AN EXAMINATION OF A UNIVERSITY SUCCESS

COACHING PROGRAM

By

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Abstract: This dissertation builds upon previous coaching research by providing a deep examination of a university success coaching program that uses an International Coach Federation (ICF) coaching framework. The dissertation seeks to identify how ICF coaching compares to the findings of previous research, what training is required to be an ICF coach at a university, how an ICF success coach supports the needs of students, and the challenges of coaching students at a university. The study utilizes a qualitative case study methodology to examine how an established and successful ICF coaching program works within a university setting. The findings of the study are also compared with the broader coaching literature outside of education and outside of the United States to suggest considerations of implementing this type of program.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Gray and Herr (1998) describe the American Dream as having access to the middle class. That dream is quickly fading (Putnam, 2015). The "rise of foreign trade, the displacement of workers by technology, the decline of labor unions, and increased immigration" (Gray & Herr, 1998; p. 31) have created an extreme redistribution of wealth and damaged the once straightforward pathway to the middle class. Gray and Herr identify education as the main way to offset these factors and restore the pathway to economic success. However, they also describe a phenomenon known as the "one way to win mentality" (p.32) that pervades the understanding of education as the access into the middle class. The one way to win mentality is identified as the belief that a bachelors degree from a four-year university is the only pathway to economic success and stability and is the main reason that most individuals choose to go to college (Gray & Herr, 1998).

Gray and Herr identify issues with the one way to win mentality. In the early 1990's the five-year graduation rate was 53 percent; of the graduates, only two out of three were able to find employment commensurate with a bachelors level education; and greater than one-half of students acquired student debt. Adding to this, they also describe an academic climate where 70 percent of high school graduates pursued education beyond high school, but only 30 percent of high school graduates had a sufficient level of academic skills to be successful in the postsecondary classroom.

The issues brought up by Gray and Herr are still relevant today. According to Duncan (2015), the current statistics regarding college completion are a significant concern:

- Nearly half of all students who begin college do not finish in six years (paragraph 12);
- Students who borrow for college but do not graduate are three times more likely to default (paragraph 45);
- Over the past 30 years tuition at four-year colleges has more than doubled; currently, the Pell Grant only covers around 30 percent of the cost of a four-year public university [undergraduate degree only] (paragraph 27);

These statistics have led to an increased concern and oversight about how best to encourage students to take steps to complete their degree. Bearing the brunt of this burden are the institutions that educate these students who are currently in an economic climate of decreased state and federal economic support. This reduction in state and federal support equates to a need for colleges and universities to dramatically increase enrollment to offset the funding cuts.

However, the need to increase the number of enrolled students might lead to students without the skillsets to be successful, who would need support beyond just enrolling in courses. Fox (2015) supports this by identifying three key issues that universities must consider. First, access to education harms students when there is not a sufficient infrastructure present to support the students who do not have the background to succeed. Second, individuals who fund initiatives intended to boost student success must support and encourage collaboration between universities to impact more than just small, localized groups. Third, it must be understood that the pathway to economic success for students is a dynamic system involving both industry and educational institutions. Until there is greater collaboration between these systems the pathway to success for students will be convoluted and uncertain, all occurring in an unclear economy of diminishing resources.

Since 2008, and the advent of the College Completion Agenda, interest in students fulfilling degree requirements in a reasonable time frame has been voiced (Robinson, 2015). The previous U.S. presidential administration added consequences for colleges to meet this mandate. Specifically, the administration tied federal funding for colleges to degree completion and employability beyond graduation. According to Duncan (2015), educational institutions will be expected to keep programs affordable and push students toward graduating within a timely manner (defined as a maximum of six years for a four-year degree). Under this program, colleges would be funded based on performance outcomes focused on student success, increasing college completion, reducing the need for remediation, and academic progress requirements for a timely graduation. Currently, with a new presidential administration taking office it is unknown whether these degree completion expectations will be maintained or amended.

Academic Success Coaching- A Retention Initiative

In the quest to comply with these mandates and increase retention and college completion, universities have worked to develop strategies to boost students' academic success in ways that are both cost-effective and successful. One of the newest approaches universities have taken is the creation of a role known as an academic success coach. This role is a new application of executive coaching that currently exists in the business world and is expected to increase learning skills, productivity, and overall performance in students (Dansinger, 2000). According to a dissertation by Robinson (2015), academic success coaching is "the individualized practice of asking reflective, motivation-based questions, providing opportunities for formal self-assessment, sharing effective strategies [for increased student success], and co-creating a tangible plan [with the student]" (p. 126).

Since 2010, academic success coaching has exploded in U.S. academic institutions. However, as described by Robinson (2015), there is a significant lack of consistent identity about the roles and responsibilities undertaken by the coaching programs. Her research identified that academic coaching

programs at institutions across the U.S. are diverse, have many elements of mentoring programs, academic advising, academic tutoring programs, and mental health counseling programs but the specific goal of academic success coaching is "skill development, performance improvement, and increased persistence" (p. 126) in students. Cavanagh & Palmer (2011) further emphasize the point by noting that currently there is no barrier to entry into the coaching profession and as such anyone can call himself or herself a coach. Robinson's (2015) research provided a proposed definition of academic success coaching and suggested further research be conducted to investigate the connections between coaching inside and outside higher education, and specifically higher education (postsecondary) coaching and International Coach Federation (ICF) coaching.

Statement of the Problem

The "one way to win mentality" (Gray & Herr, 1998; p. 32) has driven belief that everyone must have a bachelors degree to reach the middle class. This mentality has led to record post-secondary enrollment that includes many students who are academically unprepared. The current economic climate has pushed colleges and universities to find ways to increase student retention. Academic success coaching is a relatively new approach to address student retention and is in need of empirical research (Passmore & Gibbs, 2007; Sonesh, Coultas, Lacerenza, Marlow, Benishek, & Salas, 2015). Robinson (2015) conducted a broad demographic survey of student coaching programs at postsecondary colleges and universities in the U.S.; her findings provided a descriptive overview of coaching programs but little detail of what happens at the micro level. Robinson stated at the conclusion of her dissertation that no study has been conducted to investigate the connections specifically "between coaching inside and outside higher education" (p. 128). In addition, she suggests the link between higher education and ICF coaching has not been explored.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to build upon prior research to investigate the connections of coaching inside higher education with the broader coaching in education field worldwide and to provide deeper insight into the role of an ICF trained academic/success coach on a university campus. This study will provide an examination of the experience of success coaches who have completed ICF approved coach training and who work with students in a postsecondary university. The study will also examine how the practices of ICF trained coaches compare with the generalized academic success coach findings of the Robinson (2015) study.

Research Questions

This study will seek to answer the following research questions:

1. How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coach findings from Robinson (2015)?
    a. How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coaching in terms of students/clients?
    b. How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coaching in terms of coaches?
2. What does ICF coach training entail for a university employed success coach?
3. How does a success coach support the needs of the student?
4. What are the challenges of coaching students and how are they navigated?

Theoretical Framework

Input-Environment-Output Model of Assessment

In her dissertation providing descriptive statistics on the overall picture of coaching in U.S. higher education, Robinson (2015) used Astin's (1993) input, environment, and output (IEO) model of assessment as a theoretical framework to broadly examine the function of coaching with students

within higher education settings. Astin (1993) states that most models of assessment in higher education are focused specifically on outputs (retention, grades, meeting objectives, etc.) and do not take into consideration the relationships that might exist between other variables and how those could impact whether or not the output will be achieved.

The choice of this model to examine coaching is supported by broad research on coaching as a profession. Sonesh, et al. (2015) echo Astin by stating that most coaching models focus on inputs and outputs and do not account for the "theoretical distance between inputs and outputs" (p. 89). Theeboom, Beersma, & Van Vianen (2013) note that most attempts to evaluate the coaching return on investment (ROI) ignore input variables such as the background of the coach and the client. Bachkirova, Arthur, and Reading (2015) stated that there is no established and accepted methodology for evaluating a coaching program. This is due to the numerous factors influencing the coaching outcomes such as the extensive number of outcomes (from coaching), the approach of the coach, and the complexity of what happens during the actual coaching.

This work will utilize the IEO model (Astin, 1993) to examine coaching beyond (outside) of higher education, including ICF coaching. This work will follow the method used in previous research to define each element of the model and include both students and coaches. However, to more fully understand the aspects of ICF coaching, the study will consider the input aspects of the coach in more depth than were examined in previous research. Based upon the elements examined in previous studies, inputs consist of elements such as what type of student comes to coaching, the training and background of the coach, expectations that have been established by a student's advisor, mandatory versus non-mandatory coaching referral, etc. Outputs consist of elements such as GPA, retention, graduation, a learned skill, self-efficacy, and wellbeing. Environment consists of elements such as the structure of the coaching session, physical conditions present in the room, time length of a session, etc. (Figure 1).
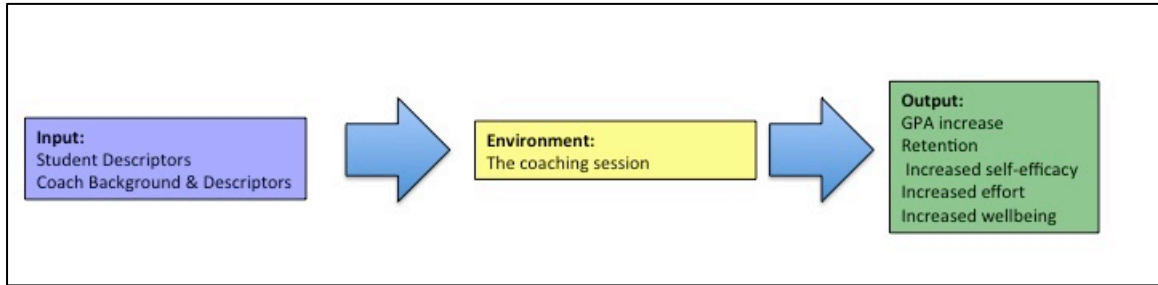
Figure 1- Researcher's theoretical framework based on Astin's IEO model

Methodology

Research Design

The general methodology for this research is a qualitative case study consisting of interviews with staff at an identified university that employs ICF coaches, an auditory observation of a feedback session between a coach and his or her supervisor, and an extensive document analysis for the program. The case study methodology has been chosen based upon the highly contextualized nature of coaching and the likelihood the boundaries of ICF coaching and success coaching are not clearly defined. According to Yin (2003), a case study is an appropriate research method when the subject of study is highly contextualized, and the boundaries of context and phenomenon are not clear. A single research participant in the selected university will also be asked to complete a copy of the survey used by Robinson (2015) to describe the coaching program to ensure a comparison of programs using the same data set. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained through Oklahoma State University (OSU), and the researcher followed all guidelines for the research defined by the IRB at both OSU and the participating university.

Population and Sample

The population for this case study is academic/success coaching programs at colleges and universities within the United States that utilize ICF trained coaches to work with their students.

Purposive sampling was utilized to obtain one institution that has a success coaching program that meets the operational definition presented by Robinson (2015), utilizes coaches that have completed ICF approved coach training, and have either obtained ICF certification or are working toward ICF certification.

Yin (2003) supports the use of one case if it represents a "unique case" (p. 40). For this study, the success coaching program at a four-year research university in the United States has been identified as a unique case and has been selected through purposive sampling. Due to small number of ICF coaching programs that exist at universities in the United States, and the small number of interview participants from the university, it is necessary to limit the descriptive identifiers of the university to protect the anonymity of the participants. For this reason, the university will simply be identified in this study as "the University." The program at the University is an established program that has been in operation for several years, requires coaches to complete specified coach training through an ICF program, and purports to coach students following ICF core competencies (M. Green, personal communication, July 21, 2015). The program has been defined as a unique case as the program aligns with ICF coaching and works with the population of students identified in Robinson (2015).

Significance of the Study

Academic success coaching is a relatively new role on university campuses in the United States (Robinson, 2015). There is a lack of consistent understanding of the role of the position (Robinson, 2015) and a significant lack of empirical research regarding student coaching programs in postsecondary educational settings (Van Nieuwerburgh, Campbell, & Knight, 2014; Iordanou, Lech, & Barnes, 2016). This study will seek to address both of these issues by providing a detailed understanding of what transpires within the experience of a student coaching program that follows an ICF-based approach in postsecondary education. This will be one of the first studies to explore this

experience and will inform worldwide research on coaching in education and inform practice for academic success coaches (and the universities that administrate coaching programs).

Relevance of the Study

Executive and professional coaching has experienced rapid growth in the business world since the 1980's and is an accepted form of leadership development for employees at all levels of the organization (Bono, Purvanova, Towler, & Peterson, 2009). Coaching has rapidly gained acceptance in postsecondary education as a method intended to increase retention of at-risk students (Robinson, 2015). As the use of coaching in education gains popularity, it is important to have a clear understanding of what coaching students entails and the elements that are needed to create an exceptional program. This study will be one of the first studies to provide a detailed description of such a program. This study will also provide a baseline for future research to measure against and will provide additional detailed information about student coaching programs that will be useful for other postsecondary educational sectors (i.e. "workforce education").

Limitations and Assumptions of the Study

Qualitative research is context specific (Patton, 2002) so the findings will only be specifically relevant to university student coaching programs fitting the narrow population being examined. However, since coaching in postsecondary education is a relatively new concept (Robinson, 2015), and the empirical research on coaching in education is very small (Campbell, et al., 2015), it is expected that this study will provide insight into how broader coaching research and ICF coaching can be applied to all coaching in postsecondary settings. This will then allow for further research to validate the practices in broader contexts.

Definitions of Key Terms

- **Academic Success Coaching/Success Coaching: "**the individualized practice of asking reflective, motivation-based questions, providing opportunities for formal self-assessment, sharing effective strategies, and co-creating a tangible plan" (Robinson, 2015; p. 126).

- **ADD/ADHD:** Attention deficit disorder/Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

- **Advising:** "connecting students' academic and career goals by providing individualized, accurate information on majors, courses, general education, degree requirements, beyond-the-classroom activities, institutional policies/procedures, and appropriate referral to academic and non-academic resources" (Robinson, 1015; p. 114).

- **Client:** In general coaching literature the client is identified as the individual who is working with a coach. For this study, client, student, and coachee all represent the individual working with the coach.

- **Coaching:** "a collaborative solution-focused, results-orientated, and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of life experience and goal attainment in the personal and/or professional life of normal, nonclinical clients (Grant, 2003; p. 254). It is helping [people] to learn rather than teaching them (Whitmore, 2009; p. 8).

- **College completion agenda:** an initiative by Complete College America, a nonprofit advocacy group, which has been adopted by multiple states. The agenda is focused on degree completion to increase the number of degree holders in the U.S. (Complete college America, 2017).

- **Counseling:** "a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals" (Kaplan, Tarvydas, & Gladding, 2014; p. 366)

- **Evidence-based coaching:** the intelligent and conscientious use of relevant and best current knowledge integrated with professional practitioner in making decisions about how to deliver

coaching to coaching clients and in designing and delivering coach training programs (Grant, 2016b; p. 76).

- **GPA:** Grade point average

- **ICF:** International Coach Federation; the major coaching certification body in the United States. ICF certifies coaches, not programs.

- **IEO model:** Input-Environment-Output model proposed by Astin (1993).

- **MI:** Motivational interviewing

- **Mentoring:** "the sharing of your knowledge or professional experience with another person in order to advance their understanding or effectiveness" (Hicks & McCracken, 2010).

- **Neurodiversity:** the concept that there are many different ways that individuals brains are wired (specifically referring to ADD and autism spectrum disorders) and that these unique differences can and should be viewed as strengths, not disorders (Armstrong, 2010).

- **Retention:** the retaining of students currently enrolled in a post-secondary institution

- **ROI:** Return on Investment. For this study unless identified as a specific type, ROI will be defined as persistence/retention (student and/or employee) and/or the amount of net profit gained by the investing entity.

- **Success Coaching/Academic Success Coaching: "**the individualized practice of asking reflective, motivation-based questions, providing opportunities for formal self-assessment, sharing effective strategies, and co-creating a tangible plan" (Robinson, 2015; p. 126).

- **Teaching:** "providing a framework for understanding based on an objective body of knowledge, not necessarily from one's own experience" (Hicks & McCracken, 2010).

- **Tutoring:** "a person employed to instruct another in some branch or branches of learning, especially a private instructor" (dictionary.com).

Summary

This chapter has described some of the challenges of currently facing higher education such as cost, degree completion, and the federal mandate requiring universities to give greater consideration to retention and degree completion. The chapter has also introduced success coaching as a newly developed role in higher education that is being used to help improve retention and graduation statistics and is in need of further study. The chapter concludes with providing the rationale, context, and methodology for a case study of a university based ICF coaching program.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chapter two is the review of literature for this study. This chapter will detail the IEO model of program evaluation, provide an introduction to retention within higher education, and provide detailed background on coaching and coaching research. A thorough look at ICF coaching will be considered as well. The examination of coaching will include literature from coaching inside and outside education, inside and outside higher education, and both inside and outside the United States.

IEO Model

Astin (1993) developed the input-environment-output model of program assessment as a response to his argument that output only models were not a true evaluation of program effectiveness. He proposed the IEO model as a method of conducting program evaluation within higher education and argued "any educational assessment project is incomplete unless it includes data on student inputs, student outcomes, and the educational environment in which the student is exposed" (p. 18). Astin posited that input and environment factors have a significant impact on output factors and true program assessment cannot be completely validated unless all three factors are considered.

IEO Model as Theoretical Framework

The IEO model was chosen as the theoretical framework for this study due to several reasons. First, the research literature describes the difficulty in understanding and evaluating coaching and coaching models due to the lack of consideration given to inputs (Theeboom, et al.,

2013), the "theoretical distance between inputs and outputs" (Sonesh, et al., 2015; p. 89), and the numerous factors that influence coaching outcomes (Bachkirova, et al., 2015). Combined with the research literature, the IEO model provides a framework for developing interview questions that allow for targeted evaluation of a coaching program and providing the data for the research questions to be answered. In the context of this study, input variables include (but are not limited to) student capability, student motivation, student background, coach training, and coach background. Output variables include (but are not limited to) student GPA, retention, graduation, persistence, and coach follow-up and reporting procedures. The environment variables include what happens during the coaching session such as student participation and the behavior of the coach and the daily duties and requirements of the coaches and program staff as it relates to the coaching role.

An Introduction to Retention

The focus on college completion and graduation has produced a spotlight on the issue of student retention. For colleges and universities, the ability to retain students equates to higher graduation rates, higher enrollments, and ultimately more money for the institution (Longnecker, 2014). In an environment where every dollar is important, universities are exploring a number of options to keep their students such as tutoring, supplemental instruction, living learning communities, student mentoring programs, and success coaching. Retention is simply defined as continuous student enrollment from admission to graduation. Ideally, this would mean a student enters as a freshman and stays enrolled until he or she graduates. The challenge is that in an era with skyrocketing cost of earning a degree, open-enrollment community colleges, the exponential growth of online programs, and the flexibility of many students to be able to transfer to other schools that are either cheaper or have a higher quality degree program, understanding what is needed to retain a student is both complex and difficult.

Student Retention Theories

For U.S. institutions there are two dominant theories regarding student retention. First, Tinto (1997) proposed a sociological model of retention that suggests that students must have a connection both academically with university faculty and staff and socially with peers in order to engage (or remain engaged) with the university and continue their enrollment. This model of student attrition presented by Tinto is the basis of most university retention models (Stieha, 2010; Willcoxson, Cotter, & Joy, 2011; Yu, DiGani, Jannasch-Pennell, & Kaprolet, 2010). An example of this model is the freshmen programming at many universities where the institution develops and provides social programs and specific course sections that force students to get involved on campus, connect with a faculty member in a freshmen seminar course, and to make new friends (Willcoxson, et al., 2011).

Secondly, there is a separate, less accepted psychological model of student attrition proposed in 1980 by Bean (Willcoxson, et al., 2011). This model suggests that retention is a factor of multiple organizational determinants and background variables such as how the university operates systemically and the impact of a student's family on their continued enrollment (Bean, 1980). Bean's model is similar to the model presented by Tinto but provides for more individualization due to the large number of variables he associates with student retention. These variables include background and defining variables, academic variables, environmental variables, social integration variables, academic outcome (GPA), and psychological outcomes; these variables all play a role in a student's decision whether to stay or leave an institution.

This list of variables includes variables specific to retaining non-traditional students that were included in a revision of his model (Bean & Metzner, 1985; Metzner & Bean, 1987). Figure 2 shows the Metzner and Bean (1987) conceptual model of student attrition. The figure includes the specific variables within each category and how Metzner and Bean theorized the variables impact the retention decision. They identify traditional students as students who meet three

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specific criteria: "under the age of 25, enrolled full-time, and reside at their college." For the

purpose of this model, students not meeting all three criteria are considered non-traditional

students. The challenge of Bean's model is that there are too many variables to have practical use

in universities who are already constrained by time and staffing issues due to reduced funding

(Willcoxson, et al., 2011). According to Willcoxson, et al. (2011), the vast majority of

universities have adopted Tinto's model to address the retention issue due to the lack of an

efficient alternative model.
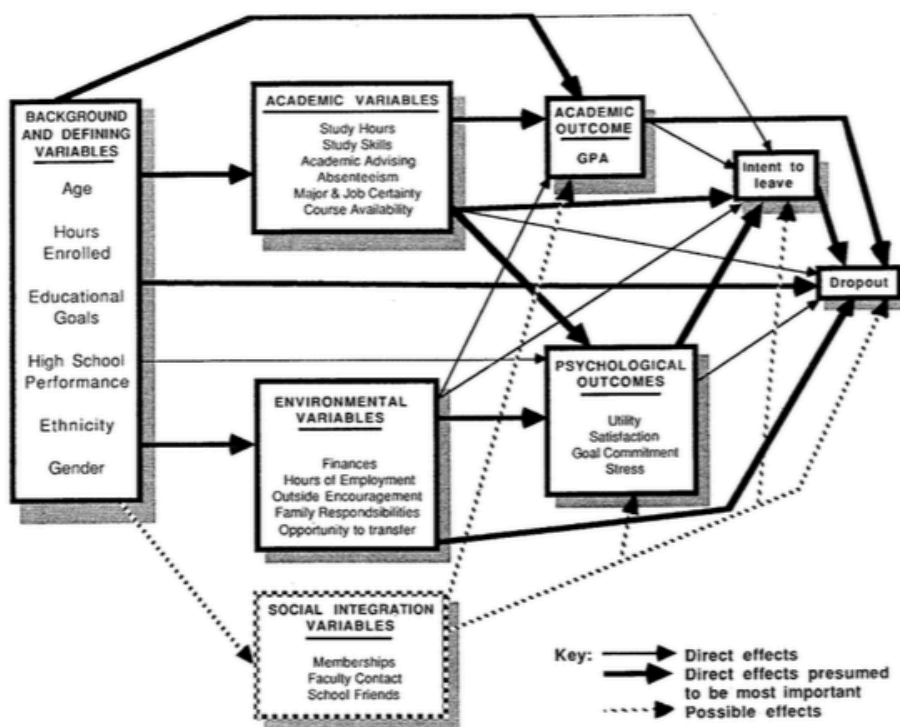
Figure 2- Conceptual model of nontraditional student retention (Metzner & Bean, 1987; p. 17)

Undergraduate Retention Programming

According to Willcoxson, et al. (2011), "freshmen attrition is 50% of overall attrition [in

U.S. universities]" (p. 333). This high percentage has resulted in a vast number of retention

programs being aimed at freshmen students (such as mandatory freshmen seminars and

requirements for freshmen to live on campus). However, with the national focus on retention and

the dwindling state and federal resources, even slight bumps in enrollment could make a

significant difference in an institution's operating expenses. Therefore, universities have been forced to consider how to improve retention rates even beyond the freshman year.

Students at different classifications have different concerns and different needs (Yu, et al., 2010). In an effort to understand the needs of students a retention study conducted at Arizona State University found that freshmen were most concerned with transitioning from home and building relationships. This is in stark contrast with their findings from sophomores, juniors, and seniors that reported ethnicity, residency (pertaining to cost), and how hours transferred (likely from upperclassmen transfers to the university) as the most important issues predicting their retention (Willcoxson, et al., 2011). Additional research conducted by Casper, Khoury, Lashbaugh, and Ruesch (2011) identified that sophomores struggle with understanding how their academic choices will lead to a career post-graduation and issues with self-efficacy. Finally, Willcoxson, et al. (2011) noted in their research findings on sophomore, junior, and senior year students that these students were more concerned with having quality interactions with faculty and with the quality of their academic program. These are only a few of a very large number of retention studies conducted on students in postsecondary education that demonstrate the challenges inherent in increasing student persistence.

A Case for Individualized Retention Approach- Success Coaching?

Spradlin, Burroughs, Rutkowski, and Lang (2010) present an argument focusing on historically underrepresented college students. They argue that retention is individualized for each student and what works will be different for each institution because the characteristics of each institution are different. In traditional higher education where academically qualified students spend four years living on (or close to) campus, attend courses in person, and can afford to focus on school over everything else having the time and ability to meet Tinto's (1997) requirement of connecting with faculty and other students seems easy to accomplish. However, in today's higher education of students who are not academically prepared, are taking courses via distance education, and/or cannot afford to attend class without working in order to offset costs, the ability

of students (or for institutions) to create opportunities for students to meet Tinto's requirements for retention are infinitely more complex. This emphasizes the point made in Spradlin, et al. (2010) that student success has to be viewed as unique for each individual.

This broad web of issues aligns more closely with the multitude of variables found in Bean's (1980) model raising the question: Is it possible for higher education institutions to address the complexity of the large number of unique variables brought forth by individual students in their quest to stay in school? One avenue universities have adopted to address meeting the individualized needs of students is the development and implementation of success coaching programs on campus (Robinson, 2015).

The Bettinger and Baker Study

The first published study of the use of coaching in higher education was an examination of coaching provided by an outside vendor (InsideTrack) seeking to address the issue of student retention (Bettinger & Baker, 2013). The study consisted of a population of students from InsideTrack that included private, public, and proprietary institutions and students in either associate or bachelor degree programs. The study sought to measure 6-month, 12-month, 18-month, and 24-month retention and graduation of these students coached by InsideTrack against a control group of students from each individual institution who did not receive coaching. They found coaching in the first year resulted in a 9-12% increase in retention and rose to 15% after two years. They also found that students in coaching had a 4% higher graduation rate than the control group after four years. The results in all categories were statistically significant and speak to the potential value of coaching in the higher education population as the effects listed here are more significant (and cheaper) than programs that specifically target financial aid (Bettinger & Baker, 2013).

Population and Sample. The population for the study consisted of 13,555 primarily non-traditional students with an average age of 31 (25% were younger than 23) and majority male (51%). (Bettinger and Baker noted that these descriptive statistics are different from the normal

populations found in U.S. higher education.) The students in the study attended eight different institutions that included: proprietary colleges, private not-for-profit colleges and universities, and public 2 and 4-year colleges and universities.

From this population, InsideTrack identified treatment groups who would receive coaching and control groups that would not. Both groups received the standard academic support that is provided to all students (such as advising and tutoring). It is also important to note that all the data for the study was provided to Bettinger and Baker from InsideTrack and not the individual universities. According to Bettinger and Baker, data coming from InsideTrack was based on contracts InsideTrack held with the institutions. They noted that InsideTrack providing the data would be considered a valid conflict but due to the checks they conducted on the data they believed it was a non-issue.

About InsideTrack. Inside Track is an independent company that outsources their coaching services to universities seeking to provide students access to experts that can work with them on an individual basis addressing both academic and non-academic issues. They attribute their effectiveness to a model focusing on four specific variables: people, technology, methodology, and supporting systems. They also believe that the non-school issues are what most effect student retention. The company started in 2000 and has coached more than 250,000 students in the United States from various private, public, and proprietary institutions (Bettinger & Baker, 2013). They utilize a proprietary coaching model and coach students via distance technologies including telephone and email.

The goal of InsideTrack's coaching initiative is "to encourage persistence and completion by helping students find ways to overcome both academic and "real-life" barriers and to identify strategies for success by helping students use resources and advocate for themselves" (p. 4). They do this by providing "empathetic and informed support" (p.4) from a source beyond the student's everyday life that is connected (via phone and email) but separate. The students are contacted by InsideTrack and offered the choice to participate in the coaching program. The students who opt

into the program work with an InsideTrack coach for two semesters. Although the study does not provide specifics, it does detail that InsideTrack estimated that only 20% of what they work on with students is specific to an individual institution.

Limitations of the Study. The study does not provide any level of detail regarding the percentage of students who opted into the program or any detail on the students who chose to opt out. Also, the study is noticeably lacking any detail on what happens during the coaching sessions that led to their findings; this includes details such as what happens during the coaching session (does the coach prescribe actions to students or do they ask questions, and the topics of each coaching session). Also noticeably absent is the description of the coaches utilized by InsideTrack. Other than the understanding that coaching is provided via distance there is no mention of the background of the coach, what specific training the coach undergoes before being fully christened as a coach, or how the coach understands the 20% of institutional specific information that is provided to the student.

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The Robinson Study

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Overview

In 2015, Robinson conducted and published dissertation research over the role of academic success coaching in higher education in the United States (identified hereafter as coaching). According to Robinson (2015), her research is the first study to provide an overview of coaching programs in the U.S. higher education system. Using Astin's (1993) input, environment, output (IEO) model she sought to explore who the students were that utilized coaching, defining features of coaching programs (such as position name, title of program, coach training, and what happens during coaching sessions), and how coaching programs assess and evaluate their effectiveness. She utilized a quantitative survey methodology and provided a broad overview of results from

160 unique higher education institutions. The institutions included public and private 2-year community colleges and 4-year universities.

Findings

Coaching Programs. Broadly, Robinson (2015) found that coaching in this population is very difficult to define and the definitions are all across the board. The coaching role is very recent. 83% of the programs were established after 2005; 70% were established since 2010. Robinson hypothesized that the majority of the programs were created in response to the Complete College America initiative that was focused on boosting retention and graduation rates. Due to the retention focus, the vast majority of programs are geared toward freshmen, sophomore, and special populations (such as first-year and academically deficient students).

The Coaching Role. Robinson also found that the term coaching represents a very broad spectrum of roles and responsibilities including tutoring, advising, mentoring, coaching, and counseling. Her findings suggested this was due to in part to the lack of clarity around the definition of what a coach is, a significant lack of agreement on the primary emphasis of coaching, and the lack of a conceptual framework that drives the behavior of coaches. She concluded her research findings with a proposed definition of academic success coaching in higher education that incorporated the entirety of these various roles. She proposed that

> academic success coaching is the individualized practice of asking reflective, motivation-based questions, providing opportunities for formal self-assessment, sharing effective strategies, and co-creating a tangible plan. The coaching process offers students an opportunity to actively practice new skills and effectively navigate appropriate resources that ultimately result in skill-development, performance improvement, and increased persistence (Robinson, 2015; p. 126).

Additional findings included: the titles of the coaches mainly varied between academic coaches, success coaches, and academic success coaches; students were either referred or required to meet with a coach depending upon the specific program; and the majority of the coaches were either full-time coaches or full-time employees who also served as coaches.

Program Assessment. Robinson (2015) found a variety of intended outcomes for the coaching programs surveyed. These intended outcomes ranged from improving retention to providing academic and institutional assistance to addressing student self-awareness and motivation issues. Table 1 identifies the intended outcomes from her research (percentages reflect the percentage of total respondents who identified the outcomes as intentional for the program).

Table 1- Intended Coaching Program Outcomes	
14%	Improve retention
12%	Provide academic assistance
11%	Promote self-awareness
10%	Provide institutional resources
9%	Improve student engagement
8%	Develop student-institutional connection
8%	Improve student satisfaction

Robinson also found that institutions used a variety of assessment methods to identify program success. These measures included surveying students on their satisfaction with coaching, the retention and persistence rates of students coached, grade point average (GPA) data, and surveying coaches for their perspectives. A significant finding from her study regarding coaching assessment was that 19% of the programs reported that their assessment procedures were either too new or too unclear to know if the program was meeting the intended objective. Table 2

identifies the measurements used by coaching programs to evaluate their outcomes and the percentage of respondents for each measurement.

Table 2- Measurements Evaluating Coaching Program Success	
26%	Survey coaching students' satisfaction
23%	Retention/Persistence rates of students using coaching
18%	GPA data
19%	Assessments too new or unclear to be helpful
12%	Survey of coaches

Limitations to Robinson Study

Study Sample. There are several limitations to Robinson's (2015) study. First, she acknowledged that her sample population might not have adequately captured all the coaching programs represented in colleges and universities within the United States. Furthermore, she noted that some institutions have more than one coaching program, which could have also skewed her data.

Worldwide Coaching in Education Research. Beyond the sample population limitations, Robinson also did not fully capture the research on coaching in education worldwide. There is a robust group of coaching research abroad covering all sectors of education: primary, secondary, post-secondary, and graduate. The number of studies in each area is small and the populations are not entirely generalizable to coaching post-secondary students. However, the findings from these studies provide an important perspective in determining the best practices in coaching post-secondary students and developing and evaluating a coaching program. These studies will be referenced through the course of the literature review.

Developing a Coaching Program. A third limitation from the Robinson study is that she did not fully explore elements related to effective implementation of a coaching program. Knight (2007) identifies five keys for building a (instructional) coaching program: (1) there has to be buy-in from both top-down and bottom-up. (2) Ideas to be implemented have to be both (more) powerful than current ideas and easy to implement. (3) To be self-organizing and highly organized, coaches have to have an open mind and not a formalized, structured approach. (4) Coaches must be both ambitious and humble in order to connect and to challenge. (5) Coaches must be engaged and detached- it has to be about the client, not the coach. Although Robinson (2015) did explore how coaching programs originated on campus, her study did not provide an in-depth probe of university buy-in, how the program was initially implemented, nor specifics on how individual coaches approach their position. This suggests another area to be considered when evaluating coaching programs.

Robinson's Suggested Next Steps

The conclusion of Robinson's (2015) research suggested future studies seek to identify a sound method of measuring program effectiveness and to explore the connections between coaching in higher education and coaching outside of higher education, such as k-12 coaching, executive and life coaching, and ICF coaching. This study builds upon Robinson's work by broadening the examination of the research literature to include studies beyond the United States and higher education in general and by providing a detailed case study of an established ICF based university coaching program.

Comparing Coaching to Other Higher Education Helping Professions

Universities are unique places. They are institutions of learning and development spanning across age, socioeconomic background, and a variety of geographic locations. They are comprised of faculty and staff who support students on the path to graduation. However, with the

similarities that exist, there are also significant differences that exist between institutions (and sometimes within different departments) that make defining a single, specific role extremely difficult. Such is the case with the attempt to identify and compare coaching with other helping professions such as mentoring, counseling, tutoring, and academic advising.

Defining the Roles

An attempt to define each of these student support roles in a way that is applicable to every institution is a futile endeavor. Robinson (2015) found that the function and intention of many of these roles were similar to that of other roles. For example, she found that some of the programs in her sample have coaches who tutor, academic advisors who coach, and academic advisors and mentors who provide counsel (in essence making them a "counselor" although not necessarily a "mental health counselor"). Further convoluting the point is her finding that some of the programs employ student (peer) mentors and coaches; are they providing mentoring? Are they providing tutoring? Are they providing advice on classes to take or how to deal with a heavy emotional issue (such as failing a course or breaking up with a partner)? The research does not specifically say what they do and even if it did it would not be completely valid due to the subjective experiences of both the peer and the student (Crotty, 1998) and the differing realities of individual universities (size, current budget, etc.).

To provide at least generalized comparison between the roles they will be considered in terms of their "bottom-line" function. The "bottom-line" function is not meant to fully encompass everything that each role performs but to describe what constitutes the absolute minimum that the role must accomplish or the role is terminated. For this study, the following perspectives will be used (student peer applications of these roles will not be considered):

- Academic advising: the role of the academic advisor is to ensure students are enrolled in proper courses and are following a degree plan toward graduation.

- Coaching: the bottom-line function for this role is still being determined. The proposed role of the coach is to facilitate the self-directed learning of the student (Hicks & McCracken, 2010; Van Nieuwerburgh, 2012). In this role, the power and responsibility lie with the student and there is very little sharing of the coach's experience and knowledge.

- Mentoring: the role of the mentor is to share their experiences and knowledge with another person to boost their effectiveness or understanding of an issue. In this role, the power lies with the mentor and the conversations are based on his or her experiences (Hicks & McCracken, 2010).

- Counseling: in this context, counseling will specifically refer to mental health counseling. As such, the "bottom-line" role of the counselor is work with students suffering from mental health issues providing both treatment and support (Griffiths & Campbell, 2008).

- Tutoring: dictionary.com defines a tutor as "a person employed to instruct another in some branch or branches of learning, especially a private instructor." In this context, the "bottom-line" role of a tutor is to provide instruction and improve understanding about a specific topic or subject relevant to the student and his or her coursework.

ICF Coaching

About ICF Coaching

According to the ICF website ("International Coach Federation About," 2016) the ICF is a professional organization who "seeks to advance the art, science, and practice of professional coaching." The ICF has a global reach and is recognized for developing core coaching competencies and a professional code of ethics, and the accreditation of individual coaches and coach training programs. The coaching competencies provide a definable and measurable set of skills for coaches. The code of ethics provides an ethical and legal framework for the overall

growth of the coaching profession. Beyond these elements, the ICF also acts as a repository of coaching research and as a directory service for individuals seeking an accredited coach.

Requirements for membership. The requirements to be a member of the ICF include either: be a current ICF credential holder, be enrolled in an ICF approved coach training program that is a minimum of 60 coach-specific training hours, or have completed at least 60 coach-specific training hours that meet ICF standards ("International Coach Federation member eligibility requirements," 2016).

Requirements for initial certification. The ICF awards three different credentials based upon the amount of training an individual has received and their skill level as a coach ("International Coach Federation individual credentialing," 2016). The three certification levels are associate certified coach (ACC), professional certified coach (PCC), and master certified coach (MCC). The ACC level certification is the initial certification and requires at least 60 hours of coach-specific training, 10 hours of mentor coaching with an ICF certified coach, at least 100 hours of coaching experience with at least eight clients (75 hours must be paid hours), and completion of an online, multiple- choice coach knowledge assessment ("International Coach Federation Associate certified coach," 2016).

Benefits of coaching

The ICF markets the benefits of using a coach as: improved time management, improved team effectiveness, improved work performance, improved business management, improved self-confidence, improved relationships, improved communication skills, improved work/life balance, and reports that 86% of companies who invested in coaching made their investment back. ("International Coach Federation benefits of using a coach," 2016). Furthermore, the ICF promotes four specific values to coaches who are members of the organization: enhanced credibility for coaches, access to a local and global community of coaches to collaborate with and

learn from, lifelong learning and professional development through discounted conferences and virtual coach training, and access to research and advice from the top coaching researchers and practitioners in the world ("International Coach Federation value of membership," 2016).

Coach Training

The ICF does not provide coach training; it only validates coach specific training for certification ("International Coach Federation eligibility requirements," 2016). For training to meet ICF requirements, at least 48 of the 60 required hours must be synchronous real-time contact hours between students and instructors and the material being taught must be based upon the 11 core ICF coaching competencies. Training that is not specific to teaching or understanding coaching skills (such as academic advising, tutoring, or how to mentor, etc.) is not considered coach-specific training and cannot be used toward the 60 hours of training required for credentialing ("International Coach Federation eligibility requirements," 2016).

ICF core coaching competencies

The ICF has defined 11 core competencies that define effective coaching practice. To obtain certification as a professional coach, individuals must demonstrate proficiency in each of these 11 competencies. The core competencies are:

1. Meeting ethical guidelines and professional standards- understanding of coaching ethics, standards, and the ability to apply them appropriately in all coaching situations.
2. Establishing the coaching agreement- the ability to understand what is needed in the specific coaching interaction and the ability to come to an agreement with the coachee about the coaching relationship and coaching process.
3. Establishing trust and intimacy with the client- the ability to create a safe and supportive environment that produces mutual respect and trust.

4. Coaching presence- the ability to be fully conscious and create a spontaneous relationship with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible, and confident.

5. Active listening- the ability to focus completely on what the client is saying and not saying, understanding the meaning of what is said in the context of the client's desires, and support the client self-expression.

6. Powerful questioning- the ability to ask questions that reveal the information needed for maximum benefit to the coaching relationship and the client.

7. Direct communication- the ability to communicate effectively during coaching sessions and to use language that has the greatest positive impact on the client.

8. Creating awareness- the ability to integrate and accurately evaluate multiple sources of information and to make interpretations that help the client gain awareness and thereby achieve agreed-upon results.

9. Designing actions- the ability to create with the client opportunities for ongoing learning, during coaching and in work (academic)/life situations, and for taking new actions that will most effectively lead to agreed-upon coaching results.

10. Planning and goal setting- the ability to develop and maintain an effective coaching plan with the client.

11. Managing progress and accountability- the ability to hold attention on what is important for the client and to leave the responsibility with the client to take action. ("International Coach Federation Core Competencies," 2016).

Coaching Beyond Higher Education

Defining Coaching

Definitions. The most accepted definition of coaching today is the definition of Sir John Whitmore (Van Nieuwerburgh, 2012). Whitmore (2009) defines coaching as "unlocking a person's potential to maximize their growth. It is helping [people] to learn rather than teaching

them" (p. 8). This definition captures the overarching ideas that permeate the concept of coaching; helping others to move from potential to success by a process that is collaborative rather than directive. Coaching is also defined as:

- "a collaborative solution-focused, results-orientated and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of life experience and goal attainment in the personal and/or professional life of normal, nonclinical clients" (Grant, 2003; p. 254).
- "partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential ("International Coach Federation about," 2016).
- "a dialogue-based change methodology" (Theeboom, 2016; p.187).
- "a non-judgmental way of talking to others characterized by mutual respect [between coach and client] where clients are expected to take personal responsibility for the situations they find themselves in" (Van Nieuwerburgh, 2016).

Coaching Evidence Base. In discussing coaching, Passmore and Gibbs (2007) identified that coaching is in its infancy both in terms of research and as a profession. Almost 10 years later coaching is still viewed as being in infancy due to a relatively small number of empirical studies and many studies that have methodological issues (Theeboom, 2016). Passmore as quoted in Cavanaugh and Palmer (2011), suggests that coaching (psychology) should aim to be a "high level profession" such as clinical psychology or medicine (p. 108). He believes that in order for coaching to be viewed at this high level there has to be an (scientific) evidence base for coaching and that all coach training should be derived from this evidence base. Grant (2005) identified only 131 peer-reviewed coaching studies from 1937 to 2003 and argues that coaching has to borrow from other disciplines to determine best practices to be used in the coaching field. In a very recent

meta-analysis, Sonesh, et al. (2015) analyzed 874 studies of executive and professional coaching and remark that coaching still lacks a substantial evidence base for practice.

This lack of a significant evidence base is important in the discussion of defining exactly what coaching is. A solid evidence base impacts both practice and training (which cyclically then impacts practice) and will refine how coaching is viewed and defined as a profession.

Theoretical Basis of Coaching. Another important aspect to consider in defining coaching is the theory that underpins it as both a process and a methodology. Coaching as both a process and a methodology draws from many different disciplines. Bush (2009) identifies that coaching in North America draws from education, psychotherapy, communication studies, the self-help movement, social systems theory, athletic motivation, adult development theories, the holistic movement, and management and leadership. Quoted in Cavanagh and Palmer (2011), Passmore describes coaching (psychology) as being grounded in both psychological and adult learning approaches. Bresser and Wilson (2016) expand this to include that the core elements of good coaching stem from a foundation of self-directed learning and include responsibility, self-belief, challenge, action, trust, awareness, a blame-free environment, and being solution-focused. Grant (2016a) describes the foundation of the solution-focused coaching approach as both self-regulation and self-directed learning. Drawing theory from this many disciplines is both a benefit and a challenge. It is a benefit in that it provides a multitude of theoretical perspectives to inform practice. It is a challenge in that each discipline espouses different processes and goals, which contributes to the lack of a clear, accepted definition and goal for coaching.

Coaching and positive psychology. Positive psychology is one of the most significant fields from which coaching draws theory (Campbell, 2016; Kauffman & Linley, 2007). Positive psychology is defined as the study of the conditions and processes that contribute to the flourishing or optimal functioning of people, groups, and institutions (Gable & Haidt, 2005).

Positive psychology focuses on what works and how to cause people to thrive (Leach & Green, 2016). The goal of the positive psychologist is to increase wellbeing in their clients (Seligman, 2011) by shifting clients from languishing to flourishing mental health states (Leach & Green, 2016).

There is significant overlap between coaching and positive psychology (Campbell, 2016). Coaching primarily functions in flourishing individuals to keep boosting improvement but can also help individuals who do not have severe mental illness move into flourishing (Grant, 2007). Coaching has specifically been linked with increases in wellbeing, goal striving, resilience and hope, emotional intelligence, academic achievement, and attitudes to learning and decreases in depressive symptoms (Leach & Green, 2016). These links correspond with the five factors of positive psychology that make up wellbeing in individuals: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment (Seligman, 2011) showing a strong correlation between coaching and positive psychology.

Wellbeing in education. Positive psychology and wellbeing specifically in the realm of education have gained significant attention in recent years due to a high awareness of mental health issues with students (Campbell, 2016). According to Leach and Green (2016): One in ten young people have a mental disorder; one in four young people regularly experience depressive symptoms; one in three often feel under strain related to: school or exam stress, bullying or other conflict, low body image, financial concerns, or worry about a future career. Leach and Green also identify a correlation in these statistics with behaviors such as suicide, self-harm, drugs and alcohol abuse, anti-social behavior, and violence. These statistics are pushing schools to be proactive in working to build mental and emotional resilience before they become an issue. Fortunately,

research over a thirty-year span is showing that a focus on realizing potential and promoting positive functioning in all young people relating to social competence, life satisfaction, civic engagement, building tolerance and trust is positively associated with the ongoing adult life-span experience of increased resilience, better physical health, and higher quality relationships, combined with less anti-social behavior and psychological distress (Leach & Green, 2016; p. 172).

This shows that a focus on wellbeing can have a tremendous impact on society and specifically education. Leach & Green (2016) identify coaching as the most straightforward way to impact all areas of wellbeing and integral to the success of positive education programs.

Also relevant to the discussion of wellbeing and students is a study by Oades (2016) where he identified 10 common challenges to wellbeing at work. The challenges he identified are: work-life interference, turning up to work but not being productive, sitting too much, sleep quality, managing your energy at work, time management/information management or busyness, workplace conflict, not feeling valued at work, the speed of change and uncertainty, and procrastination. These challenges include common themes that are typically addressed in freshmen seminars and orientation courses and speak to the relevance wellbeing has in the university setting.

Coaching in Action

Coaching Goals. Another aspect of defining coaching is examining what exactly happens during a coaching session. Grant (2005) describes the coaching process as an egalitarian (rather than authoritarian) and collaborative relationship between client and coach with a focus on goal setting and finding solutions instead of analyzing problems. Hicks (2014), describes what happens in a coaching session as a dynamic process of supporting and challenging thoughts and actions. Each coaching session has an emphasis on goal setting (Grant, 2005). Bresser and Wilson

(2016) emphasize that coaching is about enhancing performance, and as such the key to coaching is behavior (change) supported by cognition and motivation.

Coaching Wellbeing. However, Spence (2016) argues that coaching needs to be concerned about more than just clients taking action; Grant (2007) identifies this as wellbeing. Spence (2016) references the idea of workaholism and that being forced to focus only on meeting performance objectives ignores wellbeing aspects (Grant, 2007) that support optimal functioning. Grant (2005) and Kemp (2005) both acknowledge that coaching specifically works with clients who are from a population that does not have significant levels of psychopathology or emotional distress. Grant (2012b) presents a model that shows a portion of the coaching population can be in a period of languishing where they have low wellbeing (but not high levels of psychopathology or emotional distress). He argues that clients can drift in and out of the quadrants of this model due to life circumstances and that coaching can be used to move clients back into an area of flourishing. Oades (2016) found that in adults, as wellbeing increased there was a corresponding increase in productivity. This suggests a correlation between wellbeing and goal achievement and suggests that the arguments presented in Spence (2016) that coaching should be as much about wellbeing as it is about goal setting and achievement have validity.

Types of Coaching

What you coach. Grant (2005) defines three different types of coaching based upon the topic being coached. The first type is skills coaching which is focused on developing a specific skillset. This type of coaching focuses strictly on behavior and typically lasts one or two sessions. The second type of coaching is performance coaching which is focused on improving performance over a specific period of time. This type of coaching specifically addresses goals, obstacles, and monitoring performance and usually lasts between one month and two years. The third type of coaching is developmental coaching which deals with both personal and professional

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development. This type of coaching is long-term, intensive, and "involves the creation of personal reflective space where the client can explore issues and options and formulate action plans in a confidential, supportive environment" (p. 4).

Who you coach. Grant (2005) also identifies three specific types of coaching based upon the specific client being coached. First is executive coaching which is a developmental process between a coach and a client with managerial authority. The aim of this type of coaching is improving productivity and skills of the employees working for the manager. Second is workplace coaching which is coaching in the workplace with employees who are not executives. This type of coaching is focused more on skills coaching than developmental coaching. The aim of this type of coaching is to improve the skills and productivity of workers. The third type of coaching is life coaching, which is holistic coaching that is focused on personal issues and not work.

Coaching as Art and Applied Science

Van Nieuwerburgh (2016) argues that coaching is both an art and applied science. As an art, there is a *way of being* that defines how a person coaches. This way of being is the sum of a coach's past experiences and the belief system that dominates how they view the world. Coaching as an applied science (Van Nieuwerburgh, 2016) are the methods the coach uses to work with their client to achieve success. These methods are directly influenced by how the coach understands the world and the process by which they believe people find success.

Van Nieuwerburgh's (2016) statement that coaching is both an art and an applied science suggests that the two cannot be separated. He also notes that as coaching becomes more accepted and popular in the professional world there is danger that the fundamental principles that underpin coaching may get lost in the quest for efficiency and the need for executive coaches to find individuals to coach (which he argues could lead to unsubstantiated and exaggerated claims

about the benefits of coaching) (p. 250). Van Nieuwerburgh also states that there is a need for further research to be done on both the science (quantitative) and the *way of being* art (qualitative) of coaching to further understand how coaching happens. Therefore, any accepted definition of coaching or examination of coaching must consider both the art and applied science aspects at play in both the coach and the coaching session.

What Makes a (Good) Coach? If coaching is both art and applied science then what exactly does it take to be an effective coach? A thorough review of coaching literature identifies a consistent impression that coaching involves a level of competence beyond what is found from the average person on the street. The coaching literature identifies six specific things that are present in effective coaches: training, relationship building skills, a specific way of being, coaching skills, a basic understanding of various theory, and the ability to utilize various coaching models. The combination of these six represent aspects of both art and applied science and suggest that both aspects must be present for effective coaching to occur.

Training. Van Nieuwerburgh (2016) advocates that all coaches receive high-quality training. Passmore as quoted in Cavanaugh and Palmer (2011), defines high-quality coach training as masters degree level instruction with "a period of reflective practice to acquire and apply high level skills" (p. 108). Szabo (2016) and Knight (2007) add that coaches need to be connected to a professional body for support and continual learning from other coaches. Connection to a professional body assures the coach is continually growing as a professional.

The coaching literature also identifies the specific topics that coach training should include. The topics identified are:

- facilitating learning through coaching (Grant, 2005);
- the process of human change (Grant, 2016a);
- how to manage a coaching conversation (Grant, 2016a);

- goal setting (Grant, 2012a);

- ethics in coaching (Cavanaugh & Palmer, 2011);

- mental health and psychological conditions, including how to refer clients to other professionals (Cavanaugh & Palmer, 2011);

- human psychology (Cavanaugh & Palmer, 2011);

- adult learning (Cavanaugh & Palmer, 2011);

- behaviour change models (Cavanaugh & Palmer, 2011);

- coaching skills (Van Nieuwerburgh, 2012);

- coaching models (Van Nieuwerburgh, 2012); and

- life-stage theories (Garvey, 2013).

Relationship. The second thing that the literature identifies describing an effective coach is the ability to effectively foster a relationship with the client. According to Knight (2007), the ability to connect with others is critical to being an effective coach. Sonesh, et al. (2015) in a meta-analysis of coaching literature identified the relationship between a coach and client as an important mechanism for achieving coaching goals. They suggest that adopting a person-centered (Rogers, 1951) approach allows for the development of a positive relationship that fosters goal-oriented coaching outcomes and shows strong support for client behavior change. Grant (2014) states that the coach must create a supportive relationship with the client comprised of empathy, unconditional positive regard, and trust in order to be effective.

It should be noted that there is some disagreement about the importance of relationship in achieving coaching success. A study conducted by Grant (2014) found that relationship did not predict success in coaching and that coaches should focus more on goals versus relationship. The conflict on this topic suggests further research be undertaken in this area in different contexts to further clarify how important relationship is in terms of coaching success.

Way of Being. Way of being is one of three pillars of effective coaching identified by

Van Nieuwerburgh (2012). He identifies it as a concept loosely based upon the way of being idea

developed by Rogers (1951) that essentially comprises all that makes up the coach. It may be best

understood in terms of Passmore (2010) where he describes the coach as "is." Sonesh, et al.

(2015) advocate coaches work from a humanistic approach based on Rogers (1951) where the

coach adopts the assumption that "the coachee is his/her own best expert and respects self-

determination" (p.87). Van Nieuwerburgh (2012) states that the coach's way of being is not a

clearly defined concept and is in need of further research. Additional research from the field

provides some insight into how this idea may be defined.

Various coaching studies provide insight into differing aspects of the coach that come

into play during the coaching relationship and may be connected to the way of being concept.

Laske (2004) posits that the coach should be further along developmentally than the client.

Knight (2007) states that the coach must have the ability to connect with others. Sonesh, et al.

(2015) found that effective coaches have a mix of both psychology and non-psychology

backgrounds and without the mix of backgrounds coaches were less effective. Grant (2016a) and

Passmore (2010) state that coaches must possess at least a theoretical understanding of the issue

the client brings forth to effectively ask questions and uncover solutions. Passmore (2010)

suggests that effective coaches possess the skills that would make a good counselor and identifies

the possibility that these skills may be innate. Grant (2014) identifies an effective coach as being

supportive and can effectively create an environment of empathy, unconditional positive regard,

and trust. Tulpa (2016) describes an effective coach as having credibility, influence, and

authenticity. Finally, Passmore (2010) describes an effective coach as having previous experience

in the field [of the client], being affirming and supportive, being non-judgmental and trustworthy,

maintaining confidentiality, using personal experiences to demonstrate understanding, offering

alternative perspectives, staying focused, being empathetic, and using tools and techniques to help clients to see things from a new perspective.

Coaching Skills. The second coaching pillar identified by Van Nieuwerburgh (2012) is the skills needed to be an effective coach. He identifies these skills as asking powerful questions, reflective listening, summarizing and paraphrasing, and giving and receiving feedback. The International Coach Federation (about, 2016b) identifies similar skills in their core coaching competencies. They specifically identify powerful questioning, active listening, and providing direct communication as the skills necessary for effective coaching. Grant (2016a) builds on this list and adds conversational skills as a necessity for effectiveness. Passmore (2010) posits that the skills needed to be an effective coach are skills similar to counseling and take time to develop. He makes a very clear and direct case that short-term coach training programs (i.e. 2-3 day short classes) likely are not long enough to sufficiently develop the level of skill necessary for effective coaching.

Basic Understanding of Theory. Another key component of effective coaching identified by the research literature is that coaches need to have at least a basic understanding of the theoretical concepts that underlie coaching practice. Sonesh, et al. (2015) and Grant (2012a) state that coaches need to have an understanding of the theories related to goal setting and goal achievement. Grant (2016a) states that coaches need to understand theories related to human change. Knight (2011) identify seven partnership principles for coaching (based in part on the work of Paulo Freire) that include equality, choice, voice, reflection, dialogue, praxis, and reciprocity. Passmore (2010) advocates coaches understand theories that underpin counseling and organizational systems. Cavanagh and Palmer (2011) identify theories that define the domains of human psychology, adult learning, behavioral change, and the self as necessary to be effective coaches. Finally, Garvey (2013) identifies a theoretical understanding of life stages as being fundamental for effective coaching.

The Ability to Utilize Various Coaching Models. A final necessity for effective coaching is the knowledge of a variety of coaching models (Cavanaugh & Palmer, 2011; Van Nieuwerburgh, 2012). There are many different coaching models, but this work will seek to only identify the models most prevalent in the empirical coaching literature. The major coaching models include:

- motivational interviewing (Passmore, 2007);

- solution-focused coaching (Grant, 2016a);

- cognitive behavioral coaching (Neenan, 2016);

- behavioral coaching (Alexander, 2016);

- the ADHD coaching model (Cox, 2013; Field, Parker, Sawilowsky, & Rolands, 2013);

- neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) (McDermott, 2016);

- transpersonal coaching (Whitmore & Einzig; 2016);

- appreciative coaching (Clancy & Binkert, 2016);

- and an integrative coaching model (Passmore, 2016).

Each of these models will be discussed in depth in a further section. The arguments presented in Cavanaugh and Palmer (2011) and Van Nieuwerburgh (2012) do not advocate that all coaches become masters of each of these models but rather that all coaches strive to become competent in several different models. This allows coaches to be flexible if a specific model does not work with a particular client.

What Makes a Good Client?

Any discussion on coaching effectiveness and the role of a coach must also include consideration of what makes a good client. Tulpa (2016) in discussing the business case for coaching in an environment where the supply of coaches exceeds the demand of clients, describes

how coaches are enticed to take on anyone who is interested in their services [so the coach can pay their bills]. She argues this take anyone interested approach is not a good idea and needs to be reevaluated. This idea is further explained below.

Mental Health Considerations. Nash (2013), Grant (2007), and Grant and Spence (2010) provide a fuller understanding of Tupla's (2016) argument in describing how clients with potentially significant mental health issues could find their way to coaches who in turn could do more harm than good due to a lack of training in working with these populations. Nash (2013) identifies four main categories of emotional problems: depression and low mood; anxiety, phobias, and stress; addiction and dependence; and learning disabilities. Grant and Spence (2010) present a model that classifies clients in one of four categories based upon a combination of wellbeing and engagement: distressed and disengaged, distressed but functional, acquiescent, or flourishing. They argue that the clients in the distressed areas of the model are likely better suited for counseling than coaching and those in the distressed and disengaged area should without question be working with a counselor instead of a coach.

Role Overlap. Robinson (2015) provides evidence of overlap between various roles such as coach, counselor, mentor, tutor, advisor, etc. in a higher education context. Bresser and Wilson (2016) present a simple metaphor of driving a car to help understand how the coaching role differs from other helping profession roles:

- A therapist will explore what is stopping you from driving the car.
- A counselor will listen to your anxieties about the car.
- A mentor will share tips from his or her experience of driving cars.
- A consultant will advise you how to drive a car.
- A coach will encourage and support you in driving the car (p. 26).

Based on this metaphor and the goal-striving and wellbeing model (Grant & Spence, 2010),

clients who are not mentally healthy or are seeking something beyond the scope of practice for a

coach should be referred to a more appropriate professional.

Identifying a Good Client. With all the concerns about potential clients, how does a

coach effectively identify a good client? Franklin (2005) provides some insight. He posits that

coaches must first consider a client's willingness to change (loosely based upon the stages of

change model by DiClimente & Prochaska (1998) and should evaluate clients based upon the

following:

1. Recognition and acceptance that there is an aspect of their life that must be worked
   on.

2. A belief (not just a hope) that change is possible.

3. The ability to set specific and realistic goals

4. Accepting primary responsibility for change

5. Accurate insight into the real nature, cause, and maintenance of difficulties

6. Willingness to examine and face up to the contributing problems of life

7. Preparedness to experience some discomfort in the process of change

8. The ability to form a good working relationship with the coach

9. Persistence when faced with setbacks or failures (p. 197).

Franklin (2005) also provides insight into working with clients who present with significant

underlying [mental health] issues. He suggests, "if clients have significant underlying issues, in

order to make significant progress, clients need to:

1. Be able to make sense of their thoughts and feelings

2. Understand the emotions of others

3. Manage their own emotions

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4. Think in a flexible and adaptable manner" (p. 197).

Based on the ideas presented here, the ideal client can be identified as being mentally healthy, ready for change, and able (and willing) to take responsibility for his or her own actions that will lead to the change they have engaged with coaching to achieve. The outstanding question that has yet to be fully explored is (in terms of professional coaching) where precisely should the line be drawn for coaches working with individuals who are acquiescent or distressed but functional?

Coaching Models

The coaching literature identifies various coaching models for working with clients. As previously noted it is suggested that coaches must have competence in more than one model to be successful. This work seeks to provide a concise introduction to the coaching models that find the most prominence within the literature.

Motivational Interviewing (MI)

Passmore (2007) argues that behavioral change has to be viewed through the lens of the transtheoretical model (DiClimente & Prochaska, 1998) which addresses an individual's readiness to engage in behavior change. The stages of the transtheoretical model are pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparedness, action, and maintenance. Motivational interviewing (MI) is a method that is based on the transtheoretical model that aims to bring a client into behavioral change through discourse (change talk) (Passmore, 2007). Passmore (2007) states that many of the workplace performance issues are in play due to the resistance to change found in individuals who are in pre-contemplation. Grant and Franklin (2007) found a correlation between study skills in students and the stage where students were identified in the transtheoretical model. Both studies identified positive behavior change as clients progressed toward the action and

maintenance stages. MI (as a coaching model) is a direct method that is specifically structured to lead clients through the stages of change into new behaviors.

Behavioral Coaching

Alexander (2016) advocates using a behavioral coaching approach and specifically the GROW model. The GROW model is a straightforward coaching approach where the coach works with the client to identify the (G) goal of the session; the (R) reality of what currently is; the (O) options that exist to move from the reality to the goal; and the (W) client's chosen way forward to reaching the goal. He created the GROW model as a way to identify and understand an explicit structure within his coaching interactions. Alexander advocates using the GROW model because it offers a straightforward way for managers to work with their employees without having to have a background in psychology or therapy.

Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching

Neenan (2016) advocates the use of cognitive behavioral coaching. Cognitive behavioral coaching (CBC) emerged from cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and is a method that helps clients see the thoughts, beliefs, counterproductive behaviors, and emotions that are keeping them from achieving their goals. CBC increases awareness with the purpose of changing those thoughts and beliefs, developing behaviors that lead to success, and becoming more proficient at managing emotions; all of which leads to greater resilience. The cognitive behavioral approach focuses on realistic thinking (i.e. the truth about how things are) and finding constructive ways to deal with problems. According to Neenan (2016), "CBT has become the single most important and validated psychotherapeutic approach" (p. 133). The amount of research into the effectiveness of CBC is small but accepted enough that it is taught in educational settings to encourage students to use meta-cognition (thinking about how you think) to improve self-directed learning, decision-making skills, and the ability to engage in problem-solving.

CBC works within a twin track of the psychological and the practical in achieving goals. The focus of the psychological track is to help remove the underlying issues preventing change (such as procrastination, self-doubt, and indecisiveness) while the practical focuses on the specific action steps needed to reach the goal. Neenan is careful to point out that there are times when coaches (particularly with a counseling background) get so focused on unearthing a problem that the practical gets neglected. Neenan suggests that the CBC model works best with clients who are psychologically healthy and are willing to identify and change their destructive thinking because they can see how it is affecting their performance. CBC is likely not going to be effective with individuals who do not like to engage in introspective thinking, do not like the "intimacy" of the approach, or are focused on quick action as a response to their issue.

Solution-Focused Coaching

Grant (2016a) advocates the use of a solution-focused approach to coaching because coaching is about achieving results and moving forward, not about past events that brought them to the present point. He confirms that both problem and solution focused approaches show effectiveness as approaches for individuals to meet their goals; however, the solution focused approach has the added benefit of increasing positive emotions, decreasing negative emotions, increasing self-efficacy, and increasing goal attainment. The key to solution focused coaching is that clients disengage from their problems and reframe them in a way that they are solvable. Key principles for solution-focused coaching include:

- Use of a non-pathological framework: problems the client faces stem from a limited repertoire of behavior.
- Focus on constructing solutions: the coach facilitates construction of solutions rather than trying to understand the problem
- Coachee-based expertise: the coachee is the expert of his or her life

- Learning from the coachee: each session is an opportunity for the coach to learn from the coachee

- Use of client resources: the coach helps the client recognize and utilize existing resources.

- Action orientation: the coach expects positive change to occur and that the coachee will do work outside of the coaching session.

- Clear, and specific goal setting: defining stretchable, attainable goals within a specific timeframe.

- An assumption that change can happen within a short period of time: contrasted with the idea that it takes a long time for change to happen.

- Strategic: coaching interventions are designed specifically for each coachee.

- Future-orientation: the emphasis is more on the future than the present or the past.

- Attraction: the coaching process is designed and conducted in a way that is attractive and engaging for the coachee.

- Active and influential coaching: the coach is openly influential and challenges the coachee to think in a new way (p. 114).

The solution-focused approach works best when: a coach believes in the solution focused approach, the coach is able to recognize and utilize emotions and feelings that are present in the coaching session, the coach has a deep repertoire of behavioral skills (such as: structuring coaching sessions, helping clients manage action steps, and managing the expectations of the organization that hired the coach); and when the client is discontent with the present (i.e. he or she has a motivation to change), has a vision of the future, and has the skills to do the work of change (Grant, 2016a).

ADHD Coaching

Field, et al. (2013) introduce a coaching model to specifically work with students diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). They define ADHD coaching as an inquiry-based model that uses questions to "model effective executive functioning and to elicit clients' own ideas as they increase their capacity to clarify, plan, and take action on goals" (p.67).

Disability Coaching

Cox (2013) describes a coaching model to effectively coach students with a disability. Cox posits that to effectively coach clients with disabilities the coach needs to understand the model of disability that clients see themselves through. Clients who see themselves through the medical model of disability would benefit most from coaching on self-esteem and identity. Clients who see themselves through the social model of disability are difficult to coach because they "deeply believe they do not need to change, society does" (p. 238) so the coach should use the affirmative model of disability to help clients see their disability from a coaching perspective. Clients who can see themselves through the affirmative model of disability "probably accept their disability as a positive integral part of themselves, but have difficulty with society's in-built prejudices" (p. 238).

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP)

McDermott (2016) suggests using Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) as a model for coaching. NLP believes there is a specific paradigm that governs each individual's view of the world and it is possible to change behavior by changing the understanding and view of the paradigm. The key element of NLP coaching is identifying the client's model of the world (how he or she subconsciously constructs his or her view of the world; which is primarily created through the processes of deletions, distortions, and generalizations). The client's language is what reveals this subconscious model of the world as he or she engages in dialog with the coach. Once

this model of the world is clearly identified then behavior change through coaching can happen. It is important also to note that NLP is viewed as a controversial approach due to a lack of empirical evidence (Mercer, 2015).

Transpersonal Coaching

Whitmore and Einzig (2016) present a transpersonal model of coaching. Transpersonal coaching extends beyond the personal and individual to include the universal and the spiritual. It is a systematic approach that believes that there are things more important than the self and the world is bigger than the self. This model embraces the impact of the spiritual on the everyday aspects of life.

Appreciative Coaching

Clancy and Binkert (2016) advocate an appreciative coaching model (based upon the appreciative inquiry (AI) approach) that focuses on the strengths and the dreams of clients. The approach focuses on the positive aspects of individuals and seeks to build on those aspects to lead clients to the point of thriving and flourishing in all aspects of life.

Appreciative coaching utilizes the four stages of AI: "Discovery (reflecting on and discovering a client's strengths and abilities), Dream (articulating potential and one's future), Design (directing attention and action to create that future), and Destiny (seeing and living the dream in the present)" (p. 179). Appreciative coaches see clients as whole and resourceful; having problems to solve but are not living problems themselves. Clancy and Binkert posit that by helping clients to have a clearer picture of their best possible future, energy for change is generated and there is a greater likelihood for success.

Integrative Coaching Model

Passmore (2016) presents an integrative coaching model developed specifically for executive coaching. The model is comprised of six streams: Streams 1 & 2 focus on the partnership between the coach and the client. Streams 3, 4, and 5 focus on the work of coaching; the focus of stream 6 is systemic meaning.

The first stream consists of developing the coaching relationship including all aspects of a coaching relationship previously mentioned (showing empathy, being non-judgmental, etc.). The second stream is maintaining the coaching partnership; this includes all aspects of emotional intelligence (monitoring both the coach and client's emotions; being professionally detached while also maintaining personal intimacy within the professional coaching relationship). The third stream involves a behavioral focus. Passmore specifically advocates using the GROW model at this stage of coaching. He identifies behavioral coaching as appropriate for the beginning of the coaching relationship but recognizes that as the relationship progresses the coach will need to broaden his or her approach to also include working with emotions and cognition. This leads into the fourth stream, which is identified as conscious cognition. Conscious cognition is cognitive-behavioral coaching that explores the irrational cognitive beliefs that underlie behavior and to challenge (and ideally change) them. The fifth stream is unconscious cognition. This stream is specifically focused on dealing with the unconscious elements related to behavioral change. Passmore advocates using motivational interviewing (MI) at this point. He also identifies two specific instances when he would begin to operate in this stream; when the client has been referred by others concerned with his or her performance, and when the client's behaviors are significantly affecting others and he or she is being pressured to change their behavior. The final (sixth) stream is systemic which specifically addresses the environmental and cultural context. These contexts include all the other factors that are in play in the client's issues.

Passmore argues that since this model is developed from several other evidence-based models, it can be used in almost all coaching situations. However, he does identify that the model has two specific areas of weakness that may suggest using a different model. First, this model does not have a spiritual dimension; if the client is seeking specifically spiritual aspects, Passmore suggests using a different model such as the transpersonal model. Second, Passmore identifies the model as having a strong behavioral focus; if behavior change is not the explicit goal then Passmore suggests using a more humanistic model.

Coaching in Education

In the United States, coaching is mostly recognized as executive coaching in the business world. One of the most referenced studies about the effectiveness of coaching is a study by Olivero, Bane, and Kopelman (1997) that examined manager productivity following training. Their research found that a one-day training alone resulted in a 22% increase in productivity. When training was followed by eight weeks of coaching, the manager productivity increased to 88%.

Knight (2009) in discussing instructional coaching for teachers, cites a 1984 presentation by Bush that describes teachers adopting new instructional strategies. Bush (1984) found that telling teachers what to do resulted in 10% of teachers adopting new skills. Adding modeling, practice, and feedback to training increased adoption of new skills 2-3% in each modeling cycle. However, when coaching was added to the staff development, 95% of teachers adopted new skills in the classroom.

These studies illustrate that coaching crosses the boundaries of business and is applicable to the world of training and education. Dansinger (2000) agrees with this assessment by suggesting that coaching can increase learning skills, productivity, and overall performance for students in academic settings in the same way it has been shown to increase performance and

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productivity in the business world. This applicability is because, at its core, coaching facilitates active reflection that according to Mezirow (1997) is the most important prerequisite for transformative (deep level) learning.

Defining Coaching in Education

The Four Portals of Coaching in Education. Campbell, et al. (2015) identifies four specific portals (or types) of coaching in education: coaching administrators (leadership coaching); coaching teachers (to enhance practice); coaching students (for success and wellbeing); and coaching parents (or the wider school community). They identify the coaching administrators and the coaching teacher portals as having the greatest research base and the other two as having an exceptionally limited amount of research into both process and effectiveness. This literature review will specifically focus on the coaching students portal and will present research from the other portals that are relevant to the coaching students portal.

Definitions. As previously noted, coaching is most widely recognized as "unlocking a person's potential to maximize their growth" (Whitmore, 2009; p.8). A thorough review of the literature has revealed two definitions of coaching in education that expand upon the definition of Whitmore. The first is a definition by Van Nieuwerburgh (2012) that seeks to incorporate all four of the specific portals. He defines coaching in education as "a one-on-one conversation that focuses on the enhancement of learning and development through increasing self-awareness and a sense of personal responsibility, where the coach facilitates the self-directed learning of the coachee through questioning, active listening, and appropriate challenge in a supportive and encouraging climate" (p. 17).

The second definition is from Robinson (2015) and is specific to the coaching students portal. She defines coaching in education as "the individualized practice of asking reflective motivation-based questions, providing opportunities for formal self-assessment, sharing effective

strategies, and co-creating a tangible plan. [Furthermore] the coaching process offers students an opportunity to identify their strengths, actively practice new skills, and effectively navigate appropriate resources that ultimately results in skills development, performance improvement, and increased persistence" (p. 126).

It is important to note that there are subtle differences in the two definitions. Both focus on the individual nature of coaching and the expected learning outcomes. The subtle differences are in how this is achieved. The definition from Van Nieuwerburgh is heavily based upon a view of the world that incorporates all four portals, includes a global context, includes primary, secondary, and post-secondary settings, and focuses on self-directed learning. The definition from Robinson comes from a U.S. based viewpoint that uses a mentoring study (Bettinger & Baker, 2013) as its base, is specific to only post-secondary U.S. institutions, and does not refer to learning that is specifically self-directed.

Coaching in Education Research

As previously stated, the research on coaching in education specific to the coaching students portal is limited (Campbell, et al., 2014). This section will present the published research for the coaching students portal. To help provide clarity, the studies will be arranged by the ages of the students who participated in the study and the year they were published.

Primary (Elementary School). The first study identified with primary age students is a study conducted by Briggs and Van Nieuwerburgh (2011). The study examined the results of teaching peer coaching skills (specifically giving and receiving feedback) to six classes of 9-11 year-olds in the United Kingdom. Their research explored the type of feedback given from student to student and whether or not the feedback was acted upon. The study found mixed results on the outcome of the feedback.

A second study with primary age students was conducted by Madden, Green, and Grant (2011). Their study found that solution-focused coaching with primary age students led to significant increases in engagement in classroom learning and significant improvement in hope and wellbeing.

A third study was conducted by Dorrington and Van Nieuwerburgh (2015) which was a continuation of the Briggs and Van Nieuwerburgh (2011) study examining peer coaching skills (giving and receiving feedback). The study used a population of 28 10-11 year-olds at a school in East London, United Kingdom and focused specifically on the children's attitudes toward the feedback they received. This study found that feedback from other students was acted upon and they reported that the feedback was helpful.

Secondary (High School). In the first identified secondary school study, Campbell and Gardner (2005) witnessed a marked difference in year 12 Catholic high school girls who were coached versus those who were not. Their research suggests that students who are being coached put out more effort than those who are not being coached. They also noted that during the coaching process the students being coached appeared to be increasing in confidence.

In the second study, Green, Grant, and Rynsaardt (2007) examined a correlation between coaching and wellbeing in 16-year-old female secondary students in Australia. Their study did not specifically examine academic performance (grades) for the students, but their results showed evidence life-coaching helped enhance hope and resilience within students.

In 2009, Passmore and Brown concluded a three-year longitudinal study with high school students in the United Kingdom where the students were provided the opportunity to work with an external coach to help enhance their academic performance. Passmore and Brown found that the students who participated had higher grades and increased self-efficacy. They also remarked

that coaching had the potential to address social barriers such as being a first-generation student or coming from an impoverished background.

In 2013, a study by Van Nieuwerburgh and Tong examined the effects of peer coaching on the students who served as peer coaches to other students. Their research found that 16 and 17 year-old students who were taught coaching skills and functioned as peer coaches with other students had improved attitudes to learning at the end of the experience.

In an effort to identify a unified coaching and mentoring, Wang and Millward (2014) model conducted research on mentoring and coaching with 14-year-old students. Their research found that both mentoring and coaching were effective interventions with the students participating in their study. Their study resulted in the construction of a model that suggests how coaching and mentoring should be viewed when working with secondary students. The model contains several factors:

- The disposition of the learner- the student is always learning and always moving forward with knowledge, but this forward movement is affected by life circumstances.
- The coach/mentor's process and position- broadly, Wang and Millward's model shows that the coach/mentor helps with the student's learning process but is not always present in the process. This shows the student must take ownership of the learning process.
- Supporting factors to learning- there are internal and external forces that support the learning process.
- Hindering factors to learning- there are also internal and external factors that hinder the learning process. They argue that the goal of mentoring and coaching

is to help students optimize the learning conditions by minimizing the hindering

factors.

- Zone of proximity in the relationship- Wang and Millward found that there was a "degree of closeness and dependency" (p. 105) between the student and the coach/mentor that varied at different times throughout the coaching relationship. At the beginning, the zone was very close with students wanting and needing lots of contact with the coach/mentor. With time, as the student became more confident and competent in their knowledge and abilities, they found the zone of proximity grew, and the student worked with the coach/mentor substantially less than at the beginning of the relationship.

The most recent study was conducted by Pritchard and Van Nieuwerburgh (2016) in the United Kingdom with a small group of secondary students. They interviewed three adolescent girls from an inner-city school in London to identify perceptual life changes and perceived quality of life after participating in a positive psychology intervention group and integrated coaching. Their research identified that the program led the students to an increased experience of positive emotions and thoughts, identifying the purpose and meaning of life, the ability to control their emotions and reactions, and ultimately improved their perceptions of quality of life.

Post-Secondary Undergraduate. The first study conducted with undergraduates was a study conducted by Short, Kinman, and Baker (2010) that found peer coaching led to reduced stress and psychological distress among 3rd-year undergraduate psychology students. It should be noted that the coaches in this study were other undergraduate students, likely without extensive life experience to draw from and without extensive coach training.

A second study was conducted by Asghar (2010). This study also included peer students serving in the coaching role (i.e. peer coaches). Asghar found that peer coaching appeared to help build self-regulation skills and self-efficacy in first-year college students.

The third undergraduate study is a study conducted by Bettinger and Baker (2011). This study is the most referenced coaching study in the U.S. academic coaching literature and involved researching a mentoring program that was adjusted to focus more on a coaching approach than mentoring. The study found that coaching resulted in increased retention and graduation of students. It is important to note that the coaching methodology used in this study appears to differ from the common coaching in education provided by Van Nieuwerburgh. This could be significant in terms of the difference of how coaching in education at the university level is viewed in the U.S. versus internationally.

Field, et al. (2013) conducted a study of ADHD coaching for undergraduate college students. The results of their study showed that students who were engaged in coaching showed significant improvement in their learning, study, and self-regulation skills (all measured by the learning and study skills inventory) and significantly higher wellbeing (measured by the college wellbeing scale) as compared to control groups. They argue that coaching is seen as an effective intervention to improve executive functioning skills in students.

The most recent study involving undergraduate populations in the United States is the dissertation conducted by Robinson (2015). Her research examined the state of coaching at higher education institutions within the United States. The definition that she provides for coaching in education is based upon her survey and incorporates all the major activities and viewpoints from programs that participated in the survey. The main research that underpinned her study was Bettinger and Baker (2013). Robinson's research revealed the diversity of coaching programs ranging from roles similar to advising, counseling, mentoring, teaching, and tutoring and the need to further examine these programs in greater detail.

Although it is not a research study, Iordanou, et al. (2016) present some valuable perspectives regarding the use of coaching in post-secondary education. They suggest three

methods of coaching in higher education: coaching staff, coaching Ph.D. students, and training undergraduates to be peer coaches. Coaching builds affect in students, teaches students, and allows for students' critical exploration of themselves and others. They argue that coaching helps students to reflect on their beliefs and values critically and can be used with undergraduates to help universities achieve their goals of cultivating subjectivity, sensitivity, and responsibility. Coaching also engages the development of a coaching mindset that leads to more effectiveness in interpersonal relationships that can lead to greater success after graduation (i.e. work), which is valuable to both the student and the institution.

Post-secondary Graduate. The first graduate level study identified was a study by Sue-Chan and Latham (2004). They examined the GPA of graduate-level executive MBA students who were coached against those who were not. Their study found that the students who were coached had higher GPA's and were more team players [with their colleagues] than those students who were not coached.

Two other studies were conducted with graduate level students. Geber (2010) found that graduate students who worked with a coach were more effective in getting published compared to other students who did not work with a coach. Grant (2014) conducted a study that evaluated the impact of the coaching relationship on the effectiveness of the intervention among a group of adults in a postgraduate coaching psychology program. He found that the coaching relationship was not as important to the outcomes as the coaching being goal-focused in this population.

Role of a Coach in Education

Robinson (2015) found that the coaches in the population of her study also at times functioned as mentors, advisors, counselors, tutors, and/or teachers and the role of a coach were not clearly defined. This finding suggests a fundamental question be asked: what exactly is the role of a coach in education? The coaching literature provides several perspectives:

Coach as Thinking Partner. Van Nieuwerburgh (2016) argues that coach is an impartial thinking partner who facilitates self-directed learning and development by managing the conversational process (and avoids telling or advising the client as a matter of principle). He advocates that the role of a coach is to provide a "safe environment for learning and providing personalized, focused support for coachees as they strive to achieve more of their potential" (p.253).

Coach Role is Determined by the Coach or Client. Bachkirova (2011) argues that the role of a coach is determined by how the coach understands and defines the concept of the self. A coach's philosophical and epistemological stance toward others (and themselves) will dictate the approach they take working with clients. This idea is contrasted by Passmore (2013) who argues that the individual clients determine the role of a coach. Diverse clients require diverse approaches and will dictate the role a coach will take.

Coach Role Focused on Confronting Challenges. Wang & Millward (2014) argue that coaches should apply Dweck's (2006) theory of growth mindset and emphasize stretching their clients. The essential element of Dweck's (2006) theory is that intelligence is not fixed and can be further developed. Individuals with a growth mindset embrace and engage their challenges (rather than avoid them). Wang and Millward's (2014) perspective is that coaching focuses on moving clients beyond where they are comfortable and stretch their capabilities to bring about change, growth, and enhanced performance. They argue that the coach should focus on "learning, challenges, effort, and strategies rather than outcomes, targets, and performance" (p.93) as they work with their clients.

Coach is Mental Health Assessor. Nash (2013) presents arguments regarding the role of a coach with clients that have mental health concerns. She presents a decision matrix that coaches should use to determine whether to keep coaching. The matrix identifies five specific options for

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coaches working with these clients: (1) continue coaching; (2) continue coaching with other support; (3) stop coaching; (4) stop coaching and support the client while he or she finds appropriate other help; or (5) take action to initiate appropriate help for the client. This decision matrix suggests the coach may at times function as a gatekeeper to direct clients to more appropriate mental health services.

Content Versus Process. Bresser and Wilson (2016) discuss the role of a coach by identifying two distinct roles in a coaching session: the process and the content. They argue the role of the coach is to be in charge of the process of the coaching session; timekeeping, ensuring that client sets clear goals, holding the client accountable, and keeping the client focused. The client is in charge of the content; choosing the topic, creating specific goals, and defining the time frame. They take the view if coaches begin to drift into the content area of the session (i.e. giving advice) then they are no longer coaching.

Coach is a Collaborative Solution-Finder. Grant (2005) describes coaching as "a collaborative and egalitarian rather than an authoritarian relationship between coach and client… where the focus [of the coach] is on finding solutions in preference to analyzing problems… with an emphasis on collaborative goal setting" (p. 2). It is Grant's (2005) perspective that the role of a coach is to help clients find solutions to their issues by facilitating learning through the coaching approach.

Four Coaching Portals. Beyond these perspectives, any discussion of the role of a coach in education must also consider the four portals of education (Campbell, et al., 2015). The perspective of the coach's role will likely vary based upon the coaching portal he or she is working within. It is assumed that the coaching skills used and the process of coaching would be the same no matter the type of client. However, coaches working with administrators are likely to

cover at least slightly different topics than coaches working with students or parents, and there may be some nuances in the coach role that would be important to consider.

These perspectives show that the exact role of a coach in education is still very much undefined. Until there is a universally agreed upon definition of coaching and clearly defined outcome variables, the role of a coach in education is likely to remain in limbo and lacking a clear delineation.

Evaluating Coaching Programs

One of the major challenges with coaching today is that there is no established methodology for evaluating coaching programs (Bachkirova, et al., 2015; Carter & Peterson, 2016). Adding to this is the apparent lack of consistency in what outputs should be measured by coaches and institutions employing a coaching program. For example, Bachkirova, et al. (2015) in their evaluation of a coaching program in a London, England business chose to evaluate employee engagement, self-efficacy, self-compassion, and behaviors specific to the business. Bresser and Wilson (2016) cite several studies on coaching where the programs were evaluated on the monetary return on investment (ROI) from the employees working with coaches. Iordanou, et al. (2016) describe coaching in a post-secondary setting leading to affective and critical awareness for students; they do not mention any academic performance or behavioral outcomes. Field, et al. (2013) evaluated learning skills, study skills, and self-regulation skills in college students with ADHD to determine program effectiveness. Green, et al. (2007) evaluated coaching in secondary students specific to cognitive hardiness and hope measures. Patti, Holzer, Brackett, & Stern (2015) describe coaching evaluation in terms of growth in emotional intelligence. The lack of a clearly defined output variable adds to the challenge of both defining coaching and clearly estimating its value.

Suggested Measurement Perspectives. Beyond referenced studies, the coaching

literature provides several suggested ways of measuring coaching success. Bachkirova, Arthur,

and Reading (2015) suggest the development of an evaluation tool using qualitative methods such

as vignettes of the coachee experiences both before and after coaching which identifies outcome

measures but does not lose the complexity of an individual experience. Grant (2012b) argues that

ROI is not an effective measure of coaching success and advocates evaluating wellbeing and

engagement to determine coaching success. Theeboom, et al. (2013) in their meta-analysis of

coaching studies argue for coaching evaluation to include looking at the input variables of the

coach and the client. Alexander (2016) suggests evaluation based upon the FLOW model: is

coaching (f)ast (an effective use of time)? Is the coach and client (l)inked (is there an effective

relationship)? Is the (o)utcome on track to deliver? And is the coaching (w)orthwhile (is it

valuable to the coachee)? Finally, Grant (2012a) argues that the more goal focused a coaching

relationship, the more effective the engagement will be. As such, he argues that client reports of

satisfaction with coaching are not a reliable means of evaluating coaching success and a scaling

tool should be implemented.

Return on Investment

In the professional world, the bottom line is money. Return on investment (ROI) is the net

profit gained once costs of material and labor are accounted for. In terms of post-secondary

education, ROI is defined as retention and persistence as these ultimately impact the financial

bottom line of the institution and according to Robinson (2015) is the major reason most of the

coaching programs were developed.

The seminal study referenced by Robinson (2015) was the study by Bettinger and Baker

(2011) where collegiate coaching provided by InsideTrack resulted in a baseline persistence rate

of 58 percent and a 12 percent increase in retention for coached students compared to the control

group. Outside of education Bresser and Wilson (2016) cite several monetary return on investment (ROI) statistics that are comparable to the goal of collegiate retention. They stated:

- Coaching in the U.S. may offer ROI as much as 22:1,

- A study at Nortel Networks showed a ROI of 529% (788% when considering employee retention),

- ROI for executive coaches is 5.7 times greater than the initial investment (pp. 29-30).

What's being communicated in these studies is the idea that coaching works and for the upfront investment cost it may be considered a silver bullet to deal with the retention and student/employee problems seen in both education and business.

While these statistics sound impressive, the studies provide little detail regarding what happens in the coaching intervention that leads to exceptional ROI and increases in retention. Furthermore, the research literature is divided on what should be evaluated and what important results would entail. For example, there are several coaching scholars who argue that ROI is a poor way to measure coaching success (Laske, 2004; Grant, 2012; Theeboom, et al., 2014). Those arguing against ROI present several specific perspectives:

- Coaching involves a co-construction of reality between a coach, a client, and the client's internal understanding; outcomes from coaching will be influenced by the extensive number of possible outcomes from coaching, the approach of the coach, and the complexity of what happens during the actual coaching. The need to consider all these contextual issues that are both individual and interrelated require taking a constructionist or subjectivist epistemological approach to evaluation (Bachkirova & Kauffman, 2008; Bachkirova, et al. 2015). ROI (and retention) are often objective output measures that (due to epistemological stance) are in conflict with a process that itself is not objectivist in nature.

- ROI is strictly focused on performance and doesn't allow for the measurement of the nuanced developmental improvements that occur within the coaching process (Laske, 2004).

- Coaching needs to be evaluated from a holistic perspective grant (2012b).

- Most coaching ROI models ignore input variables from both the coach and those being coached, and there are indirect ways that organizations could benefit from coaching (Theeboom, et al., 2014).

- There are internal and external factors that both support and hinder the process of learning. These factors include self-awareness, motivations in learning, self-esteem, resilience, learning environment, available resources, and access to a supportive community. These holistic factors are important when considering the bottom lines of retention or ROI (Wang & Millward, 2013).

- At times, coaches encounter clients with significant mental health concerns. Mental health issues are outside of the coaching scope of practice (Grant, 2007). Referring clients to mental health professionals is often not a specific ROI measurement but may be more important for a client's long-term success than pulling or pushing a client through the issue.

Evaluating Coaching in Education

IEO Model. The lack of a clear measurement objective and measurement tool in the coaching profession is further magnified in post-secondary education where coaching is just beginning, and there is a lack of a clear understanding of what a coach is (compared to mentor, advisor, tutor, etc.) and what a coach does.

Number of Coaching Sessions- How much is Enough?

Another question regarding coaching is how long should a coach work with a client? Grant (2005) identified three different types of coaching and suggests a timeframe is associated with each. He identified skills coaching as one to two sessions; performance coaching as being between one month and two years; and developmental coaching as being long-term (an undefined number of sessions).

Two separate meta-analyses also addressed the topic of the number of coaching sessions. Sonesh, Coultas, Lacerenza, Marlow, Benishek, and Salas (2015) identified that the number of coaching sessions had a significant effect on coaching outcomes. They identified 1-3 sessions as being more beneficial than 4-6 sessions but identified 7-9 sessions as being the most beneficial. They also found that coaching session quality is more important than quantity and the number of sessions needed may depend upon the coaching goals. They caution that their findings are based on one study, and there were not enough studies to examine the effect of the number of coaching sessions on either relationship or organizational outcomes.

A second meta-analysis conducted by Theeboom, et al. (2014) examined the effectiveness of coaching in an organizational context. They found that in an organizational context, it does not appear that the number of coaching sessions matter. They suggest this finding could be based upon the idea that simpler problems need fewer sessions and complex problems need more sessions. They also suggest that it could simply be that a majority of the studies in their analysis were conducted using the solution-focused coaching methodology, which aims to deal specifically with the presenting issue and requires fewer sessions. However, they do note that when singling out the students that engaged in a large number of sessions the effects of the coaching appeared more robust.

Summary

This chapter has provided details of the IEO model of program evaluation and its use as a theoretical framework for the study. The chapter also provided an introductory background to student retention within higher education in the United States and identified how success coaching could fit within current retention models. Finally, the chapter provided a thorough examination of the current literature of coaching and coaching research from both inside and outside education, higher education, and the United States. The review of literature has demonstrated that coaching is a new field in education that shows promise but is in need of further research.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Chapter three provides the detailed methodology for this study. This chapter begins by detailing the design of the research including how the study was conceptualized, how participants and the institution were chosen, and what instruments and artifacts were utilized in the study. The chapter also details the methods used to analyze the data. The chapter concludes by detailing the specific procedures the researcher undertook to complete the study.

Purpose of Research

The purpose of this study is to build upon prior research to provide deeper insight into the role of an ICF trained success coach on a university campus. This study will provide an examination of the experience of success coaches who have completed ICF approved coach training and who work with students in a postsecondary university. The study will also examine how the practices of ICF trained coaches compare with the generalized academic success coach findings of the Robinson (2015) study.

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coach findings from Robinson (2015)?

    a. How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coaching in terms of students/clients?

b. How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coaching in terms of coaches?

2. What does ICF coach training entail for a university employed success coach?

3. How does a success coach support the needs of the student?

4. What are the challenges of coaching students and how are they navigated?

Research Design

The general methodology for this research is a qualitative case study. The study consists of interviews with staff at an identified university that works with students in a coaching framework that aligns with the definition of academic success coaching posed by Robinson (2015) and employs ICF coaches, an auditory observation of a feedback session between a coach and his or her supervisor at the institution, and an extensive document analysis for the program. A single research participant in the selected university will also be asked to complete a copy of the survey used by Robinson (2015) to describe the coaching program so the program can be compared with Robinson's findings.

A case study was chosen based upon the highly contextualized nature of coaching and the likelihood that the differences between ICF coaching and success coaching are not clearly defined. According to Yin (2003), a case study is an appropriate research method when the subject of study is highly contextualized and the boundaries of context and phenomenon are not clear. These specific methods of interview, data analysis, observation, and survey result comparison were chosen because they, through triangulation, provide a rich and detailed view of the elements that define the coaching program.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained through Oklahoma State University (OSU) and the researcher followed all guidelines for the research defined by the IRB at both OSU. The IRB of the participating university was contacted (as required by OSU IRB)

and stated no additional IRB was needed for this particular study to be conducted with staff at their institution.

<center>**Researcher Role**</center>

The role of the researcher in the study is to conduct the research study (interviews, observation, document analysis) and to interpret the data in light of the coaching literature and the researcher's experience as both an ICF coach and as a former administrator of a coaching program within a research university. The researcher's personal experiences shaped the methodology of the study and interpretation of the research findings. The researcher also consulted with a third-party ICF executive and career coach (that attended ICF coach training with him) to discuss research findings to ensure that researcher bias did not influence the research findings.

Researcher's Personal Experience with Coaching

The researcher's personal experience played a significant role in the development of the study and in the interpretation of the research findings. Prior to beginning the Ph.D. program that resulted in the completion of the study, the researcher worked as an academic advisor for traditional and non-traditional students in a small regional university. While in that role, the researcher worked with a student that required a skillset beyond his training as an academic advisor and revealed to him the need to search for a more comprehensive skillset. The search for a broader skillset to help that student led him to an executive and professional ICF coach training program at the University of Texas at Dallas. His experience with ICF coaching then led him to pursue a Ph.D. at Oklahoma State University to more fully investigate the value of ICF coaching for students pursuing education for the workforce (including pursuit of higher education).

Upon acceptance into the OSU Ph.D. program, the researcher also accepted a leadership position within the university's academic success coaching program and was tasked with

providing training and guidance to bring the program into alignment with the ICF coaching standards. As the researcher began to fulfill these duties, it became clear that there was little guidance to be found on the development and execution of a successful ICF coaching program for students and little to no research on the use of coaching with students. These experiences guided all aspects of this study including the research questions, the review of literature, the selection of a specific institution to research, the research methodology, and the interpretation of the research findings.

Research Methods

Selection of the Program and the Institution

The population for this case study is academic/success coaching programs at colleges and universities within the United States that utilize ICF trained coaches to work with their students. Purposive sampling was utilized to obtain one institution that has a success coaching program that meets the operational definition presented by Robinson (2015), utilizes coaches that have completed ICF approved coach training, and have either obtained ICF certification or are working toward ICF certification.

Yin (2003) supports the use of one case if it represents a "unique case" (p. 40). For this study, the success coaching program at a four-year research university in the United States has been identified as a unique case and has been selected through purposive sampling. Due to small number of ICF coaching programs that exist at universities in the United States, and the small number of interview participants from the university, it is necessary to limit the descriptive identifiers of the university to protect the anonymity of the participants. For this reason, the university will simply be identified in this study as "the University." The program at the University is an established program that has been in operation for several years, requires coaches to complete specified coach training through an ICF program, and purports to coach students

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following ICF core competencies (M. Green, personal communication, July 21, 2015). The program has been defined as a unique case as the program aligns with ICF coaching and works with the population of students identified in Robinson (2015).

Description of the institution. Due to the uniqueness of this type of a coaching program, and the small number of employees in the program, there is a high risk that providing specific institutional details will compromise the anonymity of the research participants. Therefore, only broad demographic descriptors will be provided for the institution. The purpose of the research is to provide further insight into how coaching functions as a role in a higher education institution and to provide specific details of ICF coaching. Due to the purpose of the research being exploratory, it is believed that omitting further identifiers will only have a small impact on the relevance of the study results. The institution selected for the study is a four-year university in the United States that has less than 10,000 students. The institution was selected specifically based upon the ICF coaching program. The program has been established for more than three years and requires individuals who coach students (i.e. the "coaches") to obtain ICF certification as a condition of their hiring.

Research participants. At the onset of the study the department only employed four full-time individuals that were involved in coaching students. There were additional student staff (tutors, etc.) employed by the department but did not coach other students or pursue ICF certification. The participants in this study consisted of all four full-time employees in the department; two administrative personnel and two coaches. During the data analysis phase, the researcher learned that the program hired two additional staff members. They were not included in the study. The participants were recruited to the study through email (see Appendix D). The departmental director's email was obtained from the department website; the email addresses for the other participants were provided by the program director upon receiving her support to participate in the study. The participants were provided with a $10 Amazon.com gift certificate

for participating in the research study. Participants agreeing to be interviewed were provided an electronic copy of a participant information sheet (see Appendix E).

Only two demographic identifiers were collected from the research participants. These were education and the background of the participant. Other demographics were not considered relevant based upon the research questions and were not collected. The two administrative personnel are Mary, the director of the department and Caitlin, the manager of the academic resource center. The two full-time coaches are Grace and Lillian. These names are pseudonyms chosen by the interview participants. As previously noted, they each hold advanced degrees in either education or counseling related fields. Due to the small number of participants, the specific degrees held by each will not be identified to further protect their anonymity.

Instruments and Artifacts

The instruments and artifacts for this study include interviews, document analysis of recent program documents, the Robinson (2015) survey, and an observation between the director of the coaching program and one of the coaches.

Interviews. The main instrument being utilized in this qualitative study is interviews with university staff associated with a student success coaching program. The questions for the interviews were unique for each staff member and developed from demographic information on each staff member found on their departmental staff page listing. The interview questions can be found in Appendix A. Beyond the director; the questions for each interview will not be linked to a specific staff member to fully protect participant anonymity.

Document Analysis. The secondary instrument utilized in the study is an extensive document analysis of relevant materials about the coaching program. The program website was identified as the main document source. The website contained information including referral procedures, student assessment forms utilized by coaching staff, staff training and background, and published news articles from the institution and larger community regarding the program.

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Additional documents were obtained from the program director. These included internal procedures, end of the year program statistics, coach job description, and slides of various presentations conducted by the department to constituents both inside and outside the university.

Survey. The survey used by Robinson (2015) was used as a tertiary instrument to further compare this particular ICF coaching program with generalized academic success coaching as defined by Robinson (2015). This was used as a comparison tool to ensure that any significant differences between general academic success coaching programs and this program could be identified and additional interview questions could be developed if deemed necessary. The director was asked to complete the survey or assign a designee to complete the survey prior to interviews being conducted. The survey was hosted on Qualtrics and completed online by the respondent. This was consistent with the methodology used by Robinson in her study. The survey can be found in Appendix B.

Observation. The program selected provided a unique opportunity for an observation to be conducted. The initial conversation with the program director yielded awareness of what she considered a major component of program success: one-on-one feedback sessions between herself as the director and the individual coaches to diagnose issues with difficult students and to provide the coaches with an evaluation of how effectively they are employing the ICF coaching competencies. The director also commented she wanted to develop a new iteration of the feedback session this year: specifically conducting group feedback sessions with each of the coaches. Feedback sessions such as this for coaches who work with students have not been identified in the previous coaching literature. The program director offered to allow the researcher to call in and listen to a feedback session between herself and a coach willing to participate in the observation and again in one of the group feedback sessions. Consent forms were gained from participants prior to participating in the observation. Specifically, the observation sought to provide further triangulation regarding the program's use of the ICF core competencies.

It should be noted that an observation of a coaching session between a coach and student was considered and rejected for this specific study. This research is specifically focused on understanding postsecondary coaching at the programmatic level and as such the interaction between coach and student was deemed less important in this context until a clear baseline could be established regarding the background of the coaches and what they do in a session. Also, it was believed that adding a third individual (or camera) into the coaching session would affect the relationship dynamic between coach and student possibly result in a less than authentic observation. Ultimately it was believed that specific interview questions could be asked to the coaches that would unearth the dynamics of what happens within a coaching session without having to observe an actual session.

Data Analysis Methods

According to Patton (2002), case studies are a specific way to collect, organize, and analyze data. He advocates a three-step process for constructing case studies: first, assemble the raw case data; second, construct a case record; and third, write a final case study narrative (Patton, 2002; p. 450). In qualitative research, data analysis begins immediately (Patton, 2002). Qualitative research is dynamic, and the research evolves as the researcher interacts with the data during each stage of the research. As the research progresses, the researcher will begin to identify patterns and have insights into the phenomenon being studied which will in turn influence the inquiry process. To further strengthen the data analysis an audit trail was developed that consisted of all transcribed interviews, interpretation notes, and a research journal detailing the researcher's thoughts and finding as the research process unfolded.

Thematic Analysis. Specifically, this case study utilized thematic analysis as a strategy to analyze and make meaning out of the data gathered in the study. Thematic analysis is "a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally

organizes and describes the data set in (rich) detail" (Braun & Clark, 2006; p. 83). Thematic analysis is a flexible method that allows the researcher to make sense out of research data through either an inductive or theoretical way.

This study initially considered the research data through the lens of the IEO model theoretical framework previously described. As the research unfolded, the findings required a more comprehensive lens to interpret the data in terms of the research questions. The lens was expanded by the researcher to include the ICF core competencies, findings from the Robinson (2015) study, and the broader coaching in education literature along with the IEO model to fully capture the meaning of the findings (Figure 3).
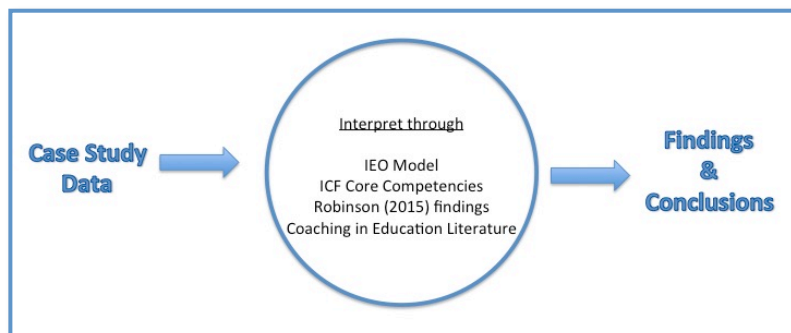
Figure 3- Researcher modified thematic analysis lens

Braun and Clark (2006) provide a step-by-step guide for conducting a thematic analysis. They begin by noting that thematic analysis as a qualitative method starts at the beginning of data collection and only ends at the conclusion of the reporting stage. The researcher serves as the research instrument (Erlandson, et al., 1993) and as such is constantly considering the themes and patterns present within the data (Braun & Clark, 2006). Braun and Clark (2006) also note that when using a theoretical approach with thematic analysis the researcher must have an understanding of the relevant literature before the analysis can begin. They describe six specific steps for conducting a thematic analysis:

The first step they identify is becoming familiar with the data. In this step, the researcher is engaged in constant reading and rereading of the data to understand the nature of the phenomenon fully and to begin to identify patterns and themes that are present in the research data. Braun and Clark (2006) advocate that "it is vital that [the researcher] immerse [himself or herself] in the data to the extent [he or she] is familiar with both the depth and breadth of the content (p. 93). They suggest one of the most effective ways to accomplish this is that the researcher performs the transcription of interviews and other verbal data. During this step, the researcher will develop a more in-depth understanding of the data and may begin to consider possible codes and themes.

The second step is to develop an initial set of codes from the data. This involves groupings that the researcher has identified as both interesting and meaningful (Braun & Clark, 2006). For this study, the initial process of coding the data was driven by the theoretical framework of the study (IEO model).

The third step is to take the list of coded data and begin to identify themes that are potentially relevant to the group of codes. Braun and Clark (2006) describe this as a "[refocusing] of the analysis at a broader level" (p. 96) where the researcher considers the relationship between various codes to identify significant ideas (or themes) found within the data. They define a theme as a representation of "a patterned response or meaning within the data set" (p. 87).

The fourth step is to review the themes that were developed in step three. In this step, the researcher considers the accuracy and relevance of the identified themes and refines or removes themes as necessary. Braun and Clark (2006) propose the use of Patton's (2002) criteria of internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity to determine whether themes are appropriate. They state "data within themes should cohere together meaningfully [and] there should be clear and identifiable distinctions between themes" (p. 97). Braun and Clark are careful to note that

coding and refining codes could go on infinitely and suggest researchers stop the coding process when the refinements are not significant.

Step five is the point where themes are defined and named. Braun and Clark (2006) describe this as "identifying the essence" (p. 98) of each theme in a descriptive and interesting way that reflects the broad story the research is attempting to describe. In this step, beyond identifying the specific themes, the researcher is also crafting a narrative about each theme. This narrative provides detail about the theme and provides an explanation of how the theme connects to the research questions.

The final step is producing the research report. This stage involves developing a narrative that both provides extracts of data that define the individual themes and comprehensively presents a persuasive case that specifically addresses the research questions.

Procedures

Data Collection Procedures

The data for the study was obtained using the following procedures (Erlandson, et al., 1993; Patton, 2002).

1. An in-depth literature review on coaching in education was conducted. The review specifically sought for relevant studies on coaching in education and other coaching studies outside the specific realm of education that were considered relevant to the topic. The literature review was ongoing throughout the study.

2. The academic success coaching program at the University was contacted via email and invited to participate in the study (the recruitment email and request to participate flyer can be found in Appendix D).

3. Once the director of the coaching program at the University agreed to participate in the study, she was provided a link to an online copy of the Robinson (2015) survey (Appendix B) for herself or a designee to complete. She was also asked to provide contact email addresses for staff members she was willing to allow to participate in the study. She was willing for all of her full-time staff members, a total of three, to be contacted to participate in the study.

4. Staff members whose email had been provided were then sent emails requesting their participation. The recruitment emails and request to participate flyer can be found in Appendix D.

5. Interviews were then scheduled with staff members who responded to the email. They were sent the participant information sheet and requested to acknowledge consent by responding via email.

6. The results of the survey were compared against the comprehensive results found in Robinson (2015).

7. Data was then collected. This included conducting interviews, obtaining relevant program documents, and observing a director/coach feedback session.

8. An independent transcription company that was approved by the OSU IRB transcribed the interviews. Following receipt of the transcribed interviews, the researcher reviewed the transcriptions against the source recordings multiple times to verify the accuracy of the transcription and to immerse himself with the data.

9. The interview participants were provided a copy of their transcribed interviews for member checking and to ensure that their perspectives were captured accurately.

10. The researcher participated in an audio observation of a staff development feedback meeting between a coach and the director of the program. The researcher captured notes of the observation that were relevant to the theoretical framework of the study and provided greater context for the interviews and program documents.

11. The data was then analyzed using thematic analysis. The data obtained from the interviews, document analysis, and staff development feedback observation was coded and themes were identified.

12. A follow-up interview was conducted with the program director to further verify the results of the research.

13. Further member checking was conducted with an ICF executive and career coach that attended ICF coach training with the researcher to verify relevancy of the identified themes with the ICF core competencies and the IEO model.

14. The research results were documented.

Data Analysis Procedures

The specific procedures for data analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006; Erlandson, et al., 1993; Patton, 2002) were as follows:

1. Research was synthesized to identify consistent themes in each of the IEO stages. This suggested what needed to be considered in the interviews and document analysis.

2. The survey results were compared to the findings of Robinson (2015). Additional questions were raised during the interviews based on the survey results. The survey results were also used during triangulation of the final research data.

3. Documents relevant to success coaching at the University were identified and initially analyzed and coded according to the theoretical framework of the IEO model using thematic analysis.

4. Interviews were conducted by the researcher and transcribed by an independent interview transcription company approved by OSU IRB. Following receipt of the transcripts, the researcher compared the transcripts and initial audio recordings multiple times to ensure the accuracy of the data and to further immerse the researcher in the data. The interview

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transcripts were then coded based on the theoretical framework of the IEO model using thematic analysis.

5. The notes from the director/coach observation session was coded based upon the theoretical framework of the IEO model and the ICF core competencies.

6. As themes developed, it became necessary to expand the thematic analysis lens to include the ICF core competencies, findings from the Robinson (2015) study, and the coaching in education literature with the IEO model to fully make sense of the data in terms of the research questions. All data collected to this point was re-examined through this new lens and codes and themes were updated.

7. Further member checking was conducted with an independent ICF coach and the dissertation advisor to test interpretations and conclusions from the interviews, observation, survey, and document analysis.

8. Findings from the interviews, observation, program survey, and document analysis were documented using "thick description" to support findings (Patton, 2002; p. 452).

9. Findings from the interviews, observation, program survey, and document analysis were then compared to the findings from the literature review to further define ICF coaching and the relationship of ICF coaching and academic success coaching in the context of U.S. higher education.

Data Management

Strict data management protocols were followed to ensure the confidentiality of the research subjects and protection of the research data. This included physical and electronic data security measures and subject protection protocols.

To fully protect the subjects in the study, they are identified only broadly by category (coach, coaching supervisor, university administrator) and with a pseudonym (chosen by the subject). The name of the university is also a pseudonym chosen to further protect the anonymity

of the subjects in the study. The data is reported in aggregate form, but specific statements from the interviews are highlighted to explain the themes developed from the research. The subjects were informed of confidentiality aspects during the consent process and at the beginning of the interview. The observation findings are presented in aggregate form with interview data but specific moments from the observations are highlighted to further explain the themes developed from the research.

Ethical Considerations

The students the coaches work with are individuals who are protected by educational right to privacy laws. Portions of the students these individuals work also have documented disabilities, which place them into a protected class. The ICF Code of Ethics (2016) and Core Competencies (2016) also makes note that coaches should ensure privacy for their clients. To ensure their privacy, all students who were discussed during the observations were referenced to the researcher using pseudonyms and not named in the data of this study.

Also, both in the review of the literature and the researcher's experience as a coach, there is a significant emphasis that coaching students often involves "non-academic" issues that affect student performance. Any documentation or study of coaching should show ethical consideration for these issues.

Triangulation of Data

Findings from this study utilized triangulation of data to provide reliability of the themes identified. The triangulation occurred using a cross-section of interviews, document analysis, observation, a specific coaching program survey, member checking, a researcher journal that documented researcher understanding along the data collection and analysis process, and an in-depth literature review to collaborate findings.

Member Checking

Member checking was conducted with the research participants to ensure the validity of the interview data. There were very few changes that were requested and one participant identified no changes. The requested changes were: changing specific identifiers, such as city names and specific persons beyond the research participants and the university, to further ensure anonymity of the institution and participants; removal of a reference to a local business; and two participants requesting their pseudonym be changed to a different pseudonym that they provided.

Summary

This chapter provided the detailed methodology for this study. The chapter began by detailing how the study was designed including conceptualization, selection of the institution and research participants, and the artifacts and instruments that were utilized in the study. The chapter also detailed the methods used for data analysis. The chapter concluded by detailing the specific procedures the researcher used to complete the study.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Chapter four provides the results from the study. The chapter begins by reintroducing the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the theoretical framework of the study. The chapter then provides the findings from each of the research questions. The chapter concludes by presenting findings from the study that were beyond the context of the research questions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to build upon prior research to provide deeper insight into the role of an ICF trained academic/success coach on a university campus. This study provided an examination of the experience of success coaches who have completed ICF approved coach training and who work with students in a postsecondary university. The study also examined how the practices of ICF trained coaches compare with the generalized academic success coach findings of the Robinson (2015) study.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coach findings from Robinson (2015)?

    a. How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coaching in terms of students/clients?

b. How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coaching in terms of coaches?

2. What does ICF coach training entail for a university employed success coach?

3. How does a success coach support the needs of the student?

4. What are the challenges of coaching students and how are they navigated?

Theoretical Framework of the Study

This work utilized the IEO model (Astin, 1993) to examine a university program that coaches students according to an ICF coaching model. This work followed the utilized in previous research to define the elements in each category of the model. The study also built upon previous research by more fully considering the input aspects of the coach. Inputs consist of elements such as: what type of student comes to coaching, the training and background of the coach, expectations that have been established by a student's advisor, mandatory versus non-mandatory coaching referral, etc. Outputs consist of elements such as: GPA, retention, graduation, a learned skill, etc. Environment consists of elements such as: the structure of the coaching session, physical conditions present in the room, length of session, etc. (See Figure 1, Chapter 1). The data collection process (including: interviews, program survey, program documents, and observation of coach/director feedback session) and data analysis was also conducted based on the framework of the IEO model. The findings unearthed by the IEO model were then examined through the lens of the findings from Robinson (2015), the ICF core competencies, and the broader coaching literature.

Findings

Research Question 1a- How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coaching in terms of students/clients?

Both ICF coaches and generalized academic success coaches work with a variety of students. The interviews, coaching survey, and several documents identified that the coaches at

the University work with a variety of students. According to the interviews, they work mainly with freshmen and sophomores, and with some juniors and seniors. They see students who are on academic probation, are high-ability and have exceptional grades, and those who fall between both categories. They do have some students who are referred to coaching from a parent or other university staff member, but the majority are students who have completed the request forms themselves and are personally seeking to work with a coach. According to Mary, about 25% of their population are students with attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The vast majority of their students are not first-generation students and have the means to afford to attend a private university. The students who apply to meet with a coach do so for various reasons including "academic performance, academic/major clarity, career opportunities, time management/effectiveness, college transition, and overall wellbeing/health" (program document). These findings are consistent with Robinson's (2015) finding that university based coaching takes place with various student populations.

Both types of coaching seek more than one outcome. The interviews and program survey identified "bumping retention up another few points" (Mary) as the main reason the program was created and implemented at the University. Grace, Mary, and Caitlin further expounded upon this by describing GPA as the way the university measures this retention bump provided through the program. Specifically, end of the year program documents state that "students who have below a 3.0 GPA and engage in the success coaching process (5-11 meetings) experience a half of a letter grade increase over their previous semester GPA." Coaching leading to a GPA boost also finds support in the coaching literature (Bettinger & Baker, 2011; Passmore & Brown, 2009).

The interviews, program survey, and program documents also identified student success outcomes beyond GPA. This is best identified through a statement on the coaching program survey that stated the reported outcomes of the coaching program in terms of students are "[finding a] trusted person [on campus], goal setting skills, time management/organization, self-

efficacy/sense of control, emotional state, and academic (i.e. GPA)" and slides from a program webinar that identify outcome measurement variables as: "GPA, stronger sense of self, new found confidence in my abilities and individuality, helping to adapt to the college experience, motivation, and empowerment to become the person I want to be." Also, Lillian specifically identified the wellbeing of the student as being important to their success. These student success outcomes support the broader coaching in education literature and specifically the portal of coaching students for student success (GPA) and wellbeing (other factors such as self-efficacy, time-management, etc.) (Passmore & Brown, 2012; Van Nieuwerburgh, Campbell, & Knight, 2014).

These findings are consistent with Robinson's (2015) finding that retention is the main reason most coaching programs are created and that some programs seek outcomes beyond a boost in GPA. While she identified GPA as a specific goal of coaching, she did not identify any details specifying exact GPA goals in this context. It should also be noted that Robinson (2015) did not identify wellbeing as a specific outcome for any of the coaching programs that responded to her survey. However, some of her findings could fall under wellbeing such as "personal concerns," "engagement" "planning/involvement," and "stress management" (p. 81).

In both settings, some students are better suited for coaching than others. In terms of students, this study found that ICF coaching works with many of the same populations of students as the programs identified in Robinson's (2015) study. According to the program survey, the interviews, and multiple documents, the students that participate in the University's ICF based coaching program are undergraduates; primarily freshmen and sophomore; enrolled in various degree programs (i.e. majors) across campus; high-achieving, academically struggling, or somewhere in between; possibly having attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); and very likely in some form of transition.

The most defining characteristic from the interviews was the idea of students being "in transition. Lillian commented, "not every student who comes to coaching is coming for an

academic reason." Caitlin elaborated on this idea by identifying "students in transition are the ones who come to coaching" and Mary provided a concrete example of transition as "students who made A's easily in high school and are now struggling." Furthermore, several departmental documents provided further elaboration on this idea of transition by describing the personal concerns that led students to work with a coach. The largest areas of interest were "time management, being overinvolved, feeling overwhelmed, stress issue(s), motivation issue(s), and sleep which are often identified as elements important to the effective transition of students into the college experience. This aspect of being in transition speaks to the idea that some students may need a specific type of support compared to others, and coaching may not be the support needed. This idea of students "in transition" was not found in Robinson's (2015) study.

Another important characteristic identified from the research is that not every student who applies or is referred to the coaching program is accepted. According to Mary, to work with a coach a student has to either apply to be in the program or be referred by another individual. Once the program receives the request form, if there are openings, a coach contacts the student by phone for an interview to assess the fit of the student with the program. Lillian stated this is because "coaching is not for everyone" and according to Grace, Caitlin, and Lillian there has to be a willingness within the student to engage in the coaching process for coaching to be effective. Robinson (2015) found that there was a variety of how students accessed a coach (self-requested, referred from another university employee, or required by the university) but did not present any findings specific to student's having to be accepted into the program to work with a coach.

This idea that coaching is not for everyone is reflected throughout the coaching literature, most notably through the idea of the partnership principles (Knight, 2011) that posit effective coaching only occurs when there is a true partnership between the coach and the client (student). This can only occur when both the student and the coach are committed to working with each other for the purpose of the student's success and wellbeing. Caitlin and Lillian provide a picture of this partnership: "[Coaching] creates a non-judgmental environment where the student is

considered the expert on themselves…the student sets the agenda and the decisions about where they're going in the process" (Caitlin). "We let [the students] tell us what they want to get out of the process and then just facilitate from there…we always believe that students have the answers inside of them…and we help students build awareness of that" (Lillian). If the student is not willing to be an active partner in the process then it is assumed effective coaching will not be successful. Again, Robinson (2015) is silent on this idea that coaching is a partnership between a student and the coach and her study does not provide any specifics on student's needing to be a fit for coaching.

Additionally, when considering whether a student is a good fit for coaching, the model of goal striving and mental health (Grant & Spence, 2010) provides a framework for identifying when counseling should be viewed by coaches as the necessary choice to support students over coaching. Specific support for this perspective is found in one of the program documents showing that the program uses Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs as a framework to determine if a student is fit for coaching over counseling. The program's website in defining coaching describes "what is coaching" as "…assisting client's in meeting their stated goals… coaching is NOT therapy…"

Lastly, the program marketing documents and presentations provide detailed descriptions of what the success coaches do and the defining factors that would make a student a good fit for working with a coach in this program. For students who are not a good fit for coaching, need something different (such as tutoring or counseling), or are unable to get into the program due to lack of openings, the program offers other options such as tutoring; supplemental instruction; shorter-term, more prescriptive approaches, and/or referral to other resources (such as academic advising and counseling). This ensures that even though the coaching program may not be able to help them the student is not left alone to fend for him or herself.

In both settings, students do not automatically buy into working with a coach.

Another aspect is that often getting students to buy-in to coaching is a process. The ICF coaching

process the program utilizes pushes the students to think beyond surface-level awareness to reach those goals. Lillian described this as "getting at the who of the student" which is "deep soul-searching work" that requires the willingness of the student to participate. Webinar slides from the program also discuss the process of getting students to buy-in. The slides specifically encourage coaching to be at the student's initiative, not the parent's. This is also supported in the coaching literature by the partnership principles (Knight, 2011), the ICF core competencies, and Van Nieuwerburgh (2014). Robinson (2015) identifies how a student comes to coaching but does not provide any insight into broader buy-in issues with the students that are presented here.

Mary described the initial meeting between the coach and the student as a time to set expectations between the coach and student by going through the coaching contract. The contract identifies the responsibilities of both parties and outlines the boundaries of the coaching relationship. Beyond the contract, Lillian discussed the process of getting students to buy in by stating that "some students need scaffolding" to be successful. Mary and Lillian both identified that certain students (such as some of the students with ADD) need more prescriptive handholding (scaffolding) at first before they are able to fully engage with the ICF coaching process. Therefore, it is noted that getting students to buy-in is both a product of willingness and the ability of the student to engage in this type of process.

In summary, in terms of students, ICF coaching is consistent with the types of students who work with generalized academic success coaches. All types of coaches work with a variety of students and seek various outcomes (although there may be individual programs that only focus on GPA). There is also varying levels of buy-in from students in both types of coaching. Finally, both ICF coaching and generalized academic success coaching demonstrate that it takes time for many students to buy into working with a coach; perhaps due to the lack of a clear definition of what a coach in higher education is and does.

Research Question 1b- How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coaching in terms of coaches?

The University coaches are full-time success coaches; a generalized academic success coach might or might not be full-time. Robinson (2015) found that there was a variety of employment status and titles for coaches employed in colleges and universities across the U.S. The program survey and the interviews identified that the University utilized full-time coaches using the title "success coaches." According to Mary, the word "academic" was left off the title as a way to keep from boxing in the work of the coaches to just academic issues. This idea of a success coach provides the coaches the freedom to work with students in a holistic way.

All the coaches at the University are trained beyond the masters degree; which is not true of all generalized academic success coaches. All the interview participants hold masters degrees and have completed specific ICF coach training beyond their graduate coursework. The participants' degrees were in the areas of higher education/student affairs and social work/counseling. Due to the small number of interview participants, the specific degrees they hold will not be identified to ensure their anonymity. The coach training the participants completed were ICF accredited coach training programs (ACTP) that included coach specific training and/or how to coach students with ADD. The program requires coaches to meet the first level of ICF certification (Associate Certified Coach).

Caitlin, Grace, and Lillian all described how important they believed the coach training was to their proficiency in the coaching role and how just their masters degree was not enough. This was best captured from Caitlin (in discussing the difference between her graduate degree and coach training) who described the coach training as the same theories she learned in her graduate program, but the coach training went a step further and observed her in her one-on-one communication. She described coaching as being "how you communicate one-on-one with people and learning all of the different ways you can communicate with someone so they come more open and you can better understand them and help them get where they want to be…and those are

all things that most grad programs aren't going to give you unless you're in a counseling program."

Additionally, all the participants mentioned the value of the ICF. Mary mentioned they participated in the local ICF chapter monthly calls as a method of continuing education and to continually hone their skills. Lillian described one of the values of being a member of the ICF is having access to training materials that could be used to support coach training, especially for postsecondary coaching programs that are unable to send their employees through formal coach training.

The literature also supports the idea of training beyond the masters degree. As previously mentioned, Passmore in Cavanaugh and Palmer (2011) identifies high-quality coach training as masters degree level instruction with " a period of reflective practice to acquire and apply high-level skills" (p. 108). Furthermore, the literature also identifies the need for high-level training (Van Nieuwerburgh, 2016) and the need to be connected to a professional coaching body for support and training from other coaches (Knight, 2007; Szabo, 2016).

In comparison, Robinson (2015) found that some coaching programs required a masters degree but it was only a very few (10 out of 101) and some programs utilized students without degrees to coach their peers. There was no discussion in Robinson's (2015) work of coach specific training or training beyond the masters degree.

Based on the training ICF coaches receive, they intentionally focus on "coaching." Generalized academic success coaches can be tutoring, mentoring, (academic) advising, and/or counseling. The interviews, program documents, and mentor coaching session demonstrate that coaches function in the role of a coach and not other student success roles (such as tutor, mentor, academic advisor, or counselor). Mary identified these roles as the "umbrella of services" that the University offers to students. The program provides documents on their website describing the responsibilities of each of these roles, the minute differences between them, when a student should choose a particular service, and what the students can expect from each of them.

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All of the interview participants also discussed helping a student identify a specific support a

student needs and then referring them to that support if it is beyond the scope of the coach role.

This included referring students to an academic advisor if they had questions about specific

courses or course sequences (Grace), to counselors or case managers if there are mental health

concerns (Mary), or career services if there are questions regarding employment (documents).

Although it is not a defined coaching skill, referring an individual to a more appropriate person or

service is a consistent theme found in the coaching literature.

Further supporting this idea that the coaches only coach is details of the peer tutoring

program that is housed in the same department (although not the same physical location) as

success coaching. According to Caitlin and Mary, the tutoring program is a peer-based program

where students tutor other students on course content based issues. The goal of the tutor is to help

a student become more proficient in the course content (ideally boosting their class grades and

then ultimately their overall GPA and retention). Caitlin described tutor training as "teaching the

tutors various learning theories" (such as constructivist learning theory and Blooms's taxonomy)

and coaching skills to help make the session more effective. She stated:

> you can use Bloom's with students, but it's much more effective if you kind of like have
>
> a coach mentality where you're letting the student take the lead, asking open-ended
>
> questions…affirming where the student might be in their learning…reflecting what
>
> you're hearing." She went further to describe how the tutors perceived the coaching
>
> skills: "[they think] it's a challenging concept because they're like, 'oh, it's going to take
>
> so much time to communicate in that way…and we only have 30 minutes to give a
>
> student everything they need…' Sometimes when we watch a new tutor we'll see the
>
> tutor is just throwing all this information at the student. But if they would have stopped
>
> and found out where the student was with the content they would have found out that the
>
> student was actually two steps behind where the tutor is.

The only caveat to this is coaching students with executive function issues such as ADD. Lillian and Mary discussed that some students are in need of scaffolding due to executive function issues, and coaching sessions with these particular students tend to look different than traditional coaching sessions. Lillian described it this way:

> For a lot of our students that have ADHD or just aren't really sure how to do something, sometimes are meetings are a lot more hands on. It might be a student is having trouble with time management, so it's a lot of processing, figuring out what could work for them…like making a calendar…or going through syllabi… [in being more hands on and scaffolding] we're still coaches and work from the spirit of coaching, but we're not necessarily just sitting back asking powerful questions or summarizing or reflecting, we are being much more hands on.

It should noted that according to Mary, this type of student is no more than 25% of their total student population. Collectively, the participants clearly communicated that how they work with students is specifically based on what the individual student needs but they work from (and are evaluated on) an ICF coaching framework.

In comparison, Robinson (2015) found that a lack of clarity exists in many of the coaching programs as they attempt to define their coaching practice from other roles (such as tutor, peer mentor, or counselor). Some of the programs in her study identified themselves as coaches but further described their duties as tutors, mentors, or advisors. Robinson commented this lack of clarity between the roles may be due in part to the lack of a single, agreed upon definition of coaching and due to the lack of a theory base for the majority of her respondents. Her study also did not detail any specifics on referrals, differentiating services based on student need, or how coaching is (or could be) present in other aspects (such as tutors who use coaching skills).

Robinson's study did not specifically look at the philosophy of the coaches while the ICF coaches work from a humanistic educational philosophy. Another aspect that emerged

from the interviews was that the coaching program at the University operates from a strong

humanistic philosophical perspective. The humanistic philosophical perspective is characterized

by a focus on the importance of the individual person and their unique experiences and by

considering the holistic system that affects their success (Elias & Merriam, 2005). This

philosophical approach was evident from statements such as "we take a holistic approach…we

market ourselves as success coaching…not just academic coaching, so we're not just focused on

specific academic outcomes" (Mary) and "[I was interested in and applied to the job because] I

was interested in working in a more holistic, whole life kind of way with students" (Grace). There

were also repeated references by Mary, Grace, and Lillian about coaching "getting to the who of a

student." This idea was further substantiated by Mary as she described what the program looks

for in hiring new coaches; she described how past employees "had a difficult time

transitioning…from being in the role of problem-solving for the client and into the coaching

role…didn't gel with the team…and didn't buy into the philosophy [of not being a problem

solver and being a coach]."

Additional support for this is found in statements from several of the coaches who

described why they wanted to work for the program. Caitlin described wanting to work with

students in a developmental way and "[being] so hopeful that I would be really helping students

make the most out of their [college] experience." Lillian described her work in her former role as

full of behavioral and academic interventions that "[didn't allow me] to work in the capacity of

the way I wanted to be..." and described one aspect of her current work as "[not just] all goal-

setting and moving people forward…there's a lot of uncover work in figuring out the who of the

person, what their values and goals are, and what drives them."

Comparing this finding to Robinson (2015); she didn't specifically look at the philosophy

underpinning the coaching practice of her respondents; however, she did note that several

respondents identified elements such as "holistic coaching" (p. 62) that could suggest at least

some level of humanistic philosophy underpinning the coaching practice of some of the programs who participated in her research.

ICF coaches are lifelong learners; lifelong learning in generalized academic success coaches was not discussed. The interviews also revealed that the participants were committed to ongoing professional development. Each of the participants had completed masters degrees and went on to complete coach training beyond the degree that provided them with ICF certification. In addition, the participants discussed further continuing education beyond the certification that included: participating in monthly ICF training with the local ICF chapter, completing additional coach training (such as motivational interviewing and career coaching), mentor coaching with the program director (for the purpose evaluating and further refining their coaching skills), and conducting peer coaching with each other to hone their coaching skills.

Beyond these elements of receiving professional development, the participants have also been empowered to provide professional development to others. Included in the program documents were slides from several webinars the participants had conducted. These webinars included topics such as "how to coach students with ADHD" and a broad description of the success coaching program at the University. In addition to the webinars, Mary stated that the program also provided training and support for other departments at the University. Currently, the University coaching staff are providing Motivational Interviewing training to academic advisors, coaching skills training to peer tutors, and have implemented a positive psychology based initiative for students that pairs with the coaching program.

The overall literature on coaching in education alludes to the idea of coaches being lifelong learners and the ICF requires coaches to participate in a minimum of 40 hours of continuing coach education and 10 hours of mentor coaching every three years to maintain certification. Robinson (2015) is silent on any aspects of learning beyond initial degree requirements to be hired into the position.

Not everyone makes a good ICF or generalized academic success coach. The interviews and program documents suggest that there may be a specific coach "way of being" with the program staff at the University. As previously noted, statements such as "this [coaching] is what I wanted to do, " "we take a holistic approach [toward working with students]," and "I was hopeful that I'd be really helping students [when I graduated]" speak to the coaches having a humanistic philosophy toward how they work with students. This was contrasted with an example given by Mary of a coach who did not stay with the program and caused her to more fully consider the "fit for this role" as she made future hiring decisions. She was very cordial about him but described the challenges he had with shifting from a telling/problem solving for the student perspective to one where he functioned as a coach. She also described how his challenge with shifting to a coach perspective affected the overall team dynamic. This was only one example but taken through the context of the broader coaching literature and the background and interviews with the other coaching staff it implies that some individuals are more suited for coaching than others. This finding is consistent with the research literature's assertion that not everyone makes a good coach (Cavanaugh & Palmer, 2011; Van Nieuwerburgh, 2014).

Robinson (2015) provides some insight into this idea as well. Her research study identified that for some coaching programs there are some entry requirements (such as having a masters degree). However, this was not true for all programs. She remarked that it was possible the lack of an agreed upon definition of coaching and lack of theoretical underpinning for the majority of the programs led to the variety of findings. However, her findings did not speak to any of the elements that are needed for someone to be an effective coach.

The coaches at the University work as a collective team; departmental dynamics were not examined for generalized academic success coaches. The interviews revealed that the coaches at the University function as a tight-knit team within a very collaborative environment. This was most evident in both words and the tone of which they spoke of each other. Mary praised each member of her staff and specifically identified strengths and accomplishments that

they each had individually. The other participants also spoke highly of each other and identified how the others supported both the program and each other. An example of this was Caitlin describing the team:

> One thing that makes us unique is our team. Having Mary as our leader… I've never worked for someone as great of a supervisor as her. The way she wants us to develop, the way that she really recognizes our strengths and lets us bring those to the table…it's really just a nice environment and our team is very dynamic, each of us brings sort of a different skill…we have a very dynamic team that…covers a lot of talent that you would hope for in an organization. And I think that makes us unique and it makes us excellent.

Additionally, the depth of relationship was also evident from Grace and Lillian as they described how they work with each other to identify how to coach certain students more effectively and they often take lunch together to purposefully talk about things other than work. The tone of all these comments conveyed warmth toward each other and led the researcher to believe their workplace is a small community of likeminded individuals, all believing in and working toward a common goal. This community aspect seems to be intentional, as Mary spoke of the importance of "general fit for the team…rounding off the team professionally…[and specific skills] regarding the unique strengths for the team dynamic" when she was asked about staffing and how she's been able to keep coaches on the team.

Another aspect supporting the idea that coaches work together as a collective team was found in the mentor coaching observation between Mary and Lillian. During the mentor coaching session, Lillian sought an opinion on how she handled a particular student during a specific coaching session. Mary's simple question of "what do you think?" before she provided her feedback unlocked Lillian's autonomy and led to several minutes of discussion of why she chose to go down a certain path with this student and how she thought she could do better the next time. From the other end of the phone, it appeared that this question reinforced Lillian's confidence in her role and work as a coach and further reinforced the trust between her and Mary (her

supervisor). Whether intentionally or unintentionally, it appeared that both members were

utilizing the partnership principles and it allowed a level of cooperation and teamwork that was

very effective for Lillian to receive both feedback and support.

This collective teamwork appeared to be in part due to Mary's leadership style but also

due to the coaching culture created in the department from the coaches participation in ICF

training and how the "spirit of coaching" (way of being and the use of core coaching skills) has

become a part of how they interact with each other daily. Mary leads her team from a coaching

approach; she evaluates them based upon the ICF core competencies and gives them feedback

using the core competencies and coaching skills to maintain the autonomy of the coach and to

further reinforce the idea of a coaching culture.

Related to this, the data appeared to suggest that the institutional climate plays a

significant role in the success of the program, collective nature of the team and the development

of the coaching culture. Mary provides insight into this as she describes how the program started:

> …our associate dean is a very innovative, very creative man who's open to lots of
>
> different ideas…so I brought him this new way of doing something that is very
>
> common…within corporations and executive coaching but not so much within higher
>
> education and he was really open to seeing what it would look like…There were a lot of
>
> people [besides the supervisor] who were skeptical [but it got approved] as a retention
>
> initiative. From the beginning, we tested it…[and] tracked everything we did…[and
>
> found] positive impacts for student engagement and retention… I think that's what sold
>
> everyone…that this could really work. This approach makes a big difference in the lives
>
> of these students…" [and that led to garnering] support from the institution [for the
>
> program].

At the inception of the program, Mary had buy-in from her supervisor to experiment with

something new; currently, the program is funded by the university and donors, the coaches are

training other departments, and as seen in university marketing materials, the coaching program is viewed institutionally as a valued part of the university student success initiatives.

In comparison, Robinson (2015) did not provide any insight into the environment of individual college and university coaching programs. Her study also did not speak to how the environment (coworkers, etc.) affects the effectiveness of the coach in working with their students. The broader coaching research is also largely silent on how a team of coaches supports each other and/or their students.

ICF coaches utilize various theory and conceptual frameworks; a large majority of generalized academic success coaches do not. The interviews and document analysis identified several theories and conceptual frameworks that underlie the practice of the coaches at the University. The documents specifically identified these as: the ICF core competencies, Motivational Interviewing, ADD coaching approaches, neurodiversity, Blooms taxonomy, positive psychology, and growth mindset. Each of the participants spoke more in depth about one or two of the theories more than the others. This may suggest that the participant may be more familiar with the specific theory they mentioned, perhaps due to the coach training they received, and the background they brought into the position.

No matter the theory that was used, the framework that underlies each participant's work with students is the ICF core competencies. This was evident from the documents, the interviews, and the mentor coaching observation. An example from the documents is the coaching contract that all students are required to sign as they begin working with a coach. It identifies what coaching is, the purpose of coaching, the boundaries of coaching (including when they would refer to more appropriate resources), and the responsibilities of both the student and the coach. The contract is a part of the ICF core competency "establishing the coaching agreement" (International Coach Federation core competencies, 2016). From the interviews, a specific example of the use of the ICF competencies came from Grace as she described supporting the needs of the student by "…the process of coaching: setting the agenda, coming up with their next

steps or action plan, working towards it throughout the course of the semester." This statement demonstrates the competencies of establishing the coaching agreement, designing actions, planning and goal setting, and managing progress and accountability (International Coach Federation core competencies, 2016).

Robinson (2015) found that only 35% of her respondents utilized theory in their work as coaches. The main theories utilized were appreciative advising (33.9%) followed by intrusive advising (12.5%). Other frameworks identified were motivational interviewing, Bloom's taxonomy, the GROW coaching model, and self-regulated learning (p. 79). Robinson's work did not provide any specifics on how the theories were utilized by individual coaches or coaching programs in support of their students.

In summary, there are significant differences between ICF coaches and generalized academic success coaches. Broadly speaking, the generalized academic success coaches described in Robinson's (2015) study are either upper-class students or university employees who have completed a university degree and are mentoring or tutoring students to degree completion. In contrast, ICF coaches are highly specialized individuals who bring a specific way of being to their work and are trained beyond the masters degree level in coaching competencies and theoretical models to work with a variety of students in a very specialized way.

Research Question 1- How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coach findings from Robinson (2015)?

The findings from research questions 1a and 1b above show similarities in the types of students who access coaching and significant differences in the coaches who are ICF coaches compared to generalized ICF coaches. To more fully understand these findings, it's important to consider the differences in this study and the Robinson (2015) study. Robinson's study consisted of an electronic survey that was quantitative in nature and provided a broad overview of the state of coaching in US higher education. Her study did not attempt to go below the bird's eye view of the field but provided a necessary and valuable starting place to further conceptualize coaching in

this population. In contrast, this study is qualitative in nature and seeks to gain the bird's eye view down to the ground level view of a very specific type of coaching at one distinct institution. Comparisons of the two studies need to be considered with this in mind.

Comparisons of findings beyond research questions 1a and 1b

Additionally, the use of Robinson's (2015) program survey to examine the ICF coaching program against her findings provided comparisons at the programmatic level. These findings include demographic comparisons, intended program outcomes, and program evaluation measurement methods.

The demographics of the University's ICF-based student coaching program are consistent with Robinson's findings. The coaching program at the University was established in 2012 to provide undergraduate students with a unique service whose goal was to increase retention and to work with special populations; such as, students who are either high-ability, undecided majors, labeled high academic risk, and/or have learning differences. The program is housed in a student success center and is organizationally housed within the division of academic affairs. The university is a four-year private university with less than 10,000 students. In 2015, the program worked with between 201-500 students, approximately 2-5% of the total university enrollment. The only description here that is unique to Robinson's findings is that the program works with high-ability students in addition to other academically "at-risk" students. Additional comparisons of students will be discussed in the next section.

The findings provide more specific detail on an individual success coaching program's intended outcomes and measurement methods than the Robinson study. The intended outcomes of the success coaching program are [the students having] a trusted person, goal-setting skills, time management/organization skills, self-efficacy, [a healthy] emotional state, and academic [retention]. These outcomes were found in programs from the Robinson (2015) study but cannot be compared against the demographics of individual institutions. These outcomes are measured using surveys of students (pre/post with qualitative coding analysis),

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surveys of coaches (group meetings and informal discussions), student GPA data, student

retention and persistence rates, and a review of meeting numbers and process oriented data (data

captured from coaching session notes) compared against academic data from the students. The

measurement methods are consistent with the primary assessment methods for coaching programs

in the Robinson study.

In summary, ICF coaching and generalized academic success coaching are similar in

terms of the students they work with, and unique in terms of the coaches they employ and the

training and methods used by the coaches. The groups are also similar in terms of how they are

organizationally structured in the university, the intended outcomes of coaching, and in how they

measure program effectiveness. Both types of coaches show increases in retention, but the lack of

in-depth measurement from the programs in Robinson's study and the lack of student analysis in

this study prohibit further determinations on the effectiveness of one program over the other.

Research Question 2- What does ICF coaching entail for a university employed success

coach such as those at the University?

University based coaches hold academic degrees. A minimum of a masters degree is

required to work in the coaching position at the University. All interview participants held

graduate degrees in various fields (interviews, program survey, and documents). According to

Mary, the department advertises the coaching position as an academic advisor in order to achieve

a higher salary. They call applicants to clarify what type of position they have applied for and

ensure the applicants are interested in this type of role.

The literature is mixed on coaches holding academic degrees. The ICF does not require

any form of academic degree to be certified (International Coach Federation associate certified

coach, 2016) but an academic degree may be required due to the requirements of the university.

Passmore as quoted in Cavanaugh and Palmer (2011) advocates coaches hold the equivalent of a

masters degree. Other coaching in education studies described students functioning as peer

coaches with other students; the classification of the students in these studies ranged from

primary age through students enrolled in Ph.D. programs. Robinson (2015) found similar results from the respondents of her survey. Programs that employed full-time coaches required a minimum of a bachelors degree, but for programs utilizing peer coaches, holding an academic degree may or may not be a requirement.

Training is required beyond the academic degree. Although the ICF does not require a degree to receive coaching certification, they do require individuals to receive coach specific training before they can be certified (International Coach Federation associate certified coach, 2016). According to Mary, all coaches hired within the program are required to complete at least the minimum of training requirements to meet the ICF associate certified coach. This includes at least 60 hours of coach-specific training designed around the ICF core competencies and at least 10 hours of mentor coaching with a credentialed ICF coach. At the University, this training is mainly provided by outside vendors. The current training program they are working with provides a combination of ACC level coach training and instruction in neurodiversity and how to coach students with ADD. This program was chosen due to the noticeable increase in students with ADHD and "[the skills] are transferable…if you can do ADHD coaching you can really work with anyone" (Mary).

Additionally, the interviews and program survey identified additional coach specific training that the participants had received beyond the basic ICF coach training. This included training in motivational interviewing, career coaching, growth (vs. fixed) mindset, ADD coaching and neurodiversity, and positive psychology interventions. These, along with the ICF training constitute the theoretical frameworks used by the program. This additional, specialized training is being used to refine and improve the skills of the coaches to the level that they can provide specialized services to students (such as the positive psychology intervention) and other university departments (such as training advisors in motivational interviewing).

The University views this training as important enough to provide the training to the coaches at no cost, and with no strings attached (Mary). According to Mary, "[Mary and her

supervisor] decided against [requiring a contract or payback from the coaches]…in terms of a philosophical approach [we] felt like if you pay for someone to go through [training] and they leave and then you benefit from it, they personally benefit from it as well, and what happens if they stay and you don't invest in their personal development?" A Google search for the cost of the programs the University participated in is around $5000-10,000 per individual. According to Mary, the university only covers the cost of salary; all other expenditures (including training) are covered through a university foundation account which is funded by donors.

Lillian and Caitlin described the importance the coach training was to both their roles and how they approach working with people. Lillian described ADHD coach training as "…its been invaluable and probably my most favorite training I've ever done, because we can take that training and apply it to so many different people." Caitlin described the coach training as an access point into the resources that would allow her to "keep enriching [herself] as a coach" for the purpose of "[being] the best possible coach she could be."

Training does not end once the coaching certificate is obtained. One thing that emerged from the interviews and the mentor coaching observation is that coach training is never truly over. Grace described this as a philosophy of "we can all grow, no matter how many years you've been practicing. And I think that coaches feel that as well. There's always room for growth…" In the interviews, all the participants mentioned going through the ICF coach training program and also mentioned the professional development that continued beyond completion of the training. This included taking additional training courses, collaborating with each other to identify ways to be more effective in working with certain students, and mentor coaching with Mary to evaluate their use of the ICF competencies and to improve their practice (as witnessed by the mentor coaching observation).

The coaching literature is mostly silent regarding the idea of coaching being a lifelong learning activity. The ICF requires continuing education for credentialed coaches to ensure they remain proficient in their coaching skills (International Coach Federation renew credential, 2016).

The ICF also offers two levels of certification above the associate certified coach level; each requires a minimum number of training hours beyond the previous level and includes additional hours of work with a mentor coach. Beyond the ICF, the literature provides insight into the elements needed to be an effective coach (training, a basic understanding of various theories, the ability to use various coaching models, etc.) but does not speak to continued education.

Feedback is key in coach training. Each of the participants mentioned how valuable and important coach training was to their effectiveness as coaches. Caitlin expounded upon this by describing an aspect in the training that she found imperative.

> So through our formal coach training, we have triads (coaching groups of three people), we had a bunch of times where we'll record it and we had to practice coaching a client which I think is really fundamental…to be able to practice…and to have formal feedback…and then to have Mary evaluate us (in mentor coaching sessions)…I think are really crucial.

This aspect of formal evaluation and feedback is tied to the mentor coaching aspect of ICF training. One requirement for ICF certification is that applicants must submit a recording of a coaching session with a client that is evaluated against the ICF core competencies. Applicants must meet a minimum standard to achieve a passing score on the assessed recording (International Coach Federation associate certified coach, 2016). Actively practicing coaching skills and receiving feedback is an imperative aspect of training.

In summary, the training requirements for ICF coaches such as those examined in this study are extensive. For individuals to be hired as employees of a university to work with students who have yet to graduate it's all but certain that they will need to hold at least a bachelors degree. Furthermore, ICF coaches are required to take ICF coach training beyond their university studies to learn skills and coaching models and to actively practice them to the point they are competent to use them with their students and so they can be certified by the ICF.

Research Question 3- How does a success coach support the needs of the student?

Success coaches use the ICF core competencies to support academic success and wellbeing. The success coaching program at the University is built upon the foundation of the ICF core coaching competencies. All participants discussed the competencies in the interviews and described a typical coaching session through a structured description that appeared to walk step-by-step through the competencies. Furthermore, the majority of the program documents either refer to the ICF or present material in a way that is not contradictory to the ICF competencies. Also, the mentor coaching observation utilized the ICF core competencies as a framework to both evaluate the coach's performance and to suggest more effective ways to work with the particular student.

To best describe these findings, they will be presented through the framework of the ICF core competencies (ICF core competencies, 2016). There are 11 competencies that are grouped together into four groups based upon the function of the specific competencies.

Competency group A- Setting the foundation. The first group of competencies includes competencies one and two: "meeting ethical guidelines and professional standards" and "establishing the coaching agreement" (ICF core competencies, 2016). The use of these competencies support the needs of the student by helping the student to understand what they could expect from working with a coach and to clarify the goals the student is hoping to achieve through the semester. These competencies were met through an introduction to coaching information session (this session occurs prior to the first actual coaching session) and through the use of the coaching agreement document.

An example of the information session came from Lillian. She described the first meeting as:

    [The initial meeting is] an opportunity for us to get to know the student and for the student to get to know us and really get a clear picture or understanding of what coaching is, and then to tell us what they're experiencing so far (at this point, they might be

referred to another resource if needed); what their concerns might be or what they're

really excited about… [at that point] we let students know they have the opportunity to

opt in or not opt in [to working with a coach]….from there we have an agreement that we

have and go through with the students…[and sometimes] there are a few assessments we

might want them to take to help us better support them…such as the VIA (character

strengths survey).

The agreement is a document that identifies the responsibilities of both the coach and the student

in terms of working with a coach. It is signed by both the coach and the student and is referred to

in future interactions as needed. Additional assessments were found on the program website

included "do what you are" self-assessment and a learning styles inventory. These assessments

linked to password-protected sites that indicated them to be tied to another university department

(such as the career center). This process of clearly defining the responsibilities supports the

students by both helping to clarify whether coaching is the support they need and by providing

the student a supportive environment where they can consider what they need for personal

success and what goals they would potentially like to work toward as a student.

Grace provided an example of setting the foundation in a specific coaching session.

"…setting an agenda would be the first step…the coaching agreement for that particular meeting.

Designing the agenda, and defining, by the end of the [session], what do you hope to leave with?

And then working towards that agenda…" (Grace). This process of allowing the students to have

the ability to lead the conversation and determine the goals for coaching supports their autonomy

(Knight, 2011), meets the professional standards of coaching (ICF code of ethics, 2016), and

moves students toward becoming more self-directed learners (Van Nieuwerburgh, 2012).

Competency group B- Co-creating the relationship. The second group of competencies

includes competencies three and four: "establishing trust and intimacy with the client" and

"coaching presence" (ICF core competencies, 2016). These competencies differ from the others

in that they are less about a particular skill but more about how a coach "is" when they are

working with a student and are evaluated by "holding the client in unconditional positive regard" and "being fully present…curious…and trusting your gut" (International Coach Federation core competencies comparison table, 2016). These competencies show up in how the coach works with the student. Examples of these competencies in practice include: [greeting the student when they come into your office] and asking them how they're doing, how the week's going" (Caitlin), "[the coach] focusing on the who [of the student]" (Mary), and being attentive to the student, such as noticing body language during a coaching session (mentor coaching observation). These competencies support meeting the needs of the student by helping to create an environment of trust and support between a student and a member of the university, which is a widely accepted factor that is necessary for retention (Tinto, 1997).

Competency group C- Communicating effectively. The third group of competencies includes competencies five, six, and seven: "active listening," "powerful questioning," and "direct communication." These competencies are specific skills that have been identified as being key to effective coaching. These skills would be best observed in an actual coaching session; however, the interviews provided a few examples of how these skills were used by the participants. An example of active listening came from Grace who, in describing a typical coaching session, describes "[once the agenda is set], letting the student take the lead in being able to talk about what it is that they're dealing with." This statement alludes to the process of active listening, where the coach takes a back seat to the needs and stories of the client. Examples of powerful questions include: "at the end of [the session] what do you hope to leave with?" (Grace), "what are you taking from today's meeting?" (Caitlin), if you could [improve your time management] what would that do for you? (Mary), and "describe a time when you were able to do (a particular behavior a student says they're not good at, such as math)" (Mary). Examples of direct communication include reflecting and reframing to the student (Caitlin), "using metaphor and analogy to help illustrate a point or paint a verbal picture, [and being] clear, articulate, and direct in sharing and providing feedback" (International Coach Federation core competencies)

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such as Mary was with Lillian during the mentor coaching observation. Further evaluation of how these are used by coaches would be assessed from an observation of an actual coaching session.

Competency group D- Facilitating learning and results. The final group of core competencies includes competencies eight through eleven: "creating awareness," "designing actions," "planning and goal setting," and "managing progress and accountability" (International Coach Federation core competencies). These competencies are the output variables that coaching seeks to achieve. They are not specifically skills but require skill in coaching to achieve. Likewise, they are not specifically tied to a "way of being" but require the coach to be purposeful in his or her approach to achieving these results.

Each of the participants mentioned that coaching creates awareness for their students. Examples of this from the interviews include Lillian describing the use of assessments with new students and discussing the use of "power questions…to uncover belief systems or what they're doing." Creating awareness supports students by helping them to have a clearer understanding of the issues that are causing them to struggle academically and/or personally. Once there is clarity around what the issue is then students can effectively develop the action steps needed to overcome the issue.

Likewise, each of the participants discussed how coaching pushed students toward designing actions that help students move closer toward their stated goal(s). Examples of actions include creating goals, creating a calendar, and developing a plan to address reoccurring challenges. Mary provided a description an example of coaching a student in the action and planning and goal setting phases:

> …and then the move to the action phase. [The student] starts planning out exactly each
> step of the process and then checking in like, "On a scale from 1 to 5 how confident are
> you in that?" And [the student] might say a 3. "Ok, well let's go back to the drawing
> board…" Or, if they say 5 then like "ok, on a scale of 1 to 5 how committed are you?"
> [The point is to] figure out where they are on the scale and then flushing that piece out

and then summarizing at the end. "What action are you going to take?" "Who's going to support you?" "What can I do as your coach?" …it might be something very concrete or it might not be. It might be…just processing through a decision or trying to gather information about something. So it might not be as concrete.

Her example describes the variability of the potential action steps that are taken by students.

Finally, managing progress and accountability is a competency that is well identified in the interviews. According to the participants, this happens at the beginning of every coaching session as a check-in to see what worked and what didn't for the student following their last meeting with a coach. This was best captured from Mary:

typically what happens [in a typical coaching session] is the coach is checking in on what's going on for them. [Such as]… 'what we talked about last time, how did it go for you,' recognizing…really acknowledging at first and at the same time…looking at…if the goal wasn't achieved or whatever the student had indicated they wanted to work on (and) weren't able to do [then, it becomes a process of] figuring out what's going on.

The example Mary provides shows how coaching supports students through a self-directed learning process by helping them to identify the barriers that kept them from reaching success and then allows them to tweak further actions (with the support and feedback of the coach) and try again. The process of managing progress and accountability is an example of double and triple loop learning (Hargrove, 2008) by helping students identify what independent factors affected their success (double-loop) and the "belief systems" (Lillian) that either hindered or helped them (triple-loop).

Lillian provided another perspective regarding managing progress and accountability with students. As previously mentioned describing the various roles coaches take with students, she identified that some of their students have been diagnosed with ADHD or "executive function issues" (Mary) are not quite as self-aware as other students and may require a more "hands-on"

approach than traditional coaching. She identifies this hands-on approach as "scaffolding…within the spirit of coaching" and describes how it would look during a coaching session:

> For students that need more scaffolding…[such as] a lot of our students that have ADHD or just really aren't sure how to do something…sometimes our meetings are a lot more hands-on. It might be a student's having trouble with time management, so it's a lot of processing, figuring out what could work for them and once we figure it out we might have to create a calendar in or office or we might have to go through syllabi with them in our office…[so], we're still coaches…working from the spirit of coaching, but we're not necessarily just sitting back asking powerful questions, or summarizing, or reflecting note skills; we're being much more hands on.

Regarding managing progress and accountability, the double and triple loop learning is still present, but the coach supports the student by playing a more active role in facilitating the student's actions and thought processes.

ICF success coaches provide individualized support to students. Another way coaches support students is by providing one-on-one support that is individualized for each student. A statement from the program survey best demonstrates this: "The coaching relationship is established based on the student's needs and the roles of the coach and student are clearly defined at the beginning of the partnership. Together, the coach and student create an individualized success plan that involves short-term and long-term goal setting." The documents describing the program outcomes (such as end of year reports, webinars, and best practices for coaches) either show or discuss various the goals students have brought to coaching. These included GPA goals, time management goals, wellbeing goals (such as making friends and getting connected on campus), and outside of campus goals (such as employment options and getting connected with other resources). Beyond this, the coaching contract itself and the assessments that are individualized for each student provide support for how coaching supports students as unique individuals.

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The interviews also provided support for this. Each of the participants discussed how coaching was about each student identifying the specific goals for what they wanted to get out of the experience. Caitlin described this individual support as, "…student focused…it is making sure the [individual] student's needs are being met and helping them discover that." Grace elaborates, "just the way the program operates…being ICF coaches and by being one-on-one…we are well equipped to be able to support whatever need the student has."

The individualized nature of coaching (and how it supports students/clients) is also supported throughout the literature. This is most identified from the numerous definitions of coaching; the one idea the majority agrees upon in is the one-on-one nature of this process. While not explicitly identified in the retention literature, providing one-on-one coaching support to students appears to be an application of Bean's model of student retention (Bean, 1980; Bean & Metzner, 1985; Willcoxson, et al., 2011) as it takes into account a large number of variables that are key to students retaining.

Coaches support the student by being responsible to the student, <u>not</u> for the student. A phrase that was repeated throughout the interviews was this perspective that "a coach is responsible to the student, not for the student." The participants described this as the coach being responsible to: be fully present and prepared for the student they are working with, to refer when necessary, and to facilitate the coaching process (ICF core competencies, time keeping, providing scaffold learning for certain students, etc.). Going beyond this, Mary made it very clear that the coaches were not responsible for the student accomplishing their work, making higher grades, meeting their goals, or even staying at the university.

The overarching theme was that the coaches trust the coaching process, and if they are experts in the process then the results will take care of themselves. While not explicitly stated in these terms, the ICF coaching approach (core competencies, code of ethics, etc.) also speaks to this idea of being responsible for the process and not for the outcome and supports the

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participant's position. This supports the needs of the student by ensuring the responsibility of success lies with the student and helps them move closer to being self-directed learners.

Success coaches support students by functioning as an extension of other student support offices on campus. The coaches at the University function as extensions of other student support offices on campus, such as academic advising, counseling, and tutoring/student disabilities (in the form of a learning support specialist for ADHD students). Grace provides an example of how the coaches assist in the advising role as she commented about working with undecided students. She said, "a lot of our freshmen, even if they have a major that's declared [are] usually still somewhat undecided." She provided the example of a pre-med student struggling with the core pre-med courses. She stated:

> That conversation can go from really focusing on study skills and test anxiety to having to reflect on if this is something they want to continue doing for the next four years. They see themselves feeling like they can't have the kind of experience they want in college with this. And sometimes make a decision to change their major, which becomes another topic.

This demonstrates how student concerns and issues cross the boundaries of separate student success roles and how the coach acts as the bridge between these roles.

The coach does not take the prescriptive role of providing direct information to students (as a tutor or mentor would) but provides the time and space for a student to explore their needs, values, culture, and the environment of responsibility surrounding all of these. The coach also provides students the ability to talk through and identify what they need (such as changing a major or going to counseling); and the to design a plan on how to meet the need(s) (such as identifying specific questions for their advising appointment or a less intimidating plan on how to connect with a counselor).

Success coaches support students by referring students to other campus resources. In addition to functioning as an extension of other student support offices, coaches also support

students by referring them to these other offices. This is the process of navigation identified by Robinson (2015). This process of navigation occurs throughout higher education; students may have a question (such as, "would engineering be a good major for me?") that gets explored by any number of support personnel (even though this particular question is most aligned with advising); thus they become an extension of another office or role. The difference is when the student needs support that requires information or practice from an expert. An example of this would be a student needing to understand a specific sequence of courses toward graduation or needing mental health evaluation or treatment.

In this context, the coaches function as an entry portal to help identify students who need the help of specific professional(s) and then to get them connected with that resource. The idea behind this process of referral or navigation is ensuring that students don't fall through the cracks of the institutional processes due to the large number of students the institution cares for. In this sense, the coaches serve as a portal to getting students to other appropriate resources on campus.

In the literature, one of the most discussed referrals for coaches (in all professional settings) is the referral to a mental health professional. As previously noted, Grant and Spence (2010) developed a model of goal striving and mental health to help coaches identify clients in distress and in need of counseling instead of coaching. This demonstrates the perceived importance of professional coaches referring these individuals. Grace provided an example of what the process of a referring to counseling and other resources might look like:

> Sometimes the student comes to coaching but what they really need is counseling. And so, we work with them to make that step toward counseling, talk to them more about what the difference between coaching and counseling is. Like, what are their thoughts about counseling [being] a better fit. Sometimes they just don't really know what to expect, so we can help them learn more about counseling. The same goes for other resources.

Referring students to other more appropriate resources supports students by ensuring they can access and get connected with the resources and individuals who are best aligned to help them overcome particular issues.

Success coaches support students through periods of transition. Grace identified the typical student using coaching as being high achieving in high school and then struggling when they get to the University. She described them as "going from being the big fish in a little pond to the little fish in a big pond, where everyone [has the same] background." She then described how this difference illuminates issues such as "how to study," "how individual students learn," "overwhelm from being too involved on campus," and "stress."

Mary identified additional students in transition. These included students who "have identified learning difference or ADHD," "students coming back from study abroad trying to reconnect to the university," "students who are struggling academically," "students who are doing great academically but are trying to find themselves and their niche on campus," and "students who have no idea why they're here or even if the University is a good fit for them." Coaches support students during these periods of transition by being supportive, by helping students to have an increased awareness of their issue, and by helping students conceptualize and implement plans to deal with these transitions. Mary provided an example of this for first-year students. "[first-year students] have this euphoria [and when it's over] things start to get challenging. [One way a coach helps with this] is maybe reconnecting the student to high school. [Regarding a test, a question might be] tell me how did you get there [when you were in high school]?"

Success coaches support students by providing professional development to others that work with students. The participants discussed taking on additional roles within and beyond the university to support and market their work. Mary conducts training webinars, has been interviewed about her work with the program, and serves on university committees (such as academic advising committee). Grace is providing coach training to the academic advisors across campus and is conducting webinars with Lillian and Mary. Beyond the webinars, Lillian is

leading a positive psychology intervention for students on campus. Caitlin provides coaching skills training for tutors and supplemental instruction leaders to help them be more effective working with their peers and serves as the contact between the department and the academic departments on campus. Each of the participants has also presented on their program in professional student success conferences. This providing of professional development to other departments and universities supports the needs of students by providing insight into best practices of a relatively new and unclear (Robinson, 2015) program that seeks to boost retention through an individualized approach to student academic and personal success. Also, the professional development that is provided to other departments on campus contributes to the development of a coaching culture where a large number of faculty, staff, and students can provide individualized support for their peers.

Success coaches support students by helping the individual student more fully understand him or herself. Another way that coaches support the needs of the student is by helping the student to more fully understand him or herself. The participants in the interviews and the mentor coach observation identified this as they described the idea of "getting at the who of a person." (Lillian, Mary follow-up interview, Lillian and Mary observation). This is based on the humanistic philosophical position that the interview participants have. Mary best describes this as she's discussing why students come to coaching. She says

> a lot of students know how to make plans], that's not why they're here. They're trying to figure out 'what's getting in the way for me? I know how to do all these things…I just can't seem to get it done.' You have to dive deep and really figure out what it is that's getting in the way for them…it's such a high level form of coaching to be able to explore the deeper meaning."

Lillian further identifies "getting at the who" as "the biggest part of the coaching process…different from counseling…[where] the main goal is to move forward." Her perspective is that by helping students understand the deep level issues, they will be able to be more

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successful in their behavior change. As noted earlier, this is the "triple-loop" in triple-loop learning (Hargrove, 2008).

Success coaches support students by modeling self-care. Finally, coaches support the needs of the student by modeling self-care. Van Nieuwerburgh, et al. (2014) identified the coaching in education portal relating to students as coaching for student (academic) success and wellbeing. In this study, overall wellbeing and health were identified as one of the dominant reasons students worked with a coach (program document). Examples of specific wellbeing traits included student stress levels, having relationships with other students and university personnel, and being physically active.

Lillian and Grace identified practicing self-care as a strong encouragement (slightly less than the level of a directive) from Mary. Mary further described the focus on self-care as "something [that she promotes] very intentionally" because "self-care is a matter of sustainability." For her, it comes back to the question, "how can you best serve the students?"

> You can't serve your students if you're energetically drained, if you're distracted, if you're sick, if you're tired. We're working with students on those same foundational needs. It just makes sense that those things are transferrable.

Self-care for the coaches takes several forms. One form is identifying the maximum number of students a coach can see in a day, identifying the times of the day that a coach functions best (i.e. morning person or afternoon person), and takes this knowledge and developing expectations, metrics, and schedules for coaches based on these factors (Lillian, and Mary). Lillian also described other aspects of self-care. These included purposefully taking lunches outside of the office and not talking about work, taking a walk around the building in between students, being mindful, and doing yoga. She summed up the idea of self-care with this:

> […it's important to figure out] what aspects of our work bring us energy and what aspects of our work drain our energy and how we can either approach [things] differently or switch back and forth between things that drain our energy and things that give us

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energy. [So] when we leave here we still feel like really happy, energized people [and]

don't feel drained every single day.

By modeling self-care, the coaches are able to be fully present with their students and are able to

demonstrate to their students the importance of health and taking care of themselves through all

the challenges they face in the university setting.

In summary, success coaches support the needs of the student through various ways that

are both direct and indirect. Directly, coaches provide individualized support for students in

various stages of transition through the use of the ICF core coaching competencies (consisting of

a specific coaching method and coaching skills) to help identify and meet the needs of the

student. Success coaches also actively promote student self-efficacy and autonomy through their

perspective of being "responsible to the student and not for the student" and by helping them to

more fully understand him or herself in the context of the issue that is keeping them from success.

Indirectly, success coaches support students by helping students navigate the complex

systems of the university through functioning as extensions of other student support offices and

by providing referrals to other support staff. Additionally, coaches indirectly support students by

modeling self-care whereby they show students how to be happier and healthier by "do what I

do" and not only by "do what I say."

Research Question 4- What are the challenges of coaching students and how are they navigated?

Working with parents. Grace, Lillian, and Caitlin identified working with parents and

their expectations as a challenge to coaching students. Grace identified that sometimes a parent

gets in the way of the coaching process and expects more than what coaching could provide or is

completely opposed to the student working with a coach. Conversely, Caitlin described the other

perspective. She noted "[some] parents want their student to have a coach, but the student doesn't

want or may not need a coach…[there's challenge] in navigating the politics of that in working

with that parent but also honoring what the student and the client wants."

Attempting to understand how to work with parents is not new to higher education as noted by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) that protects the privacy of student records. It should be noted that with the exception of the community coaching portal (Van Nieuwerburgh, Campbell, & Knight, 2014) the literature regarding coaching in education is silent about this challenge and provides no specific direction on how to navigate it.

Some students are not ready for coaching. A consistent theme about challenges in coaching students is that some students are not ready for coaching. Mary describes this as:

> many [students] have had a very prescribed path in life…[and] this is the first time they've had to really think about 'what do I want…" [in coaching, students] have to be able to have some ability to reflect and the whole self-assessment piece is such a foundational part…this is a big challenge for some students because of where they are developmentally.

Lillian builds upon Mary's comments by mentioning that some students are resistant to the coaching process of building awareness because it's often not easy. Specifically, she described that coaching is "deep, soul-searching work" and that it sometimes leads students to an awareness of "belief systems they wish they didn't have" which can be a struggle for coaches as they attempt to keep students engaged in the process.

Additionally, in considering readiness for coaching, Grace describes the challenge of not being ready for coaching in terms of unrealistic expectations.

> Sometimes there is an expectation from a student, parent, or other campus professional that coaching is like a fix-it…their idea is that if a student goes to coaching, this coach will fix the problems and the student will just be told "this is what you need to do" or "do it this way" and then everything will be great… [also] some people are coming for something quick, [and] when they realize that [coaching] is a process that [they] have a big part [in making it work, it is a challenge]… We know that's just not how behavior change works.

This idea that some students are not ready for coaching finds support in the coaching literature in terms of who makes a good coaching client. It was also slightly alluded to in Robinson (2015) when she describes the lack of understanding of what coaching in higher education is and the lack of a concrete definition.

There is a lack of variety in clients (types of students/experiences). Another challenge mentioned by Mary was the idea that having a lack of variety in their context can lead to a listlessness in coaches. She mentions that "based on the academic cycle and the types of things that tend to come up, [coaching with traditional University students] can be somewhat predictable, [even though] the way it plays out for each student isn't." According to Mary, this challenge is navigated by providing the coaches freedom to be more than just a coach to students. Mary mentioned that she has empowered her staff to take on these various additional duties and provided them personal support until they are fully capable of managing these on their own.

This challenge did not specifically come up from any of the other participants. However, when considered through the lens Mary presented (that it becomes rote and the challenge is navigated by additional duties beyond coaching students), the other participants' discussion of what they do beyond coaching students supports the validity of this idea. For Grace, it was interest and excitement in providing training in coaching skills to professional advisors at the University. For Caitlin, it was taking on the process of taking on the role of collecting and interpreting program data. For Lillian, it was the interest in taking a career-coaching course to learn more about a different application of coaching that is beyond what she is currently knowledgeable about and leading a positive psychology based intervention on campus. Also, all of the participants mentioned the department's interest in developing and publishing their own research and in participating in outreach activities (such as webinars and other presentations) that get them out of the office and doing something different.

It should also be noted that the lack of variety creating listlessness in coaches is another aspect of coaching in education that the research literature does not mention.

Mental health concerns. Caitlin mentioned the "rise in mental health concerns" and "seeing how hard students are on themselves" as a top challenge in coaching students. She goes on to describe the importance of "knowing your limitations as a coach and make sure you're referring." Several program documents also reference mental health referrals. One specific document describes students who are appropriate for coaching in terms of Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs. Students who are able to benefit from coaching are at least at level three of the pyramid (the love and belonging stage). Students who demonstrate behavior and provide discussion showing that they are stuck in the bottom two levels (physiological and safety needs) of the hierarchy are to be referred to counseling for more appropriate support.

Supporting this finding is the abundance of mental health concerns in the coaching literature. A highly visible piece of coaching literature on this topic is Grant's (2007) model of goal striving and mental health. Grant identifies that clients with mental health issues may find their way to coaches and coaches need to understand who is mentally healthy enough for coaching and to have boundaries and referral procedures in place for those individuals who are not. His model provides a framework for (broadly) categorizing clients. A very recent text on ethical decisions in coaching (Iordanou, Hawley, & Iordanou, 2017) provides additional discussion on the topic, further reinforcing the finding that mental health concerns are prevalent within the realm of coaching.

Self-care for coaches. As previously identified, closely related to the mental health concerns of students is the aspect of self-care for coaches. This was brought up by Lillian and described as "sometimes coaches care too much what happens with their students." She expounded on the thought by saying "I think coaches care so much about supporting students' growth that a lot of times we're really hard on ourselves because we want to make sure we do the best we could for the need of the student. Mary clarified the idea of self-care by describing how important it is for coaches to be fully present with students and the difficulty in doing this when they are not taking care of themselves. She mentioned that Lillian, Caitlin, and Grace describe

self-care to new coaches they have hired as "[coaching] is not just all rainbows and sunshine. [Self-care] serves a specific purpose in that when you're taking care of yourself then you can better serve your students. The quality of your coaching is going to be improved…" Examples of barriers to self-care include: "having to work through lunch…to meet numbers" and the use of punitive measures that some companies employ (Mary). Mary having intentional conversations with the coaches about prioritizing their self-care and then supporting their actions navigates the self-care issue.

Funding. While not explicitly mentioned as a challenge, funding also emerged as a theme. In discussing the role of the coach, one of the participants asked if anyone had mentioned how much coaches get paid and followed it up with the comment "it's not that much…and the coaching role is seen as a two-year position." It should be noted that even though the one participant mentioned issues loosely related to pay, neither of the two coaches interviewed mentioned it at all. Their enthusiasm for the role was clear from their tone of voice as they spoke about coming to the position and all four participants mentioned that the role sounded like something they would be interested in or to quote Caitlin, "this [coaching] is what I want to do."

Secondly, related to funding is the cost of ICF coach training. A Google search for coach training programs similar to those mentioned by the interview participants reveals a spectrum of training options and costs ranging from approximately $4000 to approximately $10,000. Even with package deals for more than one participant from the university, it is clear that the training is expensive and is exceptionally costly to implement. Mary spoke to this specifically and stated that the university only covers the salary of the coaches; everything else is covered through a separate donor funded pool of money. Each of the participants mentioned the training provided on the ICF website and the local ICF chapter as being alternatives to a full coach training program. However there is still a cost associated with accessing those resources.

In summary, the challenges of coaching students identified in this study include: working with parents, students who are not ready for coaching, the lack of variety in students and

experiences (that leads to rote experiences for coaches), mental health concerns, and funding. The challenges are navigated in various ways, but no specific way has been identified to navigate these challenges successfully in every situation.

Summary

This chapter provided the results from the study. The chapter began by providing the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the theoretical framework that guided the formation of the study. The chapter then provided findings that answered each of the research questions. The chapter concluded with findings that emerged from the study that were beyond the context of the research questions.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Chapter five provides discussion, conclusions, and implications from the findings of the study. The chapter seeks to describe how the findings are relevant to higher education and the broader coaching field. The chapter concludes with study delimitations, limitations and assumptions, and suggestions for future research.

Summary of the Study

This study sought to build upon previous research to provide a more detailed and exploratory understanding of the role of an ICF trained success coach on a university campus. This was accomplished using a case study methodology to examine the experiences and backgrounds of success coaches who completed ICF approved coach training and work in as an ICF coach with students and by examining the programmatic aspects of the ICF coaching program. Astin's (1993) IEO model served as the framework for the study and along with the literature review, guided the development of the interview questions. The study found significant similarities and significant differences exist between a coaching program based on an ICF model and programs from the broad academic/success coaching study conducted by Robinson (2015).

Statement of the Problem and Research Questions

The "one way to win mentality" (Gray & Herr, 1998; p. 32) has driven a belief that everyone must have a bachelors degree to reach the middle class. This mentality has led to record

post-secondary enrollment that includes many students who are academically unprepared. The current economic climate has pushed colleges and universities to find ways to increase student retention. Academic success coaching is a relatively new approach to address student retention and is in need of empirical research (Passmore & Gibbs, 2007; Sonesh, et al., 2015). Robinson (2015) conducted a broad demographic survey of coaching programs in the U.S.; her findings stated no study has been conducted to investigate the connections "between coaching inside and outside higher education" (p. 128) and specifically higher education and ICF coaching (p. 128) and suggested further study in these areas. This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coach findings from Robinson (2015)?
    a. How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coaching in terms of students/clients?
    b. How does ICF coaching compare with generalized academic success coaching in terms of coaches?
2. What does ICF coach training entail for a university employed success coach?
3. How does a success coach support the needs of the student?
4. What are the challenges of coaching students and how are they navigated?

Participants and Methodology

The participants in this study consisted of four employees of a student coaching program at a private, four-year university. All of the participants completed ICF approved coach training, are certified coaches from the ICF, and have worked in their position for longer than a year. The program has been operating since 2012 and requires the coaches to complete ICF coach training.

The methodology for the study was a qualitative case study utilizing interviews, document analysis, an over the phone observation of a mentor coaching session between a coach and her supervisor, and the questionnaire used by Robinson (2015).

Discussion and Implications

Coaching does show a boost in retention, but it is not a fix-all for retention

As noted in this study, the Bettinger and Baker (2011) study, and the Robinson (2015) study, coaching has been connected with an increase in retention for the students who participate. However, as this study has discussed, not all students are fit for coaching or want to work with a coach. The ethics of coaching and the partnership principles espousing coaching require that students be given the freedom of choice to participate for coaching to be most effective. Colleges and universities who are seeking the miracle cure for their retention woes will likely find tangible retention return from implementing an ICF coaching program on their campus, but will still be left searching for the answer to the group of students who remain unaffected from current retention initiatives that include ICF coaching. The continuing issues with retention beyond what a coach could address appear to be a combination of student and institutional factors.

Student Factors. This study identified two specific student factors that may indicate why coaching is not successful for some students. The first of these factors was that some students did not buy into or benefit from working with a coach. This may be connected to personal, developmental, or mental health issues that are beyond the university scope of control (such as needing to move home due to the death of a parent) or perhaps due to student's immunity to change (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). A second possibility is that students who buy into working with a coach exhibit the characteristics of adult learners and readily engage with an andragogical learning approach (Elias & Merriam, 2005; Knowles, 1970; 1980). Students who have issues beyond the university's scope of control are not likely to be impacted by any retention outreach

activity or service. The best the university could hope for with these students is to learn of their issue and help them avoid academic suspension so they can continue their education at a later time and not be required to repeat a failed course.

Immunity to change. A possibility for students who are resistant to working with a coach is the possibility he or she is immune to change (Kegan and Lahey, 2009) and until this immunity to change is overcome there is little support the university can provide other than attempting to pull the student along.

Kegan and Lahey posit that there are three ingredients needed for people to overcome immunity to change: First, people have to have a desire and need to change from deep inside their gut. Second, for change to occur both thinking and feeling must be engaged at the same time; they call this coming from both the head and the heart. Third, change is about both mindset and behavior; it is about recognizing the assumptions a person holds (such as "I must either study or have friends, not both") are keys to change along with changes in behavior.

Comparing Kegan and Lahey's theory with the findings from this study, it appears that the students who are better suited for coaching at least have a gut awareness of their need to change. Secora described coaching as "deep, soul-searching work" suggesting that the coaching process engages both the head and heart as students participate in the process. Beyond this, students must do actions and think about the world differently. According to Kegan and Lahey (2009), "when we are working on truly adaptive goals- ones that require us to develop our mindset- we must continually convert what we learn from behavioral changes into changes in our mindset" (p. 222). As behavior changes mindset, mindset leads to changed behavior. Students who are best suited for coaching understand they need to do something different, are willing to engage in the deep, soul-searching work of understanding the roles of both the head and the heart,

and are willing to engage in new behaviors while working to change their mindset around the behavior.

Conversely, Kegan and Lahey's theory also provides insight into the students who would not be best suited for an ICF coaching approach. These students could be described as: students who do not have a knowledge "deep in their gut" that they need to change, students who are willing to only engage in either the head or the heart but not both as they consider what to change and why, and students who are willing to attempt a new behavior but not willing to examine or work on the mindsets behind those behaviors. Also, in the current microwave society where there is an expectation of instant change and instant success, the investment of time and energy needed to engage students is more than some students (and some universities) are willing to make. Students who fit this category of "immune to change" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009) are highly likely to be resistant to an ICF coaching approach and will likely require behavior change to be forced on them through more behavioristic approaches (Skinner, 1999).

Andragogy. A second possibility of why some students do or do not engage with a coach may lie in Knowles (1970) theory of andragogy. Andragogy is the study of how adults learn and is differentiated from pedagogy, which, according to Knowles, is specifically how children learn. In higher education students above the age of 24 are typically considered adults (Bash, 2003); however, the participants of this ICF coaching study described their students as being what would be considered traditional undergraduate students (i.e. 18-24).

Elias and Merriam (2005), in their description of the philosophical foundation of humanistic adult education, identify the five assumptions of andragogy based on Knowles work: The first assumption is that it is necessary for the educator to respect and trust the adult learner. This includes creating a cooperative (rather than competitive) atmosphere, placing value on the self-concept of the individual student, and trusting them to perform self-diagnosed evaluations

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and learning (p. 133). The second assumption is that an adult learner is defined from the life experiences they have had to this point. Decisions adults make in terms of their learning are shaped by this set of experiences. The third assumption is that "an adult's readiness to learn is linked to developmental tasks unique to a stage in life" (p. 134). Specifically, adults need to know why subjects matter and how they will apply to their life. The fourth assumption is that adults will immediately implement what they learn (compared to waiting until after graduation for traditional non-adult students). The fifth assumption is that adult students are motivated more internally than externally.

The findings from the study described these tenets in how the coach supports the student. Andragogy's first assumption is captured in the ICF code of ethics and the partnership principles (Knight, 2011). The second assumption is seen within the coaching sessions where students are asked to draw on successful experiences they had in high school as a starting point to developing a pathway to success in the university. The third assumption presents itself simply as students just showing up; if a student does not show up or engage with a coach their not ready for these specific developmental tasks. The fourth assumption is also seen within the coaching sessions; students come to an awareness of what their next steps need to be and then they immediately implement it before the next session as a homework experiment. Finally, the fifth assumption is assumed; students who were struggling began working with a coach, and are still successful following their work with a coach may be demonstrating internal motivation.

Coaching uses many different fields as a theory base including adult education (Bush, 2009). It is not surprising then that the research participants identified these behaviors in their students; however, it may be insightful to consider those students who do not benefit from coaching may be more akin to a secondary school student and may need specific secondary type interventions that are more prescriptive.

Institutional factors. The other factor in a university's ability to retain a student may simply be institutional demographics that cannot be easily changed. For example, a student may have chosen to attend a particular university only to decide (with the help of that university's academic advisor) he or she wants to enroll in a major program that is not offered by this particular university. In this case, advising, coaching, and perhaps other student success roles have helped the student clarify his or her questions and come to an understanding of what he or she wants, but the resolution to the issue is beyond the purview of the institution, and there is no benefit to the student staying. For cases such as this, perhaps retention could be conceptualized in a way that does not punish intuitions when students leave with the purpose of finishing their education at a different university.

A second institutional factor may be its lack of ability to adequately support students with developmental or mental health issues. The participants in this study identified 25% of the students they coach have been diagnosed with ADD. They considered this number so significant that they then chose a different coach training provider to specifically teach them how to coach clients with ADD. This number only addresses students with ADD and does not consider students who have other developmental issues or mental health concerns. Considering all these factors, it is an almost certainty there is a high population of students on that campus who may need specialized support.

Colleges that have a fully open (or very liberal) admission policy and do not have trained staff and resources to work with such a large percentage of the population are likely to still struggle with retention issues no matter what new service is introduced. For higher education, it is the situation of the chicken and the egg; an institution needs students to pay for these services, but they also need the services to be able to better serve and retain the students. In this study, specially trained coaches have been shown to help this issue; however, it is almost certain not to

be enough. Secondary and postsecondary institutions need to come together on this issue and identify more effective (and cost effective) ways to support this group of students.

Specific Implications for Administrators Wanting to Start an ICF Coaching Program

Administrative level support is important for program success. The study revealed the complexity involved in developing and implementing a program such as this. For this reason, it is important that upper-level administrator(s) consider the level of support they need to provide the coaching program for it to be successful.

The first complexity is that ICF coaching in a university is a unique program that in some ways even goes against the grain of the prescriptive style many institutions have employed for decades. ICF coaching represents a culture shift in many ways. It espouses self-directed learning, trusting students, and an emphasis on building awareness through questions and reflection instead of being specifically told what to do by university employees. For this program to work, it likely must be sold to other departments and students. This is initially done through the support of the upper-level administration; without this support, it is likely that the rest of the campus will have little reason to get behind the program unless it gets fully functional and can create its own momentum.

The second complexity is that training is necessary for ICF coaching to be successful. If the training is not supported by the administration, the program will likely see limited success compared to the findings in this study. Some of the questions include: Will this training be provided to new staff or will someone be hired who has already completed training? If it is provided, how will it be provided? Who will pay for it? Will there be a payback requirement or a service contract? These are questions that will have to be answered (likely) above the level of the departmental director.

The third complexity builds upon the second; there are many cost factors at play in the development and success of an ICF coaching program. As previously mentioned, training is necessary, and it will cost. Adding to this is the consideration that not everyone makes a good coach; what happens if someone gets hired on, gets trained, and then leaves? What happens if someone gets hired on, gets trained, decides he or she does not buy into the approach, and then the university does not see success metrics equivalent to the other coaches on staff? Does the administration replace this person or keep them? Replacing employees is expensive; replacing employees who also require training is even more expensive. Due to this, it is likely that the role of the ICF coach needs to be salaried at a level beyond entry-level pay; however, how as a new and unique position how would long-term employees in well-known positions such as academic advisors receive this? There are lots of questions regarding cost; addressing the cost factors is not straightforward and will require thoughtful consideration from university administration.

Thoughtful consideration needs to be given to the evaluation of the ICF coaching program. This study and the coaching in education literature showed that majority of coaching programs were created with student retention in mind but lack clear identification of what outputs from coaching lead to increased retention. The study and the literature also showed that the value of coaching students goes beyond GPA and the noncognitive factors addressed by coaching may be important to retention in ways that are unique from traditional students success roles (such as tutoring and academic advising, etc.). Clearly, GPA and retention are the bottom lines for institutions, but with the significant cost of implementing a program like this perhaps there are ways to measure and describe the value of the program beyond GPA and retention statistics.

For example, this study showed that the ICF coach training and targeted hiring resulted in a very cohesive student success team that provided support for each other and challenged each other to continually learn and improve their work with students. Also as shown in this study, having specialized (and trained) university staff that are not tied to teaching, administrative, or

enrollment (advising) responsibilities can provide opportunities for faculty and staff to receive in-house professional development, research to be conducted, and experimentation with new retention initiatives could occur.

Furthermore, having staff that is not tied to administration, enrollment, or teaching allows students to have access to university staff who have the time to sit down and spend an hour with students to help them address a host of issues. There is potential that this role could identify serious issues that may not be identified in other roles (such a advisors and professors) due to the time constraints faced by the other roles.

Also, the nature and framework of ICF coaching can easily be adapted for distance learning students. Having a specialized support role that can work with this population of students could be a significant value to institutions as many degree programs move online and there is increased scrutiny by the government over the graduation and gainful employment rate of fully online universities.

Lastly, coaching students in higher education is exceptionally new; ICF coaching in this population is more specialized and even more new. Providing outreach to other universities (such as workshops and participating in this study) could add to the reputation of an institution and be a unique selling point for students and their parents as they decide where to attend college leading to increased enrollment.

Mental Health Issues in Students will Emerge- Formal Relationships and Procedures Need to be Established Before Working with Students

This study identified process of care procedures for students who come to a coach but are better suited to work with a mental health professional. This finding is highly supported by the coaching literature and strongly implies that consideration needs to be given to this issue before

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coaches begin working with students. Several aspects need to be considered here with specific regards to the coaching role.

Coaching and counseling are very similar in their approach. According to a study involving ICF coaches by Griffiths and Campbell (2008), coaching and counseling are more similar than is suggested by their practitioners. They share listening, questioning, the non-judgmental nature of the client/practitioner relationship, and seek to help clients uncover deeper awareness of the issues keeping them from moving forward. Griffiths and Campbell suggest that the similarities found between the two fields "challenges [counselors] tendencies to label coaching as superficial and for coaches, it challenges their resistance to move to deeper levels of exploration" (p. 172). They further dissect the idea that clients benefit from either a coach or a counselor; they argue that mental health is a continuum, with the mental health needs of individuals swinging between this ideal definition of clients who need counseling versus those who need coaching. This suggests "coaching may assist clients in seeking counselors…[and] counseling may not be successful, if clients come with coaching-type motivations or needs" (p. 173). Griffiths and Campbell concluded their study by advocating both coaching and counseling are beneficial fields that should be in collaboration with each other (instead of being in competition) to best serve their clients.

Coaching and counseling compared to friendship. A second consideration regarding mental health and coaching comes from Western (2012). In his text, he takes a critical look at coaching and mentoring through both a philosophical and historical approach. Specifically, he describes coaching as originating from other helping relationships (including psychology and counseling). Western argues that the root of all these relationships is friendship and there is a need to consider the role of friendship against coaching and other helping professions. He describes friendship as

overlooked in the therapeutic and coaching fields as they attempt to differentiate themselves from it. However, even today with all the professionalized helping relationships [can] offer, friendship is the first place we turn to for psychological and emotional sense-making and support (p. 73).

He goes on to describe modern (as opposed to pre-modern and post-modern) friendship where

friends disclose their 'secret selves' to each other and share therapeutic interpretations and explanations of their emotional, psychological, and physical states. The role of contemporary friendship overlaps with the role of coaching, both providing a conversational space, a sense-making space, and a 'psychologizing' process of discovering the self in an 'intimate relationship' with another (p. 91).

He further describes post-modern friendship as "[offering] intimacy and a close 'other' [while] allowing us to retain our autonomy and distance" (p. 104). He compares coaching to this post-modern view of friendship as "the coach is an expert to whom we can confess our interior lives and experiences…our dreams and successes, but also not see for weeks, and abandon when we choose" (p. 104).

In the current society that is comprised of students from both the modern generation x and the post-modern millennial generation, it is important to conceptualize how students view the helping professional. If these roles are truly tied philosophically to how the student views friendship (and in cultures where working with a mental health professional is seen as a social stigma), it's important for institutions and administrators to consider how a student will react when faced with a mental health crisis. Western's perspective on how the helping professions are rooted in friendship suggest students with mental health issues may reach out to individuals they trust, such as a coach, counselor, mentor, academic advisor, trusted faculty member, and/or

trusted tutor. Therefore, great consideration needs to be given to training both coaches and other university helping roles, specifically training in how an institutional staff member should respond to a mental health concern, should the situation arise.

A proposed way forward. It is not the opinion of this research that referring students to a mental health professional be replaced by referring them to a coach or their friends. Clearly, students that display mental health concerns need to be referred to a mental health professional for both liability and ethical reasons. However, due to the fact that individuals move back and forth on a mental health continuum (Griffiths and Campbell, 2008) and the dynamics of how student support roles work with students who have mental health issues (i.e. advisors still advise and tutors still tutor) it is important for universities to develop clear expectations and policies to address this issue prior to working with students. These expectations and policies should include developing formal relationships with university counseling personnel where coaches (and other helping roles) have the ability to consult with a counselor on a student they are concerned about (Buckley & Buckley, 2006). The policies should also include clear procedures for connecting students with counseling and how to address the academic support needs of students who may not be able to meet with a mental health professional for several weeks.

Coaching in higher education may be more benefitted by identifying itself as a skillset, way of being, or specific communication style used by individuals instead of being identified as a specific role

The underlying issue to the Robinson (2015) study was that coaching does not possess a clear definition and subsequently results in many institutions using the title "coach" but rather providing tutoring, advising, or mentoring advice. The arguments for coaching leading to an increase in GPA (Passmore & Brown, 2009) and higher retention (Bettinger & Baker, 2011) were found in the referenced studies and this study to stem from the use of specific models, skills, and

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way of being employed by the individuals working with the students and not by the specific title the individuals held.

In the United States, the idea of a coach is most closely associated with an athletic coach who is arguably more prescriptive in his or her approach than the ICF coaching competencies and the coaching partnership principles would allow. Focusing on coaching as a set of skills, a way of being, and/or a specific communication style instead of a specific title allows greater flexibility to universities who like the idea of coaching but lack the resources to hire new positions with a sole focus of helping students overcome obstacles and achieve goals. For example, universities might consider training advisors to coach students. This would provide the opportunity to have a required role at the university (academic advisor) who also possesses advanced skills in helping students clarify goals and develop plans of action to overcome obstacles. This is not considered ideal, and arguments could be made that an academic advisor who coaches is not truly functioning as a coach; however, it does seem to fit within Hicks and McCracken's (2010) paradigm of coaches "using different hats" (p. 70).

ICF coaching may offer a framework for universities to engage parents

One of the challenges arising from the research was dealing with parents. This included parents referring a student to coaching without the student's knowledge or consent and parents calling to get information on their student, possibly in violation of federal student privacy laws (FERPA). This is not an uncommon problem in higher education and quoting FERPA laws to parents is unsatisfying to both the parent and staff members, especially when parents do not understand the "rules" of higher education and are truly trying to help their child.

Campbell, et al. (2015) identify parents and the broader educational support community as one of the four portals of coaching in education. They note that there is very little research on the use of coaching with this group and the application of coaching in this portal is unclear.

However, the nature of coaching (setting goals, overcoming obstacles, building awareness of issues) is such that universities may be able to develop and benefit from offering group coaching sessions to parents that both inform them of the "rules" of parental involvement in college and provide them an opportunity to develop an individualized plan of how to interact with these rules while also getting their intrinsic needs met.

While it seems counterintuitive for universities to engage with the parents of their students, it is possible that an intervention such as this could reduce the call volume on student support offices and the stress levels of university staff caught in the middle of a student and their parent(s). There is the possibility it could also provide a secondary benefit of providing some of these parents with the confidence to enroll in the university as well. The possibility and dynamics of implementing a program such as this would vary by institution. However, if an ICF coaching program were already established the cost of implementing such an intervention would be very minimal and makes the idea at least worth further consideration to institutions seeking a way to support parents without violating federal law.

The broader coaching literature is relevant to coaching in higher education

This is the first study to bring together the literature of coaching in nonacademic contexts, coaching in education beyond the U.S., and with student coaching in the U.S. Although it was not a specific research question, the study found that the research presented in the literature review is consistent with the practice and findings of the ICF program studied. This strongly supports the use of research from these broader areas to inform the practice of coaching students in a U.S. postsecondary population. It is suggested that future studies and institutions seeking to develop coaching programs give careful consideration to these additional research areas.

Delimitations of Study

This study is delimited on several issues. First, the university in the case study is a university that employs selective admission practices. This could mean that the populations of students they work with are likely to be more prepared academically than students who attend less academically selective institutions. Second, the participants from the case study have all been employed at the University for some years and have all completed ICF approved training. A case study involving new coaches or established coaches who have not completed ICF training would likely produce different results. Third, Robinson (2015) showed that coaching programs are housed under differing administrative units at various universities. If the coaching program was housed (or moved) under a different administrative unit, the results of the study could be different. Finally, the study is delimited on the basis of time and location. Each year brings new challenges for institutions: new budgets, new administrative visions, and new state and/or federal regulations. The results of this study would potentially differ (at least slightly) based upon the location of the institution and the specific fiscal/academic year.

Limitations and Assumptions of Study

Qualitative research is context specific (Patton, 2002) so the findings in this study will only be specifically relevant to university student coaching programs fitting the narrow population being examined. However, since coaching in postsecondary education is a relatively new concept (Robinson, 2015) and the empirical research on coaching in education is very small (Campbell, et al., 2015) there was a need for an in-depth case study to provide a launching point for future studies. This study was intended to be that launching point by providing insight into how the broader coaching research and ICF coaching with students could be applied to all coaching in postsecondary settings. The findings of this study should be considered introductory; it is suggested that further research be undertaken to validate the practices in broader contexts.

Suggestions for Future Research

The intent of this study was to provide a clearer picture of the dynamics of an ICF coaching program that works with postsecondary students so future studies can continue to uncover how coaching supports students compared to other university roles and the true value of coaching to institutions. The following are rationales and suggestions for future research.

Robinson's (2015) study provided a "bird's eye view" of coaching in the United States. This study built upon Robinson's work and provided a community level view of an ICF coaching program. Future research needs to consider other "communities" of coaching in comparison with this study and Robinson's findings. Future research also needs to consider the "individual" view of coaching by thoroughly examining the micro-interactions between a coach and a student in individual coaching sessions and in multiple sessions over a period of time.

Metzner and Bean's (1987) retention model identifies retention as the product of a number of interrelated factors; any number of which may be the defining factor(s) in students staying or leaving an institution. Further research could consider coaching in higher education by using Metzner and Bean's model as a theoretical framework to examine its validity with students who come to coaching.

This study identified student self-measurement as a method of evaluating student satisfaction with coaching and how valuable he or she feels it is. It has been argued that student self-measurement in coaching is not reliable (Dunning, Heath, & Suls, 2004). Further research needs to be conducted in this area to identify a consistent, accurate, and reliable method to evaluate the effectiveness and return on investment of coaching in higher education and other postsecondary education settings.

The finding that coaches work as a collective team was unexpected. It may suggest that a coaching program's effectiveness with students in a university setting is tied to the collective

abilities, wellbeing, and cooperation/coordination of the team within the department. This may imply an importance in administrators considering team dynamics (in addition to an individual's way of being) when hiring individuals for this position. To further understand this dynamic, future research should compare teams of ICF coaches with other teams and with programs that only employ one coach.

Further research needs to be done on Return on Investment (ROI); specifically, the cost of training a new coach versus the cost of hiring a trained ICF coach. These costs then need to be considered against (1) the monetary return of a student retaining and graduating due to coaching (how many students retaining makes the cost of training worth it?), (2) the less tangible value of student stories of how coaching helped them retain/graduate, and (3) the time value of coaching providing support for other campus departments (such as supporting advisors by helping students explore majors, potential careers, and how their backgrounds and strengths would apply in these specific majors and fields) and serving as another frontline role for identifying high-risk students.

The inclusion of parental involvement in the coaching relationship is a significant difference between coaching in education and coaching beyond education. It is not represented in the research literature beyond the educational setting. The implication of this finding is that more consideration should be given to this area as suggested by Campbell, et al. (2015). Future research should consider how coaching parents and the broader educational community could help this area.

At the conclusion of the study the researcher was introduced to the educator role profile; a learning cycle model to help educators understand how their style of educating based upon experiential learning theory (Kolb, Kolb, Passarelli, & Sharma, 2014). The model provides further insight into the coach role compared the other student helping roles on campus (teacher, tutor, etc.) and may give additional clarity and support to the conclusion that coaching should be

viewed as a way of being or skillset instead of a specific role. Future research on coaching in education should consider using the educator role profile as a theoretical framework for evaluating both the coaches and the direction of the coaching program. Future research should also consider the role of experiential learning in the coaching process.

This study represents another example of an educational institution that views coaching as valuable and has witnessed an increase in GPA and retention in their students. A final suggestion for future research is that a study could be done to consider how coaching could be used in other postsecondary educational areas such as technical skill training centers to boost retention and graduation rates and as a method to help students work toward achieving education and career goals.

Summary

The intent of this research was to provide an in-depth look at a coaching program utilizing an ICF methodology within higher education in the United States. The research showed that coaching is a viable option to address individual student concerns and can be a viable option to improve retention on an individual basis. The research also identified that coaching does not work in all circumstances with all students and warrants further study to more fully understand exactly what happens in a coaching conversation between a student and a coach. In summary, this approach looks to be a very interesting and promising methodology for universities to use in the future especially for students in the midst of transferring from one role to another.

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APPENDIX A- Interview Questions

<u>Program Director</u>

1. What brought you to coaching?
2. Tell me about your decision to pursue ICF certification.
3. As program director, what guided your decisions in hiring staff?
4. According to your website, all your success center staff are certified through the ICF. From the program director perspective, what can you tell me about this?
5. I understand you worked for _____ prior to coming to the University. Tell me about your experience coaching students there compared to coaching students at the University.
6. Describe for me the typical student who uses success coaching.
7. How are students connected with a coach?
8. As program director, how do you measure success in terms of students?
9. As program director, how do you measure success in terms of coaches?
10. Describe for me in detail a typical day for an academic success coach.
11. Describe for me in detail a typical coaching session between a coach and student.
12. What does ICF coach training entail for a success coach at the University?
13. How did you choose the ICF training program you attended?
14. How does an academic success coach support the needs of the student?
15. What are the challenges of coaching students?
16. How are the challenges navigated?
17. As program developer and director, what are the most prominent lessons learned since the coaching program started?
18. Is there anything I did not ask that you think I should have?

Manager of Academic Success Resources (Tutoring)

1. As manager of the academic success resources, how do coaching compare with the other roles you manage?
2. What brought you to coaching?
3. Tell me about your decision to pursue ICF certification.
4. Describe for me the typical student who uses success coaching.
5. How does the coaching program measure success in terms of students?
6. How does the coaching program measure success in terms of coaches?
7. When you were a coach, how did you measure success for yourself?
8. Describe for me in detail a typical day for an academic success coach.
9. Describe for me in detail a typical coaching session between a coach and student.
10. What does ICF coach training entail for a success coach at the University?
11. How did you choose the ICF training program you attended?
12. How does an academic success coach support the needs of the student?
13. What are the challenges of coaching students?
14. How are the challenges navigated?
15. As a former coach and current manager of academic success resources, what do you believe are the most prominent lessons learned since the coaching program started?
16. Is there anything I did not ask that you think I should have?

Success Coach

1. What brought you to coaching?
2. Tell me about your decision to pursue ICF certification.
3. How does the coaching program measure success in terms of students?
4. How does the coaching program measure success in terms of coaches?
5. As a coach, how do you measure success for yourself?
6. Describe for me a typical student who uses success coaching.
7. Describe for me in detail a typical day for an academic success coach.
8. Describe for me in detail a typical coaching session between a coach and student.
9. What does ICF coach training entail for a success coach at the University?
10. According to your website, you are the manager of _____; what does this entail?
11. How did you choose the ICF training program you attended?
12. According to your website, you have extensive experience in _____; how does this differ from training and expertise your colleagues have?
13. How does an academic success coach support the needs of the student?
14. What are the challenges of coaching students?
15. How are the challenges navigated?
16. As a success coach, what do you believe are the most prominent lessons learned since the coaching program started?
17. Is there anything I did not ask that you think I should have?

Default Question Block

Directions: Thank you for taking the time to complete the following survey on coaching programs within higher education institutions. This survey consists of 15-25 questions, depending on the nature of your coaching program. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability.

Intended Audience: Administrators, directors, coordinators, and/or coaches at universities and colleges with an institutionally supported coaching program.

Purpose: The purpose of this survey is to simply describe your institution's coaching program(s).

Note: If your institution has more than one coaching program (for example, distinct "Career Coaching" versus "Academic Coaching"), please submit separate survey responses for each coaching program on your campus. Feel free to forward this survey to a colleague with the most familiarity for each program.

Results: If you would like a copy of the results, be sure to include your contact information after the last question has been answered. Individual answers will remain confidential and institutional themes will be reported in the aggregate. This research has been IRB approved.

This survey was developed by Robinson (2015).

What is the **name** of your coaching program/your coaches' title? (Select one) (Please note: While there are many related roles/responsibilities on campus such as academic specialists, advisors, mentors, counselors, etc., this survey is intended only for college programs and services that use the title "Coach".) If your institution has more than one coaching program, please select the service with which you are **most** familiar. You will have the option and the end of the survey to complete another evaluation about additional programs.

○ Academic Coach

○ Academic Success Coach

○ Achievement Coach

○ Career Coach

○ Coach

○ College Coach

○ Graduation Coach

○ Leadership Coach

○ Life Coach

○ Organizational Coach

○ Retention Coach

○ Success Coach

○ Writing Coach

○ InsideTrack Coach (i.e., Your institution provides outsourced coaching through InsideTrack Company)

○ Other title (please specify)

[   ]

Please indicate the **type of coach(es)** you emply: (Check all that apply)

☐ Full-time professional coach (i.e., the sole responsibility of coach role is working directly with/coaching students)

☐ "Partial" full-time professional coach (i.e., the coaching role is part of another full-time position on campus such as advising, teaching, administration, etc.)

☐ Graduate student

☐ Undergraduate student

☐ Private/Outsourced/Contract coaching

☐ Volunteer Coaches (please specify)

[   ]

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

Please indicate how many of these types of coaches are **employed within your program:**

1-5 Coaches	6-10 Coaches	11-20 Coaches	21 or more Coaches
○	○	○	○

Please use this space to provide any additional details on your coach employment (optional)

[   ]

What **year** was your coaching program established?

[   ]

Why was your coaching program first **established**? (Check the top three reasons)

☐ To provide students with a specialized/unique service (please describe)

[   ]

☐ To provide students with a new service

☐ To expand on a current student service (please name)

[   ]

☐ To enhance Academic Advising Services

☐ To replace an old title

☐ To increase retention

☐ To work with academic deficient students/students on academic probation

☐ To work with specific population(s) of students (please specify)

[   ]

☐ Other option 1 (please specify)

[   ]

☐ Other option 2 (please specify)

[   ]

☐ Other option 3 (please specify)

[   ]

What was the **primary emphases** of your coaching position? What is the **focus** of the coaching conversations? (Check the top **three** reasons)

☐ Academic planning

☐ Academic recovery/working with students on academic probation

☐ Career planning/development/exploration

☐ Course registration

☐ Course selection/Choosing classes for major

☐ Course specific support (i.e., tutoring in course content or subject matter)

☐ Disability services

☐ Engagement planning/involvment

☐ Executive function/ADD and ADHD support

☐ FinancialAid/Financial Support

☐ Goal setting (i.e., reflecting on academic performance and outlining future plans for improvement)

☐ Job/Internship

☐ Leadership skills

☐ Personal concerns (homesickness, depression, etc.)

☐ Professional development

☐ Stress management

☐ Study skills (time management, reading comprehension, note-taking)

☐ Writing

☐ Other option 1 (please specify)

☐ Other option 2 (please specify)

☐ Other option 3 (please specify)

Please use this space to **comment and/or expand on the above primary emphases** of your coaching program.

For example: What **topics** are discussed in the coaching sessions? What **resources** are used? What **questions** are asked?

What are the **intended objectives and/or outcomes** of your coaching program? (Check all that apply)

☐ Assist in selection of major

☐ Career preparation

☐ Develop connection to faculty/staff

☐ Develop leadership skills

☐ Develop student-institutional connection

☐ Improve retention

☐ Improve student engagement

☐ Improve student satisfaction

☐ Improve oral communication skills

☐ Improve written communication skills

☐ Promote critical thinking

☐ Promote self-awareness

☐ Provide academic assistance

☐ Provide institutional resources and information

☐ Other (please specify)

How do you **measure the intended outcomes** of your coaching program? (Check all that apply and briefly describe your assessment method.)

☐ Surveys of students using coaching (please describe)

☐ Surveys of coaches (please describe)

☐ Focus groups (please describe)

☐ GPA data (please describe)

☐ Retention/persistence rates of students using coaching services (please describe)

☐ Other (please describe)

☐ We do not currently assess our coaching program.

If you assess your coaching program, please **describe your results:** (i.e. What measures do you use? What data have emerged?)

What do you perceive to be the **unique roles of coaches** on your campus? (i.e.

Do coaches provide a service that no other office/position does on campus?) Specifically, please differentiate your coaching program/roles from Counseling, Tutoring, Advising, Mentoring, and/or other programs on campus.

What **student populations** do your coaches work with primarily? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ All undergraduates (first-year through senior)
- ☐ First-year students
- ☐ Sophomore students
- ☐ Juniors
- ☐ Seniors
- ☐ Academic deficient undergraduate students
- ☐ Graduate students
- ☐ Special population (please specify) _____

Approximately **how many students** does your coaching program serve in one year (i.e. within the last 12 months)?

○ 10 or fewer

○ 11-50

○ 51-100

○ 101-200

○ 201-500

○ 501-1,000

○ 1,001-2,000

○ 2,001-3,000

○ 3,001 or more

How do **students utilize** your coaching service? (Please indicate the **primary reason**)

○ Students are required/mandated to attend by a policy, etc.

○ Students are referred (but not required) to attend.

○ Students drop-in/schedule their own appointments.

What is the **average length** of a coaching session?

○ 15 minutes or less

○ 16-30 minutes

○ 31-60 minutes

○ 61 minutes or more

Do you currently use a **theoretical framework** in your coaching program for service delivery? (i.e. Do your coaches use a theoretical framework when working with students?)

○ Yes (please indicate the name of the framework)

[   ]

○ No, we currently do not use a framework for our coaching program.

Name of institution:

[   ]

Size of student body:

○ Fewer than 1,000

○ 1,000-4,999

○ 5,000-9,999

○ 10,000 or more

Type of instution:

○ 2 year public

○ 2 year private

○ 4 year public

○ 4 year private

What is the **name of the office/unit** in which your coaching program is held?

[   ]

In which **division/unit/department** is your coaching program held? (Check all that apply)

☐ Academic Affairs

☐ Student Affairs

☐ Student Success Center/Learning Assistance/Academic Support Office

☐ Athletics (i.e., an educational coaching program that supports athletes exclusively)

☐ Other (please specify)
[   ]

What is **your role** on campus? (Please select the description that most closely aligns with your position)

○ Coach (i.e., I work directly with students)

○ Director/Assistant Director/Coordinator of Coaching Program (i.e., I oversee our coaching program and supervise coaches.)

○ Department Head (i.e., Coaching is one part of a larger office with multiple programs that I direct.)

○ Other (Please explain)
[   ]

<u>Does your coaching program have a **website**?</u>

   ○ Yes (please include the web address)

   ○ No

What is your coaching program's website?

[   ]

Would you like to receive a copy of the results of this survey?

   ○ Yes

   ○ No

What email address would you like the survey results sent to?

[   ]

Thank you for your participation in the survey! If you have any questions please contact marlin.blankenship@okstate.edu.

Reference:

Robinson, C. (2015). Academic/success coaching: A description of an emerging field in higher education. (3704390 Ph.D.), University of South Carolina, Ann Arbor. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global: Social Sciences database.

APPENDIX C- IRB Approval

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date:	Thursday, June 30, 2016
IRB Application No	ED16118
Proposal Title:	An Examination of a University Academic Coaching Program

Reviewed and Processed as:	Exempt

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved   Protocol Expires: 6/29/2019

Principal
Investigator(s):

Marlin Blankenship   Mary Jo Self
                                            261 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078   Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

☐ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI advisor, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of the research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Dawnett Watkins 219 Scott Hall (phone: 405-744-5700, dawnett.watkins@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Hugh Crethar, Chair
Institutional Review Board

Emails to Program Director and Coaches

<u>Section 1</u>.

Email to Program Director asking her if she's ok with conducting the study of her program. (Attach Recruitment Script)

Good morning Mary,

As we have discussed previously, my dissertation research is centered around the use of coaching for students in higher education. After consulting with my dissertation committee, we decided the most helpful path forward would be a case study of a coaching program that uses ICF standards, has well-trained coaches, and has existed for more than three years.

From our previous conversations and the exceptional presentation your team did for my staff I firmly believe that the University is one of the most advanced ICF coaching programs that currently exists in higher ed. As such, I would like to ask your consideration for the program to take part in my dissertation study.

The purpose of my study is to build upon the research conducted by Robinson (2015) to provide deeper insight into the role(s) of ICF trained academic success coaches on a university campus. The study will provide an examination of the experience of academic success coaches who have completed ICF approved coach training and who work with students in a postsecondary university. The study will also examine how the practices of ICF trained coaches compare with the generalized academic success coach findings of Robinson's study.

I am specifically asking for:

1) Permission to conduct the case study of the University's Success Coaching program. The University will not be named. You will be given the opportunity to choose a pseudo-name for the university.

2) You (or a designee) to conduct a short online survey comparing your program with generalized findings of success coaching nation-wide.

3) Electronic copies of program materials, departmental manuals, coaching forms, and electronic media that is not available on the program website. (Non-public documents will not be shared and will be deleted/destroyed upon completion of the study.)

4) A phone/Skype interview with you as program director/ICF coach.

5) Permission and contact information (phone/email) for any of your current or former staff who completed ICF approved coach training and coached students. None of the research participants will be named. Each individual will be given the opportunity to provide a pseudo-name for him or herself.

6) A phone/Skype interview with any of your staff members who **voluntarily** choose to participate in the research.

7) The opportunity to listen to one of the weekly feedback sessions you conduct with one of your coaches (to observe how you utilize ICF competencies in your feedback to the coaches and how feedback is utilized in the program).

8) Potential short follow-up interviews with yourself and coaches to validate my findings.

It's my hope that a case study of an advanced program (i.e. the University) will provide a very large part of the puzzle to identify the 'best practices' for coaching students in higher ed. You have done an outstanding job developing the program and I sincerely hope that we are able to work together to further advance coaching worldwide and to provide empirical evidence showing how the University is leading the way in collegiate coaching.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing back from you!

I have also attached the recruitment flyer for the study for your review. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Marlin Blankenship, Ph.D. Candidate

Education- Workforce and Adult Education

Oklahoma State University

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Section 2

Director Individual Interview Setup (Attach Participant Information Sheet and Survey)

Good morning/afternoon Mary,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research study. Attached to this email is a participant information sheet that provides further details regarding the study.

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. Please review the document and reply to this email acknowledging your consent to participate in the study **and** provide the best day of the week and time of the day for you to participate in the interview (e.g. Monday mornings, Thursday afternoons). I will then contact you to setup a specific interview time.

I would also like to ask you (or your designee) to complete the attached program survey. This survey will allow me to compare the success coaching program at the University with generalized success coach program findings from across the United States in 2015.

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Section 3

Coach individual Interview Setup (Attach Participant Information Sheet)

Good morning/afternoon _____,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research study. Attached to this email is a participant information sheet that provides further details regarding the study.

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. Please review the document and reply to this email acknowledging your consent to participate in the study **and** provide the best day of the week and time of the day for you to participate in the interview (e.g. Monday mornings, Thursday afternoons). I will then contact you to setup a specific interview time.

Section 4

Coach Request to participate (Recruitment Script)

Good morning/afternoon,

Your name and email was provided to me by Mary. I am seeking participants to be involved in a case study of the University's Success Coaching program.

I am investigating the practices of university academic coaching programs who utilize ICF coaching practices in working with students. I would like to invite you to participate in my study which will require between 30-60 minutes of your time. You will be asked to participate in a phone/Skype interview and a possible follow-up interview. A $10 Amazon.com gift certificate will be provided to participants at the completion of the initial interview.

To Sign Up for the Study contact:

Marlin Blankenship: marlin.blankenship@okstate.edu; 580-230-4938

Consistent with previous research in this area, we will request your permission to find out descriptors of demographic information (e.g. age, gender, previous employment experience, etc.). No names will be given or used in any way. The information you submit can only be accessed by our research team and will remain private. All data collected in this study will remain strictly confidential and only group results will be reported. Risks associated with participating in this study are minimal.

Questions?

Dr. Mary Jo Self: **maryjo.self@okstate.edu**; 405-744-9191

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

Title: An Examination of University Academic Coaching Programs

Investigator(s): Marlin Blankenship, PhD Student Oklahoma State University-Workforce and Adult Education

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to build upon the research conducted by Robinson (2015) to provide deeper insight into the role of an ICF trained academic success coach on a university campus. This study will provide an examination of the experience of academic success coaches who have completed ICF approved coach training and who work with students in a postsecondary university. The study will also examine how the practices of ICF trained coaches compare with the generalized academic success coach findings of the Robinson (2015) study.

What to Expect: You will be asked to participate in a 30-60 minute interview via phone or Skype and a potential follow-up interview at the conclusion of the data collection period. The interviews will explore practices and perceptions of academic coaching in your specific setting. You may also be asked to complete a short demographic survey regarding the coaching program as a whole. The survey will be used to compare this specific program against generalized findings of university based academic success coaching programs in the United States.

Risks: There are no risks associated with this project which are expected to be greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Benefits: You will have the opportunity to help identify the best practices for coaching programs within university academic settings.

Compensation: You will receive a $10 electronic Amazon gift certificate for your participation in the initial interview. The gift certificate will be delivered to the email address you provide upon completion of the interview.

Your Rights and Confidentiality: Your participation in this research is voluntary. There is no penalty for refusal to participate, and you are free to withdraw your consent and participation in this project at any time.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. Any written results will discuss group findings and will not include information that will identify you. Research records will be stored on a password protected computer in a locked office and only

researchers and individuals responsible for research oversight will have access to the records. Data will be destroyed three years after the study has been completed. Audio recording of the interviews will be transcribed and destroyed within 5 days of the interview."

Contacts: You may contact any of the researchers at the following addresses and phone numbers, should you desire to discuss your participation in the study and/or request information about the results of the study: Marlin Blankenship, M.A., PO Box 236, Calera, OK 74730, 580.230.4938 or Dr. Mary Jo Self, Ed.D., Willard Hall, Dept. of Workforce and Adult Education Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078. If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact the IRB Office at 223 Scott Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu

VITA

Marlin Dwayne Blankenship

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: AN EXAMINATION OF A UNIVERSITY BASED ACADEMIC SUCCESS
          COACHING PROGRAM

Major Field: Workforce and Adult Education

Biographical:

Education:
Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy/Education in Workforce and
Adult Education at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2016.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Arts in Theological Studies at Liberty
University/College, Lynchburg, VA/USA in 2010.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in Interpersonal/Organizational
Communication at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant, OK/USA in 2002.

Experience:
Scholarship Program Specialist, 2016-Present
Chahta Foundation- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Durant, OK

Coordinator- Academic Success Coaching, 2013-2016
Oklahoma State University- LASSO Center, Stillwater, OK

Director of Admissions and Recruitment, 2012-2013
Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant, OK

Academic Advisor –New Freshmen, Adult, & Online Students, 2010-2012
Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant, OK

Admissions Counselor/Recruiter, 2005-2007
Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant, OK

Professional Memberships:
International Coach Federation, Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, National Academic
        Advising Association, Institute of Coaching