature mandates the program will be followed and prescribes the indicators used to determine success.
- Mandated but not prescribed through which the state legislature mandates the program and the state coordinating bodies along with campus administrators propose the indicators for success.

- Not mandated systems exist when the coordinating body and campus administrators agree to adopt the plan of their own volition without a state mandate (Burke & Minassians, 2002).

The method of initiation for policy in higher education is important to how the policy is received, implemented, and ultimately how constituents engage the system moving forward. Mandating the adoption of a given policy can quickly undermine the stability of the program; state officials that impose policy may be seen as ignoring the voice of the coordinating body or campus officials who are vital to implementation (Burke et al., 2002, 2003). Programs without mandate may leave policymakers without ownership over the new policy. In Kansas, a coordinating body, campus officials, and state policymakers co-authored the design and implementation strategy for performance-based funding, budgeting, and reporting (Burke & Minassians, 2002).

Once performance-based policies are implemented, scholars have documented approaches to how states measure progress toward the articulated benchmarks (Ewell & Jones, 1994). These approaches offer insight as to how states like Kansas are responding to performance-based policies and inform the discourse surrounding the measures and the response by higher education institutions to these measures. Approaches include:

1. Inputs, processes, outcomes assessed as a “production model” that measures the value added to students leaving the institution through a pre-and post-process.
2. Resource efficiency and effectiveness are measured through understanding how human, space, and equipment resources are used.

3. State need and return on investment that focuses on higher education as a strategic investment for the state, designed to measure the fit between the needs of the state and higher education (for instance, workforce preparation).
4. Customer need and return on investment, built through neoliberal ideals, specifically consumerism and measures the impact of higher education on meeting the needs of the individual needs (retention and graduation rates, for instance).

This framework is a guide through which policymakers can understand their own process and rationale for setting out an established way forward for a policy like the performance-based funding models in education (Ewell, 1999; Ewell & Jones, 1994). “Performance funding, budgeting, and reporting represent the main methods of assuring state accountability for public higher education in a decentralized era of managing for results rather than controlling by regulations” (Burke & Minassians, 2002, p.2). Next I will discuss how these strategies became policy in the state of Kansas.

Adoption in Kansas

Many states that adopted one measure of performance-based outcomes also adopted another (Burke et al., 2002; McLendon et al., 2007). The state of Kansas has all three measures, adopting performance-based budgeting first in 1997, and then following that with performance-based funding in 1999, and reporting in 2001. The table below tells the story of how these measures were adopted and who initiated the process.

Table 1

Adoption of Performance Measure in Kansas

Kansas Adoption of Performance-Based Measures		Mandated	Indicators	Initiation
Performance- Based Budgeting	1997	No	No	Coordinating body
Performance-Based Funding	1999	Yes	No	Governor, legislature
Performance-Based Reporting	2001	-	-	-
Outcomes-Based Reporting	2009	Yes	Yes	Coordinating Body

In Kansas, the Kansas Board of Regents serves as the central governing body for higher education in the state. In 1999, the senate passed Bill No. 345 which recreated the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) to its current status in the state as a coordinating body responsible for governing state universities, supervising community colleges, technical colleges, and Washburn University, and coordinating postsecondary education in Kansas (“A Brief History of the Kansas Board of Regents System,” n.d.).

As performance-based measures are implemented across the nation, states have learned important lessons about what works and what fails. Maio (2012) cites the importance that educational leaders gain support and involve stakeholders early on in the organization and implementation process. The Kansas legislature and KBOR have taken measures to develop a network of key stakeholders at research institutions in the state. This study examines their shared (or disparate) understanding of the rationale, purpose, and impacts of measures like performance-based funding legislation through the examination of discourse.

A Metaphor for Policy

The emergence of performance-based models (PBMs) and their relationship with higher education, policy, state and federal governance, and the citizens and taxpayers who fund state

institutions is complex (Firestone, 1989; Nisar, 2015). PBMs are policies that have emerged from the work of state governors, legislators, and budget officers as a strategy for funding higher education. PBMs were introduced by state governing bodies and today are located within institutions of higher education (Layzell, 1998, 1999). William A. Firestone (1989) described policy through the metaphor, the ecology-of-games. Directed at education policy, his metaphor highlights the complexity of governance, and implementation of policies like PBMs. Describing the complex web of relationships that surround policy, he details the messiness of policy development and implementation. This process requires multiple stakeholders, each with distinct relationships and agendas – covert and overt in nature – working toward a policy product. Policy in this description becomes a chain of negotiated values and relationships from the statehouse to the classroom and back (Firestone, 1989). When understood through the lens of state governance, this complicated web of stakeholders with dynamic values and rationale for their work turn those efforts into policy. At the legislative level that policy has a short time from introduction to adoption. The timespan of a legislative session or budget session can set the agenda for how quickly a policy or budget decision is made (“National Conference of State Legislatures,” n.d.). The players — in this case publicly elected officials — along with the constituents who have elected them, and the individuals (higher education institutions, students, and employees, for instance) impacted by their decisions are intertwined during the lifespan of the policy process. The ecology-of-games metaphor presses the idea that for legislators, their role in the game is contingent upon the satisfaction of their constituents. This could lead to pushing incomplete or unknown policy for the sake of success during the legislative session (Firestone, 1989). Practices like these impact legislation and those who must interpret and implement policy.

Identifying, building, and implementing good policy become a game that stakeholders from different contexts play. Understanding more clearly how the players impacted in policy decisions conceptualize the purpose of higher education, the goals to be achieved by higher education, and how those goals might be measured and shared can shed light onto the complex process and impact of performance-based models for research institutions in Kansas.

Neoliberalism, Discourse Analysis and This Study

Neoliberalism has been rooted in values held widely; the ideals of dignity and individual freedom are appealing to individuals and communities. These values resonate with the idea of the American dream and with Midwest values in part because they are connected to people who value their ability to make decisions for themselves. PBMs in higher education are one manifestation of neoliberal ideology in Kansas. The shifting approach in how state policymakers, taxpayers, and institutions of higher education understand the purposes and function of higher education is resulting in complex policy that impacts the state today, and will certainly impact the future of Kansas. Discourse has significant bearing on power and how social structures and policies come to power and enact power on others (Gee, 1989, 2014; Hursh, 2007; Rogers, 2011; Van Dijk, 2003). Neoliberalism in society is a tool to reshape public institutions into markets; the role of the state in this process is to facilitate the conditions for the educational marketplace to flourish (Hursh, 2007; Harvey, 2005). This study looks specifically at the language used in those policy processes and examine what values and beliefs about the purposes of public higher education underpin the discourse. I will seek to understand more of how individual actors engaged with the policies understand and articulate the purpose of public higher education.

Justification of Documents

I have elected to use performance-based reports and agreements as two of the key texts for this discourse analysis. The documents are tightly linked to one another, as reports are built on the basis of the performance-agreements, and are the primary indicators of how PBMs are enacted at the state level (Burke et al., 2002, 2003).

Performance policies in higher education often result in performance-based reporting and these reports are shared with policymakers and the public to communicate institutional and statewide performance based on the prescribed indicators developed through performance-based agreements (Burke et al., 2002, 2003). Reports inform others (legislators, taxpayers, and higher education employees) of the institutional achievements and to incentivize achievement through public reporting on the prescribed indicators. They may also be leveraged for public relations on behalf of higher education or to encourage institutional competition; as such they provide a marker of how institutions measure up in the state (Burke & Minassians, 2002; McLendon, Hearn, & Deaton, 2006).

Performance-based agreements are the documents created and approved by governing bodies and institutions together, and in Kansas, these are submitted for approval every three years (Burke et al., 2002, 2003). Benchmarks or indicators and the justification for use of these indicators, along with the reporting process are explained through performance-based agreements. The agreements provide context for the performance-based reports, the end products from the agreed upon reports. The discourse in these documents represents agreement and knowledge constructed between state officials and higher education officials as to how reporting should be done and what accountability information matters (Alexander, 2000; Banta & Borden, 1994; Burke et al., 2003). Analyzing these documents can provide context, a critical component

in discourse analysis, for the larger conversation about higher education and funding in the state (Gee, 2014; Rogers, 2011). These documents are also a data source that offers a lens through which to explore how policymakers (Kansas Board of Regents, governor, legislators) and higher education officials in Kansas have determined and articulated elements of the values and purpose of higher education in the state through policy.

The Foresight 2020 planning documents, along with the reports, presentation materials, and other supporting documents emerged in 2010 as a new process for accountability in higher education in Kansas (“A Brief History of the Kansas Board of Regents System,” n.d.). From 2010 forward, the Foresight 2020 agreements, procedures, and reports were analyzed to examine the discourse taking place around higher education accountability through those policies and processes.

Finally, Table five includes Kansas Statute 74-3202d, the statute that the performance documents for higher education in Kansas reference as the rationale for their existence. This document was analyzed as the source of this policy. I also analyzed a series of speeches given by governors of the state from 1997 (the emergence of performance measures in the state) to present day. In these addresses, higher education or general sentiments about education, education funding, and education’s purpose in the state, are mentioned — briefly in some, and more extensively in others. These governors have been in office throughout the lifespan of the policies. They represent distinct political ideologies for the state. Analysis of these speeches provided a broader scope of data for analysis. Inaugural addresses, state of the state addresses, legislative addresses and remarks to the Kansas Board of Regents were all included documents. Selected because they were electronically archived by the state and represent common elements across most of the administrations (inaugural addresses and state of the state addresses happen on fairly

routine timelines). These documents also allowed an entry point to a different angle on the discourse around higher education in the state. Governors in this case were engaged in policy, but did not directly work for the Kansas Board of Regents or with higher education. More speeches were identified as relevant to the study.

The documents identified for this study provide an entry point to understand the discourse around performance measures in the state of Kansas. These elements are part of the social construction of language, beliefs, and values that I hope to understand more fully as a result of the research. Spoken and written language is active and can build the world through activities, institutions, and identities. When actors engage in creating dialogue, writing policy, interpreting policy, and building it into our systems of practice and organizational operation they are using power (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Van Dijk, 2003). When actors engage in building, rebuilding, and moving values, ideologies, and beliefs, these are then reified into actions (Gee, 2014).

Summary

This literature review has included an explanation of the positioning of public institutions of higher education, exploring their shifting identities over time. I have discussed the intersection of the public good and higher education, and the presence and purpose of neoliberalism, academic capitalism, and education policy. I have outlined the role of performance measures historically, how they are defined, implemented, and used in K – 12 and higher education. I have also explored the relationship of PBMs with the accountability movement. Finally, I have made connections to the role of this work in Kansas and for this study. In the next chapter, I will explain in detail the methodology for this research.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Recall the purpose of this study is to explore how policymakers and actors in higher education in Kansas understand and communicate the purposes of higher education through rhetoric including written and spoken discourse. Through the study, I aim to understand how these officials conceive of the purpose(s) higher education has in the state, and how those conceptions are manifested in written policy and reports.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study include:

1. What is the policy rhetoric around the purposes of public higher education in Kansas?
2. How are performance measures for higher education reflected in policy and public discourse?
 - a. What is communicated as the most significant goals to be achieved by higher education and how should they be measured?
3. How do the above-mentioned discourses reflect neoliberal ideologies and rationalities in relation to the budgetary and policy decisions?
4. How does discourse in policy reduce or reify existing structures of power in higher education in Kansas?

Research Scope

A deeper understanding of the indicators and language made present in these documents provides a foundation to understand the discourse that is part of and forwarded by the policies. This analysis explores the discursive realities and impacts of performance-based measures and the rhetoric surrounding them; it includes the examination of overt and covert language and implications of the policies and rhetoric. This study explores the explicitly stated discourse and

the more implicit values, perceptions, and beliefs that the discourse presents, to the end of better understanding how views of higher education are shaped and with what values. Analysis in this study was designed to unpack how discourse frames and shares educational and state priorities. The methodological framing assisted in the process of exploring the discourse and revealing assumptions about the purpose of higher education through a close look at education policy and the rhetoric around performance-based measures.

The Role of Qualitative Research

Rooted in qualitative inquiry, this study reflects a research tradition that is exploratory, subjective, relative, and situational (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). The tradition of qualitative inquiry is exploratory in that it provides me as researcher an approach that is bottom up with the primary aim of opening space to ask broad questions and produce new knowledge about the topic (Bhattacharya, 2015; Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Researchers can better understand and frame existing gaps in the current literature by asking open-ended questions through qualitative inquiry. This approach to research provides the mechanism to open a space for broad exploration and deep interrogation of how the phenomena has come to be and how it acts, and is acted upon by others, qualitative research focuses on broad questions and deep inquiry (Bhattacharya, 2015; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Qualitative research is not positivist in nature, instead it is open and works to unearth new knowledge in a way that it has not before been explored (Bhattacharya, 2015; Creswell, 2012; Peshkin, 1993).

Qualitative research has ontological roots that are subjective and personal in nature as truth and reality are understood to be fluid depending upon who is constructing the narrative (Bhattacharya, 2015; Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Epistemology, or the theory of knowledge, in much qualitative research is relative in that individuals and groups shift how

knowledge is created and understood, and knowledge is socially constructed (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). For this study, I assumed that ontology and epistemology are also subjective and socially constructed. As such, the data was representative of multiple actors, across organizations, who have socially and historically situated approaches to and perspectives on education policy. I explored the discourse of actors across organizations and time, with a specific focus on performance-based measures and how these can be used to understand policymakers' perspectives on the purposes of public education. Relative understanding, approached from multiple lenses may contribute to future action or work in education. This study may lead to additional research focused more specifically on a particular element of the policy, or focused more clearly on one group of actors related to that policy. This initial study has opened avenues for future research.

The situational, interpretive, and relative nature of qualitative research findings can generate new knowledge, expose new areas of inquiry, or shed new light onto how a particular issue is understood, even going so far as to inform policy (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Qualitative research creates space to understand how the data in this study was situated relative to the actors involved in the creation and interpretation of policy through an iterative approach to processing data (Bhattacharya, 2015; Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Peshkin (1993) offers four hallmarks of qualitative research, description, interpretation, verification, and evaluation. Outlined in Figure 1, I have explored Peshkin's (1993) hallmarks as connected with this study through interpreting categories of analysis and types of outcomes.

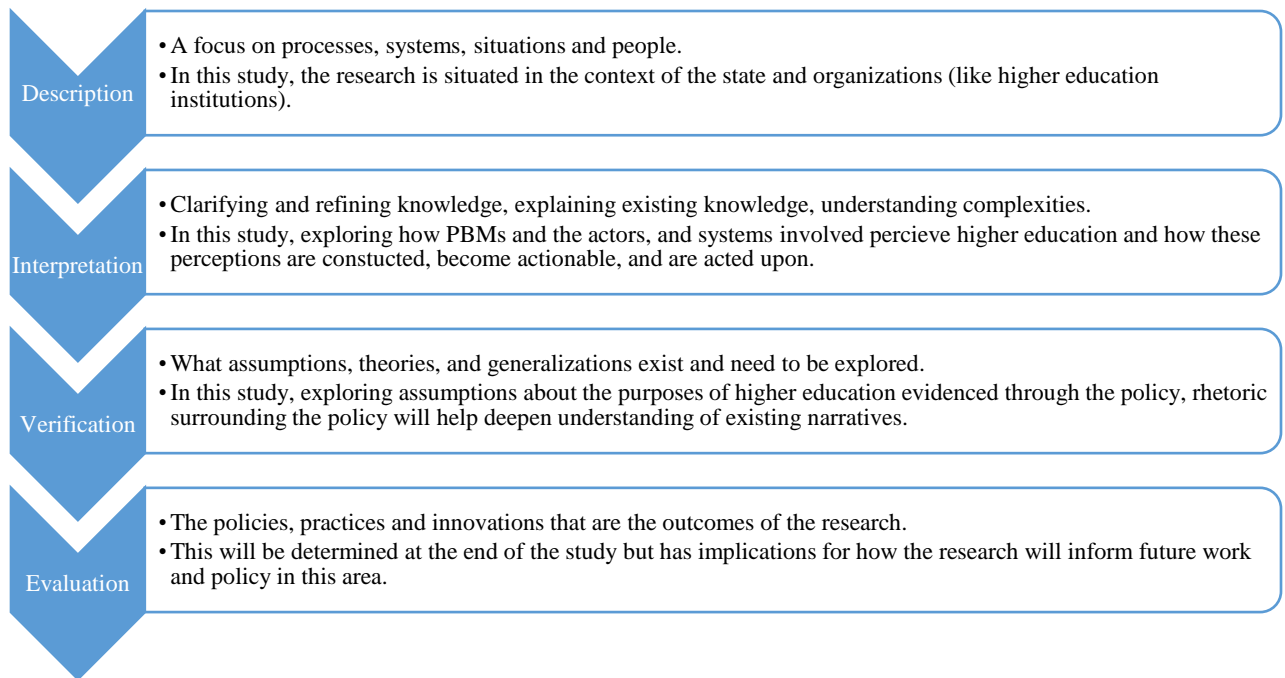


Figure 1. Discourse Analysis in Qualitative Research.

Figure 1 outlines Peshkin's (1993) criteria for well-done qualitative research as interpreted and explained through the lens of this study. This figure represents the intersection of discourse analysis and rich qualitative research methods outlined by Peshkin (1993).

Above I have provided an interpretation of how qualitative research fits with this study. The steps of description, interpretation, verification, and evaluation are part of the research design in this study and have guided methodological and other design choices. I returned to these guideposts throughout the study to ground the work in a strong foundation of qualitative inquiry.

Discourse Analysis

In this section I will explain the rationale behind using a discourse analysis as the methodology for this study. First, I will revisit the underpinnings of discourse analysis as methodology and how they matter to this study. Next, I will talk specifically about what discourse is and how examination of existing discourses can be used in research. Then, I will discuss the rationale for using discourse analysis as the methodological approach in this study.

Discourse analysis with a focus on political and critical analysis are the theoretical and methodological constructs for this research. Using this methodology, I worked to understand how the discourse surrounding higher education policy sheds light on ideologies and rationalities about higher education funding, rhetoric, and policy. Gee (2014) stated that discourse analysis is a methodology that allows the researcher to see and explore how data converge into compatible themes (pp. 195-196). Borrowing heavily from the traditions of discourse analysis – the design of this study is political, critical, and educational in nature. I aimed to explore the rhetoric of discursive documents and understand more fully the experiences of those who have shaped and work with the documents about the public purposes of higher education. Focused on how language is experienced and expressed, discourse analysis is often used to explore a way of seeing, understanding, and talking about the world, in this study, the theory and method of practice of data collection and analysis are intertwined (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Rogers, 2011). Gee (2014) defines discourse analysis as, “the study of language at use in world, not just to say things, but also to do things” (p. 1). As such, researchers can move toward drawing conclusions in a study through the analysis of multiple data sources by using several analysis methods. In this section, I will (1) revisit the basic tenets of discourse analysis methodology; (2) unpack the philosophical underpinnings of discourse analysis; and (3) recall the purpose for discourse analysis as the theoretical and methodological framework for this study.

Discourse analysis is explained as using language - written, and spoken - as a central tool to indicate and develop meaning (Gee, 2014; Schiffrin et al., 2008). Discourse includes multiple forms of text including, speeches, policy documents, reports to name a few (Gee, 2014; Rogers, 2011; Schiffrin et al., 2008). As a research methodology, discourse analysis requires the analyst

to tend to the language used, derived from written and spoken texts and examine it for how it shapes the way people communicate ideas, values, and connect shared knowledge (Gee, 2014; Wilson in Schiffrin, Tannen, & Hamilton, 2001). Discursive research can focus on grammar or other aspects of language. Gee (2014) wrote, “some approaches to discourse analysis are not as closely tied to the grammatical details of language, but concentrate on ideas, issues, and themes as they are expressed in talk and writing” (p. 1). Gee writes about an approach to discourse that centers around ideas, issues, and themes expressed as a way to make meaning of data. This approach to discourse analysis informed this study. I focused on the ideas, issues, and themes that have been expressed through the data discourse analysis leveraging the tools and theory inherent in this methodological approach.

The details of the language are important and have bearing on how the analyst makes sense of social, cultural, and political components of the data (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). The social, cultural, and political components of discourse reflect its multiperspective nature. Multiperspectivism refers to the idea that there are several approaches and lenses through which to view a single discourse. Those lenses in this study included social, cultural, and political components, informed by different power structures depending upon the actors that are creating, reifying, and interpreting them. In this study, discourse analysis was organized through multiperspectivism and allowed me as researcher to identify and tend to various ways of understanding and speaking the discourse and the social, cultural, and political components embedded in documents. Gee (2014) elaborated on this idea explaining discourse as a process of analysis that includes a variety of tools that can be used for analysis of language. Gee’s assertion was a call to researchers to adapt the tools in discourse analysis to the needs of their own study. Using multiperspectivism as researcher, I weighed the

approach (tool used for analysis) next to other approaches and identified what kind of knowledge each approach can supply. In turn, I considered required modifications in light of this new knowledge (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). In this study, I leveraged discourse analysis tools from critical discourse analysis to examine social, cultural, and political language and elements in the discourse.

The design of this study acknowledges language as a tool that can create and deconstruct social, political, economic and other structures that guide society (Gee, 2014; Schiffrin et al., 2008). Discourse analysis is the process and tool through which these patterns of language that undergird personal, professional, and community lives, are studied and understood (Gee, 2014; Rogers, 2011; Schiffrin et al., 2008). Through analysis of these data, I sought to uncover how language used in written policy, reports, speeches, communicates ideas, values, and connects knowledge (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Schiffrin et al., 2008). Analysis of discursive data can explain language as a tool that has shaped meaning through what individuals say (in written and spoken texts), and through how discursive ideas are expressed in the creation of policy or reporting of progress through performance measures (Gee, 2014). Discovered expressions in the data can have bearing on social, cultural, and political components of society (Fairclough et al., 2011; Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Rogers, 2011; Van Dijk, 2003; Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Using discourse analysis for this study, I tended to the language used in a form that connects and maintains the relationship from theoretical and methodological foundations as a whole practice working hand in hand (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Research frameworks and the philosophy that underpin the practice are inextricably linked throughout this study design, data collection, and data analysis practices, each layer informed and built upon the

other (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). I have revisited the framework and purpose of discourse analysis, discussed what discourse is and how it contributes to research, and explained the rationale for using discourse in this study. Next, I will talk more in detail about the methodological framework as organized for this research.

Methodological Framework

The methodological framework for discourse analysis in this study will be first shared through a brief explanation of philosophical influences on discourse analysis. Next, I will explain in more depth the critical and political approach to discourse analysis. Finally, I will connect how those will be incorporated as the methodological approach in this study. Discourse analysis is informed by various philosophical frameworks; important to this study is the epistemological lens of knowledge as socially constructed (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Van Dijk, 2003). Other frameworks like multiperspectivism, critical and political discourse analysis have influenced the methodological approaches in this study. First though, I will discuss the broader influences on discourse analysis as used in this research.

Sociolinguists discuss discourse analysis as the constructed character of discourse, making considerations for how macro level social formations and micro level local uses of discourse define and construct the positionality of the actors creating and being impacted by the discourse (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Psycholinguists approach discourse analysis as part of early childhood development through which the student or user of language is a “phonating subject,” i.e. the creator of sounds, and creative user of language production (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Gee’s approach to discourse analysis focused on social, cultural and political meaning in language, and understood the theory of discourse analysis through a set of particular tools used to engage and interpret data (Gee, 2014). For the purpose of this study, Gee’s (2014)

approach to discourse analysis as theory and method was the central organizing structure. Methodological frameworks included in Gee's approach are the influences on the research design in this study. They included an epistemological approach through social construction, and methodological framing in discourse analysis through critical discourse analysis, and political discourse analysis, I will introduce these constructs and then discuss how they were applied in this research design.

Social Construction

Discourse analysis is rooted in the concept that knowledge, including discourse, is socially constructed (Creswell, 2012; Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Schiffrin et al., 2008; Van Dijk, 2003). Approaches to social constructionist discourse analysis focus on power relationships, using a critical lens to examine discourse (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Social constructionism is a way to group a set of theories about society and culture. In this study, I borrowed three approaches from social construction: (1) a critical approach to taken-for-granted knowledge, specifically, treating an individual's knowledge of the world as one lens, not as an objective truth; (2) the link between knowledge and social processes, which accepts knowledge as constructed and managed through social interactions that help build common truths; and (3) the result of the first two, that knowledge leads to social action, specifically, conceptions of knowledge and truth lead to different and differently accepted sets of actions and behaviors (Creswell, 2012; Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). These paraphrased considerations position discourse as socially constructed; thus, in this study, a socially constructed approach to the discourse analysis can push on existing structures by exposing how language builds, and recreates power relationships, or how it can shift power (Edelman, 2013; Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Luke, 1995; Van Dijk, 2003).

I examined what people mean through analysis of discursive data and also through analyzing spaces in the data to expose the context and reality that underpins the presented discourse (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, Mosley, Hui, & Joseph, 2005). I focused on the meaning behind the dialogue in discursive data about the funding of higher education through performance-based measures for two public research institutions in Kansas (Gee, 2014).

Critical and Political Discourse Analysis

Finally, Gee's (2014) approach to discourse analysis which centrally informed the design of this study includes considerations for the frameworks of political (PDA) and critical discourse analysis (CDA). Critical discourse analysis has two specific forms that intersect well with this study: (1) actions - process: social actors are constituent parts of group actions and of social processes, specifically through legislation and news making, and (2) context - social structure: discursive interaction happens through situations that are part of a social order and structure (Fairclough, Mulderrig, & Wodak, 2011; Van Dijk, 2003). Actions and context were part of the consideration for the process and social order through which PBMs in this study were engaged. A press conference for instance may be standard for media institutions or elected officials, it is social context and structure that frames the discourse (Edelman, 2013; Fairclough et al., 2011; Van Dijk, 2003). Further, it requires specific behaviors from actors involved, such as where to sit, when to speak, and the appropriate language to use. This is a socially constructed set of standards that frame the discourse. Political discourse analysis is an approach that sees discourse analysis as a political process with language embedded with power, conflict, and control key aspects of the political (Edelman, 2013; Luke, 1995; Rogers, 2011; Van Dijk, 2003). Political discourse analysis accepts all actors as inherently political. These frameworks along with the

process and theory that underpin discourse analysis guided the design of this study, including the data analysis process.

Discourse analysis with a focus on political and critical analysis are the theoretical and methodological constructs for this research. I utilized this methodology to understand how the words used in politics and policy shed light on ideologies and beliefs about current issues, such as higher education funding, rhetoric, and policy. Gee (2014) stated that discourse analysis is an applied methodology that allows the researcher to see and explore how data converge into compatible themes (pp. 195-196). I borrowed heavily from the traditions of discourse analysis, political, critical, and educational in nature. Figure 2 below provides an illustration of how I leveraged these frameworks.

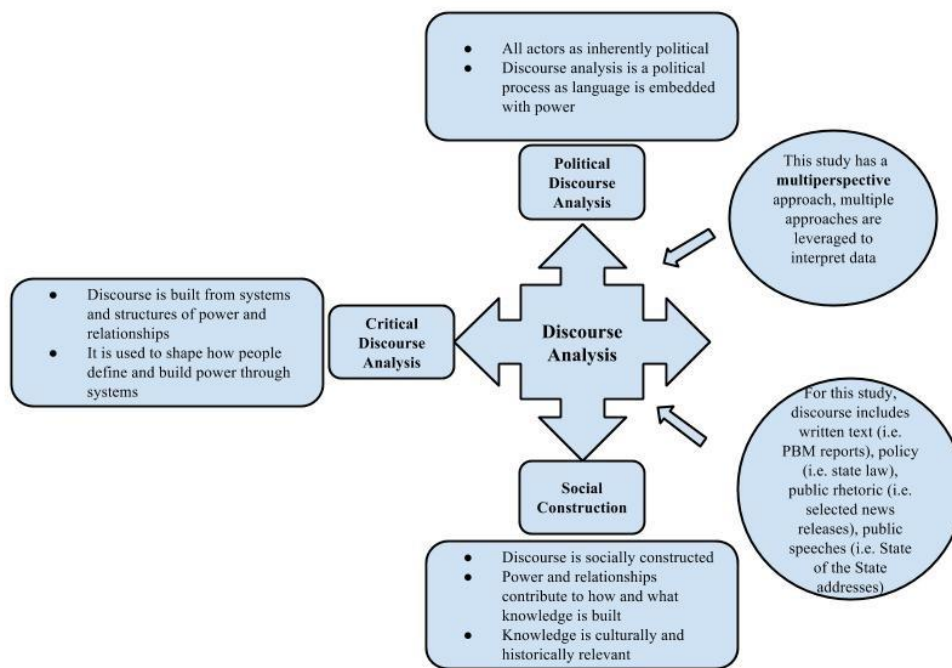


Figure 2. The Methodological Framework.

The approach to educational discourse in this study (outlined above) was influenced in part by the political, economic, and social interests and structures that reify existing systems and policies in education (Gee, 2014; Luke, 1995; Rogers, 2011). Figure 2 demonstrates the relationship between social construction, critical, and political discourse analysis as they informed the approach to this study.

Higher education policy and the discourse surrounding it may demonstrate how educational systems are built and run. In this study, a close examination of the complex relationship and process shed light onto how these systems are built, reified, and function to maintain power. This included acknowledgement and examination of systems of power that are inherently political, that include the social, political, and economic influences present in critical

discourse analysis, and that represent multiple perspectives and ways of understanding the world (Fairclough et al., 2011; Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Rogers et al., 2005; Van Dijk, 2003). These approaches are constantly socially constructed and reconstructed (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). The relationship between discourse and the systems established as a result of that complex relationship is part of the social construction of policy and institutions (Luke, 1995; Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Rogers, 2011; Schifffrin et al., 2008).

Finally, the intersection of this work is what Gee (2014) calls an “applied discourse analysis.” Applied discourse analysis is research oriented to engage questions and topics that involve that can address and impact real social challenge. Applied discourse analysis as research is focused on producing strong research that can result in interventions and practical applications. This approach is enriched by an understanding of the social, political, and economic aspects of the study at hand as a way to gain a multiperspective appreciation of issue (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Rogers et al., 2005; Van Dijk, 2003).

The discussion above provides an outline of how I as researcher understand philosophical influences on discourse analysis. Critical and political discourse analysis along with an understanding of knowledge as socially constructed were the guiding frameworks for this applied discourse analysis. In the next section, I will introduce my approach to the research design.

Research Design

In this section I will first introduce the overview of the research design. Next I will discuss the pilot study that proceeded the research proposal and study. I will then explain membership role as researcher, along with the data collection strategies used to complete the

study. I will provide an overview of the data for the study, including an explanation of the archival documents. Finally, I will outline the data management process that was followed.

This study is an applied discourse analysis that began in the fall of 2015 (see completed timeline in Appendix A). Using archival documents as the primary data source, I explored how policymakers and actors in higher education in Kansas understand and communicate the purposes of higher education through rhetoric including written and spoken discourse. I sought to understand how these officials conceive of the purpose(s) that higher education has in the state, and how those conceptions were manifested in written policy and reports. During this time I collected and inventoried the archival documents (justifications explained in chapter two). I will first introduce the design of a 2015 pilot study that has informed this work, and then I will explain document selection and access.

Pilot Study

Qualitative scholars cite the importance of pilot studies so that the researcher may test theories, concepts, study design, and the overall approach to the research (Maxwell, 2008, 2012; van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). The pilot study can provide an early test of the trustworthiness and rigor of the research design by exposing challenges to the proposed methodological and design approaches before the researcher engages the full scale study (Maxwell, 2008, 2012; van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001).

In the spring of 2015 I conducted a pilot study using discourse analysis as the theory and methodology and I mirrored the process I proposed for this study. I used criterion sampling to select participants. Criterion sampling is a purposeful sampling method that involves identifying criteria the participants must meet for inclusion in the study (Sandelowski, 2000). I conducted interviews with two participants, one interview with a former publicly elected official in the

state, and one with a public educator in the state. These interviews were open-ended and semi-structured in nature. They were based on a set of research questions framed for the pilot study. This protocol allowed me to follow-up relevant responses with unscripted questions and provided a narrower line of inquiry than a totally open-ended process would (Cohen & Crabtree, 2008).

I collected documents for analysis to gain context and understanding of the participants' experiences in education and education policy. Archival documents were selected because of their relevance to the study. I identified documents (publicly accessible through the state government) that shed light onto the work taking place in the state government education committees and through the work of the participants. This led me to important decisions about the data set and design of this research study.

The pilot study moved me to a focus on a document analysis that included rhetoric from publicly elected officials (public speeches for instance) and policy documents. Through the study, I gained an understanding of what documents were available and what documents contained the type of discourse (narrative text and speeches for instance), important for this study. I was able to identify specific policy documents and reports (performance-measures) to use as archival data. Identification of these documents was the result of understanding that a specific policy would be important to making sense of how a discourse developed over time related to higher education. The pilot study informed the basis for the research design in this study. The pilot helped me narrow the focus of my population specifically to state level actors who were influencing performance-based measures through their interaction with PBMs. Revealing the richness of data available through study of archival documents, written texts, and existing forms of policy and rhetorical data, the pilot study led me to do a sample data coding

and analysis. Finally, the pilot study resulted in an understanding of how tools like memo-writing, peer debriefing, and descriptive data analysis, could deepen data coding processes. The pilot study served as a way to test research design, data collection strategies, and data analysis approaches for this study.

Document Selection and Gaining Access

To gain context and understanding of the rhetoric around higher education and related policy in Kansas, the preliminary source of data for this study was archival documents. Scholars identify textual documents as a source of data in discursive studies, which can include transcribed speeches or interviews, policy, legislation, reports, and other written documents (Gee, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Rogers et al., 2005; Van Dijk, 2003). In this study, documents including transcribed speeches, policy documents, legislation, reports, presentations, and other related text were used as the central data source. The documents collected were narrowed in scope based on the following criteria:

- They were related to one or both of the research institutions in the state
- They were produced during the timeframe of the study 1997 – 2015
- They were connected to higher education policy or the purpose of higher education
- They were connected to performance-based measures in higher education: this includes performance-based reports (and related documents), performance-based budgets (and related documents), and performance-based funding (and related documents)

The two research institutions have been selected because of their roles as the public research institutions for the state. This period from 1997 - 2015 is the lifespan of the performance-based measures in this state and provides a timeline through which I could truncate

rhetoric around policy dates that span several administrations (both at the university and through the scope of publicly elected and appointed officials). This aided me in demonstrating how policy and changing rhetoric around higher education have developed in Kansas as connected to the national landscape.

The primary documents that I reviewed included: (1) performance-based reports from the two research Regent's Institutions in the state (University of Kansas and Kansas State University), (2) the performance agreements that led to those reports, (3) state Statute 74-3202d - the statute responsible for introducing performance-based reporting in Kansas, 4) excerpts from public addresses from state governors and other officials on higher education. Tables five and six provide outlines of the documents that I analyzed, chapter two includes an in depth justification as to why each document was selected for inclusion in the data set.

I selected documents because they shed light onto the work taking place through the Kansas Board of Regents, and from two research institutions in Kansas related to the purposes of higher education. This helped me explore how higher education is conceptualized through policy and with a specific focus on performance measure policy in Kansas. The documents were all publicly accessible through the state government and most were electronically available. For some, I contacted university representatives to ensure I had the most complete data set. I did not need to submit an open records request to the Kansas Board of Regents in order to procure any data. The data inventory (in Appendix B of this work) for this study reflects that over 500 pages of discourse were analyzed. In the appendix, Tables five and six include the categories of documents that I reviewed in order to saturate my understanding of the discussion and rhetoric surrounding PBMs in Kansas.

Membership Role

Membership role is a way for the researcher to identify positionality within the context of his/her study (Adler & Adler, 1987). In this study, I was positioned as both an active member in the research as researcher, and as someone engaged in higher education as faculty/staff. I am employed through the work and operations of higher education. In accordance with recommendations of CDA and PDA, I acknowledge that because I also live in the state and work at one of the institutions being studied, I am inherently a political actor (Adler & Adler, 1987; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Rogers, 2011). In political discourse analysis, the researcher acknowledges self as a political actor – one engaged in the construction or deconstruction of systems of power through the use of language (Edelman, 2013; Gee, 2014; Rogers, 2011; Van Dijk, 2003). It is through this lens that I acknowledge my own complicities in the development and use of the policies and practices analyzed in this discourse analysis. As an actor in higher education, I have participated in the development of systems of measurement that are a part of the performance-based measures in the state. I have also benefited from funding structures in K-12 and higher education that have rewarded institutions for meeting established benchmarks for accountability. My membership role includes my current position as a student in a research institution being studied, as an educator, and as an employee in higher education. I also acknowledge the influence of my role as an active citizen engaged in voting and political action in Kansas. For this study, I have been an active participant through the nature of my work, location, and interests. In the rigor and trustworthiness section of this study, I discuss reflexivity as a tool that I employed to examine my membership role critically throughout the data analysis process.

Data Collection Methods

For this study, the data collection process took about four months (see Appendix A). The data included four types of documents, 1) state-level documents on performance measures (legislation and procedural documents for instance), 2) performance measure reports from two research institutions in the state, 3) public rhetoric from elected officials during the lifespan of the performance measures in state, 4) additional documents provided by participants. The data also included transcripts and researcher notes from the document collection and analysis process.

Table four in Appendix B outlines the estimated number of pages including raw data and researcher notes. There were over 500 pages in total, a revision from the 200 pages estimated at the start of the study before the archival data had been collected and organized.

Archival Documents as Data

First, a basic understanding of archival documents as part of the social construction of higher education was important for this discourse analysis. Analysis of discourse through a critical lens began with the understanding that discourse is always social, in that it is always engaged in constructing meaning and is influenced by the actors involved; this includes written discourse like archival documents (Gee, 2014; Rogers et al., 2005; Van Dijk, 2003). Constructed meaning then also includes written texts like policy documents, reports, articles, pieces of legislation, websites and other kinds of documents (Edelman, 2001; Gee, 2014; Luke, 1995; Rogers et al., 2005). These documents and the discourse they contain can wield power to reify systems and structures of power, or challenge them. Document analysis involves examining these texts for meaning, through analysis of the language used in consideration of the context in which the text was written, including, by whom, for whom, and in response to what. Gee (2014) called this the Building Tasks and Building Tools approach to discourse analysis which is a way

to examine documents to understand how they are used to, “continually and actively build and rebuild our worlds,” (p. 94). The archival documents have language that is important to building the world of performance-based measures, but also that can respond to existing structures in higher education. Constructed meaning in the documents and through this work, means they have the power to shape and change institutions and understandings of higher education. Next I will elaborate on why this data set specifically was identified for this discourse analysis.

Archival documents were the preliminary source of data for this study. This research focused on analysis of archival documents that include discourse that has shaped meaning around PBMs in Kansas. They span an 18- year time frame (from 1997 – 2015) and offer a historical look at how the context around PBMs has developed over time. Beginning with the first year of PBMs in the state (1997) and spanning the total existence of PBMs as a measure for higher education in Kansas including the most recent 2015 reports, the documents cover 18 years (Burke et al., 2002, 2003). These reports included the full scope of performance-based reports for the state (performance-based reports, funding, budgets, and the other texts that explain and support them).

Finally, I will explain how I narrowed the PBM texts to the two research institutions selected for this study. Kansas State University and the University of Kansas were selected for this study because of their roles as public research institutions in the state. To position the study to demonstrate how changing rhetoric around higher education has developed, I focused on these institutions over this timeline. A summary of the documents is included in Tables five and six located in Appendix B and a justification as to why each document was selected is in chapter two. This section helps define what documents were selected and why they were identified for

data in this research. The next section will talk specifically about management strategies used to collect and organize the data.

Data Management

The data management and analysis strategy outlined in this study helped organize the data so that the analysis and coding cycles were iterative, emergent, and built upon each layer in the process to ultimately yield deeper meaning for the study (Creswell, 2012). Data management included the organization of hardcopy and electronic documents, along with researcher memos, and peer or committee debriefings. I maintained a large binder with the data printed in hard copy to make hand coding easier, all documents were labeled and dated. Documents were scanned for identifying information to be redacted if necessary; however, no information was redacted. See Appendix C for the Document Analysis Protocol.

I took additional steps to manage the data including:

- 1) Data (paper based and electronic files) were stored in password protected devices (iPad, recording device, filing cabinet, and laptop computer), and kept in a locked office.
- 2) Any identifiable details shared in the course of the study that were not already publicly available would be fictionalized,
- 3) Three years after the conclusion of the study, unused data will be destroyed as per suggested by qualitative research protocol.
- 4) Data will be shared in the dissertation and with faculty with the same standards of confidentiality.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process for this study developed fully during data collection and

preliminary coding. The coding process was emergent and iterative and the process changed as the study developed (Creswell, 2012). In the next section, I have outlined my initial strategy for coding and analysis as it took place. The coding and analysis strategies provided a way to convert raw data into categories and themes, and allowed me to make inferences and draw conclusions about the findings.

For the document analysis, the preliminary strategy was descriptive data analysis. Descriptive data analysis is part of elemental coding and provides a way to filter raw data (Saldaña, 2013). After the elemental coding process, there is a framework established to build from so that secondary coding can be done (Saldaña, 2013). I used descriptive coding to summarize short phrases and words in the data, and in this process. The preliminary coding process is a tool to help identify topics in the data rather than the detailed content of the data. Topics found through descriptive coding and memo-writing provided a preliminary sense of the data and the main ideas present in the data set (the documents) (Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz & Belgrave, 2002; Saldaña, 2013). Finally, all coding done in this study took place through the interrogation of power dynamics in social, political, and economic discursive systems. The theoretical and epistemological underpinnings focused on unpacking the various ways in which power is enacted, maintained, and proliferated through discourse. Descriptive data analysis was the first step in the data analysis process.

Description underpins the basis of qualitative data. Preliminary coding followed the descriptive data analysis and was informed by an analytical descriptive process of the data. As researcher, this allowed me to identify and explore themes of power (social, economic, and political in nature) that presented in the data and reified or shaped ideologies, rationalities, and policies in higher education. Through discourse analysis general topics emerged across different

data sources and across time periods, this strategy allowed me to push beyond general topics toward areas that required additional attention to more fully understand the data (Saldaña, 2013). Borrowing from grounded theory, memo-writing was a strategy I used in this process to deepen my own documentation and reflection on observations of the data (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2002). Memo writing is a way to move beyond initial coding and begin drafting language about the data. The memo-writing process is developed through using memo writing to begin clustering data and then grouping data into categories. Memo writing is part of the iterative process. I completed memo-writing before I begin to write about the data and alongside the descriptive data analysis process (Charmaz, 2006). I then worked to cluster, or group categories and themes in the memos as part of the preliminary data analysis and document review. Descriptive coding then provided a foundational coding process with memo writing as a secondary strategy for the first look at the data, I then moved on to complete a secondary coding process. The second cycle coding emerged directly from a discourse analysis strategy called the Building Task Tool (Gee, 2014, p. 95).

Tools from Gee (2014) and Saldaña (2013) allowed me to uncover the power of words and phrases to build institutions and create structures of meaning and knowledge that become systems and institutions - this happens when ideas and values are written into laws or policies. When ideology becomes the framework for putting a new practice into a state governance structure then discourse has moved from rhetoric to practice, rhetoric then is a tool for building context. This informs how discourse wields power and shapes society. Gee (2014) identified context as something that

includes the physical setting in which the communication take place and everything in it; the bodies, eye gaze, gestures, and movements of those present;

all that has previously been said and done by those involved in the communication; any shared knowledge those involved have, including cultural knowledge, that is, knowledge of their own shared culture and any other cultures that may be relevant in the context (p. 90).

To unpack this further, context by Gee's (2014) definition includes understanding the ideological underpinnings and cultural, political, and social knowledge that is shared by the actors creating the discourse. This approach to understanding the full scope of meaning in discourse includes the beliefs and values governing officials, administrators, students, and staff impacted by decisions made about and around higher education. My analysis of this discourse included a focus on language that exposes perceptions cultural, political, and social knowledge expressed in existing discourse.

Context is Reflexive Tool

The context as reflexive tool is one way to derive understanding of how discourse came to shape systems, institutions, and activities, as a tool it requires analysis of several things. Gee (2014) offered a series of questions to guide the analysis process, which will be applied in the coding process for the data:

1. How is what the speaker is saying and how it is said used to shape, manipulate, or impact how listeners hear the message?
2. How is what the speaker is saying and how it is said used to reproduce existing contexts and continue to provide them with relevance over time?
3. Is the speaker reproducing contexts aware of aspects of the existing context consciously? Is the speaker intentionally or unintentionally reproducing elements of those contexts?

4. Is what the speaker is saying replicating contexts like those that already exist? Is the speaker transforming or creating next contexts? (p. 93).

With these questions and tools, I was able to build on preliminary data coding, moving from descriptive coding toward more specific discourse analysis methods in order to begin to make meaning from the data.

Building Tasks and Building Tools

The Building Tasks and Building Tools categories and strategies were part of the secondary coding cycle. Gee (2014) outlined tasks that speak to the power and use of language, they are: 1) language that is used to build or indicate significance, 2) language that is active, which is language used not just to say something but to do something, 3) language that points to an identity role, 4) language that is used to build or sustain relationships, 5) language that is political in that it connects to the management of social goods, 6) language that demonstrates connections between and among things, and, 7) language that is used to build up or tear down systems of knowledge and understanding (p. 95). Coding was done inductively with these building tasks guiding the secondary processes. These seven tools helped me shed light onto how the discourse was active in creating, connecting, reifying, or challenging ideas, values, and norms. I examined the discourse for exemplars of this in the data for representation and further explanation of this process for the study.

Preliminary and secondary document analysis was completed to gain a deeper understanding of the rhetoric and action around PBMs. Coding was iterative with cycles of coding, memo writing, and peer debriefing used to increase clarity and accuracy. I applied the lens of discourse analysis influenced by political and critical discourse analysis and by

leveraging the coding strategies above to analyze findings from the data. Below is a linear guide to questions informed by discourse analysis that guided each coding process.

Table 2

Questions Informing Discourse Analysis

Influence	Guiding Questions
PDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the message overtly political? • Who are the political actors involved?
CDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What language present indicates the message is overtly political? • What is the social problem being addressed in this data? • What relationships are present? • What are the references to social systems, actors, or ideas? • What are the historical references? • What action is inherent in this data?
Gee's Tools: Context as Reflexive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is what the speaker is saying and how it is said used to shape, manipulate, or impacts how listeners hear the message? • How is what the speaker is saying and how it is said used to reproduce existing contexts and continue to provide them with relevance over time?
Building Tasks and Building Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What existing contexts are being reproduced by the speaker? How are existing contexts consciously or not being reproduced? How is the speaker intentionally or unintentionally reproducing elements of those contexts? • How is what the speaker is saying replicating contexts like those that already exist? How is the speaker transforming or creating next contexts? No act of speaking in a particular context will ever be totally identical to another but the level of distinction between the acts can be minor or major (p. 93). • How does the language get used to build or indicate significance? • How is the language active, language used not just to say something but to do something? • How is the language pointing to an identity role? • How is the language used to build or sustain relationships? • How is the language political in that it connects to the management of social goods? • Does the language demonstrate connections between and among things? • Does the language used build up or tear down systems of knowledge and understanding?

These questions informed by critical and political discourse analysis and built from Gee's (2014) toolkit, along with the data coding cycle pictured below guided the analysis process.

Figure 3 below provides an illustration of how the coding process worked for this study. Stages of coding were followed with memo writing and peer debriefing and the cycle took place until the data analysis appeared to become iterative and the data had been saturated.

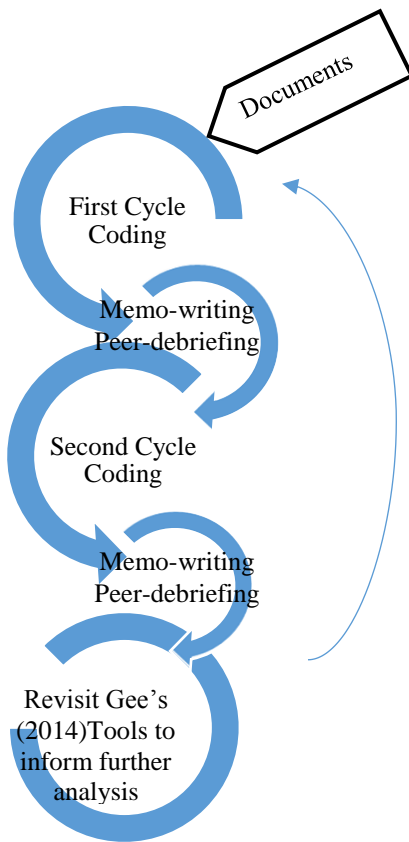


Figure 3. The Coding Cycle for the Study.

The coding cycle for this study was iterative, the figure above illustrates how the cycle developed through first and second cycle coding, moving to memo-writing and peer debriefing between cycles to make meaning of the data.

Ethical Considerations

For this study, I did not work with human subjects. However, in accordance with best practices, I did submit the documentation to the IRB (Institutional Review Board) for the approval process to be waived. I completed the IRB research compliance modules to inform the practice. The scope of the information used in this study did not include information beyond the publicly available data. I did not need to complete the state open records request process to procure data, as I was able to get all of the data needed from this study through public records or through request to campus representatives.

Data Representation

It was difficult to determine the full scope of data representation prior to the study. However, based off of other discourse analysis studies, in line with what Gee (2014) and Rogers (2011) illustrated in their work, and following the data analysis process, data representation has been done through the use of direct quotes from transcriptions and from the documents. Data also represented through the inclusion of memos and other notes taken throughout the process that shed light on the development of themes in the appendix of this writing. I borrowed from other qualitative traditions and used some vignettes to build a story to illustrate the findings.

Following the study, I intend to further weave a narrative of the discourses surrounding higher education in the state that is in a more suitable format for general public distribution. This may be in the form of a blog post to be featured on statewide platforms or through an opinion editorial for the state newspapers. Representing the data in a public format that can be widely read, interpreted, and shared is in line with the purposes of research performed at public institutions, and I will continue to work to align with this tradition.

Trustworthiness and Rigor

Trustworthiness is key to doing strong qualitative studies, and a framework for organizing a study design with attention to trustworthiness and rigor can result in meaningful contributions to the field (Creswell, 2012; Tracy, 2010). Tracy (2010) acknowledges the importance of context and localized situationally for qualitative researchers, in short, designing studies responsive to the specific needs of the context of that particular space, place, population, and design. Tracy (2010) conceptualized criteria to help guide, perfect, and tend to the craft of qualitative research through thoughtful and intentional design. Tracy (2010) acknowledges eight elements of design to underpin high quality qualitative research. Those include, (a) a worthy topic, (b) rich rigor, (c) sincerity, (d) credibility, (e) resonance, (f) significant contribution, (g) ethics, and (h) meaningful coherence (p. 839). Tracy's "Big Tent" rubric for rigor in qualitative research was used in the design of this study and in the pilot study conducted in the spring of 2015 to demonstrate the quality of the research and test the design. The design of this study was meant to increase trustworthiness and rigor in this qualitative research, it is not however, a promise of rigor. Instead, this intentional design called attention to a process that can enhance rigor and ameliorate areas of weakness in the study.

I have revisited and defined each of Tracy's eight points and then explained their relevance for this study.

- (a) A worthy topic is relevant, timely, and significant and could be emergent in the field or in society, Tracy (2010) wrote, "Current political climates or contemporary controversies can spark research" (p. 841). For this study, the research was timely and connected to a current topic in the state. Following a maximum six month time period, beginning in the fall of 2015 (October or November) and finishing in the early

spring (March or April 2016). The topic developed through personal interest in understanding current perceptions about the purposes of public higher education and how they influence and intersect with policy. This study has the capacity to help policymakers, administrators, taxpayers and other higher education and government officials understand the rhetoric and realities of the discourse around public higher education and ultimately could influence future processes and approaches to policy work. This topic has been explored in different states and through different research strategies but not through a focus on discourse analysis or in Kansas.

- (b) The hallmark rigor in qualitative research includes an abundance of data that can expose the nuance and complexity of the phenomenon being explored, a strong theoretical basis for the study, suitable time in the field, and appropriate study design (procedures and data management strategies) (Tracy, 2010). Documents were purposefully selected for the lifetime of the performance-based measures in Kansas with multiple sources (policy documents, reports, and speeches for instance) to provide a rich data set. Rigor in this study included the analysis of hundreds of pages of documents that spanned an 18- year time period to enrich understanding of the themes that emerged from the document analysis. The data analysis plan (outlined in the data analysis section) was specific to the data sources and theoretical plans for this study and was established prior to data collection. I used thick description through memo writing and descriptive data analysis to explore all of the data and to determine that the selected documents and purposeful sample of participants provided sufficient data to complete a rigorous qualitative study.

- (c) Sincerity or authenticity in the data collection process and study means a self-reflexive and transparent approach to the qualitative study (Tracy, 2010). These critical components of the research design allow for the researcher to disclose any subjectivities (see chapter one) and fully explore their membership role (see chapter three) as elements that impact the study. In addition to my own subjectivity statement and the exploration of my membership role, the descriptive data analysis process and memo writing that were completed throughout the document analysis process aided in the transparency of this study. I used these processes as a researcher to explore my own thoughts about the data and disclose questions and ideas. Peer debriefing processes throughout the research also contributed to transparency and sincerity in the study. I debriefed after each stage in the coding cycle with peers in the graduate program and an advisor. Finally, through description of the timeline and methodology for this study I worked to increase the sincerity of the approach by outlining my thought process and rationale at each stage to the research process.
- (d) Tracy (2010) points to the credibility of research as a component that indicates the “plausibility of the research findings” (p. 842). Thick description was central to the credibility of this study, Tracy (2010) described this as, “in-depth illustration that explicates culturally situated meanings,” for this study, that included continued exploration of the documents through the context of the state in which the policy and other decisions are being constructed. I worked toward saturation of data by accessing multiple sources, including documents from an 18-year time span from different sources to deepen understanding of the documents and rhetoric surrounding

performance-measurers and policy in the state. Finally, I provided samples and excerpts of that data throughout the representation section.

- (e) Resonance is the research's, "ability to meaningfully reverberate and affect an audience" (Tracy, 2010), I worked toward transferability in this study through presenting an evocative narrative in the research findings section. Public education is something that taxpayers have connections to; transferability is possible in this study and would look like communicating how the findings relate to other relevant issues. Through use of narrative, specifically vignettes, I presented the data and the findings in a way that allows readers to explore how the data impacts them and their life, and that tells a clear narrative of the actors and the rhetoric surrounding the policy. Descriptive memo writing also added to the resonance of the study as I shared my own reactions to the narratives presented in documents.
- (f) The significant contributions of this research include an aim toward producing practically significant research, research and findings that will challenge existing structures and empower new ways of knowing and being through. Good qualitative research according to Tracy (2010) highlights how practitioners are able to deal with situated problems and helps may help others understand future ways of acting, this can include political or social action. For this study, contributions of the research include findings that may challenge current notions of state governance related to public higher education by shedding light onto existing structures and the rhetoric surrounding those structures. Using the approach of critical discourse analysis in this study contributed to the practical significance by focusing on the structures that challenge access to higher education.

(g) Tracy (2010) described ethical considerations in research studies for each layer of the study, this includes how I engaged and worked through the presentation and interpretation of the research findings. Ethical considerations happened by intentional practices through multiple points in the study and included beginning with procedural ethics by engaging the steps of the IRB (Institutional Review Board) to examine and approve the process of the study. Existing ethics, specifically how the research was presented were also central to considerations in this study. Existing ethics for this study included what and how data samples are excerpted for presentation in the written findings section of the study, and my intentions as researcher to present the findings in a way that is accessible and transferable to academicians and the public, which may include opinion editorials or blog posts. I cannot control how others interpret the research and findings, but I can control how they are presented as part of the research strategy.

(h) Tracy (2010) wrote that qualitative studies are meaningfully coherent when they, “eloquently interconnect their research design, data collection, and analysis with their theoretical framework and situational goals.” A specific example she used that I adhered to in this study includes the use of peer –debriefing throughout analysis. Peer debriefing was used to acknowledge that socially constructed knowledge about higher education policy might have multiple truths, not one singular reality. Using a peer-debriefing strategy throughout the analysis process demonstrates coherence to social construction as one of the frameworks for this study. I attended to the purpose statement, revisiting it in each section of this work and situating the purpose statement, research questions, and the findings in the literature.

In addition to considerations outlined by Tracy (2010), I adhered to recommendations for trustworthiness and rigor in discourse analysis. Gee (2014) challenged researchers to check for convergence of themes across the data sources and for agreement and coverage in these themes and in the discourse across the data.

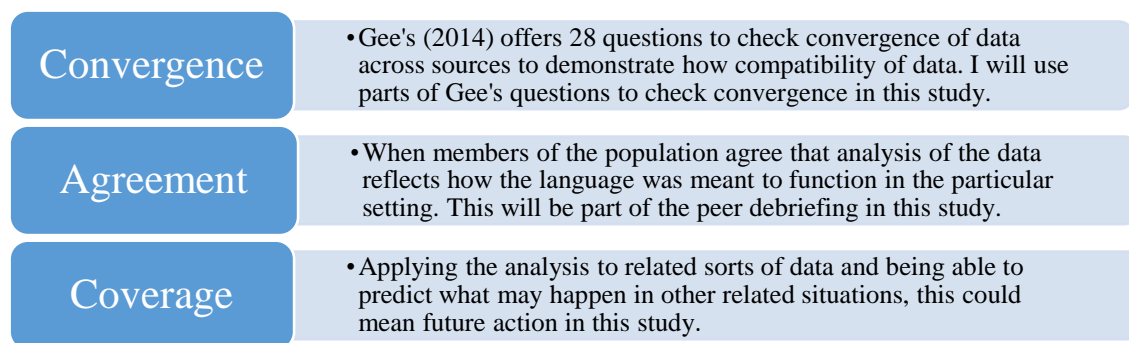


Figure 4. Criteria for Discourse Analysis.

Figure 4 outlines Gee's (2014) criteria for trustworthiness and rigor in a discourse analysis. I have outlined Gee's work and aligned it with the process that I engaged for this study. While I cannot guarantee that readers will assess the rigor of this study in any homogenous or universal manner, I did take appropriate steps to do my due diligence in this study. This way, when the study is released to interested readers, readers can assess rigor for themselves.

Additionally, Gee (2014) outlined four elements to promote validity and trustworthiness in a discourse analysis study. I have outlined three of the elements presented in Figure 4 and introduced by Gee that I have leveraged to bolster the validity and trustworthiness of this study. I have also reviewed the AERA Standards for humanities-based research in education. Along with convergence across data sources, AERA also calls heavily on reflexivity in the research process, and demonstration of relevance to the field, along with timeliness of the study (Association & others, 2009). In accordance with these standards, and through the purpose of the study, review of current and past literature, and methodological design, I have attended to these standards and

outlined that process. I returned to these standards throughout the study to increase the rigor of this research and check the process for best practices in qualitative educational research.

Moreover, this study used multiple data sources, through a variety of documents that span an 18-year time period, and that represent texts and voices from different factions of policy and higher education. The identification of these discourses as data is part of the process aimed at increasing the opportunity for convergence across themes. Together, Tracy (2010), the AERA Standards (2009), and Gee's (2014) steps demonstrate my due diligence to maintain trustworthiness in discourse analysis.

Finally, peer debriefing is a feedback strategy used in qualitative research to improve the clarity of the data gathered and check for accuracy of information. Through peer debriefing the researcher can examine data analysis processes (Creswell & Miller, 2000). I used this strategy during and immediately following the preliminary and secondary coding cycles. Using these multiple sources and strategies for coding can increase the trustworthiness of the codes by corroborating the codes across sources (Saldaña, 2013, p. 111). I included the memo writing and analytic notes, along with other notes in the appendix. While presentation of the data through an audit trail does not guarantee trustworthiness, it does extend the transparency through which data analysis and coding took place (Birks, Chapman, & Francis, 2008; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Saldaña, 2013).

Summary

I began this chapter by revisiting the purposes of this study and the guiding research questions. I explored the role of qualitative research and how it fits this study, and moved on to discuss more fully the methodological framework and research design of this study. Included in the research design, I explained the process and rationale behind the document collection and

participant selection for this study and as they are situated in the field of discourse analysis. I also outlined my anticipated approach to the data analysis and management processes. Finally, I discussed the trustworthiness of the methodology and the limitations of the study through the recommendations of scholars in qualitative research and discourse analysis. Leveraging Gee's (2014) strategies for discourse analysis I aimed to understand how these actors conceive of the purpose(s) higher education has in the state, and how those conceptions are manifested in written policy, discourse about higher education, and through other expressions of their work as legislators and policymakers.

Chapter 4 - Findings

I aimed to understand how higher education actors and public officials conceive of the purpose(s) of higher education as manifested in written policy, discourse, and other expressions of their work. To do so, I looked specifically at policy in Kansas connected to higher education performance-based outcomes and the surrounding rhetoric. Archival documents served as the preliminary data source for this study. From those archival documents, I reviewed over 500 pages of discourse for analysis in this study. I focused analysis on archival documents, specifically discourse that shaped meaning around performance-based measures (PBMs) in Kansas. Documents included performance reports from 2003 – 2015, performance-agreements, Regents' reports from 2010 – 2015, the 1997 state statute which was revised in 2014 that mandated the performance funding in the state, and political speeches from 1997 – 2015. I conducted preliminary, secondary, and tertiary data analysis and coding processes over several months. I completed a memo writing and peer debriefing process during data analysis to deepen my own understanding of the data. In this chapter I provide an overview of three primary findings and several subthemes within those findings that emerged from data analysis.

General Organization of Data Representation

In this chapter, the findings are presented in the specific order that follows:

- 1) Policy Dictates Access to and in Higher Education
 - a) Policy Dictates Who Gains Access
 - b) Policy Dictates Who Succeeds and Persists
- 2) Production Drives Higher Education through Social, Experiential, Workforce Development, and Economic Outputs
 - a) Social Outputs

- b) Experience Outputs
 - c) Workforce Development Output
 - d) Economic Outputs
- 3) Accountability as a Goal of Higher Education Policy
- a) Mandated Reporting, Accountability, and Directionality

Once I have presented each finding, I will introduce a vignette that carries throughout the chapter to bring the findings to life. In each section I will open discussion with the vignette and I will use excerpted data to support the finding. The vignette will be integrated throughout the discussion to elaborate on the potential realization of each finding in Kansas. The use of the vignettes throughout will be a lens to understand the impact of each finding on both privileged and underserved citizens in the state. Utilizing vignettes also sheds light on the way that an individual's power, privilege, and access can dictate who benefits from higher education in the state. The vignettes will allow me as researcher to explore how discourse organizes, reifies, and builds structures of power in the higher education system in a format that reaches a broad audience of readers. Through examination of the data I will demonstrate how each finding is part of a critical approach to this discourse analysis. Finally, I will interpret and explain how the findings build upon or contradict one another.

Findings include, Policy Dictates Access to and in Higher Education, Production Drives Higher Education Outputs (through Social, Experiential, Workforce Development, and Economic Outputs), and Accountability as a Goal of Higher Education Policy which includes the category of directionality. Next I will discuss the findings and the data that drove them.

Policy Dictates Access to and in Higher Education

The Miller family is preparing their oldest son for the college entrance process. The Millers have a family tradition of attending the state institutions and are familiar with the campus and the culture. A white middle class family, they have deep roots in the state which includes both parents graduating from the state institution. They have been looking forward to the day Charlie would also attend their alma mater and continue the family tradition. After work, both parents return home to meet with Charlie; they sit down at the kitchen table and turn on their laptop computer to access the Kansas State University admissions website. Mr. and Mrs. Miller both graduated from Kansas State, her with a bachelor's, masters, and doctorate and him with bachelors and master's degrees. They have friends that still work at the university and Mr. Miller spoke with one to get some tips about the application process. Charlie had taken the ACT in school earlier that year and his counselor had been working with him to ensure that he had successfully completed all of the coursework required for college entrance. At his school, he had no problem selecting these courses, as they were part of the standard curriculum taught each semester. His counselor had helped him have his updated transcripts sent over to several universities he was interested in and had helped him establish an automatic report of his ACT scores to those same schools. All that was left to do was for Charlie to apply. With the laptop fired up, the Millers sat down as a family to complete the electronic application and pay the application fee – they took a moment to begin the financial aid process as well. Mr. Miller's earlier conversation with a K-State employee had also cued them into the need to complete a housing application on-line as early as possible. Sure, the Miller's had some arguments as any family would when working together to apply for college, but ultimately Charlie ended the

evening with a successful application to Kansas State. In a few short weeks he would have his answer about acceptance to Kansas State.

In another part of the state the Campbell family was just sitting down to dinner. Ms. Campbell had a rare night off and her daughter Alice wanted to talk about applying for college. Ms. Campbell had been nervous about this conversation – while she was thrilled to know Alice wanted to attend the state university the entire process was new to her as she went straight from high school into her factory job. The Campbell's, an African American family had been in Kansas City for several generations but nobody had attended the state school. College was something that seemed obscure and unattainable. Alice's school had frequent college representatives visiting, but still, this was not something that her mother had ever discussed with Alice as a real possibility. Alice understood that staying home and working might be better for her family in the future anyhow. Alice had done well in school, but Ms. Campbell was unsure if she had completed the necessary coursework especially since the school had been short of counselors because of the budget crisis. Alice had been getting less guidance on what to take. Some of the courses she needed were only offered via the community colleges. After reviewing the optional ACT test dates and locations the school had sent home earlier that spring, Ms. Campbell also knew they had just a few more opportunities to get Alice signed-up for the test. Taking the ACT would require them to find a Saturday that Ms. Campbell could get off of work so that she could drive Alice to the test. Reluctantly Ms. Campbell sat down with Alice to talk through the process. Tomorrow Alice would go to the guidance counselors' office to see when she could use a school computer to apply. Then they would worry about the application fees and other paperwork required, and surely the counselor would know how best to send on any additional information.

The Millers and the Campbells are just about to begin the college entrance process. For each family antecedent circumstances like their unique family histories, ethnicities, and abilities to access educational resources have all played into their experience gaining access to higher education in Kansas. The ability to access higher education in Kansas is significantly impacted by state policy. In this section I will discuss the key issues that inform the differentiated access for people with certain demographic characteristics. Policy and access to higher education can be understood via 1) who gains access to the higher education system and 2) who succeeds and persists in the system. The key issues concerning policies dictating access to higher education includes a focus on at-risk, underserved, and place-bound populations who persist despite barriers. Emergent subthemes that supported this finding include who can gain access to the system, such as under-served and at risk populations, who can have success once in the system, and the programs that support the success of underserved populations.

Consider the Campbell and the Miller families as a way to understand access. In the case of the Campbell's, access is impacted by the new admissions standards that Alice is beholden to, specifically, qualified admissions. This new set of requirements for higher education include a combination of pre-college coursework, ACT test scores, and GPA in order to be eligible for admission to the state school. The process of understanding those standards and assessing her own work in high school is dependent upon her access to her counselor, her family's literacy about the higher education process, and her own ability to navigate the websites and other resources available from the institutions. This access is limited for her based on her family history and resources. These circumstances may hinder her ability to gain entrance to higher

education, to say nothing about her access to programming to support her as a first generation student upon entry into that system.

For the Millers, the college admissions process, even with the changing admissions standards, is familiar. With two graduates from the same institution, a high school focused on college preparation, and multiple college visits as resources for how to navigate the process, Charlie is already several steps ahead of Alice in how to gain entry into the system. These two scenarios are not unusual for families looking to gain entrance into higher education. Policy, as evidenced in the data, impacts how these families have distinct experiences and their successes and failures with the process.

Institutions of higher education responded to calls to increase access in their performance reports. Actors such as politicians leaned heavily on the idea of access over time to discuss the purpose and process of facilitating higher education in Kansas. Specific groups were identified by the Regents and institutions in relationship to access and opportunity, these groups include African American, Hispanic, female, and nontraditional students. Targeting efforts toward these groups is one way in which policy could impact the Campbell family as a member of one of these underserved groups. Here, policy is proposed to support families like the Campbells through opportunities to focus on this particular group gaining access to higher education. Research institutions in the state geared recruitment efforts and programming toward these populations. A report from Kansas State University included discourse specific to the underserved populations. In their report, actors from Kansas State discussed programming efforts to increase access to higher education for these groups. This would in particular apply to someone like Alice in her college entrance process.

K-State plans to continue the development of programs and approaches that will serve current at risk and under-served populations (minorities and women). Broadening both ethnic diversity in the university community, as well as strengthening diversity skills through the university experience, are critical aspects of being a top-tier land-grant university (2003, 2005, 2006 Performance Report).

Kansas State is identifying a commitment to programs that will serve populations identified as at-risk in order to support their success in higher education. This would mean the development of a program meant specifically for someone like Alice. She would be able to gain entrance to the university through an admissions process that acknowledged the barriers she was facing as a first-generation college student from an under-served population. Furthermore, upon entry into college, she would have available programming that would allow her to find appropriate support systems to be successful in her first year. The Regents in the 2005 – 2007 reports also affirm this goal as a primary focus of the higher education institutions. It is then labeled as an institutional measure under the "Targeted Participation/ Access" indicator, a measure that appears in reporting from 2005 – 2012. Kansas State's 2005 report explains that institutions of higher education should work to, "increase the enrollment of at-risk and under-served populations," and, to measure annually the "retention of at risk and underserved populations enrolled in KSU, students remaining enrolled at the end of the first, the second, the third, and fourth semesters." Here, the focus on access is predicated on a careful demonstration of success in this endeavor, something required by policy that each university reports on. In this example, policy dictated increased access to higher education through specific programming efforts. Universities have an intentional focus on serving specific populations in order to increase

access to higher education through increasing programming that supports under-served populations.

Institutional goals to “target” at-risk and underserved groups to increase access emerged throughout the data. Language from actors in a 2005 performance report discussed policy and efforts related to the access, enrollment, and retention of at-risk and under-served populations. In the institutional performance reports and through institutional goals, universities continued to make clear their commitments to under-served populations. An explicit focus in early data (2003 – 2012) was placed on under-served and at-risk populations defined as African American, Hispanic, female, and nontraditional students. Through Foresight 2020 reports Regents called for a focus on: 1) under-served populations including linguistically, culturally, ethnically, and economically diverse populations, 2) increasing access to place-bound students through offering on-line and distance education, 3) increasing access to efficient programs for non-traditional students, 4) increasing affordability through providing need-based assistance (Performance Reports 2013, 2014, 2015). Not mentioned in the first ten years (2003 – 2010) of the reports, this shift broadens the criteria for who should gain access to those who are economically and linguistically diverse.

The university policy dictated access to the institution just as state policy dictated how and what the universities do about supporting this goal. The data above from university reports documents a process of identifying issues with access and working to ameliorate those issues through policy and programs. Even if the university sincerely believed in this commitment to serving certain populations regardless of policy, the mandate of performance reporting policy pressurized that focus to include measurement of successes related to such efforts. The policy in this case codified access as a goal of the state. In the case of Alice, the requirements to report

increased services and increased enrollments from under-served populations may ultimately serve her as someone who can benefit from such programs. This finding extended access beyond those defined as at-risk and underserved introducing place-bound students as another consideration for policy. The Regents and the institutions of higher education referred to place-bound students in 2005 performance reports that included the following,

K-State contacted 238 place-bound Kansas students through Access US and other formal affiliations. The degree to which K-State's programmatic offerings meet the needs of transfer student and of on-campus credit hours (sic) will be used as a measure of the access provided by this institution and specifically in the performance report.

From 2003 - 2008, policy dictated a focus on programs to increase access and reduce barriers to higher education for place-bound students through new programs. This could serve a family like that of Alice Campbell by extending her additional opportunities to access higher education in an alternate means. For Charlie, this type of programming may enhance his ability to complete additional college coursework during summer breaks or intersessions. Increasing access by targeting place-bound students provided a way to serve students with a variety of backgrounds and academic goals.

Through discourse from these reports I saw an ongoing discussion between the state and institutional actors concerning access to higher education for at-risk, underserved, and place-bound populations. This discussion demonstrated the vast interpretation of the policy and who should be the focus of increasing access. One institution stated, "K-State recognizes and values diversity, not simply as a matter of form, but as an imperative for the intellectual and social development of all students and faculty" (2005, Performance Report). Recognizing their role in serving society, institutional actors cited the imperative of intellectual and social development as

a rationale for policy that increased access to the higher education system in the state. Through this evolution of the discourse, access to higher education was defined as a public good and human imperative. The performance reports referenced public service outcomes specific to teaching and research. Discussing one way the institutions could advance the public good, one report stated "... [the program] is designed to create a sense of possibility in the minds of KCK school district students that college is an affordable and accessible option (2003 Performance Report). In this example, higher education actors cited how policy led to programming efforts geared toward increasing access to higher education for Kansas City Kansas schools. This focus resulted in an opportunity to make higher education a reality for groups that may otherwise not have considered it. The evolution of the access to higher education as a central discourse in these documents developed over the lifespan of this policy work. Actors called on higher education to account for access beyond the quantifiable measures like demographic percentages. The discourse from these actors introduced the idea of access as opportunity. For Alice, an opportunity like this may include programming at school that allowed her to envision herself pursuing higher education. Perhaps this could look like an investment in services geared toward increasing college access or in additional resources like personnel to help students navigate college entrance exams, applications, or school visits. However the investment is made, the purpose of this kind of policy is clear, investing in underserved and at-risk students like Alice.

The Regent's authored Foresight documents began with statements about higher education access as it intersects with the purposes of the higher education system in Kansas. In addition to the purpose of increasing access for underserved populations, institutional actors articulated another purpose of higher education, to provide opportunities to Kansans for the future. A 2012 performance report included the following discourse about the purpose of higher

education, "A fundamental belief that America is the land of opportunity. One of the keys to sustaining that belief is the availability of a high-quality public education system for all citizens, regardless of status or background". Phrasing like, "for all citizens, regardless of status or background," delimited groups by citizenship status. Actors using this language made the case for supporting access for all other underrepresented and under-served groups and linked the idea of opportunity as an American value to the identity of higher education. With this excerpt, actors are framing higher education as the conduit through which opportunity can be provided to underserved groups. Omitted from this discourse however is a critical element related to access as it connects to policy. Specifically, that citizens (regardless of status or background) must at least meet specific admissions criteria outlined in the 2012 report or their access to higher education in the state through a Regents Institution would be postponed. Here policy dictated access over the idea of the human imperative as a reason to drive access to higher education.

A specific policy, qualified admissions, was presented in 2012 and developed through discourse from Foresight 2020 Reports. Actors used discourse to forward qualified admissions standards as a policy that changed access to higher education. The criteria for access presented are as follows:

Students graduating from an accredited Kansas high school, under the age of 21,

MUST:

- Complete the precollege or Kansas Scholars Curriculum with at least a 2.0 GPA;

AND

- Achieve ONE of the following:
 - ACT score of 21 or higher; OR
 - SAT Score of 980 or higher; OR

- Graduate in the top one-third of their class; AND
- Achieve a 2.0 GPA or higher on any college credit taken in high school.

Prior to the enactment of the qualified admissions policy higher education actors served as the primary gatekeepers to the system dictating access to their systems based on institutional requirements. This system allowed individual institutions more autonomy. With qualified admissions, the process evolved into one in which higher education institutions would be held accountable by the state to adhere to the Regent's policy. This policy limited access to the system for certain groups and districts.

In these reports, the Regents introduced a dialogue about alignment between higher education and their policies that could reduce access to higher education for certain groups. "The Kansas State Department of Education, in cooperation with the Kansas Board of Regents, is finalizing a reporting system that provides reports for high schools on their students' achievement at the postsecondary level" (2012, Foresight 2020). The Regent's developed this strategic plan for alignment and accountability in an effort to eliminate education gaps by engaging local schools and communities. The report refers to the effort to "Identify Education Gaps" to align expectations for high school graduates with college level education and to support high school graduates to be better prepared for college entry. The Regent's proposed response through policy was to revise the admissions standards for college.

This process of qualified admissions included a communications directive from the Regents to the institutions about informing secondary schools and Kansans of the new policy. 2012 Foresight Report includes a communication plan that required parents, high school counselors, teachers, and others involved in the educational process as an essential component to address the changes to the admissions standards. This plan created an additional access barrier.

Those districts, families, and individuals with limited access in their schools to college counselors, with limited literacy about the college admissions process, or who are underserved and at-risk could have additional barriers to interpreting and planning for the college entrance process under qualified admissions.

This revision of admissions standards to the qualified admissions criteria raises and rationalizes standards that can create a barrier to access for underserved groups. Presented in the 2012 Foresight Report data and referred to in 2013, 2014, and 2015 reports, this is a contradiction of the earlier discourse by these actors proclaiming education for all citizens regardless of status or background. This change discounts earlier declarations by the Regents about the role of higher education in providing access to Kansans for the development of humans as the higher imperative for the education system. Instead, it structurally inhibits access for people like Alice by codifying through policy a more nuanced pathway to access.

The discourse related to admissions standards continued evolving to discussion of improved graduation and retention rates. The qualified admissions policy became a student success message. Highlighting the essential nature of access to higher education as critical for success reports state, "In order for Kansas to experience the full benefits of having a highly educated citizenry, it is imperative that students who enter the higher education system leave with a credential" (Foresight 2020, 2012). These statements negate those who have structural barriers to their entry into the system in the first place; those deterred by qualified admission or other policy don't gain access to the system, don't gain access to the human development imperative, and don't graduate with a credential. For individuals unable to meet qualified admissions standards the postponement of access to higher education would continue until they demonstrate appropriate, Regent-approved competencies for entry to higher education.

Institutions seek to serve at-risk populations at the same juncture as the Regents develop policy that tightens access this system. The policy and the actors responsible for developing it oscillated between calling on increased access to higher education and delimiting that access. For a student like Charlie these policies may make little difference in his ability to navigate the college process, particularly because his family history, school, and access to knowledge about the system all offer him ample support in navigating any changes to policy. However, for someone like Alice, her access, and according to higher education actors, her future opportunity may become more limited by changing policy. Alice does not have the same levers to pull as Charlie. She will have to work harder to navigate the changing criteria and to interpret how those changes impact her. Further, let's pretend Alice has a friend Joe. Joe's parents immigrated to Kansas City from Mexico when he was six-months old. Joe has lived most of his life in Kansas but not as a citizen. He is not only held to the qualified admissions standards to gain access to the opportunity of higher education, but he is also bound by policy about citizenship status in the state. Charlie, Alice, and Joe all have different pathways to college access in the state and each pathway is powerfully impacted by the policies of the institutions that govern higher education. Policy dictates access and access to higher education is a process that becomes easier for some than others.

The goal of increasing higher education attainment among all Kansans was written in each Foresight 2020 report. Each report increasingly loses focus on this goal as evidenced by discourse that mentions a focus on access and attainment more infrequently than the initial 2012 report. Later reports reference the value of an educated citizenry and workforce 2013, 2014, and 2015 as the central argument for higher education attainment. Political discourse also focused on

entry to higher education. In a 2009 address to the Regents, Governor Parkinson shed light on the changing tenor around access, a shift evident in the 2014 performance reports. He stated,

Finally, it is clear to me that some of this improvement will cost money, but some of it will not. For example, our open enrollment policy has hurt our rankings considerably. It has lowered our ACT and GPA scores and more importantly, resulted in students who are not ready for college-level classes enrolling in Kansas institutions. That ultimately hurts retention and graduation rates. I'm pleased that you now have additional flexibility with respect to admissions and I encourage you to use it (Parkinson, 2009).

Parkinson's reference is to qualified admissions standards at the Regents institutions. Essentially, while access remained a focus as recently as the 2009 political discourse, the conversation around that access shifted, to one focused on narrowing access based on this new policy; Parkinson's address marks that shift. The discourse once directed at serving at-risk and underserved populations to gain entry and persist became dependent upon ability to gain entry into institutions of higher education. The move toward qualified admissions (and the discourse surrounding the standard) placed a greater barrier to entry into Regents institutions.

In this same excerpt, Parkinson refers to national rankings, something prevalent in the Regent's reports. The quest for national rankings for these research institutions is the argument made for qualified admissions. Evident in the Foresight Reports and political discourse, a values proposition emerged around access to higher education. Access became limited to under-represented groups who could also advance university rankings leaving many other voices unheard, unrepresented, and making it structurally impossible to gain entrance into Regents institutions.

Success and Persistence in Higher Education is Dictated by Policy

Access to higher education developed in the data through discourse about who can succeed and persist in higher education once in the system. Rhetoric of the political leaders in their state of the state addresses indicated that all who have access to higher education should persist and succeed. One governor said, “May we be guided not by politics or personal agendas but by a vision of a better Kansas. Our vision must continue the 140 years of commitment to building a Kansas in which our citizens have the opportunity to pursue their dreams” (Graves, 1999, State of the State Address). Early in the lifespan of the performance measures, this statement from Governor Graves would have constituents believe the focus of policy for higher education is on access for all. The data does not follow this proclamation precisely. Instead, the question of who succeeds and persists in higher education is largely determined by those who have access to programs designed for student success. Student success programs as defined by the Regents and institutions of higher education include programs for: 1) student retention and persistence, 2) general education programs, or 3) programs that make education more attainable and are designed for underrepresented groups. Policy that supports programs meant to increase student retention and persistence across the institution can dictate student success in higher education. Discourse in the performance reports called this improving learner outcomes (Performance Reports 2005, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2012) and enriching the undergraduate learning experience (Performance Reports 2010 – 2012). Both Alice and Charlie could benefit from such programs. For Alice, programming aimed at making education and post-secondary success more attainable could be key to getting her into school and helping her succeed beyond the first semester. Charlie will enter into school with great privilege and access to resources to support his success beyond what the institution can offer. Nonetheless, programs geared toward general

education courses and his success in completing those well would benefit him. Without these programs however, Alice lacking the outside support may not fare as well Charlie through or beyond her first semester of school.

Improve Learner Outcomes, a goal articulated by the Regents in the 2005, 2006, 2007, 2010, and 2012 included discourse focused on student learning. The reports read, “Improve student learning outcomes in general education and the majors by first positioning students to learn and then giving them the opportunity to demonstrate their learning” (Performance Report, 2007). The discourse frames student-learning success as the student’s ability to demonstrate learning. This same discourse proposed institutions develop; “Matches between a freshman student and an opportunity for enhancement or assistance,” as an appropriate response to increase success and persistence and ultimately open access to a wider audience. Here a focus on student success through access to opportunity and programs codified in university programs and practice. This codification of discourse and ultimately policy into practice could enhance the experience and ultimately opportunity for both Charlie and Alice.

Later, in discourse from the 2010 - 2012 performance reports I saw a demonstrated a shift in terminology. Instead of “improved learner outcomes” as the indicator for student success and persistence, “enrich the undergraduate learning experience,” developed as the measure of student success in higher education. Discussion of the enriched undergraduate learning experience included policy and programming reform following these practices,

- Number of freshmen taking advantage of the many first-year learning experiences available to them has increased
- Consistent with our strategic efforts to increase engagement for our first-year students as part of our retention effort

- Engagement beyond the first year and spanning the undergraduate career is critical to students' reaching graduation and lifelong learning
- Important ways of engaging students and enriching their undergraduate experience from their first year at KU until they graduate. This engagement is a critical factor in student's success and improved learner outcomes (Performance Reports, 2012).

This set of practices and goals was designed to impact undergraduate students from the first semester they attend the institution through their graduation. Institution-driven initiatives like this one were geared toward freshman. With these initiatives institutions used performance reporting to create an established structure and to provide students the opportunity to get solid footing through first-year learning experiences. Success and persistence in higher education became bolstered by access to programs and institutional structures articulated through performance reports. Later, institutions elucidated the role of policy in creating a structural support in higher education for student success as evidenced by this excerpt from 2008,

A family's inability to pay for college is one of the significant reasons why potential students do not attend K-State or withdraw after starting; an increase in the number of awards will result in greater access to students from lower-income families to begin and continue to attend. K-State's land-grant mission includes enriching the lives of the citizens of Kansas by extending to them opportunities to benefit from the results of research. This indicator is one example of the alignment of our land-grant mission with the Regents goal of increased targeted participation and access to university services (2008, Performance Report).

Institutional actors articulated their commitment to access for Kansans to the university and its knowledge. This discourse, produced by higher education, makes a case for its value to

Kansas and Kansans by sharing how the land-grant mission and the ongoing institutional research can enrich the lives of Kansans. Discussing the value of codifying these contributions through performance indicators, this discourse on the purpose of higher education in serving the citizens of the state by, “enriching the lives of the citizens,” or “extending them opportunities to benefit from the results of research,” is not prevalent in the documents produced by the Regents. The language of citizenship, the greater good of Kansans, public land-grant mission, and research for the people is only presented in the political discourse and the institutional reports. It appears throughout university performance reports from 2005 onward. Language in the discourse from all actors continues to frame university commitment to student access and success through programming.

Plans to recruit, support, and innovate services that increased access for nontraditional and underrepresented groups in the state is one way that the universities moved from rhetoric to action. Throughout the reports institutional actors reflect on the impact of the state and national economy on the universities’ ability to implement support programs. In contrast to the framing from the state documents, institutions indicated they are hindered by the economic policy and status of the state. Throughout the university reports, language focused on student success placing students above other obligations such as economic ones. While discourse produced by the Regents differentiated the value of students to the state through their persistence through school and credentialing after college, the discourse from the universities differentiated their value to the students through their ability to offer them proper support and development upon enrollment.

Finally, the political rhetoric included discourse about who has access to financial support for higher education. Access in these terms included the discussion of economic power,

in terms of individuals, that could financially afford the support needed to gain access to and attain a higher education in Kansas. Data from the political speeches revealed a heavy focus on access as a question of finances. In a 2008 address, Governor Sebelius stated,

...still too many Kansans find the doors of opportunity barred by rising tuition costs, room and board expenses and textbook prices... My budget takes significant steps to make college more affordable. I am providing an additional \$3 million in scholarship money to ensure that 2,000 more students can afford the opportunity to compete in our new innovation economy. There are also significant new state resources proposed for post-secondary education, to lower the costs for parents, students and Kansas families (State of the State).

Sebelius acknowledged the question of financial barriers to access and proposed a policy shift in response to those barriers. This discourse is evidence of an intentional policy development initiative geared toward economic access to higher education. Sebelius acknowledged that financial access or barriers to that access are pervasive beyond the question of gaining entry into higher education. She uses the term ‘innovation economy,’ as an indicator of the value of higher education for contribution to the state beyond school. The innovation economy mentioned in this statement is the response to the question of who may have financial access. Specifically, the innovation economy is available to those who can access, succeed, and persist in higher education but precludes those who cannot do those things. Before Sebelius identified the financial barriers of access to higher education, Graves (2002, State of the State) spoke specifically to the obligation of politicians to increase access to higher education in the financial arena,

I believe we should do more for student financial aid. I recommend a \$1 million enhancement, bringing the total to \$15 million for student financial aid provided by the Board of Regents. This will enable us to serve an additional 750 students. We must do what we can to ensure the door to a higher education is not locked for talented Kansans simply because of the economic status.

Graves used his state of the state address to introduce political discourse specific to funding higher education. Through political discourse, Graves and Sebelius proposed policy that would dictate access to higher education through financial means. After the 2002 and 2008 discourse around financial barriers and higher education access, institutions in their performance reports discussed the financial challenges to staffing student support programs. Institutional actors cited financial stressors as significant for students who were struggling with access, persistence, and success in higher education. Discourse from the 2002 and 2008 rhetoric along with the performance reports linked financial access and entry into higher education with persistence and success through higher education.

I reviewed data in this section that pointed to specific policy barriers that limited access and programs that supported access. Discourse around access developed distinctly from the Regents, institutions, and governors. Persistence and success in higher education emerged as a significant theme undergirding the discussion of access to higher education. The goals of higher education were articulated as for the human imperative, to develop and highlight student learning, to enhance the undergraduate student experience through programs for student success, mentoring, advising, and first-year programming, and finally to contribute to the innovation economy. These articulations demonstrate how the discourse around the purpose of higher education developed when told by different actors. Finally, the theme of access was played out in

discourse from the institutions and politicians around the barrier of cost to and for higher education. Policy dictates access to higher education as evidenced by the above discussion of the data. Data revealed systems of power embedded in the discourse distinct for different actors constructing the narrative. These systems of power developed more fully in the next finding from this study, that production drives higher education through specific outputs.

Production Drives Higher Education Outputs

The Miller family traveled to campus for an official visit. Charlie, unsure of his major, is invited to meet with the college of engineering because of his college entrance exam scores. The engineering program is in a beautiful new building with study alcoves for the students to use and updated technology in all of the classrooms. The adviser he meets with tells him that there are excellent scholarship opportunities, internships, and sponsored study abroad programs for students who study chemical, electrical, and nuclear engineering. The adviser also mentions the professional advantage program that the local engineering firms sponsor by donating time and expertise. Charlie enjoys the sciences but was unsure about engineering until he heard about the opportunities embedded in the college. While he wanted to study to be a science teacher, the College of Education hardly offered the number of scholarships available in the engineering program and student teaching economically didn't stack up to the paid internships he would take as an engineering undergraduate. The engineering adviser ended the visit with Charlie by sharing the statistics on employment and pay for engineers after graduation. Charlie was nearly guaranteed a job and with little to no debt if he took the engineering route!

The Campbell family had finally completed the application process for university and just in time to make one visit to campus for orientation and enrollment. Alice was unsure of where to start – her high school counselor had not spent much time with her identifying a major so she

was hopeful that the open options adviser at the university would offer her some direction. As an open options student Alice was grateful to have been admitted to a first –year program geared toward supporting first generation college students. The program would provide her opportunities to meet with different faculty on campus and ease her transition from high school to college. She knew that this would help her get a solid footing her first year. Unfortunately, the program adviser had informed her that due to state budgets, only one year of support for the program was available. Alice had hoped that after one year, she would have a clearer picture of what she wanted to study. Alice knew adding time to her degree program would cost additional dollars. She also saw that some colleges were more expensive than others based off of program fees. While she thought business might be a good fit – the additional student fees assessed added up to several hundred dollars annually. She didn't know if she could afford that and pay for her home and school bills. Alice pushed those thoughts to the back of her mind and decided to focus on the support program as a way to get through the first year, she would figure out the rest after.

The above vignettes highlight scenarios through which production can be considered as an output of the higher education system. The production value of Charlie's degree comes in the experiences he would get as an engineering student and the job security after college. For Alice the production value of her education is through the economic cost of the experience and the availability of experiences she could have as a student to help her be successful in school. These outputs of the higher education system including the experiences, the economic benefits, and the credentialing of Alice and Charlie as professionals are all part of the production value of higher education. The role of production as the key output of higher education emerged as a central finding in this study. Production drives higher education in the state of Kansas through social, experiential, workforce development, and economic outputs.

Production outputs are communicated throughout discourse over the 1997 – 2015 span of data analyzed in this study. As a primary goal or purpose of higher education, production outputs presented through four sub-categories of outputs, 1) social good, 2) experience or experiential 3) workforce development, and 4) economic, together these categories comprise the Production Model of Higher Education.

The Production Model in Higher Education emerged through use of the language of production throughout the discourse, through certain policy and higher education initiatives and programs, and through organizational structures and initiatives. Throughout this discussion, the word production or product applies as a measure of how much value the outputs of the university have in relationship to the identified object (person, knowledge, thing, etc.) Further, this production value can be used to assess financial investment from the state. The language of production can be easily found throughout the data.

Several examples illuminate how production discourse is used to shape power around and through language. First, production language was applied to the value of higher education degrees. In a 2012 performance report actors wrote, “Steady enrollment and degree production is a standing objective [of the university]”. In this statement, higher education actors highlighted the goal of continual enrollments and degree completion as a measure of university success. Enrollment and degree completion numbers can be counted and reported as indicators of university performance. In these same reports, production language is used in reference to another goal of the institution shared by the state, “Enhance workforce development in Kansas through training and degree production”. Producing degrees and training a workforce for Kansas are two ways that the language of production is leveraged to indicate a benefit to the state from a

higher education output. These are instances of production language being used to link degrees and people as products of higher education.

Production discourse as a descriptor of the outputs of higher education is language embedded with power. Production language assigns value, and ultimately power to the reporting institution based on their ability to produce degrees, graduates, research, and other outputs. These outputs were measured in the performance reports and described later by the governor's addresses and the Regent's Foresight 2020 reports as contributions to workforce in the state, to the state economy, and as a worthy investment (input) of the state. I will unpack this language more thoroughly throughout the discussion of production as a finding.

Production language is embedded with political power. In the national performance measures movement production is outlined as a desired outcome of higher education (Edelman, 2013; Fairclough et al., 2011). Across the Kansas performance reports language of production occurred, one example appeared in a 2003 statement about the goal mentoring less productive research faculty to support them in gaining grants. Higher education actors reported on research productivity and steps they would take to increase the production of research by their faculty. Actors noted an effort to provide resources through mentoring and funding toward supporting faculty in increasing their research production. This framing of the role of research faculty asserts production as the goal toward which they must work in order to demonstrate their value to the institution and the state. The Regents also used production language in their Foresight Reports. In a 2012 Foresight 2020 Report the Regents discussed the relationship between higher education and "Kansas Workforce Needs." The reports state, "The public higher education system is the largest producer of individuals with the skills and credentials necessary to fuel the Kansas economy and meet the projected workforce demands". Here language describes the value

of higher education as a producer of people through production of a skilled labor force. The Regents used the language of production to identify people as a product of higher education. For Charlie and Alice, their value as students in the system connects directly with their ability to contribute to the state economy after school specifically through employment.

The 2012 Foresight 2020 Reports shape the connection between graduates and their value to the state more clearly in a section entitled, “Why We Care,” which says,

Degree completion is a clear measure of student and institutional success. A high value on this measure benefits Kansas in two ways: 1) it leads to higher degree production and a better-educated citizenry, and 2) it demonstrates an efficient postsecondary pipeline as students move through the education system at high rates which is more cost efficient.

In the report the Regents have coopted production language to orient higher education as valued on the basis of production to and for the state. The Report specifically highlights this value through the outputs of degrees, of educated citizens, and of a system that operates as a high efficiency pipeline for education. Further, each of these things is measurable so higher education actors can report on them. Production language exists in many other forms across the data, it is a key outcome reported on in Foresight 2013 and is mentioned through the number of degrees or certificates awarded in 2014 and 2015 reports. Production language developed throughout the discourse, embedded with power to shape the understanding of higher education.

Production language throughout the discourse was defined by outputs of higher education and through its power to shape the purposes of higher education. Additionally, within the Production Model of Higher Education articulated by the Regents and the institutional reports, categories emerged and provided accountability measures for those products. These categories include social goods, experience, workforce development, and economic development

and products. I have placed these outputs on a continuum based on difficult they may be to accurately measure according to the reporting system.

Toward the left-hand side of the continuum are social good outcomes which may be more difficult to measure or may require new ways of organizing. Toward the right-hand side of the continuum are economic outputs, a measure of accountability that can be more traditionally captured through using dollars and cents. The heuristic organizes these categories on a continuum within the theme of production.

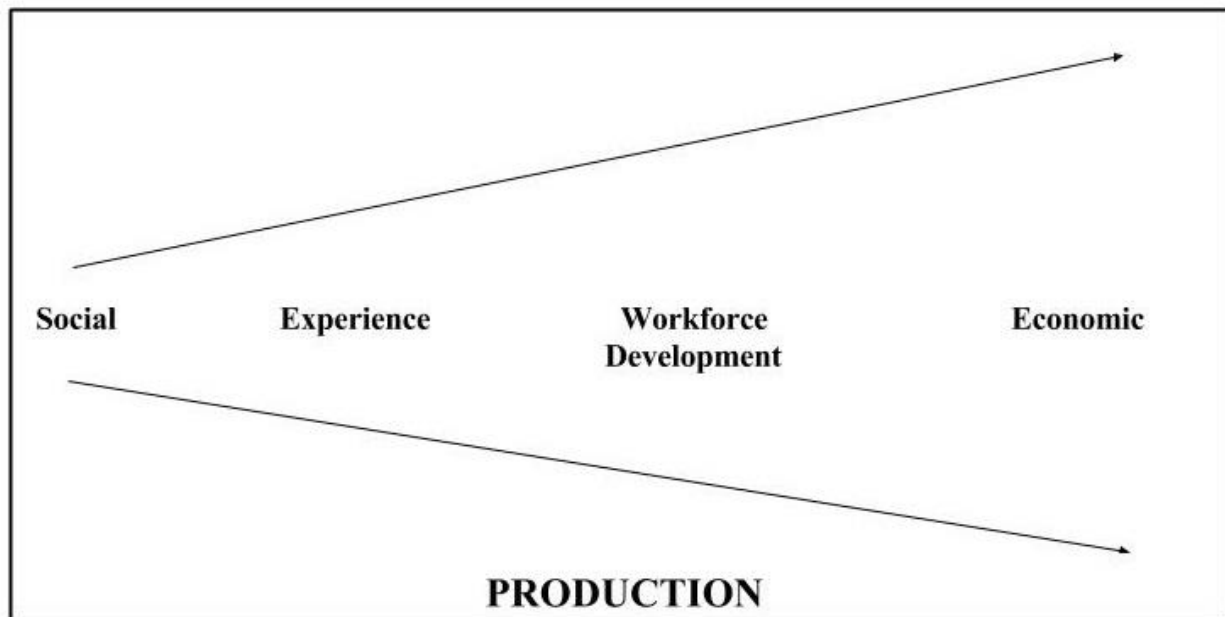


Figure 5. Production Continuum.

Set on a continuum, any element can move to become more fully represented throughout the discourse. It is also possible that an element can interact with others on the continuum. As it is currently situated, the social outputs organized along the left-hand side of the continuum represent those that emerged less frequently across the data, while the economic outputs situated on the right-hand side of the continuum, represent outputs that occurred more frequently. Social outputs and economic outputs may converge, complement, and build off of one another in any

given element of the data. Each category emerged regularly enough across these data to merit further exploration under the production theme in this study. I will begin by discussing the emergence of social outputs as a category within the production finding.

Social Outputs of Higher Education

Social outputs are one component of the production role of higher education. I define social outputs as the general well-being of an individual student, their contributions to social systems, or individual contributions to the educational process. Social outputs include the specific mention of the product or purpose of ongoing work in higher education in Kansas. These outputs first appeared in performance reports from 2006 – 2008 in which actors listed them as a goal of higher education developed, and defined them through discourse.

Performance reports from 2006 – 2008 included specific discussion of the benefit to the social system of the state, mentioning citizens of Kansas as social beneficiaries of higher education research advancements. Noted benefits resulted from work on rural and urban development, and additional resources in the STEM fields. Social outputs of higher education were reported from the standpoint of individual students and they included the mention of skills like critical thinking, contributions as a citizen to the state, or contributions to the community through social good generally. The language of social good was used to reference a broad social or community benefit. Discourse defined social good clearly through individual and systemic outcomes but did not propose a way to measure these outcomes.

Illustrative of the challenge in categorizing or measuring this as an output, data revealed a limited description of what qualified or defined social good outputs. Regents specifically listed in the “Why We Care” category of their report how they understand a value of the measure of higher education, “it leads to higher degree production and a better educated citizenry...” (2012,

Foresight Report). Degree production is easily measurable as an indicator of higher education's success through quantifying the number of degrees awarded annually. The measure of a better-educated citizenry, an element of social output, is more difficult to quantify. Actors from higher education outlined the value of having an educated citizenry by including it in the report as a goal of higher education. They did not however, define or guide how institutions measure if the citizenry is better educated. The effort to include social outputs as a product that define the value of higher education continues on the individual level as shared in this 2013 Foresight Report,

College educated adults also possess desirable social characteristics, such as higher voting rates and higher philanthropic tendencies. Equally important, college educated parents tend to pass on their knowledge and aspirations to their children resulting in multigenerational socio economic mobility.

This discourse reflects an articulation of higher education's purpose as critical to families and youth in the state. If parents attain higher education, the social good for the individual and the state are noted through the aspirations of their children and their economic abilities. This excerpt offers a clearer picture on how to quantify social good. Specifically, the discourse proposes measurement through voting rates, philanthropic tendencies, social characteristics, and socioeconomic mobility. These proposed measures narrow how institutions might report on the social products of their work, an output that overall is nebulous to measure in practice. The experience and outcome of getting a degree is a social good for individuals and for the state as articulated by actors producing these discourses. For Alice and Charlie, the social outputs of higher education could be measured by looking at their parents. Charlie's pathway to higher education became easier because of his parents experience which included their socioeconomic status. Charlie lived in a school district that could fund a college resource center, offered college

coursework, and could assist students in taking entrance exams. These components of the social output of higher education illustrate how these outputs move from individuals to the system as Charlie's parents passed on opportunity to him. This is an example of how discourse can build systems. If social outputs are a product of higher education and Alice does not have similar access to those outputs because her mother did not go to school, then she cannot benefit from them as Charlie did. The social outputs of higher education are defined as part of the production value of higher education in the state however, measuring these outputs, even with suggested categories internal to social good, remains difficult for actors to do.

Social outputs also emerged through discussion of opportunity. Opportunity is used in reference to what education should do for the social good of Kansas (citizens and as a state). Discussing the benefit of higher education, discourse from the 2013 Foresight 2020 Report outlines programs that benefit individuals and the state socially through general studies, liberal arts, history, and other social psychology fields. The report reads, "There are also programs where there is no linear educational path to specific occupations. These programs often develop talented individuals who thrive in a variety of occupations" (2013, Foresight 2020 Report, p. 9). The development of individuals who can thrive and contribute in a variety of settings is the social output of such liberal arts, general studies, history, and other social psychology programs. The governor's addresses also offered an articulation of this output. In a 2005 State of the State Address, Governor Sebelius said,

In a knowledge-based economy, first-rate schools – from preschool classrooms through our Universities' graduate programs — represent the best investment we can make for our children and for the future of our state. That is why we must respond to the Court's urgent call for action with dispatch, common sense, and a commitment to educational

excellence. Failing to do so would abdicate our most fundamental obligation as public servants.

Through this call to action, Sebelius appealed to a commitment as public servants, an obligation to do the best for both individuals (the children) and the system (for the future of the state). “The best” in this data includes reference to the best social good for the state, defined as an investment in education. This rhetoric obligating the government to support education for individual and statewide social good appears in varied forms across political speeches. In 2003, Governor Graves decried, “In spite of our financial challenges, we must provide opportunity for all Kansans through education and economic growth” (2003, State of the State Address).

Education as a social good for the state is couched as a means to provide opportunity which ultimately leads to an economic contribution to the state. Social good in and of itself, or education for the sake of social outcomes however does not stand alone in these data. This may point to a significant shift in how institutions of higher education, political actors, and others understand the purpose and value of higher education in comparison to how scholars like Dewey, Boyer, and Addams articulated it. For Alice and Charlie, it also raises a question about their value as students in this system. If ultimately the social output of the system is meant to lead toward something measureable like economic contributions, how is someone that studies engineering valued in comparison to someone who graduates as a teacher? Further, if socioeconomic standing is a result of the social outputs of higher education as proposed in the discourses supporting this finding, then how does Alice’s standing as an individual without parental access to the social benefits of higher education become a consideration of the system? How does this system ensure opportunity for students like Charlie and Alice both given their divergent abilities to access the social outputs of higher education?

Social outputs emerged as part of the production finding that impact individuals and the state system. Defined by the discourse through language about the common or social good and through language related to opportunity. Discourse reflected social good or social outputs as a product of higher education and it remained difficult for actors to clearly measure in reports and through proposed ideas of what it meant for individuals and the state. Higher education as a production model also includes this next category which points directly to specific experiences that individuals might have in higher education system as important outputs of the system.

Experiential Outputs of Higher Education

Experiential outputs, the next finding on the Production Continuum is defined as opportunities for students in higher education that would prepare them for contributions after graduation. This output is defined by opportunities that become currency for students to use following graduation from higher education. This currency may develop as a new way of knowing such as cultural knowledge, an experience in research that enriches understanding or boosts a job application, or an experience working with the community that results in gaining new knowledge. These are just a few examples of how experience as an output of higher education becomes an opportunity. Discourse stated that these opportunities provided for better graduates more prepared to contribute after college and sometimes more prepared for success in college following the experience. The student could leverage the currency of the experience output after graduation for job employment or “marketability” for instance. Students like Alice and Charlie might list these experiences on their resumes or discuss them as indicators of their ability to meet job requirements in a professional interview. Furthermore, Alice and Charlie might specifically choose a major or program of study based on the number of experiences they offer to their students. For Charlie, an engineering student, study abroad and internship

experiences have been built into his program as ways to enrich his learning. His college offers funding to support these experiences. Alice however as an open options student doesn't have the same resources to fund a study abroad endeavor. If she continues into the College of Education, there may be ways to support her as a study abroad student. Her internship however would still be a valued experience through a pre-service classroom placement and then as a student teacher. These professional placements for Alice would not however be paid, another indicator of how this is valued by the state.

An example of this output developed in 2007 – 2008 performance reports which stated, “[students who] successfully complete a study abroad experience will be counted [as outputs in an indicator for the reports],” Institutional actors counted study abroad as an experience to be leveraged as currency for students who have participated. In their 2005 performance reports, actors go on, “Students who have such experiences gain ‘awareness and understanding of the skills necessary to live and work in a diverse world.’” Actors have documented the skills and knowledge that are gained by “such experiences” as something of value to the participant. Study abroad experiences are a measure of the skills that are important to gain for life after higher education. Institutional actors also counted and reported on the numbers of students who completed a capstone course and who participated in living and learning communities on campus. This collection of experiences was introduced throughout the reports as a way to enrich the undergraduate learning experience; an indicator institutions were accountable for measuring and reporting on.

To account for the completion of these indicators institutional actors counted the percentage of students participating in each experience. Even though this output emerged with the goal of improved student learning or enriched undergraduate learning experience, the

assessment strategy to report this output was primarily quantitative in nature. It did not account for the learning taking place from these experiences. This reporting strategy proposed in the discourse and tied to the experience output informs how the experience outputs were valued by the state. Specifically that access to and completion of these opportunities was the assessed value the state needed to see, not necessarily learning because of them. This could be because such measures are hard to take, similar to the social output category of the production continuum. Regardless, experiences were documented as part of the value of and outputs of the higher education system.

Reference to student experiences as outputs emerged across the performance reports from 2005 forward. These included classroom experiences, service-learning and community-based experiences, independent project work, and reflective experiences. With each experience, the performance report narrative of their value focused on the professionalization of students and bringing academic learning to a practical application through the outlined experiences. Experience outputs also intersected social outputs. One report spoke exclusively about civic engagement across the institution as a significant experience for students, faculty, and the community,

Civic engagement occurs in all areas of university work – research, service, and teaching. Service learning is an engaged teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. Service learning is one avenue by which Kansas State University can meet its public trust to inspire an active, responsible and committed citizenry while helping to address society's most pressing needs (Performance Report, 2012).

In this articulation of an experience output, the value proposition points directly to the experience output as a social good for the participant, community, and the state, not as a job. The value-proposition is at the intersection of the experience and social output categories on the production continuum. Experience as an output complements the social output of the educational endeavor in that service-learning is one experience that actors note contributes to the civic engagement (social output category), goals of higher education. Experiences in higher education may allow the student to gain new or deeper insight into their work and societal contributions after school. Through excerpt like this, actors acknowledged social and experiential goals as viable outputs of the higher education system but do not address the question of who has access to those experiences. This again gives pause as to how the experience output of higher education becomes more or less available to students like Alice and Charlie based on their major, program of study, and obligations outside of the classroom such as work. The implications of experiences as an output for Alice and Charlie varies. For Charlie, his experience as an engineer will likely include an internship and a study abroad opportunity as he has the means, the academic background, and a program that likely requires these things. These experiences will expose him to opportunities for employment and likely make him more marketable in his employment pursuit. For Alice, experiences will vary based on the program she moves through. In education, she will have experiences to student teach, a critical piece of preparation for her degree. Her experiences with study abroad will depend heavily upon her ability to fund this opportunity; here money is a limiting factor. Other experiences will depend upon programs offered by her program and how those opportunities are supported financially. Ultimately, while both Alice and Charlie may have equal access to experiences, their financial standing may dictate what they are able to take advantage of as students.

This output is also defined as a research experience, something that the actors who wrote the 2003 – 2014 performance reports cite specifically as a goal of higher education and gear toward underrepresented groups. Actors explained research experiences as means toward better preparation of graduates and enrichment of their learning and contributions after college. One institution indicates that these experiences will be listed on college transcripts thereby formalizing the process of the experience (2003, Performance Reports). By indicating this on the transcripts, this formalization professionalizes the experience and credentials the graduate. Professionalization allows graduates to use their experiences as currency, an articulation of their value, in their job search following college. Experience as a goal of higher education can be as a contributor to the graduate's life after college through their ability to gain employment. Further, credentialing the experiences and formalizing them as outputs may be an indication of the accountability movement permeating higher education. Alice and Charlie would have different credentials to professionalize them based on their experiences in college. Charlie as a student who has additional funding to take on those experiences would likely have more to share than Alice. For her, taking advantage of some of the experiences in college may mean choosing between additional hours and therefore money at her job, or an experience that may contribute to her employability after school. Experience as an output is only valuable to those who can take advantage of it as students in higher education. This output may be limited by access to higher education and barriers to persistence and success in that endeavor as evidenced by Charlie and Alice each.

Discussion of experience as an output of higher education appears primarily in discourse from the performance reports. This category did not occur in the Regents Foresight 2020 Reports or the political speeches. This output takes on value as a currency for graduates who have it as it

becomes credentialed through certifications and indication on transcripts. Experience outputs include but are not limited to study abroad, living learning and first year communities, service-learning experiences, research opportunities, and other practical opportunities that bring knowledge to practice. In the next section I will discuss the production finding through the lens of workforce development as an output of higher education.

Workforce Development as an Output of Higher Education

Workforce development is also a production output of higher education in Kansas. Workforce development is terminology used throughout the discourse to discuss one result of the higher education system. Workforce development had multiple meanings in the data. It refers to the development of specific skills for graduates of higher education and the specific practices in the educational process that could contribute to the development of a workforce post-graduation. These specific practices were referred to in the data as the skills or experiences necessary for competency in the workforce. The workforce development category of data included workforce development as industry specific and generally as a goal for higher education. Industry specific workforce development emerged as discourse that connected workforce development skills and competencies to a specific sector or industry, for instance animal research. For Charlie, these skills might include a set of abilities that the engineering industry in Kansas has determined are necessary for the next generation of engineers in the state. General mention of workforce development appeared when the discourse referenced it in describing the primary purpose of higher education. For Alice, this would mean that the central outcome of her degree in education would be her credential as a professional teacher ready to enter the state school system. This credential would be valued by the state above any other learning our outcomes of the educational

process. First, I will discuss data with industry specific references to workforce development before moving on to the general use of the word.

Industry specific references to workforce development occurred throughout the discourse as mention of a particular industry in reference to workforce outputs of higher education. The examples that follow illustrate that in these data industry played several roles. One role industry played is that of the expert consultant informing higher education of how to make progress toward the development of a skilled workforce for the state. In the performance reports industry played the role of resource through which institutions could distribute new knowledge and understand implications for that knowledge. In this excerpt from Governor Graves industry plays the role of resource, as it is connected to higher education financially and through production outcomes,

Three million dollars for the educational building fund will support construction of the agriculture value-added center at Kansas State University. The value-added center - strongly supported by my Task Force on Agriculture - will serve as a place where producers and industry partner with university researchers to create new uses and greater demand for Kansas agricultural products (2001, State of the State).

Graves referenced a relationship between industry, education, and state governance through mention of the Task Force on Agriculture. Here industry is a partner for research and in production of research as a good for the state. A political actor speaks out in this example making explicit the value (three million dollars) of this partnership by linking its value to research and industry for Kansas. Industry is also mentioned in the performance reports as a resource for learning more about a specific sector and as partner to bring products to market.

Cited throughout the Foresight 2020 plans and the political speeches, industry is a resource to shape higher education and in return, to benefit from the products of higher education, the workforce. Data from political speeches introduces this relationship as early as 2001, and continues below in this excerpt from Governor Sebelius from 2004.

Our economic Revitalization Plan focuses new resources on six goals; creating and retaining jobs, expanding the biosciences industry, providing start-up capital for new businesses, encouraging entrepreneurship in rural areas, linking our workforce development programs to the needs of business and industry, and enhancing the state's image.

In this excerpt, the link between industries and the workforce is a means for developing new programs and enhancing the state's image. This link offers one way in which business can contribute to the state but higher education is not mentioned as a contributing resource of this effort. The efforts of business and industry are the key to developing workforce programs to inform the expansion of economic development and create new jobs for the state. Industry emerges throughout the discourse as the primary driver of economic production for the state. Later in her 2006 address, Sebelius furthered the value proposition between industry and education, "Let me be clear, these jobs aren't created by state government, and I will continue to fight any attempt to put government where private industry should be". This statement elucidates the power of industry in relationships to the state. The Governor uses her political power to separate state government institutions like education from job creation by honoring private industry as the primary contributor to the job creation effort. The 2014 Foresight Reports further this power system. In reports the Regents stated that the role of higher education was to, "Respond to business and industry expectations for graduates and ensure all technical programs

meet expectations of quality.” By omitting higher education, the Regents made it clear that higher education does not serve as a creator of jobs. Instead, higher education is expected to be responsive to industry, the creator of jobs, expectations. Industry, separate and apart from higher education, holds the power. Industry has privilege to influence and develop the workforce training for the state.

In 2007, Governor Sebelius broadens the intersection of industry and the workforce. “I announced On-TRACK a coordinated workforce development initiative to help businesses recruit and retain skilled workers, and to help potential employees get the training needed for a successful career in one of Kansas’ many growing industries”. The workforce is the focus here and higher education is again omitted from the speech replacing the power and responsibility of higher education to support and educate the workforce with the role of industry. In data from 2008 reports, actors continued to elaborate upon the connection between industry, workforce, and higher education specific to technical education efforts,

Last year I signed into law the Postsecondary Technical Education Authority to ensure Kansans are able to gain the knowledge and skills they will need to succeed in the workforce. Collaboration between education leaders and the business community is underway so that the training for new and current workers matches the skill sets needed for the innovation economy.

The policy mentioned above is specific to technical education. Nonetheless it exemplifies an action taken by government to formalize relationships between industry and specific workforce outcomes with educational systems in the state. Through this discourse, actors highlighted the value of a collaborative relationship between business and educational leaders for the sake of developing a workforce to spur the state economy. Finally, in a 2009 speech made by

Governor Parkinson to the Kansas Board of Regents he summarized how workforce, industry, and education are understood and who has the power in the relationship. Governor Parkinson said, “We need you actively engaged as if you were a board of directors for a private company. That means that you are not yes people. Instead you ask questions, you challenge assumptions, and you force the Regents to perform at their maximum potential.” In reference to how to govern higher education institutions in the state, Parkinson’s challenge to the Regents to behave as a board of directors for a private corporation appropriately illuminates how the political discourse assigns power. The purpose of higher education in relationship to industry and workforce is articulated as a private company which must respond to market demands from the Regents in order to be of value. Tasked by the governor, the Regents are responsible for developing a governance structure in which a clear return on investment from the higher education institutions can be articulated. A skilled, industry ready workforce is one of these returns on investment that these actors articulated through discourse as an important product of higher education.

Finally, the Regents and governors codified the relationship between industry and higher education through policy standards. Discourse from the 2014 Foresight 2020 Reports included the following statements which support this finding:

In addition to establishing new ways to track and report on academic student performance, many programs of study require students to successfully pass a third-party assessment which can also be monitored as an indicator of how the postsecondary system is meeting business and industry expectations.

The third-party test of the student’s preparedness for industry credentials is an assertion of the power of industry over higher education. As third party industry is allowed to determine the worthiness of the student and curriculum as a product of higher education for the workforce.

Through this statement, actors have highlighted the relationship between industry and government to establish this system. The Regents in a 2014 Foresight Report go on to say, “A pilot initiative is now underway, so that reporting structures can be addressed and a better understanding of how to secure accurate counts of industry-recognized credentials can be obtained prior to full implementation.” Through this pilot initiative industry has power to decide who is ready for entry into the workforce and set the standards of readiness. Industry alongside third party providers assesses readiness. For Charlie, this assessment may come through an engineering firm, or a set of standards developed by outside engineers to judge his skillset graduating from Kansas State. For Alice, this could also include the completion of credentialing exam developed by industry. Strongly articulated through the discourse presented by the Regents and political actors, an industry ready workforce is presented throughout these data as a category of production related to the purpose of higher education. The articulation of workforce as a central purpose of higher education happened more generally as well, I will explore this next.

The mention of workforce development appeared in the discourse describing the primary purpose of higher education as the developer of the state workforce. The Regents codified in the institutional standards from 2011 the workforce outputs of higher education writing in the Foresight Report, “By December of 2011, the Board will begin receiving an annual report on the workforce needs of the state and the number of persons educated in the higher education system to fill those needs to determine the alignment gaps.” This report of alignment tied the “outputs” of the higher education system to the workforce through specific industry needs of the state. Assessment of learning, one of the goals universities articulated in their performance reports, became the category of alignment with workforce needs. The movement from student

enrichment (in the social and opportunity outputs categories) to workforce development and later economic categories develops gradually in these data.

In Foresight Reports the Regents shifted the discourse toward workforce as a product of higher education. “The public higher education system [in Kansas] is the largest producer of individuals with the skills and credentials necessary to fuel the Kansas economy and meet the projected workforce demands.” In this statement from 2012, the Regents announced higher education as a producer of workforce for Kansas. Nowhere more clearly in the data have they articulated the role of higher education as a producer for the state. In this framing, the inputs in the higher education production model are the students and the outputs are skilled and credentialed workforce members ready to meet industry demands and fuel the Kansas economy. The assertion that people (college graduates) are the fuel in the economy of the state is one that removes the human from the equation replacing individual citizens with fuel, turning people into an element of the educational machine. Figure 6 is a heuristic that further develops the production continuum evolving in the state of Kansas as told through these data from 1997 forward.

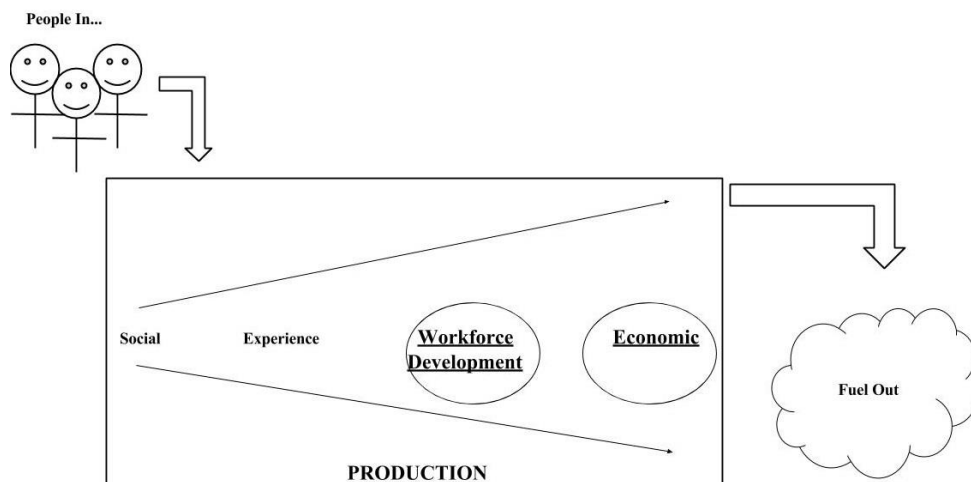


Figure 6. Production: People as Fuel.

Through the Foresight Reports data exemplified the production language of workforce development as the purpose of higher education in Kansas. Written as an argument for why the Workforce Alignment Report is a need for the state, the Regents go on in a 2013 report to codify more clearly the state obligation to inform Kansans of the direct link between a chosen postsecondary education program and job placement and earnings information. “Economic prosperity relies on an educated workforce. In order for Kansans to succeed in the workforce they must have a postsecondary education that matches demand occupations.” The Regents present a consumer-based mindset for approaching education as a workforce developer. This articulation of the purpose of education furthers the narrative that education is a product or good for the benefit of the individual and the state. The Regents go on in the data explaining, “Viewing the system [higher education] from only one lens, workforce production or personal growth, is not effective or productive as all postsecondary achievement is relevant” (Foresight 2020, p. 27). The discourse identifies all programs as relevant and articulates that there is a direct connection between program relevance and economic achievement. In the cases of Alice and Charlie, both academic majors would be seen as valuable to the state. Each student might receive

data when choosing their degree program as to their potential earnings post-graduation. This data would be meant to help them in the decision making process about what they would study. Additionally, their colleges would likely need to report on their employment statistics as a measure of how well the respective programs prepared them for professional work.

Finally, the Regents go on to craft the discourse carefully around the value proposition of higher education,

Although all credentials have value, certain credentials are highly desired to respond to workforce and economic demands. The Board of Regents has developed a mixture of tasks and measures to recognize the extraordinary responsibility the system has in developing the workforce necessary for economic success (Foresight 2020, 2012, p. 27).

This data speaks to a hierarchy within the higher education system. Some outputs (in this case credentials and degrees) are more valuable to individuals and to the state than others. The Foresight Reports from which this data emerged demonstrates a carefully crafted purpose (value) of higher education in the state. The constructed narrative from the Regents further emboldened the workforce production role of the university as it became cemented through the reporting structures they established for higher education.

Making arguments for the role of higher education in workforce development, the Regents in the Foresight 2020 Reports in 2013, 2014, and 2015 continue to deepen the goal of “Improve Alignment of the State’s Higher Education System with the Needs of the Economy”. Through this discourse they forwarded the argument for higher education to drive workforce development for the economic success of the state by linking the workforce, prosperity, and the economy. This next excerpt from the 2014 Foresight report demonstrates this effort:

The long-term prosperity of Kansans and the Kansas economy rely on an educated workforce with the skills matching high-wage, high-demand occupations in the state.

Although the needs of the workforce are dynamic and fluid, the higher education system, in partnership with the Governor and Legislature, can and must effectively adjust to meet workforce shortages that hamper economic growth and competitiveness of Kansas.

Here the Regents make a case for the role of higher education in contributing to an educated and productive workforce. This is not a new expectation of higher education but it does mark an omission of the role of the university as a developer of citizens. The Regent's narrative indicates a reduced role of the university as a developer of critical thinkers replacing a social good role with the purpose of workforce development and prosperity for the state. This role of workforce developer is then defined narrowly through production of industry and economic growth, two indicators that emerged from the discourse as the priority of the state.

The role of the university as a developer of the workforce presented in narratives from all actors specific to industry and more generally focused on a workforce output. Through these data the constructed narrative broadens the production continuum introduced in Figure 5 and illustrated in Figure 6 toward a focus on the economic and workforce outputs of higher education. In these data, workforce development as the role of higher education emerges as a means of moving the system toward a focus more fully on economic production. Next, I will discuss the economic category of the production theme as the final and most apparent finding in the data.

Production as the Economic Outputs of Higher Education

Throughout the discourse actors referred directly to the economic benefit of the pursuit of higher education. Economic language occurs through discussion of research endeavors (the

Animal Health corridor or licensing for instance), through the quantitative measurement of graduates as contributors to the workforce, and through discussion of knowledge or education-based economies. These instances of data emerged in discourse from the Regents, the governors, and higher education in their discussion of the purpose and process of the education system..

An economic category for higher education developed in relationship to research produced by the universities including public and private sector partnerships. In 2014 the Kansas Board of Regents outlined in Aspiration 5 of their Foresight 2020 Report goals for economic developments through research, “Enhance understanding of the role of university research in supporting the economy”. The Regents have the power to shape the identity of the public institution for citizens and the legislature by creating a discourse that frames this institutional identity as one that is a support system to the economy of the state through production of research. This public identity emerged much earlier in the data and is crafted by the Regents, the Governors, and the institutions themselves throughout the data.

In the earliest (2003) performance reports, institutions began to shape their own identities as contributors to the state economy through their role as research producers. Indicators like the “Teaching, research, and public service outreach programs in Kansas,” served as a way for them to articulate their role in serving the state. This same 2003 report presented these efforts in research as a “link between community action groups and KC economic growth”. Here the institutional actors communicated the identity of the research institutions as cross between public service and research that can enhance economic production. This identity begins to evolve and in 2005 the same institutional actors continued to present higher education as a driver of the economy through research production. This time they expressed their identities through production of technology and outputs for the market: “Technologies derived from K-State

intellectual property are sometimes licensed or optioned to companies in Kansas, thereby contributing to economic development in the state. Indicators [of success] are the amount of licensing revenues and equity received from these companies” (Performance Report, 2005). In a later report, the language becomes even clearer, “Research provides economic benefits to the State of Kansas and is a critical function of our mission,” (Performance Reports, 2010-2012). The discourse from 2010-2012 explicitly identified research as an opportunity to benefit the state economically and connects it directly to the institutional mission. Over nine years of data, the institutions cultivated a discourse that moved them centrally into the role of economic producers for the state through their research endeavors.

Similarly, the political addresses from this timeline demonstrate an institutional identity connected to the state economy through research. In 2009, Governor Sebelius cites a cross-sector research and production partnership as a significant economic engine for the state,

We now have an opportunity to create a Comprehensive Cancer Center. And much like the effort to bring NBAF to Kansas, this will be a multi-year collaborative effort.

Including private sector partners, our research universities, health allies from across the region, the Midwest Cancer Alliance, and the Bio Science Authority. This application for National Cancer Institute designation will occur in 2011; and if successful, has enormous potential as an economic engine, estimated to generate \$1.3 billion dollars annually, and create nearly 10,000 new jobs within a decade.

Governor Sebelius clearly highlighted a research initiative means to link private and public sector partners and economically stimulate the state. Here she has articulated the opportunity for higher education to literally drive the state economy through research and partnership. Most recently, in a 2011 address to the state, Governor Brownback takes the linkage

and the accountability on higher education as an economic development engine for the state further,

A three year, \$105 M University Economic Growth initiative to enhance job growth in key economic sectors such as Aviation, Cancer Research, Animal Health, and Engineering. Each university will be required to provide through private sector or reprogrammed funds 5% of the cost of the program initiative.

In this statement Brownback developed a co-created identity. The university is an economic driver for the state, an identity developed through discourses from higher education, the Regents, and elected officials. This identity links the institution to public and private (industry) partnerships. Presented in the data through quantifiable dollars and cents, the discourse crafts the identity of the institution as a research driver. The institution is an “engine” to drive the state giving the institution power. The university with the identity of an economic engine binds the success of that institution based on its economic contribution to the state, in this case, through research. The identity of the university as a production engine for the state through commodification of research and technology is not the only one that occurs in the economic category of the production theme. Data also connects the identity and purpose of higher education to production of workforce for the purpose of economic gain.

In the discourse, data illustrated the intersection of the workforce and economic identities of the university. Actors expressed the purposes of the university through a production lens that includes distinct and dependent categories. Workforce and economic production intersect in the production theme; the Regents in the Foresight Reports communicated the intersection of these categories. In these discourses actors built the identity of the research institution along with the purpose of higher education through the lens of economic support and production through

workforce development. Constructing the discourse around the purpose of higher education, the Regents wrote in a 2012 report, “The postsecondary system balances the needs and desires of the individual seeking personal growth with the demands of the economy”. Here their narrative pointed to a possible conflict with the economic demands of the system and individual wants. The narrative here is of power in systems, further, the constructed discourse in these data alludes to the hierarchy of valuing the system over individual needs. The Regents at the helm of this system determine prioritization of individual needs. This is presented in data from a 2014 and 2015 Foresight 2020 reports, “Goal 2: Improve Alignment of the State’s Higher Education System with the Needs of the Economy”. Adopted by the Regents, who in the same reports acknowledge, “that the higher education system in Kansas is one of the main drivers of the workforce and economy”. Critically, the institution of higher education, not the individual citizen or participant in that system, is the driver of the economy through workforce development. Higher education produces a workforce that drives the economy, an identity crafted through Regents discourse. That identity defers to a system which requires specific outputs, as stated in Goal 2, which align with the state economy. The production of a workforce aligned with the economy and driving the economy is an output of higher education institutions. This output identifies students like Alice and Charlie as products to be churned out by the colleges and universities for the benefit of the state. These two students become valuable because of their ability to contribute to the workforce and conversely, if they do not graduate or enter an industry that the state needs, their value decreases. It could follow-suit that their programs receive funding and state support or private industry support based on the graduates they are producing. Further, programs not producing graduates seen as valuable according to state

industry may get cut – for Alice and Charlie, this could directly impact how and what they are able to do in school.

Finally, data demonstrates how the Regents make the message of workforce development and institutional identity clear with discourse as their tool, “...universities are now better connecting current students and graduates to engineering opportunities at Kansas companies, providing a substantial return on investment for both students and Kansas businesses” (Foresight 2020, 2014). The development of a workforce for entry into engineering programs in the state has resulted in economic benefit for the industry, and the individual, but ultimately for the state system. In discourse like the excerpt from Foresight Reports, the Regents frame a return on investment argument for higher education. The economic value of the graduates as members of the workforce is the primary measure the state is concerned with.

Finally, through discourse, actors built a narrative about the identity of the university as one of a builder of the economy. In 2003 Governor Graves linked education and economies formalizing power through including it in a public address to the state. His statement below informed a discourse around the purpose of higher education,

In spite of our financial challenges, we must provide opportunity for all Kansans through education and economic growth. An educated workforce is so intimately linked to economic prosperity that we can’t afford to retreat from educational excellence in difficult economic times or we will hinder our recovery efforts (State of the State, 2003).

His message of investment in higher education is for the economic prosperity of the state. His words indicate an understanding that this investment in higher education is also an economic risk for the state. Through discourse Graves presented higher education through an investment

lens. Other governors reified the role of education as an investment. In 2008, Governor Sebelius linked the opportunity to compete in the economy with the issue of access,

My budget takes significant steps to make college more affordable. I am providing an additional \$3 million in scholarship money to ensure that 2,000 more students can afford the opportunity to compete in our new innovation economy. There are also significant new state resources proposed for post-secondary education, to lower the costs for parents, students and Kansas families (State of the State, 2008).

Sebelius argues for increasing access to higher education for underserved populations in the state. Her message linked that financial commitment to underserved peoples to an economic opportunity for the state. She used discourse to frame this as the opportunity for these groups to participate in the innovation economy of the state, to advance the identity of research institution as an economic driver for the state. For Alice, this endeavor would mean additional opportunity to participate and that she is seen as having potential to economically contribute to the state.

Governor Parkinson picked up this language of schools as economic engines taking it further, in 2010, “Make no mistake, our commitment to higher education is not just the right thing to do, it is great economic development” (State of the State Address). These political actors made apparent that an investment in higher education is an investment in the economic success of the state. Actors continually make this connection in these narratives. However, there is no mention of other (if any) benefits for the state by committing to higher education. Investments are framed as economic and for the return of economic prosperity in the state. In 2010, Governor Parkinson continued connecting the research institution identity and that of an economic driver for the state.

Hundreds of thousands of Kansans have graduated from these schools and have made our state what it is today. *In addition, our schools have become an economic engine. Ask*

yourself why the animal health corridor exists in Kansas. It exists because this Legislature had the vision many years ago to fund Kansas State University so it could develop a world-class veterinary school. Make no mistake, our commitment to higher education is not just the right thing to do, it is great economic development.

The governor's address formalizes the connection between investment in state higher education and economic return for the state linking investments in animal health to drive economic development through industry. The governors are not alone in their articulation of higher education as an economic driver for the state; the Regents also carried forward this discourse. In 2014 the Regents developed a discourse highlighting this connection citing, "Growing jobs, economic prosperity for companies and Kansans, and a return on investment for Kansas taxpayers," as outputs and benefits of the university as an economic driver in the state (p. 13). Demonstrating the power of discourse shared by those with access, they credit Governor Brownback for this focus on the university as an economic driver, "...as part of his *Economic Development Strategic Plan* and its focus on Universities as Engines of Economic Development" (Foresight 2020, 2014).

In addition to speaking directly about higher education as an economic driver, the term knowledge-based economy and innovation economy occur throughout the Regents Foresight 2020 Reports and in political speeches. In 2013 under the goal of "Improve Economic Alignment," the Regents wrote, "In the knowledge-based economy, obtaining a postsecondary credential is increasingly vital for personal economic success and the long term economic success of the state" (p. 7). The framing of the economy as knowledge-based solidifies the role of the higher education institution as a participant in economic development. Through omission it also disempowers any other role of the university, like that as a civic educator or social driver.

While the Regents and the Governors championed the role of the university as an economic driver, the institutions shared a different interpretation of their relationship within the state economy. In the next element of this finding I'll unpack how higher education institutions articulated the impact of the economy.

Economic hardship at the state-level is mentioned throughout the data beginning with performance reports from 2007. It is discussed as a hindrance to research and development, fundraising, and programs vital to student success. In 2010-2012 reports higher education actors illustrated the impact of the economic hardship of the state on the university stating,

Maintaining the current average degree production will be challenged by many conditions including program offerings, employer-supported tuition funding, tuition harmonization, competitive market conditions such as nontraditional degree programs, and economic climate (Performance Report, 2010 – 2012).

The universities similarly cite challenges of the state economy as a hardship on enrollments, on their faculty and staff, and on the research endeavors. While the governors and Regents formalized the need for the institutions to serve as drivers of the economy, institutions reflected in their own discourses challenges they face because of a struggling state economy. This illustrates the dependent and delicate relationship between the state as an institution and higher education as part of that state institution.

Data from the Regents, the governors, and the institutions themselves supported economic outputs as a goal for higher education. Institutions presented their contributions as economic producers through workforce, through production of research for commercialization, and through their role as a driver of the knowledge-economy in the state. The identity of higher

education was co-created by these actors through their narratives which painted its identity as an economic player in and for the state.

Workforce and economic outputs of the production model build upon and depend upon one another in the production finding. The heuristic in Figure 7 demonstrates how the two categories interact. Workforce contributes to economic outputs and the development of the workforce contributes to economic prosperity of the state. These expectations are articulated in discourse from the Regents and governors. The outputs underneath each category represent the other articulated expectations of workforce development and economic outputs of higher education. The state has reported on the impact of industry, of research, and the aspirations of a knowledge and innovation economy to drive it forward.

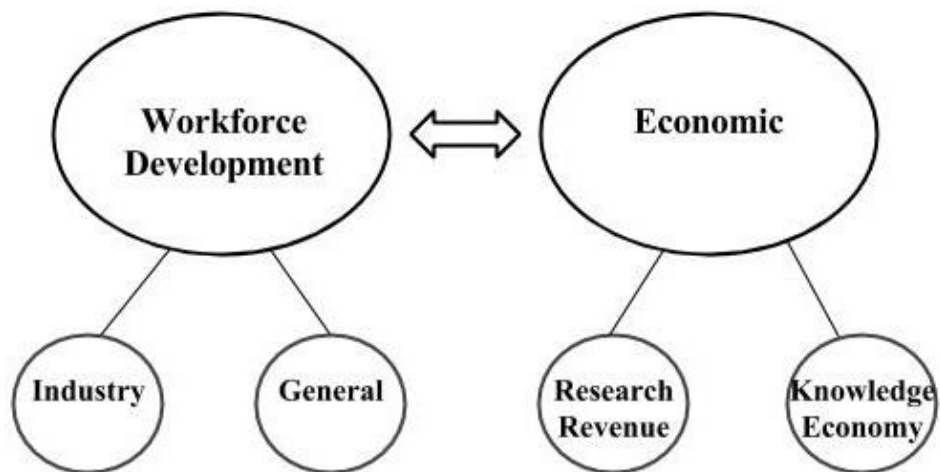


Figure 7. The Intersection of Workforce and Economic Outputs.

Production as an output and identity of higher education presented in all of the aforementioned data. Discourses included most prominently data on workforce development or economic outcomes. These discourses illuminate how the identity of the university is understood and how actors built that identity through these data. The production model that has emerged

lends itself toward quantifiable data; workforce and economic outcomes are more easily quantifiable than social outputs. These findings (social, experiential, workforce development, economic) shape the production model of higher education. Next I will discuss the role of accountability for higher education as it emerged from the data.

State Mandated Accountability for Higher Education

Charlie's first semester of college was off to a great start. His time in the engineering program was proving challenging but also full of great opportunities. He had been assigned a professional mentor and the preparation he had received in high school had served him well. The college of engineering had recently announced a series of new opportunities that Charlie planned to take advantage of. His adviser had told him they would help with his job opportunities after college. Through his job in the admissions office Charlie also knew that engineering had the best job placement rate of any college on campus and he regularly heard the university president talking about it in his speeches. This made his parents feel proud too and Charlie felt certain that he was in the right program.

Alice had been struggling to get her financial aid sorted out during her first semester of school. She had the paperwork completed but it had all taken longer to organize than she had expected. The program she was a part of had been a great help in supporting her to meet other students, access campus resources, and develop study skills. Sadly, the director had recently told Alice that she would only be able to stay in the program for the first semester unless she chose a major. Additionally, the director was often so busy with paperwork that Alice wasn't getting nearly the time she had hoped to talk about degree pathways. While Alice's mind was set on the business program, between the extra cost per credit hour and the required GPA – which she did not have as a first semester student – she would have to opt into another program and perhaps

transfer in during a future semester. It looked like Alice might have to extend her program of study if she wanted to complete the degree program in business. In the meantime, courses in the humanities, required for her degree program were getting tougher and tougher to enroll in. Alice had heard rumors that the department had to make cuts.

Discourse reflected that actors mandated accountability for higher education, codifying it through policy to guide practice. Internal to the finding of accountability for higher education is the development of directionality, or the direction in which the production, accountability, and the outputs of the educational system flow. State mandated accountability for higher education relates directly to how the performance reports and Foresight 2020 documents are presented by the Regents and higher education institutions. Mandated accountability also is part of how the higher education system is explained in discourse from the governors.

As early as 2001 governors discussed publicly increased accountability in higher education. In a 2001 State of the State Address, Governor Graves said,

For the second year, Regents universities, community colleges and Washburn University will benefit from substantial increases in funding as a result of the Higher Education Coordination Act. Last year we added \$21 million. For fiscal year 2002, I recommend an additional \$21 million. In addition, we have increased student financial aid and enhanced vocational education funding. Also, I endorse the key components of the new budgeting plan put forth by the Board of Regents commonly referred to as block grants. The plan allows for increased management flexibility, but demands increased accountability.

With block grants as the mechanism Graves forwarded accountability to manage higher education funding and the investment of the state. Accountability is essentially a reporting structure for higher education in order to understand and track how state money is spent and how

the outputs of the higher education system contribute overall to the state. In the excerpt, Graves pairs the call for accountability with an investment of funds, essentially linking the reported successes of higher education to the investment of additional state dollars. The call for accountability remained salient in the years following this address. Other administrators picked up the call for accountability in their formal remarks to the state. In 2006, Governor Sebelius called for greater accountability connected to investment related to the K-12 system. Accountability is presented for both higher education and K-12 as important to tracking state funding and holding educational systems accountable for their work for the state.

A demonstrated commitment to accountability continued to emerge from the data in the discourse and through practice related to higher education in Kansas. In 2009, Governor Parkinson personally addressed the Kansas Board of Regents making the case for stricter accountability, he said,

The topic du jour when the Kansas Regents system is discussed is financial accountability. This is the case because of the abuses that took place at Kansas State, primarily in the Athletic Department. They were unfortunate and unacceptable. I appreciate the leadership that you have taken in requiring audits to deter them from happening again.

These data demonstrate accountability measures being put in place as a result of an abuse in the system, although not on the academic side of the system. Evidence of neoliberalization of educational structures in the state, here Parkinson blurred the lines between academics and athletics as the role of higher education. Athletics arms of higher education are linked to the economic value of the major research institutions in the state. Citing an abuse on the athletics side of the institution as reason enough, the Governor made the case for tighter accountability in

academics. In this discourse, to propose further accountability across the academy Parkinson used athletics as a springboard, “The future to me is academic accountability. 1) national rankings, the second is retention/graduation rates, and the third is graduate placement in the private sector” (2009). As cited by scholars, the proposal for accountability is dovetailed with quantifiable information – rankings, percentages, and placement rates (Hursh, 2007). These measures of accountability distill the outputs of higher education, the value of higher education, to quantifiable numbers.

In his 2009 address Parkinson continued to build the case for accountability, the following demonstrates his argument, “I’ve asked you to hold the institution accountable for their rankings; as well as retention and graduation rates. I’m also asking you to hold them accountable for what happens to the students that do graduate.” This narrative is evidence of the accountability movement taking root in Kansas higher education, “We need data not just on where are students are going, but what they are doing and what sort of success they are experiencing. That will help us make changes necessary to share our programs for success (Parkinson, Address to the Regents, 2009). Through Parkinson’s insistence on more reporting and the request for the reports to come in quantifiable formats (rankings, percentages, and numbers) this discourse reflects an alignment with the accountability movement attributed to neoliberal ideologies.

Finally, the discourse on accountability comes full circle with the data returning to a focus on access and who can have entry into the higher education system. In the same 2009 address to the Regents, Parkinson provides remarks about the investment required for the move toward accountability to take place,

Finally, it is clear to me that some of this improvement will cost money, but some of it will not. For example, our open enrollment policy has hurt our rankings considerably. It has lowered our ACT and GPA scores and more importantly, resulted in students who are not ready for college-level classes enrolling in Kansas institutions. That ultimately hurts retention and graduation rates. I'm pleased that you now have additional flexibility with respect to admissions and I encourage you to use it.

Parkinson calls on a reconsideration of the open door policy of higher education in the state in the name of accountability measures. This 2009 remark precedes the data on the new qualified admissions standards. In the name of accountability, the governor proposed a move to close access to higher education for under-performing populations in the state. The narrowed reporting structure and required accountability parallels the narrowing access point to higher education. The argument is made as an economic one; institutions must consider the incoming students as a return on investment above other goals.

The introduction of measures like the Workforce Needs Report (2012 Foresight 2020), state statute 74-3202d, the statute legislating performance indicators and the reporting structure, and the language of alignment through these policies are also indicators of movement toward accountability. Reports on retention numbers, percentages of grades and other quantifiable measure are the state hallmark for this movement and align with national trends. Another link to the national accountability movement that presented in the data is the question of directionality in the process. Directionality of onus and support in the state system is the final finding for discussion.

The question of the directionality of the work emerged and with it, an indication of how directionality indicates power. Directionality as a concept can be clarified through the question

of, which direction should resources and accounting for those resources flow? Discourse from the Regents in their Foresight Reports indicated a specific expectation of directionality, moreover that the higher education system has the obligation to do for the good of the state, not the other way around. In most of the discourse, the direction of power flowed from the Regents to higher education, with the onus of responsibility to do the most work (through reporting, outputs of the system, and making their case for their value to the state) residing with higher education institutions. In 2013, this was illustrated through data that read, “higher education systems alignment with the Kansas economy will insure the system is responding to the needs of the Kansas economy,” (Foresight 2020, 2013). A later 2014 report included, “The Kansas economy is undeniably strengthened when students choose to prepare themselves for high-demand occupations aligned with significant needs and accompanying compensation,” (Foresight 2020, 2014) . In both instances, Regents demonstrated an expectation of the directionality of the work *from* higher education and individual students as responsible parties moving support *to* the state for a specific need. This pattern of discourse occurs throughout the data. The question of the directionality of the “return on investment” of higher education occurred in all of the Foresight Reports and in the governors’ addresses. Figure 8 (below) illustrates the direction of production or outputs. Discourse from the Regents indicated an expectation of the institution of higher education and individuals internal to that system, *doing for* which may include production of outputs, including workforce, research, reporting data, or other outputs, industry, the state of Kansas, and for the economy of the state.

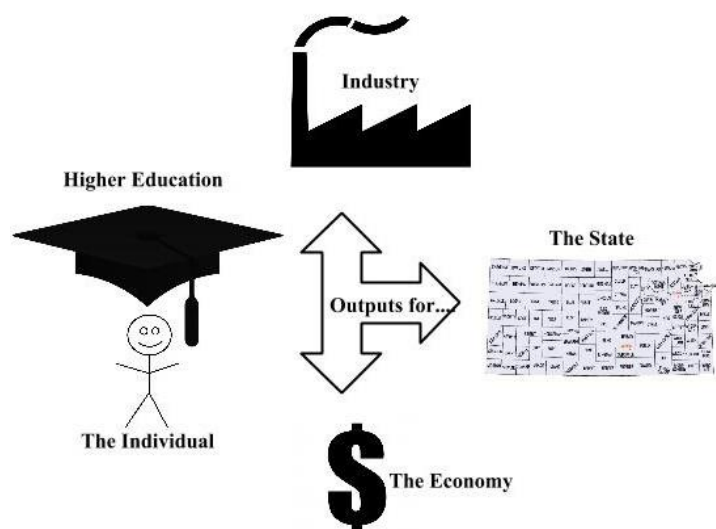


Figure 8. Directionality of Production.

As illustrated in the figure, the expectation is on individuals, higher education, industry, and the economy to produce for and contribute to the state. The expectation, articulated through state documents was that the direction of work should move from those entities to the state. The Regents and governors through discourse placed the onus on the organizations to contribute to the state system. For Alice and Charlie, this means their value as individuals is assessed through a measure of what they can and do contribute to the state. Additionally, policy is constructed by the state to manage these contributions. Performance reports, an accountability measure designed by the state, are one way the state can assess the outputs of the above systems and as a result, their contributions to and for the state.

The directionality of the outputs of higher education presented throughout the data as an element tracking accountability in the system. Actor's narrative exposed accountability as a theme for the higher education system in the state. Actors in the state mandated accountability through policies like the performance measures and qualified admissions in order to track the contributions of higher education to the state. The accountability measures that presented in this

data align with national standards emerging for higher education institutions. These measures change how individuals like Alice and Charlie experience higher education. Their admission to higher education, their value in the system, and their experience in the system are all impacted by the policies put forth to govern the system. Policies that privilege the return on investment of higher education over social good may have an adverse impact on individuals like Alice or Charlie. If Alice for instance, opts into an academic program that has less economic return for the state, it may decrease the access to funding for the program and ultimately, decrease her ability to access opportunities and experiences within that program. If Charlie opts into a program that ultimately results in economic or industry benefits for the state, he may find himself with additional funding, internship opportunities, and job possibilities following school. With the direction of the work on higher education to do for the state, each program is accountable for contributing and is then judged on that accountability. In chapter five, I will connect these findings more closely with the research questions that framed this study.

Summary of Findings

The overarching research question guiding this study is *what is the policy rhetoric around the purposes of public higher education in Kansas?* The findings in this analysis contributed to the development of an overarching theme that responds to the research question in this study. This finding is, *Higher education is understood as source of economic and workforce production for the state and for industry, discourse from elected and appointed officials and institutions of higher education reflect this central identity.*

Within each finding, I examined and highlighted data from the lifespan of performance reports in Kansas, from elected officials' addresses to the public, from the Kansas Board of Regents, the body responsible for governing higher education, and from reports developed by the

two research institutions in this study. In the data, discourse reflected the collective understanding of the primary purpose of higher education as an economic producer for the state. Performance reports and indicators embedded within those reports focused on the production of a prepared workforce to propel the state economy. The data reveal the framing of the knowledge or innovation-based economy as the goal for successful graduates. Finally, the data introduced values-propositions between open access to higher education for Kansans (access) and closing off admissions policies in recognition of limited economic resources and a need to compete for national rankings.

Regents as actors with power influenced how higher education actors articulated their work through the performance reports. From 2003 – 2015, the discourse in the reports evolved demonstrating a focus on the economic value of the institution for the state. Language around support programs to increase access for under-served populations shifted. A focus on the production of research for commercialization emerged more strongly, and reporting on the economic and workforce contributions of the institutions appeared more clearly. The Regents' Reports reflected a similar evolution with indicators for success from 2010 – 2015 moving more tightly toward quantifiable measures (percentages, rankings, and dollar amounts). These reports exemplified the dependent relationship the state has with higher education, recalling the role of higher education as obligated to drive the workforce and economy. Finally, the political addresses moved from collaborative discourse that framed education and investments from the state as a mutual responsibility to discourse that changed the direction of the work, primarily oriented toward what higher education institutions could, and should do for the state.

Three findings and the categories internal to those findings emerged from the data analysis in this study: 1) *Policy Dictates Access to and in Higher Education*, 2) *Production*

Drives Higher Education as Social, Experiential, Workforce Development, Economic Outputs and 3) the State Mandates Accountability for Higher Education. Together these findings depict how the purposes of higher education are understood and articulated by the state of Kansas, the Regents, and the two institutions in this study. They demonstrate a focus on higher education as a producer for the state, a finding that aligns with the idea that neoliberal ideologies are influencing and embedding in state policy, discourse, and practices. Finally, the findings reflect the power of discourse to shape policy and understanding around a state system like higher education. Findings reflect the ability of discourse as a power structure to leave out populations who are not seen as directly contributing to the economic production of higher education in Kansas. In this case, that includes at-risk and underserved populations.

The actors who produced and shared these discourses articulated the purpose of higher education throughout the data analyzed for this study. Higher education is understood as source of economic and workforce production for the state and for industry. The supporting discourse from elected and appointed officials and institutions of higher education reflected this central identity.

Summary

This chapter provided results of the analysis of over 500 pages of discourse, the data for this study. These data came from performance-reports and agreements, political addresses, Regents' Reports, and state statutes. From these data, three primary findings and several undergirding categories emerged contributing to the development of an overarching theme that serves as response to the guiding research questions of the study. In chapter five I will discuss how findings from the data intersected with the research questions framing this study and how

these intersections played out in the data, along with the implications for future research and contributions to the field of study.

Chapter 5 - Summary, Discussion, and Implications

In this chapter, first I will recall the purpose of this study by revisiting the research questions that framed it. Next, I will summarize how the findings connect to these questions and then I will discuss the implications for practice from this research. Finally, I will explore the contributions to the literature from this study and opportunities for future research. To begin, recall the research questions that framed the purpose for this study.

Response to Research Questions and Contributions to Literature

The purpose of this research was to explore the discourse from publicly elected and appointed state level officials and institutions of higher education related to higher education policy, purpose, and governance. Through the study, I worked to understand how higher education actors and public officials conceived of the purpose(s) of higher education as manifested in written policy, discourse, and other expressions of their work as policymakers. I looked specifically at policy in Kansas connected to performance-based outcomes and the rhetoric surrounding them. Key research questions guided this qualitative discourse analysis including:

1. What is the policy rhetoric around the purposes of public higher education in Kansas?
2. How are performance-based measures for higher education reflected in policy and public discourse?
 - a. What is communicated as the most significant goals to be achieved by higher education and how should they be measured
3. How do the above-mentioned discourses reflect neoliberal ideologies and rationalities in relation to budgetary and policy decisions?

4. How does discourse in policy reduce or reify existing structures of power in higher education in Kansas?

In this section I will discuss the findings in relation to the research purpose and questions. Please note that given the iterative nature of qualitative research, findings intersect with multiple research questions. Therefore, it would be impossible to confine one finding or a set of findings to one research question. Typical in qualitative research, response to research questions can be done comprehensively through careful discussion of findings that is presented below. I will use three ideologies to frame this discussion, the politicians' understanding of higher education, ideologies of the economic value of access and personhood, and ideologies of mechanism or how higher education's value is shared.

Ideologies of Politicians'

The way in which politicians understand and share the value of higher education has a significant impact on institutions of higher education, state policy, and ultimately the citizens of the state. Throughout the data the language of production was used to describe and articulate higher education as a production model with social, experiential, workforce development and economic outputs. Centrally, the policy and rhetoric around the purposes of higher education pointed to the identity of higher education as understood through its ability to produce for the state. I illustrated this identity through the Production Model of Higher Education and depicted it in Figure 5. The outputs or production from higher education occurred prolifically across data sources through four categories: social good, experiential good, workforce development, and economic goods. The production value included social and experiential outputs presenting less powerfully in the discourse and workforce and economic outputs emerging as the most clearly framed articulation of the purpose of higher education. Actors including the governors, the

Regents, and the higher education institutions themselves made the case for their value to the state through presenting their products. Products included their graduates, students like Alice and Charlie who have the ability to stimulate the state economically through their entry into specific industries. Actors used policy and rhetoric to frame higher education as a producer of social, experiential, workforce, and economic goods for individuals and the state. This happened through the performance reports, in the political rhetoric from the governors' addresses, and through the reports and discourse produced by the Kansas Board of Regents.

Ideology from politicians' connected the role of higher education as in service to the state. Data revealed performance policies as a means to understand how higher education systems in the state could respond to and ultimately serve the state's expectations. Performance measures provided discourse through which the Regents, institutions of higher education, and publicly elected officials could understand and hold higher education accountable. This was underscored by the finding that the state policymakers mandate accountability for higher education.

Performance measures are a structure through which the state accounts for higher education through reporting on how institutions have met goals. Institutions demonstrate their value through the reporting on these achievements and outputs. Discourses from this data set reflected the accountability movement taking shape in Kansas higher education. This discourse also emerged in the political addresses and Regents' reports. Through these discourses actors called on higher education to advance state priorities through codified reporting and funding structures, like state statute 74-3202d and the Workforce Needs Report. Data illuminated the finding that politicians through performance reporting codified *state mandated accountability* measures. Further, political discourse produced by those reports articulated the value of higher

education through the lens of production outputs. These data shed light onto how policy and discourse from political actors and some from higher education institutions themselves reified the value of higher education through production measures. This ideology reshaped the narrative of higher education framing its identity through its economic value as an investment for and benefit to the state. Production language and accountability measures developed first as a way to present the value of the performance policies for higher education, (the policies serve as a way to demonstrate its value), and later as an expectation of the higher education institutions, (the institutions must demonstrate their value in order to receive funding and support generally). This language became more prevalent in the discourse from these political actors throughout the years following national trends through the accountability movements in higher education.

The production model of higher education shed light onto how actors understood and presented the value of higher education to the state. Specifically, reporting from the institutions and interpretation of the role of higher education shared through discourse by the regents and governors pointed to the value of higher education as defined through its products for the state. These products - social, experiential, workforce, and economic - emerged on a continuum, with workforce and economic products presented as the most significant contributors to the state industry and economy.

Discourse holds significant power to shape and reshape systems and institutions (Fairclough et al., 2011; Gee, 2014; Luke, 1995; Rogers, 2011). The discourse presenting in these data privileges the voice of industry over higher education. Granted by the Governor's Office, the Regents, and by the institutions of higher education themselves, this privilege is evidenced in the aforementioned data and is systemic. These data demonstrated a relationship in which industry informed higher education, not the other way around. Industry set the guidelines

for higher education institutions as to who is in the workforce and what the workforce should be able to do. This is problematic and contrasts the idea of access and opportunity through education. Rather than the institution of higher education being free to innovate and develop competencies for the future, original research, and drive the state forward, they are instead bound to training students for entry into specific industry and researching what is funded and supported by these industries. The loss here is significant. Educational institutions miss the opportunity to educate students as critical thinkers in lieu of focusing on specific industry standards. Balance of power shifts and educational institutions become powerless in a state governance system that privileges industry. Ultimately industry and the state stand to suffer.

The absence of a clear narrative in these data that identifies higher education as a developer of critical thinkers is evidence of the erosion of this identity. Scholars have touted the role of education as a developer of citizens but that did not emerge centrally from this study (Addams, 1964; Boyer, 1994, 2014; Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Dewey, 2004; Giroux, 2013; Kennedy, 1997; Kenny et al., 1998). Evidenced further by current unrest on college campuses where faculty feel unsure of if or how to engage students in critical conversations about race, power, and privilege and where students may come reluctantly or not at all to the idea that these things are central to their education. If the identity of the institution is not presented as a place where free speech is valued, where a market place of ideas can be explored, then instead it is a place where positivism takes priority. Policies that govern what can be said on social media from higher education actors only further erode the public narrative of higher education as a place where citizens come to develop their capacities to participate in democracy. This shift is part of the neoliberalization of higher education. It is a demonstration of how education is stripped of part of its purpose, to uncover the values and processes of citizenship and democracy, in lieu of

economic and production value for the state (Giroux, 2002; Giroux, 2006, 2013; Harvey, 2005; Ravitch, 2013; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

The prevalence of production language throughout the data, and particularly in the political addresses and the Foresight Reports, points to the purpose of higher education as a producer of the workforce for the state. Production is for industry-specific standards and with deference to industry as the expert. In this model, higher education depends on industry for private contributions, research grants, and for employment of graduates. These are formalized indicators in the performance agreements the Regents and the state have mandated for higher education accountability. These indicators align with international movements toward the neoliberalization of public systems (Giroux, 2002; Giroux, 2013; Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Weil, 2010). Workforce development as an output of the higher education production model includes industry informing and funding researchers' labs, positions, and has industry with the power to decide how and what is to be done. With industry at the helm, specific research may be brought to bear or may lay dormant so that another study with more likelihood for financial gain can be advanced. At stake is the loss of innovative discovery, because it is not industry funded researchers divert their focus to other projects. At stake are tainted or incomplete results from a study due to corporate interest or pressures. Stripping the public purpose out of higher education prioritizes profit and private interest over the public good.

The power structure of higher education, the state, and industry were codified in performance agreements and through other reporting structures. However, these agreements bear no weight on the motivations behind why and how industry interacts with and influences higher education. Industry is not required to engage higher education for the greater good, rather they may consider singularly – if they so choose – the return on investment of the relationship. A

university researcher might have a powerful experiment that brings to bear groundbreaking research that can benefit the state but without industry support, goes unnoticed.

Ideologies of the politicians' in this study centrally focused on higher education as a producer for the state and an economic proposition for the state above all else. While national trends pointed to shifting ideologies around higher education there was not yet existing research specific to Kansas. This study and resulting findings fill that gap by informing Kansas-centric literature. Further, the politicians' ideologies offer a new lens through which to understand how this shift is taking place. Contributing to the existing literature, this discourse analysis highlights how narratives presented by political actors like the Regents, governors, and higher education administrators have shaped a new identity for higher education in one state. Further, through the development of this new identity, the narrative of higher education as a public good is eroding.

Ideologies of the Economic Value of Personhood and Access

A second ideology of personhood and access emerged as an economic proposition in this study. Actors involved in constructing the discourse around higher education from 1997 – 2015 also constructed policy that governed who had access to the system. These policies reveal how ideologies about the purposes of the higher education govern who can access the system.

Discourse shapes, and reshapes systems and structures of power (Fairclough et al., 2011; Gee, 1989, 2014; Luke, 1995; Rogers et al., 2005). The discourse in this study around access to higher education is one indicator of how systems of power become shaped and reshaped. Early data from the performance reports and political addresses reflected a commitment to underserved and at-risk populations through investment in programs to support recruitment and retention of those groups. Underserved or at-risk populations were defined in the data as culturally, racially, linguistically, and economically diverse groups, along with first-generation students and gender

minorities. Political addresses underpinned the responsibility of the state to invest in an educated citizenry. Later, data revealed a shifting discourse with attention focused on national rankings built through entrance exam scores, retention, and graduation rates. This data emerged from a discourse proposing a policy for Qualified Admissions. This policy would reduce entrance into higher education based on test scores, available secondary coursework, and literacy of the policy early on in the individual's high school career. This policy was built through discourse that shifted onus to local schools, parents, and families to educate their students on how to gain Qualified Admissions, a process that must begin at the onset of high school coursework in order for the right combination of educational opportunities to be completed. The shifting of onus reified the power structure privileging the state over higher education or the individual. It also represents a structural barrier for underserved populations.

The finding that *Production Drives Higher Education through Social, Experiential, Workforce Development, and Economic Outputs*, also reifies power structures in the state. Data underpinning this finding revealed production language throughout the discourse. Discourse that described production as the primary goal of education privileges units and individuals based on their ability to contribute to workforce and economic outputs for the state. This discourse reified the value of economic productivity above all other contributions individuals and systems can make in the state. Further, it disempowered populations based on their ability to access higher education and therefore later in life, based on access to high earning professions. Data revealed privilege for those individuals who already had some access to the higher education system. Industry relationships, pipelines into the workforce, the funding or research dollars, all emerged as elements of the data reflective of this commitment. In this structure, those with power to produce economically also have power to influence higher education curriculum and research

and to determine who gains access to the system in the first place (industry and private investment and influence in higher education).

Gee's tools for discourse analysis pose questions about who is speaking in the discourse and who has power in the discourse (Gee, 2014). In discourse analysis power plays a significant role. Power exists through understanding who is speaking, how the discourse is directed, and those voices who are omitted from the discourse or not allowed at the table (Gee, 2014; Rogers, 2011; Rogers et al., 2005; Van Dijk, 2003). The finding that *Policy Dictates Access to and in higher education* calls into question who in the educational and social systems in the state has the power to enter, navigate, and benefit from being a part of that system. Drawing on critical discourse analysis (CDA), and specifically power relationships, the findings about access and opportunity in these data shed light onto the power of this discourse. The discourse analyzed reflects the relationship between actors in the educational system in this study and specifically whose voices are more powerful in the creation, implementation, and impacts of these policies (Rogers, 2011; Rogers et al., 2005). Recall from chapter one, actors refers to political actors, as well as to those involved with creating and responding to existing and emerging discourse. Through CDA, actors in the discursive process shape and deconstruct existing structures through discourse (Gee, 2014; Rogers, 2011; Rogers et al., 2005; Van Dijk, 2003). Conversely, those who are not granted access to the process lack the power to shape and deconstruct these structures, at least in a formalized way. Those without access to shape the system would be individuals like Alice who have limited access to or experience in the higher education system and Alice's family, who has even less connection to the higher education system and the governance structures in the state. Generally, underserved and underrepresented populations in the state would also be those who had limited ability to shape the policies and systems of power

in the state that govern institutions like higher education. Therefore, while policy dictates access to and in higher education, that policy is shaped by a very narrow set of voices that may leave out underserved and underrepresented populations. Without a voice in the process, their ability to benefit from systems like higher education in the state is at risk.

CDA also presents the development of discourse as an inherently political process, actors in the process are political (Fairclough et al., 2011; Gee, 2014; Luke, 1995; Rogers, 2011; Van Dijk, 2003). In this study, those actors shaped a system of policy that narrowed access to higher education in the name of accountability. Actors through this process disempowered people like Alice, and populations like those who are underserved or have limited knowledge of the higher education system. While rhetoric in the data acknowledged and even discussed how to increase access for underserved populations, ultimately policy and the discourse surrounding it introduced barriers to the system like limiting access to support programs due to decreased funding – something institutions discussed in the performance reports, or making more complicated admissions processes, a result of policies like Qualified Admissions. The policy and discourse surrounding it could narrow access, thereby narrowing opportunity for individuals like Alice.

The Qualified Admissions policy shifted the access points to higher education and control over those access points. The revision of policy standards and discourse outlining Qualified Admissions in the 2012 – 2015 Foresight Reports placed the burden squarely on the shoulders of individuals, families, and local school districts to prepare students for those amended standards. This shift effectively ignored barriers to those individuals, families, or districts that had more limited resources to navigate the new policy. The burden of navigating access shifted but did not ameliorate other barriers individuals face in that process. Barriers like individual or family familiarity with the admissions process, with navigating college entrance exams, or with

completing financial aid paperwork are all barriers that may make it more difficult for citizens to gain entry into higher education. The shift in the Qualified Admissions policy required institutions to amend admissions standards which shifted who could gain entry into higher education. Discourse pointed to a change in how they responded to underserved populations. In early documents, those populations were recruited actively and programming existed to support them in their persistence and success in higher education. Over the lifespan of the performance measures and in alignment with the changing economy (as mentioned in institutional discourse and discourse from the governors from 2007 forward), policy led institutions to a more narrowed focus, targeting recruitment of underserved populations only if they had also been successful in navigating secondary education through the guidelines. This shift in focus may have left out those without the ability or resources to navigate the Qualified Admissions Standards. This raises the question of personhood, specifically what persons are valued in the creation of these policies. In this example, persons only have value if they are likely to meet the standards issues by the Regents. Those outside the standards effectively lose access to higher education at these institutions. This is one example of how policy may have created a barrier for those populations to a state system like higher education. Is it appropriate for the state to value the economic production of the education system above individual ability to access that system?

The question of access resulted in the Qualified Admissions policy that redefined and restricted how individuals in the state could gain access to higher education. This policy reflects neoliberal ideologies. Institutions such as higher education are understood as monetary investments of the state and are privileged above the individual actors in the state system (Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). These same institutions are held accountable by strict standards for their production of outputs that benefit the state. Discourse that reflected

policymaker insistence on increasing retention and graduation rates for the sake of national rankings is one example of the production outputs for which higher education would be accountable. National rankings like graduation and retention rates were held above the goal of increasing access to the higher education system. The finding that *Production Drives Higher Education through Social, Experiential, Workforce Development, and Economic Outputs* is reflective of a value-proposition between access, success, and persistence, and the educational support programs students opt into. The value proposition is measured through the lens of production as an expected output of higher education. Decisions on what programs receive support and accolades from the state, and internal to the educational institutions, were reflective of neoliberal ideologies. These ideologies led actors to look to production and economic outputs of the system as the primary demonstration of its value.

At the onset of the performance measure movement in higher education, Ewell and Jones (1994) identified inputs, processes, and outcomes assessed as a “production model” in higher education. The idea behind this model was that the performance-measures were a way to evaluate the value added to the students leaving the institution through a pre and post- test process. A similar measurement-based production model emerged throughout the data. Performance reports from 2003 through 2015 referred to the number of degrees, research grants, technologies transfers and licensing, scholarly publications, and students all as products of higher education. When this language is applied to experiences students had this accounting could be attributed to a focus on student learning and assessment of that learning. A secondary explanation is the professionalization and credentialing of all educational experiences to ensure that they “count” in the eyes of the Regents and the public. Credentialing the experiences and formalizing them as outputs may be an indication of the accountability movement permeating

higher education. If this is the case, then here we see institutions credentialing themselves before it can be suggested or rather mandated by an outside governing body.

Finally, uncovered in this study is the value proposition that allows industry to dictate production value in and from higher education. This power structure has industry as the expert informant for workforce training, essentially stripping higher education of that duty. The state does not charge higher education with the development of people as a skilled and capable workforce. It instead reifies a power system in which industry identifies the skills and initiatives needed to create a workforce to their own benefit. Production is to be done for industry-specific standards and with deference to industry as the expert. Deference in this case invites expert industry to inform policy and grants expert industry power to weigh in on how the higher education institutions prepare this workforce. In this value proposition industry holds power above, and through policy, over higher education leading to a precarious relationship between the two entities.

The discussion of personhood and the economic proposition of access informs the literature by offering a new way to understand the impacts of neoliberal ideologies. The ability of an individual who is part of an at-risk population in Kansas to access higher education can become more difficult because of these policies. Evidence on the state level of a system valuing the economic propositions over citizens can inform how national movements are impacting communities and trickling down into state and local systems. This new evidence of state policy that privileges industry knowledge over higher education knowledge also informs literature as to how neoliberal ideologies are manifesting locally. Finally, the complicated nature through which rhetoric shifts to create a value proposition of economics over individuals contributes to the

growing body of literature on neoliberal discourses in education. Next I will discuss the ideologies of mechanism or the rigid approach to assessing the value of higher education.

Ideologies of Mechanism of sharing information about higher education

Ideologies around accountability and efficiency in the state higher education system were prevalent in this study. Specifically, the ideology around how information about higher education productivity is presented came through in the political discourse and the performance reports.

State Mandated Accountability manifested through data as demonstrative of the rationality that the value of an institution should be easily quantifiable. Accountability reflected an expectation that elements of the higher education endeavor that are valuable for the state should be clearly quantifiable. Recall a hallmark of the neoliberal movement in education is the ability to distill the value of an entity to the simplest form – often times this means dollars and cents or numeric data. Scholars remind us that this in and of itself is not dangerous, but the abandonment of other forms of measurement – such as learning outcomes or citizenship competencies in higher education – reflects a dangerous ideology underpinned by bottom line thinking (Giroux, 2002; Harvey, 2005; Hursh, 2007; Ravitch, 2013; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

State mandated accountability is codified for higher education. The concept of accountability in performance measures emerged in the literature review in chapter two as part of a national movement for accountability in higher education. To summarize that discussion and frame this finding, accountability is a movement in education attached to the measurement of each and every component of the system, it is sometimes called alignment (Burke et al., 2002, 2003; McKeown-Moak, 2013, 2013; McLendon et al., 2007, 2006). Scholars connect this movement to the neoliberalization of education (Giroux, 2002; Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). In a neoliberal structure, accountability when implemented pressurizes systems

like higher education to support the state through measures of production, a measure of the system's value to the state (Giroux, 2002; Giroux, 2013; Harvey, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). These pressurizing measures work by establishing a reporting structure that can be quantified easily as a demonstration of value (Hursh, 2007). The introduction of performance measures as a means to account for and fund education is evidence of this structural pressure to clarify through hard data the value of public higher education (Gaither & Others, 1994; Hursh, 2007; Kennedy, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Slaughter and Rhoades count this as movement toward the neoliberalization of public higher education (2004). These measures of performance drive the state and the economy through a focus on those systems (both easy to quantify) above the service to the individual citizen, student, the university, or the civic purposes of public education (McKeown-Moak, 2013). Actors who are part of shaping the discourse in this study followed the national trends, carrying forward the mantle for accountability for higher education through their own reporting, policies, and discourse.

In chapter two of this study accountability measures were explained more fully as an education policy and funding strategy (Alexander, 2000; Burke et al., 2003; McLendon et al., 2006). When implemented, these measures can raise questions about which activities and functions of public colleges and universities (e.g., academic programs, budgets, tuition setting, for instance) should be dictated by the state. In this same vein, the measures can raise questions as to the activities that remain under the discretion of campus officials, and the process that is maximally effective and efficient for resource flow and regulation (Berdahl, 1971; McLendon, 2003; Volkwein, 1987 as cited in McLendon, Hearn, & Deaton, 2006). Combined, this shifts an understanding of higher education prioritizing the outputs above the needs of the individual (Gaither & Others, 1994; McKeown-Moak, 2013). These trends were apparent in the data.

Accountability emerged as the Regents and other political actors cited a need for stricter alignment for the higher education system. The term alignment was used as a measure and goal for higher education throughout the Regent's work. Governors like Parkinson in his address to the Regents and Sebelius in her address to the state cited specific ways in which the state could hold higher education accountable for its contributions to the state through production of goods. They defined these goods as research, knowledge and innovation, and graduates who could directly contribute to the state economy and industry.

Mandated accountability for higher education as a finding was underpinned by a narrowed focus on the *directionality of responsibility in the state system*, specifically if the state was expected to serve higher education or vice versa, and the articulation of the purpose of higher education in the discourse. Discourse following neoliberal ideologies called on the state higher education system to do for the state of Kansas. The direction of responsibility shifted from the state to the individual. The individuals in the system, through their research or as graduates ready to enter the workforce, were positioned as those with responsibility to do for the state, not the other way around. The production model of higher education defined the value of higher education through social, experiential, workforce, and economic outputs that all served the state. This narrowed focus revealed a production model for higher education. Higher education at the center of that model works as an engine to drive the state economically and serve the state's needs (workforce, economic, and otherwise). The articulation of the purpose of higher education reflected an expectation from the state of Kansas, through the Regents and the governors, to contribute to the state economy through the production of outputs. Further, findings about state mandated accountability reflected the measure in which the state system would hold accountable, both reward and punish these institutions for their ability to meet this production expectation.

The discourse comprising the data for this study repeatedly pointed to the production value of higher education as its most significant goal. This occurred in language that revealed the role of higher education in developing a skilled workforce and aligning with the economic plans of the state. This language is measured in the performance reports through quantifying measures reflected in graduation and employment percentages, program rankings, and expected salary earnings. Regents' reports and political addresses reified production as the central message and contribution of higher education institutions. The request for quantifiable information reified the production value of higher education by assessing its value based on specific outputs. Those outputs that are more difficult to quantify, like social or citizenship outputs, are not counted in this assessment of value. The reports communicate the most significant purpose of higher education is its ability to contribute to and enhance the state economically through production. Neoliberal ideology is reflected in the discourse as represented through mandated accountability for these measures. The quantifiable reporting from the reports demonstrates the production of higher education as its maximum value for the state.

Through mandated accountability and the performance measures an ideology of mechanism emerged from this study. The ideology of mechanism manifested through the development of policies that made it necessary to quantify the value of the higher education system through the simplest form, numbers. This quantifiable data has value but without contextualized stories of the individuals in the system, it strips the human imperative from the reporting on the value of higher education. Ideologies of mechanism are present through the insistence of the Regents' on efficiencies in the system above all else; through the focus on national rankings and graduation rates over who has access to and how individuals experience education. This contributes to the literature, as ideologies of mechanism are another

manifestation of neoliberalism in education. They inform the literature by providing insight as to how Kansas, on the state level, has implemented policies of accountability and efficiency. Further, this informs the literature by demonstrating how those policies in one state have contributed to a shift in the state discourse effectively creating an ideology of mechanism around the higher education system.

Discussion of the findings resulted in the emergence of several ideologies from this study. The ideologies of politicians', economic value and personhood, and mechanism of sharing higher education's value all reflect a neoliberal air present in the narrative around higher education in Kansas. This undergirding neoliberal ideology has implications for practice as actors in the state consider how they want to engage in creating a discourse around higher education in the future.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study deepen the understanding of the field of higher education in Kansas and offer insight into future practices in building policy. Different actors articulate the value of higher education uniquely and as a result, implications for practice vary for these actors. A deeper understanding of the findings in this study offers insight into several implications for practice related to the discourse of higher education in Kansas. Next, I will discuss those implications framed for citizens of Kansas, higher education actors, and policymakers like the Regents and the governors.

Developing a New Discourse

First, higher education institutions should consider closely how they articulate their value and how other actors experience that narrative. Higher education actors can restructure and reclaim the narrative about their value with the performance reports as their tool. Constructing a

discourse that reshapes their own value proposition for the state, they can leverage their power to serve underserved populations or combat the neoliberalization of the higher education system. Higher education actors must coopt ideologies of mechanism and use the performance reports to reclaim and reinvigorate the story of the public purpose of education in Kansas. In order to do this, higher education actors must create a new discourse that illuminates the human imperative of education more powerfully. This will require professional development and resources for higher education actors on how to articulate the value of their work contextually.

This reclaimed narrative can be built through adjusting the measurement of social outputs to higher education. Measuring the social outputs of higher education proved difficult as evidenced by the small amounts reported in the performance documents. Nonetheless, social goods, as cited by scholars, serve as one of the central benefits of a state system of education (Boyer, 1994, 2014; Dewey, 2004; Ravitch, 2013). The ability to develop engaged, active, citizens with high levels of social-emotional abilities are historically a goal of public education (Boyer, 1994, 2014; Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Dewey, 2004, 2013). The measure to quantify this in a performance report is difficult. The only way institutions were able to do so was by counting the number of experiences students have that institution identified would enhance their learning. In order to change this, institutions must develop a new discourse, a new process through which higher education actors are empowered to share new measures of the social and experiential outputs that makes a case for the benefit of higher education as a developer of citizens. This new discourse should include contextualized experiences. Alongside the performance reports measures, contextualized discourse should be presented to explain experiential and social outputs through a narrative that the Regents and the political actors could use in their work. There is nothing to be lost in this endeavor. Current performance reports are

not resulting in additional funding for higher education institutions in Kansas. Further, in the last 18 months funding to these institutions has been reduced regardless of their ability to meet these measures. Institutions risk little by including this additional discourse. What is to be gained is the construction of a new discourse in the state that reifies the identity of higher education institutions as developers of a productive and educated citizenry. This discourse, provided to the Regents and other political actors offers a new way for these actors to discuss and share the value of higher education and it offers an equitable place at the table for the social and experiential outputs of the system that have been more difficult to measure. Further, it restores ideologies of personhood to higher education by contextualizing quantifiable data with narrative. Reclaiming the human imperative of higher education through these contextualized narratives can serve to remind political actors of the human casualty resultant from continued cuts to higher education

Contextualized and Longitudinal Measures

Another implication for practice related to the development of a new discourse involves the political actors directly. Political actors can coopt language to redefine how they share the value of higher education. If social and experiential products are valued in the system, political actors should consider how to define those values and how to adjust the manifestation of rhetoric into policy. There is a breakdown when the rhetoric about higher education (seen in the governors' discourse) results in policy that can only share its value through measures of accountability and efficiency that are quantifiable (such as the performance reports). Political actors can open up the accountability measures to include the contextualized reporting, proposed above. This reporting structure restores the value of social contributions of higher education at the institutional, unit, and individual level. Political actors should also consider approaching accountability measures through a longitudinal practice that could take place alongside the

annual reports. For instance, take Alice and Charlie as cases. To study Charlie's outputs in the system the institution he attends may track his employment and salary within the first several years after graduation. Because of his work in engineering, they may see a job offer during his senior year to a firm in the state. This could then have direct implications for his contribution to state industry and the state economy. For Alice, a teacher, they may also see her output as a state employee in a local school district. Of course, her earnings would not stack up to Charlie's in the engineering industry. Additionally, her industry, education, would not have a value as an economic producer for the state, particularly if assessed in the first years following her graduation. However, to introduce a new measure of accountability that approached their earnings longitudinally and through the introduction of contextualized measures, different data may emerge. Actors may receive information about Alice's impact on 30 students annually over 10 or 20 years, which ultimately could demonstrate a significant economic contribution to the state through the number of students who leave her classroom and continue on to higher education or specific industries in the state. Further, contextualized reporting information may tell the story of her contributions to the state based on her abilities to engage students and families in the educational process. Contextualized reports may share of her ability to introduce critical thinking skills to students who can use those in their daily life, or her ability to model for other students in underserved communities the pathway to and through higher education. Reporting with contextualized information over an extended period will introduce new information about the production value of higher education across the categories of outputs.

Political actors have a fine line to walk to ensure that such contextualized measures for the outputs of the system do not turn into quantifiable or efficiency measures – this will be a difficult skill to hone. Nonetheless, an attempt to reimagine accountability measures to include

contextualized discourse and longitudinal data may offer a more comprehensive idea of the full outputs of the system. At risk if political actors do not take this step is the abandonment of the human imperative for higher education. Without a contextualized understanding of higher education political actors risk stripping institutions of programs whose value is difficult to quantify. Losing programs like the humanities that demand students consider a marketplace of ideas would be devastating to the core of higher education and individual ability to think critically about complex social challenges. Political actors must pick up the mantle for the role of higher education in producing critical thinkers; they must forward the human imperative through demanding a contextualized understanding of the value of higher education alongside quantifiable measures.

Who is at the Table

Another implication for practice is that actors in this system should have additional education around the impacts of policies they introduce. Whether the actors are elected or appointed officials, higher education actors, or citizens like Alice and Charlie, a clearer understanding and unpacking of the impact of policies on access to the higher education system is merited. Having clarity on how policies like the performance measures or Qualified Admissions reshape the discourse around higher education may allow them to examine how that discourse privileges folks like Charlie and marginalizes folks like Alice. Policies like those examined in this discourse analysis may be put in place to increase accountability for a state system. They may also inadvertently disempower certain populations by narrowing access to the higher education system or moving funding away from the system. A deeper understanding of how these policies over time (in this case from 1997 – 2015) impact the citizens of the state can

then inform future policy with the goal of developing more equitable processes for a system like higher education. This work can be done through asking the question of who is at the table.

Political and higher education actors must consider who is at the table to make decisions about education in the state. Actors that create policy do so through constructing a discourse with the power to shape access to education. This discourse informs policy that impacts all citizens of the state. The question of who is at the table to develop the discourse and the policy is a question of equity and justice for underserved populations.

Alice's voice must be at the table, so must the voice of her mother, her community, and others who are struggling to gain access to or success in higher education. Expanding access to who is at the table to shape policies could also expand who benefits from the policies and how they serve all Kansans. The practice of inviting others to the table has implications for access. The constructed discourse will take on new power with new voices shaping the narrative. Inviting voices – not just tokens – but many underrepresented voices from throughout the community to co-create the discourse around higher education and more critically, the policy that is implemented will change the narrative and resulting structure. This step has implications for the development of more inclusive policy that serves a broader network across the state. Furthermore, expanding the network of voices at the table acknowledges the personhood of individuals who may not historically have had access to power structures like higher education or state government. The question of who is at the table to construct narrative and develop policy is ultimately a question of serving all Kansans and valuing each voice equitably.

Understanding Personal Ideologies

Finally, actors in this system can more closely evaluate their own ideologies about the purpose and process of higher education. Implicit in the discourse was that the value of higher

education was defined through its production for the state of Kansas. This aligns with neoliberal ideologies that are emerging nationally. Actors in this state system should examine their own values and ideologies around the purpose of a public higher education system to determine if the policies they are enacting, responding to, or beholden to, truly represent their ideologies about the purpose of education. Understanding the values that underpin the policies they enact, respond to, or are beholden to may help them redefine their relationships to the policies, and ultimately the actors responsible for those policies. An examination of how individual political actors connect to or reject neoliberal ideologies may empower those individuals to make different decisions in the future. While I will not propose a formal mechanism for this ideological assessment to take place, I do believe it is critical for political actors to explore before and during their time in governance. Whether this happens through a system of mentorship in the political arena, through partnerships with educators, through enrollment in a philosophy or humanities course, through dialogues with their constituents, or through another mechanism altogether, time devoted to understanding the political and philosophical underpinnings and influences on the policy they construct is essential to their ability to govern. A heuristic like the production continuum could be one way in which these policymakers explore their own ideologies about the purpose of higher education in Kansas.

The findings from this study shed light onto how higher education is understood and how its value is articulated in Kansas. A response to those findings can take place through the introduction of new practices at the individual and state level. These practices should include the development of a new discourse that contextualizes the social and experiential outputs of higher education for the state. Higher education actors must reclaim the narrative of the public purposes of education. This may require professional development for higher education actors on how to

build this discourse. The development of a new reporting structure that includes a contextualized and longitudinal approach to tracking the outputs of higher education will contribute to the development of this discourse. Additionally, underrepresented voices must at the table when policymakers create policy and discuss the results of policy. More voices at the table when developing and discussing policy can inform new and different practices. Finally, actors involved in the construction of these policies should be encouraged to reflect on their own values and ideologies about the purposes of higher education. Next, I will discuss the implications for future research resulting from this study.

Future Research

Scholars have called attention to the ideological underpinnings of public research universities. Recall that Barnett (1994) called on higher education to focus on the knowing, being, and doing components of whole learner development, warning off the production model that concerned Dewey (2013) and Pichardo Alemonte (2014). Others posed warnings about the implementation of performance-based policies by documenting how other states have approached and measured progress toward benchmarks (Ewell & Jones, 1994). These approaches have come to life in this study, specifically in consideration of how Kansas has adopted and implemented performance-based policies and constructed the discourse surrounding the measures from higher education institutions, politicians, and policymakers. These scholars noted approaches that also appeared throughout this study. To revisit what they wrote, approaches include:

- Inputs, processes, outcomes assessed as a “production model” that measures the value added to students leaving the institution through a pre-and post-process.

- Resource efficiency and effectiveness are measured through understanding how human, space, and equipment resources are used.
- State need and return on investment that focuses on higher education as a strategic investment for the state, designed to measure the fit between the needs of the state and higher education (for instance, workforce preparation).
- Customer need and return on investment, built through neoliberal ideals, specifically consumerism and measures the impact of higher education on meeting the needs of the individual needs (retention and graduation rates, for instance).

This framework was not used as the analytical tool for movement through data in this study. However, it was reflected in the data and ultimately the findings that emerged from the study. After analysis of the data and a review of the literature for this study, the convergence of this framework and the findings appeared. This informs how I as researcher will consider future directions for this work.

First, within each category of the production model, one of the key findings of this research emerged the question of directionality. Who has onus and where is the locus of the work? Is the purpose of producing socially responsible students for the students, the state, communities or some other entity? What about economic and workforce outputs - these were largely articulated as for the good of the state as an economic and production oriented institution. Understanding more fully the direction of the production model work and the implications for education as a state institution is one such area of future research in this study. Future research would look specifically at the production orientation of education through interviews or personal accounts of the purpose and value of education to the state from policy makers themselves. Further, this may include an analysis of the movement of money in the state to and from higher

education. Examining questions of resource efficiency and return on investment ideologies in the state will impact how policy is considered in relationship to economic propositions.

Another area of future research is in the consideration of how the focus on K-12 accountability in Kansas led to or impacts accountability structures for higher education. The Kansas trends already mirror the national trends in accountability outlined in chapter two. However, a deeper understanding of components that diverge and that have developed from one another in both state and national systems can shed light onto the next trends higher education will take on in policy and governance. This could inform political actors as they construct their own approaches to the governance of education in the state. Additionally, a study to explore the ideologies shaping how these political actors understand and approach the development of policy could be helpful for the citizens of the state in knowing how their elected officials approach governance. An area for future research is the investigation of the values, ideologies, and leadership approaches that the Regents and other political actors in the state ascribe to as they shape education policy.

Finally, this study exposed some of the inequities that policy and other structural governance for higher education has created for families in Kansas. More research should be done at the individual and family level to understand the implications of these policies for the citizens of the state. This could include following individuals like Alice or Charlie as they navigate the system to explore how policy does impact their interactions with and access to higher education. A case study that follows individuals in the system could shed light onto the direct impacts of policies in the state on individual families and provide some of the contextualized data suggested as an implication for practice with this work.

Future research that results from this work will inform how higher education in Kansas is shaped and understood. It may also focus on the actors who shape higher education and allow a deeper understanding of their leadership, ideologies, and approaches to governance.

Conclusions

Each of the findings in this study intersected directly with one or more research questions as outlined in the summary of this chapter. I have elaborated on these findings through the exploration of one overarching theme: *Higher education is understood to be a source of economic and workforce production for the state and for industry. Discourse from elected and appointed officials and institutions of higher education reflect this central identity.* I have also discussed implications of the findings as related to the literature and introduced areas of additional research for future work. This research and any future work from this study can inform how individual actors, and how the system of higher education in Kansas is governed. It sheds light onto how actors in the state understand and articulate the goals of that system. Discourse shapes how higher education is understood and governed in Kansas; continuing to explore this discourse can have an impact on how future policies change the system of higher education in the state.

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Appendix A - Proposed Timeline for Study

Table 3

Data Collection and Analysis Timeline

Time (in days, weeks, months)	Duration of activity	Description of Activity	Participant's role
Week 1 – 4 *this can begin prior to IRB approval as it does not involve human subjects but existing and publicly accessible data	2) TBD	2) IRB waiver submission	1) None
	2) Entirety of study	2) Document collection (KBOR & pbm documents, gubernatorial speeches, legislation)	2) None, unless they offer additional documents
Projected start date, November 1	3) Entirety of study	3) Memo-writing	3) None
<i>Actual start date, Feb 2. After approved proposal meeting – IRB was approved within two weeks of proposal</i>	2) Four weeks	4) Preliminary coding of documents begins	2) None
Week 4 – 8	1) Four weeks	1) Preliminary coding of documents continues	1) None
<i>Actual: Week 2 – 10</i>		2) Peer Debriefing with colleague, review process, coding strategy, and preliminary observations	2) Peer Debrief meeting
Week 9 – 10	1) Eight hours / week	3) Memo-writing 1) Review initial document coding and analysis	1) None
<i>Actual: Week 10 - 11</i>		2) Begin secondary data coding cycle	
	2) Eight hours / week	3) Memo-writing	
Week 11 – 13	3) One hour 1) Eight hours / week	1) Continue secondary data coding cycle until complete	
<i>Actual: Week 11 - 12</i>			

	2) One hour	2) Memo-writing	
Week 14	1) 10 hours	1) Tertiary coding of all data completed	None
<i>Actual: Week 13</i>	2) Two hours	2) Peer debriefing with chairs or research colleague	
Week 15 – 16	3) One hour 1) Ten hours/ week	3) Memo-writing 1) Begin themes based on codes	1) None
<i>Actual: Week 14 – This process took place iteratively during weeks 12 – 13 of coding and was solidified during these final weeks</i>	2) One – three hours	2) Alternate peer debriefing session as needed	2) Peer debrief
Week 17- 20	1) Three weeks	1) Write data analysis and finalizing findings	1) None
<i>Actual: Week 15 Attended Graduate School Writing Retreat in May – drafted chapter four by May 20</i>			
<i>Week 16 – 18</i>	1) Two weeks	1) Edit drafted chapter four	1) None
Week 21 – 23	1) Four weeks	1) Finalize write up of data and edit entire document	1) None
Sent to committee by Friday, April 8			
<i>Actual: Week 18 send drafted chapter four to Dr. Tolar for edits – send Friday, June 10</i>			2) Dr. Tolar
Week 24-25	1) Four hours/week	1) Dissertation Preparation - revisit chapter three and edit with updated analysis process	
<i>Actual: Week 19 - 20</i>			
Week 26 – 28	1) Two hours	1) Dissertation Defense	1) None
Projected Completion date April 18 – 22			
<i>Actual: Week 20 – 23</i>	10 – 20 hours	Completed draft chapter five, edits to chapter four	

*Send completed three – five
to Dr. Bhattacharya by
Monday, July 8 in
preparation for writing
retreat*

<i>Week 24 Attend Dr. Bhattacharya's writing retreat</i>	<i>1) 48 hours</i>	<i>Complete edits to drafted chapter four and five and revised chapter three</i>	<i>1) Dr. Bhattacharya</i>
<i>Week 25 – 27</i>	<i>1) 12 hours</i>	<i>Take final notes from Dr. Bhattacharya on complete manuscript Final edits from retreat and feedback from Drs. Bhattacharya and Tolar</i>	
<i>Week 28 Monday, August 15, 2016</i>	<i>1) 4 hours</i>	<i>Send completed dissertation to Dr. Thompson, Dr. Tolar, Dr. Bhattacharya for final comment</i>	<i>1) Drs. Bhattacharya, Tolar, Thompson</i>
<i>Week 29 – 31</i>		<i>Await committee feedback</i>	
<i>Week 32 – Monday, September 12, 2016</i>		<i>Follow-up with committee on any feedback and schedule final defense</i>	<i>1) Drs. Bhattacharya, Tolar, Thompson</i>
<i>Week 33 – Week 37</i>		<i>Complete Edits and defense</i>	<i>1) Drs. Bhattacharya, Tolar, Thompson</i>
<i>Defense and all edits should be completed before Monday, November 7, 2016 – defense must be approved and scheduled by October 21 according to the Graduate School</i>			
<i>Weeks 38 – 40 Complete all edits to documents and submit to ETDR</i>			
<i>November 18 – final day to submit dissertation to ETDR and submission of final exam ballot due</i>			

Appendix B - Data Proposition

Table 4

Dissertation Study Data Proposition

Source of data	Number of pages	Total number of pages
Policy documents	2 – 5 pages of observation notes and coded per page of document	$2 \times 1 = 2$, $5 \times 5 = 25$, 2 – 25 pages per artifact
Memo-writing	TBD	$2 \times 8 = 16$, $4 \times 16 = 48$ 16 – 48 pages
3 – 60 minute peer debriefing session	10 pages per one hour transcribed	$10 \times 3 = 60$ pages
Artifact analysis (speeches/ public rhetoric) during the administrative cycle	2 – 5 pages of observation notes and coded per page of artifact	$2 \times 1 = 2$, $5 \times 5 = 25$, 2 – 25 pages per artifact
Total Documents Used for Analysis	TBD	TBD
	Total Pages	158 pages

Table 5

Inventory of Gubernatorial Discourse on Higher Education

Governor	Document Information	Pages
William Preston Graves	State of the State Address (1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002)	43
Kathleen Sebelius	State of the State (2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009), Inaugural Address (2003, 2007)	49
Mark Parkinson	Inaugural Address (2009), Kansas Board of Regents Remarks (2009), State of the State (2010), Special Legislative Message (2009)	19
Sam Brownback	Inaugural Address (2011, 2015), State of the State Address (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014)	19
Total		130

Table 6*Inventory of Kansas Performance Measure Documents 1997 – 2015*

Document	Year	Total Page Number
Performance Report	1997 - 2009	169
Kansas Statute 74-3202-d	1997 - 2014	1
Foresight 2020 Plan, supporting documents	2010 – 2011	40
Foresight 2015 Report, presentation, supporting documents	2012 – 2015	173
Total		383

Appendix C - Document Analysis Protocol

TIMELINE FOR DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Table 7

Data Collection and Analysis Timeline

Date	Item
Feb. 2, 2016	IRB Submitted to URCO
Feb. 2016	Document collection (all KBOR & performance documents, gubernatorial speeches)
Feb/March 2016	Documents – preliminary coding
March 2016	Documents – secondary coding
April 2016	All coding has gone through preliminary and secondary processes

Data Analysis Protocol

1. First Cycle Coding included descriptive coding to summarize short phrases and words in the data, and in this process. The preliminary coding process was a tool to identify topics in the data.
2. Memo writing and peer debriefing were used between each coding cycle. Memo writing was used to deepen my own documentation and reflection on observations of the data and to move beyond initial coding and begin drafting language about the data. Peer debriefing allowed me to check those initial descriptive codes with a peer.
3. Secondary Cycle Coding included Gee's tools Context is Reflexive and Building Tasks and Building Tools. I used questions that underpin these two tools for deeper data analysis.

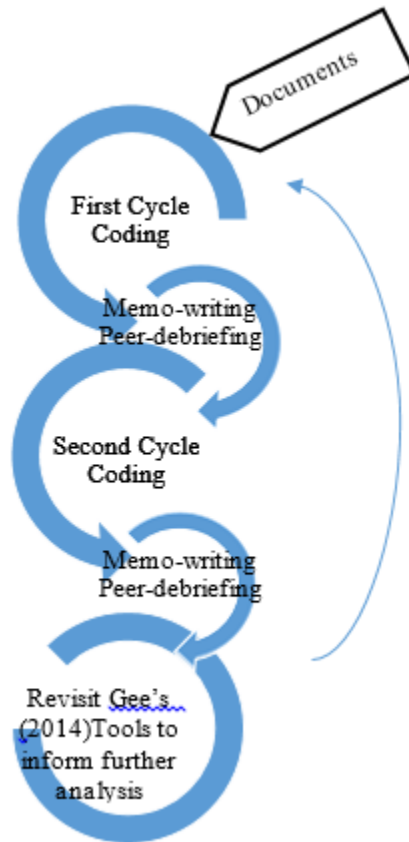


Figure 3. Data Coding Cycle for the Study.

Appendix D - Memo Writing and Peer Debriefing Notes

Memo - February 25, 2016

Pay attention to the movement of the language – state investing in higher education versus higher education providing for or producing for the state. Language in these addressed (1999, 2000, 2001) are primarily language of investment in higher education for the common good, not for production outcome.

Memo - March 3, 2016

Heavy focus on individual v. institution and personal v. workforce development or economic attainment. The purpose of the document is to highlight how data is articulated. The justification and framing of the purpose of higher education is clearly and regularly presented.

Memo

Student –centered framing. The institution uses personal pronouns our, we, etc. to talk about the students and center their goals and success in the report.

Focus is on what can be done for underserved populations

Emphasis is placed on the land-grant/access/serving students and Kansans

Memo - March 10, 2016

There is clear language throughout framing the universities commitment to student access and success. This language is extended to plans to recruit, support, and innovate services that increase access for nontraditional and underrepresented groups in the state. Along these same lines and throughout the report, there is reflection of the impact of the state/national economy on the universities ability to implement such programs. Further, in contrast to the framing from the state documents, the university documents indicate they are hindered by the economic policy/status of the state.

Throughout, language focuses on student success and places students at the center.

There is an interesting rationale for community-engaged work related to economic development and development of education and engaged citizens.

Memo - April 7, 2016: 1:00 pm

- Notes from meeting with Kelli Cox
- Performance reports in the current format didn't exist before 2003.
- From 2000 – 2003 the reports were standardized and didn't have narratives to accompany them. They provided less information that would be helpful for the study. This structure was for both KState and KU.
- Pay attention to questions about the purposes of higher education as related to funding.
- **What power is there in the messaging when it is mismanaged- IE language from Gov. Parkinson about the mismanagement of funds from K-State athletics.**
- How do we highlight the power in the performance documents and the language when framed from the state government?

Memo - April 13, 2016

Language is people first. Any mention of efficiency of even WFD is connected to 1) investing in university infrastructure/ systems or 2) investing in university faculty/staff as a WF/resource to be used. Language heavily focused on/around opportunity, experience, service to community. This seems like an asset-based approach from the institutions. Looking for and building in opportunity (written about 2003 reports).

Memo - April 14, 2016

Pay close attention to introduction of language about revenue generation or impacts of budget on system/plans.

Group 2007 & 2009 as data is exact mirror

Memo

Children and education are highlighted as investments and opportunities – central to the message

Pay special attention to how power is assigned. Industry informs higher education – not the other way in decisions about workforce development.

Heavy focus on education for opportunity to compete economically.

Memo

The framing of NBAF/Cancer institute's completely tied to WFD/economic opportunity.

Contribution couched in value propositions that these entities will enhance the state economy v. citizenship ideals more broadly – bottom line focus.

Memo

Again, there is little to no mention of how the state impacts or intends to engage higher education. In contrast, there is no mention of how higher education can or will advance and support the state. Is it worse not to be mentioned or to be mentioned with intentional policy around why higher education is omitted.

Appendix E - IRB Approval



University Research Compliance Office

TO: Mary Tolar
Leadership Studies
1300 Leadership

Proposal Number: 8119

FROM: Rick Scheidt, Chair 
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 02/11/16

RE: Proposal Entitled, "Analysis of Discourse and rhetoric in performance measures for research universities in Kansas"

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects / Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Kansas State University has reviewed the proposal identified above and has determined that it is EXEMPT from further IRB review. This exemption applies only to the proposal - as written - and currently on file with the IRB. Any change potentially affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation and may disqualify the proposal from exemption.

Based upon information provided to the IRB, this activity is exempt under the criteria set forth in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, 45 CFR §46.101, paragraph b, category: 4, subsection:

Certain research is exempt from the requirements of HHS/OHRP regulations. A determination that research is exempt does not imply that investigators have no ethical responsibilities to subjects in such research; it means only that the regulatory requirements related to IRB review, informed consent, and assurance of compliance do not apply to the research.

Any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, the University Research Compliance Office, and if the subjects are KSU students, to the Director of the Student Health Center.