5-1-2008

The journey of African-Americans on the path toward the doctoral degree: a revelation of underlying factors and themes

Walter R. Jacobs Jr.
Clark Atlanta University

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.auctr.edu/dissertations

Part of the Education Commons

Recommended Citation
ABSTRACT

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

JACOBS, JR., WALTER RALEIGH

B.S. ST LOUIS UNIVERSITY, 1955

B.A. WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY – ST. LOUIS, 1961

M.A. WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY – ST. LOUIS, 1965

THE JOURNEY OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS ON THE PATH TOWARD THE DOCTORAL DEGREE: A REVELATION OF UNDERLYING FACTORS AND THEMES

Advisor: Dr. Moses C. Norman

Dissertation date May 2008

This dissertation developed from an awareness of the continuing census gap in the award of doctorates between African-Americans and Caucasians. In a 2006 summary report of doctorate recipients from United States universities by race and ethnicity over the years 1986, 1996, and 2006, there was a decline in the number of doctorates awarded whites from 91% in 1986 to 80% in 2006. Conversely, there was an incline in the number of doctorates awarded African-Americans from 3.6% in 1986 to 6.3% in 2006. Nevertheless, irrespective on the decline of one group and the incline of the other, a noticeable gap in the awards continued to be very apparent.
Adapting from an educational theory concerning social systems theory proposed by Jacob Gertzel and Egon Guba, this study asked if the gap was a function of institutional requirements alone, self-efficacy on the part of African-American doctoral candidates, or racial/bias conditions in the U.S. culture. Literature reviews and results from interviews with twelve African-American doctoral graduates and eight African-American matriculating doctoral candidates—each associated with a highly selective doctoral fellowship program and each attending a predominately white institution in the southern University States—did not reveal institutional requirements to be the cause of the gap. Nevertheless, both sources confirmed the presence of various themes associated with racial and/or gender insensitivities that still operate in many graduate departments to retard award of the doctorate to African-Americans. However, the interview results revealed that African-American candidates’ self-efficacy could move them either to achieve in spite of racial/gender insensitivities or flounder in their aspirations toward the doctorate. The chief themes or factors behind the direction of achievement—either pro or con—revolved around the degree of mentoring, networking, and positive departmental climate/support received by African-American doctoral candidates. Their passion for the doctorate, their early awareness for the importance of relationships with faculty, and their strong religious or spiritual faith emerged as three other unexpected themes that could accelerate accomplishment of degree requirements.

The study recommended K-12 schools to emphasize the doctorate early to high achievers and graduate departments to employ sensitivity training with faculty.
THE JOURNEY OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS ON THE PATH TOWARD
THE DOCTORAL DEGREE: A REVELATION OF
UNDERLYING FACTORS AND THEMES

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

BY

WALTER RALEIGH JACOBS, JR.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

MAY 2008
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the very highest sense, this dissertation is dedicated to my Lord Jesus Christ who blessed me from early childhood with caring parents and many creative talents. Next, I dedicate this dissertation in all earthly respects to Loretta Jones Jacobs, my wife, who lovingly and persistently reminded me that the completion of my doctoral degree was decades overdue. Without her encouragement, I may have stumbled in producing this academic work.

Grateful appreciation is extended to the State-Doctoral Scholars Program (DSP) of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), Atlanta Georgia. A special acknowledgement is extended to the DSP director, Dr. Ansley A. Abraham, all staff members of the DSP, interviewees in this study, and college faculty members associated with the DSP. Thanks go to the staff members of the College Board and 100 Black Men of Atlanta, Inc. who advised on the K-12 school and undergraduate preparations that are essential for students’ success in graduate school. Additional thanks go to the following individuals who provided recognizable support for this study: Dr. Robert Belle, Christi Byrd, Betty Cooke, Melissa Courtney, Dr. Deborah Fite, Anna Johnson, Dr. Joe Marks, Robbie Ouzts, and Adria Toliver. Finally, most earnest thanks go to the entire faculty and staff of the Educational Leadership Department, especially Dr. Moses Norman, Dr. Sheila Gregory, Dr. Darrel Groves, and Dr. Melanie Carter (former Department Chair).
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ........................................................................................................ ii
LIST OF FIGURES ........................................................................................................ vi
LIST OF TABLES ........................................................................................................... vii

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................ 1
   The Problem ........................................................................................................... 1
   The Research Questions ........................................................................................ 9
   Significance of the Study ...................................................................................... 10

II. THE LITERATURE REVIEW .............................................................................. 12
   The Problem restated in Terms of Census Data .................................................... 13
   Intervening Variables that Affect Completion Rates .............................................. 14
   Moderating Variables that Affect Completion Rates ............................................ 22

III. METHODOLOGY .............................................................................................. 28
   Design of the Study ............................................................................................... 32
   Methods of Data Collection .................................................................................. 38
   Methods of Data Analysis ...................................................................................... 39
   Data Validity and Reliability ................................................................................ 41
   Definition of Terms ............................................................................................... 42
   Limitations of the Study ....................................................................................... 43
# Table of Contents (continued)

## CHAPTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV.</th>
<th>ANALYSIS OF THE DATA</th>
<th>45</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflections from the Literature Review</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflections from the Keywords-in-Context Analysis and the Coding Process</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflections from the Stories Told by the Interviewees</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflections from a Survey of Faculty Opinions About Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Hypothesis Development Process</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V.</th>
<th>FINDINGS FROM THE ANALYSIS</th>
<th>52</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Findings from the Literature Review</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Findings from the Interviews</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Findings from the Keyword-in-Context analysis</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Themes Relating to Requirements for the Doctorate</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Themes Not Relating to Requirements for the Degree</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Findings with Respect to Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VI.</th>
<th>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
<th>78</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion for Question #1</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommendation for Question #1</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion for Question #2</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommendation for Question #2</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table of Contents (continued)

| Conclusion for Question #3 | ................................................................. 84 |
| Recommendation for Question #3 | ................................................................. 85 |
| Conclusion for Question #4 | ................................................................. 87 |
| Recommendation for Question #4 | ................................................................. 89 |
| Implications for Future Research | ................................................................. 90 |

APPENDIX

| A. Interviews with Doctoral Scholars Program Graduates | ................................................................. 92 |
| B. Interviews with State Doctoral Program Scholars | ................................................................. 149 |
| C. Interview Questions for Graduates | ................................................................. 196 |
| D. Interview Questions for Matriculating Scholars | ................................................................. 197 |
| E. Coded Questions that Drew Responses from Graduates | ................................................................. 198 |
| F. Coded Questions that Drew Responses for Matriculating Scholars | ................................................................. 199 |
| G. Talley of Responses from College Faculty Members on Graduate Students’ Self-Efficacy (N=16) | ................................................................. 200 |

REFERENCES | ................................................................. 202 |
LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE PAGE
1. Theoretical Framework of the Study ............................................. 29
LIST OF TABLES

TABLE                        PAGE

1. Themes Associated with the Independent, Intervening, And Moderator Variables..............................................................31

2. Number of DSP Interviewees in the Study...............................................................33

3. Number and Percent of Themes Relating to the Independent Variable: Conditions REQUIRED for Receipt of the Doctorate ..................................................................................................................54

4. Number and Percent of Themes Relating to Intervening and Moderator Variables: Conditions NOT Required for Receipt of the Doctorate..................................................................................................................55
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The Problem

This study essentially focuses on the need to advance opportunities for scholarship of African-Americans in higher education. Across all ages and earthly domains, the course of civilization has advanced on scholarship, the fund of information known and learned. Over the past two centuries, the pinnacle of such scholarship in western civilizations has been marked by the terminal degree, the doctorate. Thus the specific goal of this study is to reveal “The Journey of African-Americans on the Path Toward the Doctoral Degree: A Revelation of Underlying Factors and Themes.”

All too often, scholarship has been highlighted only with respect to areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. However, the continuing urgency for creative problem-solvers in education has brought renewed attention to the need for scholarship amongst educational leaders. The National Research Council (1990) reported that in 1988, 43% of African-Americans received their doctorates in education in comparison to 22% of the overall number of permanent U.S. citizens receiving doctorates in education. Continuing this trend, Gravois (2007) reported that a third of black Ph.D.s earned their degrees in education. Hence, this study is set under the general heading of educational leadership.
But first, notwithstanding the term “doctorate,” a reawakening of early African history has revealed a paradox (Hilliard, 1997). A review of ancient African history reveals many contributions from Africa that predate what is assumed to be the products of western civilizations (African Timelines Part I, 2008). For example, discoveries suggest Africa was the primary gene-center for cultivated plants like cotton, sorghum, watermelon, kola-nuts and coffee, and the site of the domestication of certain plants and foods, (p. 1) . . . Imhotep is regarded by many as the father of medicine, (p. 4) . . . Ancient Africans believed that the deity Dhehuti [Thoth] invented writing . . . (p. 5) . . . African oral arts often combine religious, artistic as well as social functions: e.g., to convey wisdom, teach ethics and social codes of conduct. (p. 8)

If such early contributions to the body of worldly knowledge came from Ancient Africa, one has to wonder why this heritage is not apparent in the contemporary scholarship of African-Americans. The answer is to this paradox appears obvious and deserves no further elaboration. The recognitions, contributions, and scholarship from Ancient Africa were generally disregarded in western cultures during the Diaspora of Africans and the slavery of African-Americans in the United States. The admonitions of slavery prohibited all components of academic learning on the part of African-Americans. For centuries the pinnacle of scholarship in the form of doctoral degrees from this group was virtually a myth. Hence, this paradox looms as the etiology behind the current disproportionate award of the doctoral degree to African-Americans, the discrepancy which set the stage for this dissertation.
The Journey Was Interrupted

Gradually, beginning in the mid-late 1800s and early 1900s, small scatterings of African-Americans completed doctoral degrees or equivalents to document scholarship. Their efforts launched some of the early contributions now taken for granted in American culture, especially in education, patented inventions, selected areas of biochemistry, and agriculture. Their contributions signaled the beginning of a renewed journey of African-Americans toward scholarship.

Remarkable stories from history of the journey have been provided by Benjamin (2005), recounting excerpts of the journey of Francis Cecil Sumner, first African-American to receive a doctorate in psychology in 1920 (from Clark University with G. Stanley Hall); and Inez Beverly Prosser, who in 1933 became the first African-American female to earn a Ph.D. in psychology. Notable also in this regard of early Ph.D. recipients are the examples of doctoral accomplishments as noted by Hrabowski (2004):

- Edward Bouchet—First African-American to graduate from Yale (1874) and first to earn a Ph.D. from an American university (1876)
- W. E. B. Du Bois—First African-American to earn a Ph.D. at Harvard
- Patrick and Sherwood Healy—First two African-Americans to earn Ph.D.s from European Universities, North American College in Rome (1860)

The journey picks up in the following century. For example, in 1965 Dr. Joyce Mitchell Cook became the first African-American to earn a Ph.D. in Philosophy. She earned her degree at Yale University (Diverse Issues in Higher Education, 2007). Nevertheless, the celebration of African-American females (like Dr. Mitchell) to capture the doctorate
cannot be cited without their unique struggles against both racial and gender oppression. Evans (2007) cites clear examples of these struggles, notable being the tenacity of Dr. Pauli Murray. According to Evans, in 1933, Dr. Pauli Murray

\[\ldots\text{Was rejected from the University of North Carolina because of her race}\ldots\]

\[\text{and was denied admittance to Harvard Law School because of her gender}\ldots\]

But Murray was not to be stopped: she earned a bachelor of law from Howard in 1944, a master of law from Berkeley in 1947, and a doctorate from Yale in 1965.

(p. 95)

Green and Scott (2003) and Jones (2005), respectively, are two current authors who have published additional stories, guides, and strategies on the joys and struggles of African-Americans to achieve the doctorate, in addition to recommended ways and means of navigating successfully toward this degree.

*The Journey Is Being Renewed*

Nevertheless to this date, the success rate of African-Americans obtaining the degree continues to be dismal in comparison to the corresponding rate for Caucasians. The scholarship of African-Americans, as signaled by the doctoral degree, is now critical to assist in meeting the cultural, educational, and economical needs of a growing and diverse American society.

Over the past three decades, there have been noticeable efforts throughout the country to improve the status of graduate school scholarship in higher education amongst African-Americans, (Abraham & Jacobs, 2006). Some colleges and universities relaxed admissions requirements to promote a better critical mass of African-Americans on
camps; philanthropic and scholarship agencies accelerated their searches for qualified racial/ethnic group doctoral candidates; some funding agencies even made special provisions for African-Americans to enter graduate school. The above were examples of efforts to increase a diverse pipeline of candidates for faculty positions in higher education. More specifically, it was an effort to increase the pool of minority doctoral recipients who could enter the professoriate (Knowles & Harleson, 1997). A position statement from the Howard University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences was quoted in the April 2, 1998 edition of Black Issues in Higher Education to explain the rationale for increasing the pool, as follows:

If our nation is serious about achieving a modicum of diversity on college and university faculties, universities must simply do a far better job in recruiting, and graduating more people of color with the Ph.D. degrees. U.S. Department of Education statistics show that almost 16% of all undergraduate degrees are awarded to students of color. But their proportions diminish to slightly over 8% at the Ph.D. level. (p. 2)

Yet, census data (see Chapter II) revealed that these innovations collectively did little to improve the rate at which African-Americans received the doctoral degree.

The Emerging Problem

The reduced opportunities for scholarship on the part of African-Americans have emerged as the problem. In fact. Hubbard (2002) has brought distinct clarity to the problem with this comment: “The national debate about the overproduction of doctorates dangerously ignores the underproduction of African-American doctorates within the
academy and the crucial role these scholars play in promoting further success of African-American students” (p. 1).

With the doctorate as the recognized highest level of scholarship, the problem appeared in U.S. Census data by the very small fraction of doctorates awarded to African-Americans in comparison to doctoral awards to Caucasians (see Chapter II). With reduced opportunities for award of the doctorate, African-Americans have had reduced opportunities for scholarship. In turn, African-Americans have had reduced opportunities to contribute to the resolution of critical problem areas issues facing this country.

Quantitative studies in general have been useful in stating the problem. Using either descriptive or inferential statistical methods, these studies have described the variables that operate to work either positively or negatively for award of the degree, especially for African-Americans. Clear examples of quantitative studies have come from the research findings of Nettles and Millett (2006). Nevertheless, such quantitative studies focus more on the WHAT of a phenomenon than the HOW and WHY behind the WHAT.

On the other hand, qualitative studies are noteworthy because they generally give detailed attention to the HOW and WHY. As regards such detail, qualitative studies in the literature (see Chapter II) characteristically have provided survey opinions from African-American graduate students. But often these surveys have not searched the underlying background conditions (or themes) that have given birth to the opinions. Such depth involving internal themes could have the potential of contributing to information
about HOW and WHY African-Americans are not receiving the doctoral degree in a manner commensurate to the award of the degree to Caucasians.

For example, when qualitative survey data report that African-Americans claim inadequate departmental support (see Chapter V and Appendices A and B), what was the background condition behind such claims? Was it unfairness perceived in the college’s policy or rules? Was it something attributable to shortcomings in the scholar’s level of motivation or self-efficacy? Did the scholar encounter ill-preparation in K-12 academic classes and/or undergraduate course work? Was the unavailability of financial aid the issue? Did the scholar envision some manner of micro-racial infringements from the graduate department’s instructional staff? Has the historical non-recognition of African-American scholarly accomplishments—the previously mentioned “paradox”—affected African-Americans’ persistence toward achieving the terminal degree? All of these are possible reasons. They could be revealed in themes.

Except in a few discussion and conclusion sections of research reports about doctoral candidates’ progress, quantitative studies in general provide minimal information about hidden internal themes of doctoral candidates. The HOW and the WHY are given less attention. The real value of quantitative studies comes from their presentation of statistical data to reveal components of graduate school life that impact on all doctoral candidates (see Chapter II). As such, these data give pictures of conditions that may affect more chronically on the success rates of African-American doctoral candidates.
Qualitative studies commonly cite from interviews provided by hundreds of scholars and college faculty members across multiple institutions. These studies have, indeed, approached internal themes. Nevertheless, these studies usually do not bring forward enough descriptive detail about the hidden reasons or etiologies behind these themes. Such in-depth inquiry may point to actions that may be taken into consideration more consciously by graduate school administrators (see Chapter VI).

The Theory Behind This Study

Apparently, there have been hidden or undisclosed factors and/or conditions that blunted efforts to bring about some manner of equity in African-Americans’ receipt of the doctorate. This study theorizes that African-American candidates for the doctoral degree may possess certain internal themes that either propel or impede their progression on the path toward the doctorate, irrespective of external factors like better admissions opportunities or better financial aid as commonly cited by quantitative studies. The theory behind this study is a derived adaptation from a more expansive and accepted theory in educational administration concerning social systems, Jacob Getzel and Egon Guba (Lunenburg & Ornstein 2004).

In essence, the larger theory states that rules, roles, and expectations of an organization may or may not support the personal needs of the individuals in that organization (see Chapter III). Translated for this study, this adapted theory contends that there are internal themes (perhaps hidden) in the personal lives of African-American doctoral candidates that have a bearing on their success in accomplishing the doctoral
degree—themes that may or may not be in sync with the roles and regulations of a degree-granting institution.

The major contention of this study is that such themes may be exorcized efficiently through a qualitative analysis of self-reported communications delivered in interviews from two groups of individuals. They would be (a) graduates and (b) currently matriculating scholars admitted to a sponsored doctoral program that is highly recognized for providing the maximum of support services to racial/ethnic group doctoral candidates: The Doctoral Scholars Program (DSP) of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) in Atlanta, Georgia. The restriction of interviewees to this program, one that provides high support, would reduce or perhaps eliminate resultant themes from interviewees that could be strictly a function of non-support from a sponsoring agency.

The Research Questions

There are variables (see Chapter III) that may be behind the disproportionate award of the doctoral degree between African-Americans and Caucasians. Four research questions are brought forward in this study to answer this disproportional phenomenon:

1. Are the lower percentages of African-Americans awarded the doctorate a function of institutional requirements alone?

2. Are the lower percentages a function of the candidates' own lack of self-efficacy?

3. Are there racial/bias conditions in the U.S. culture that hamper their completion of the doctorate?
4. Are there certain internal themes relating to self-efficacy that may be used to overcome racial/bias conditions?

In the final analysis, what is the likelihood that evidence revealed from this study could assist in bringing about some manner of equity in the completion rates between African-Americans and other groups seeking the doctorate?

Significance of the Study

Quantitative studies in this area are remarkable for presenting statistical evidence for the gap between African-Americans and Caucasians being awarded the doctorate. On the other hand, qualitative studies have the potential of extracting some of the more personal issues that African-Americans may possess to contribute to the phenomenon. The two types of studies, qualitative and quantitative, seem to complement each other, (Goodchild, Green, Katz, & Kluever, 1997). Nevertheless, it is the contention of this study that changing the circumstances facing African-Americans will demand the attention that comes more from qualitative studies.

The element of change looms as a long-overdue solution to correcting the disparity in graduate rates. Abraham (2007) introduced the following model for cultivating graduate school institutional change:

When one considers the enterprise of graduate education, and juxtaposes terms like change/diversity/responsibility, there are certain inalienable conditions that must be recognized. Key among these conditions is that change happens in an evolutionary not revolutionary manner; change is incremental not exponential. (p. 1)
In the final analysis, this qualitative study additionally seeks to intertwine needed elements of institutional change with a revelation of factors and/or themes associated with African-American students seeking doctoral degrees. If these factors and themes can be made more evident, they may operate to promote awareness for the kind of change required for doctoral mentors and graduate departments to support and enhance African-American candidates’ persistence toward the doctorate.

It would seem that this study would have immense value to graduate departments seeking and/or committed to the goals of diversity in their candidate pools, especially for African-Americans, (Abraham & Jacobs, 2006).

*The Journey Could Then Be Continued*

Willie, Grady, and Hope (1991) were early writers who expressed the need for more attention to the doctoral experiences for African-Americans. Although Nerad and Miller (1996) expanded the view for all students—New Directions in Institutional Research 92—the view for African-Americans specifically would contribute to the endeavors of this country to remain a global leader.
CHAPTER II
THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Attainment of the doctorate is a challenge that all candidates for this degree face irrespective of race, ethnicity, age, or other census labels (Golde, 1994). Completion of the degree is the dependent variable—a response to degree requirements. In graduate school departments across the country, there is practically a standard set of universal requirements for award of the doctorate. These requirements collectively may be termed the independent variable—stimuli from the department in the form of course and dissertation requirements for award of the doctoral degree.

However, a literature review on the subject of African-American candidates’ journey toward the doctorate brings to light two additional variables that seemingly have a bearing on these candidates’ success in meeting degree requirements—intervening and moderator variables.

An intervening variable is “a factor that theoretically affects observed phenomena but cannot be seen, measured, or manipulated” (Tuckman, 1999, p. 101). Translated specifically for the purposes of this study, this kind of factor represents an underlying or hidden theme that affects a doctoral degree candidate’s success. A general example from the literature is departmental climate.

On the other hand, a moderator variable is a type of secondary independent variable. It is “... a factor that is measured, manipulated, or selected by the
experimenter to discover whether it modifies the relationship of the independent variable to an observed phenomenon" (Tuckman, 1999, p. 97). The literature review of this chapter indicates race and gender to be two factors in this regard. Studies by Burrell (1997), Ellis (2001), Holland (1993), King and Chepyator-Thomason (1996), Shears, Lewis, and Furman (2004), and Turner and Thompson (1993) have found elements of racial/gender insensitivities to African-American doctoral candidates seeking the doctoral degree. These findings suggest factors that go beyond the normal institutional requirements that confront African-American doctoral candidates.

The Problem Restated in Terms of Census Data

The trend in the award of doctorates does not appear to be changing. Between 1997 and 1998, 46,010 doctoral degrees were awarded by public and private colleges and universities in the United States. Of this number, only 4.4% was awarded to African-Americans (Abraham & Jacobs, 2006). In the 2004-05 academic year, 52,645 doctorates were awarded by public and private colleges and universities in the United States. However, when this increased number was disaggregated by race, the percentage increase for African-Americans was 5.0%, only one percentage point over the 4.4 percentage point reported by Abraham and Jacobs (Marks, 2007).

Disaggregating data on the award of the doctorate by age also reveals disparities between racial/ethnic groups. Data extracted from the March 15, 2007 U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (U.S. Census, 2007) indicated that 0.9% of native whites 25 to 44 years of age had attained the doctorate; the percentage for the corresponding age group of blacks was 0.4%. For the succeeding age group of 45 to 64
years of age, the percentage increased to 1.6% for native whites; it increased only to 0.5% for Native American blacks.

Statistical information from various offices and authors on the award of doctorates continues to offer some slight differences, depending on how the awards are grouped, counted, and associated with significant variables. The 2008 analysis of baseline program data from the Council of Graduate Schools' Ph.D. Completion Project is an example (Sowell, Zhang, & Redd, 2008). However, in the preceding year of 2007, a more comprehensive reflection of doctorates awarded was produced in a report by six federal agencies. It was a 2006 summary report of doctorate recipients from United States universities by race and ethnicity over the years 1986, 1996, and 2006 (Hoffer, Hess, Welch, & Williams, 2007). The report indicated a decline in the number of doctorates awarded whites from 91% in 1986 to 80% in 2006. On the other hand, the report showed an incline in the number of doctorates awarded African-Americans from 3.6% in 1986 to 6.3% in 2006. Thus in spite of the developing percentage incline among African-Americans, its incline is but a small faction of the white percentage decline.

Intervening Variables that Affect Completion Rates

Major Studies on Unfavorable Conditions

In a 1999 paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Blair, Richert, Haworth, and Grant (1999) reported that between forty to sixty percent of students who begin doctoral studies at selective institutions do not persist to graduation. A general explanation may be found in the work of Golde (2001). She interviewed students at 27 universities and one cross-institutional program,
the *Compact for Faculty Diversity*. Golde found a number of unfavorable situations that apply to students irrespective of their racial/ethnic group membership. For example, she reported that “. . . colleges and universities from which pre-doctoral students graduate often provide little guidance to students about doctoral studies . . .” (p. 48). Also, she reported, “. . . too often, students feel powerless and unable to speak up . . .“ (p. 44). Golde (2005) later summed up the matter by stating, “At least 40% of the students who begin a doctoral program fail to complete it” (p. 669).

Nevertheless, the number of African-Americans receiving doctorates is distinctively smaller in comparison to the number of doctoral degrees received by Caucasians. This observation appears as a natural consequence of the continuing struggles of African-Americans to attain high-quality education (Gordon, 2006).

The literature reports a wide range of conditions that may account for these differences in graduate school attrition between African-Americans and Caucasians. But a curious observation comes from the study of Gasman, Gerstl-Pepin, Thompkins, Rasheed, and Hathaway (2004), as follows:

. . . We noticed that much of the literature focuses on the challenges facing African-American graduate students was written by researchers removed from the experience or by graduate students engaged in the experience. However, little has been written from the perspective of graduate students and faculty working in collaboration . . . (p. 690)

Indeed, the examples cited in this study do not appear to take this observation into consideration.
Specific Studies Referring to Ill-preparation of Graduate Students

Aside from the successful completion of graduate course work, practically all institutions nationwide that are authorized and accredited to award the doctoral degree require the completion of a dissertation (Goodchild et al., 1997). Thus, the non-completion of the dissertation may appear to loom as a potential negative for all candidates under the guise of ill-preparation. Goodchild and colleagues attribute this problem to five circumstances in the dissertation process:

- Too early a departure
- Too much enthusiasm, too little focus
- Too hard to please
- Too long in transit
- Too much isolation (p. 10)

A January 18, 2006 discrimination complaint by black students at the University of Michigan has seemingly extended this notion of ill-preparation to encompass racist attitudes by college officials (Lewis, 2008). “. . . Among graduate students, those African-Americans who enroll as Ph.D. students are abused and demoralized, told they are not ‘Ph.D. material,’ and are ‘advised’ that their best option is to leave after completing master’s-level requirements” (p. 1).

Notwithstanding this complaint and similar others, Lovitts (2001) was a chief researcher who wrote to describe more specifically the general conditions that seemingly affect all graduate students, irrespective of race and gender, as follows:
• Graduate students often find themselves at the bottom of a status hierarchy and in a dependent relationship with their professors. (p. 28)

• The high rate of graduate student attrition persists because universities have focused on student characteristics at the time of admission rather than on the organizational culture of graduate school and the structure and process of graduate education itself (p. 37). . . . Graduate students—completers and non-completers—nonetheless appear to be relatively uninformed about the programs to which they apply. (p. 51)

• . . . Differences in departments’ students—and faculty—attrition rates are a function of the number of opportunities they provide for academic and social integration. (p. 82)

• On track and at-risk completers were equally likely to report not having received financial support . . . (p. 96)

• Students who left because they had felt they were doing the wrong thing with their lives . . . felt that they had been too young and immature . . . lacked sufficient life experiences to make a commitment to their programs . . . changed their career plans . . . or they decided the academic lifestyles were not for them. (p. 178)

A newly emerging idea related to ill-preparation comes from a position held by Sherman Bonds (2007). This author writes that there is an abundance of African-American children who, during their formative years, have not formed the possibilities of becoming a doctor. Therefore, it could be surmised that ill-preparation for graduate
school, and the doctorate, is a long-range development, and not merely an acute manifestation of local conditions and consequences relating to graduate school entry.

The press for long-range development brings into focus another question. What kinds of parent-training models are available for African-American families to use in inspiring their children toward the terminal degree? Coard, Foy-Watson, Zimmer, and Wallace (2007) cite a problem in this regard. They contend that “... because parent-training models have traditionally been designed for European-American and middle-class parents and families, their utility for many racial or ethnic groups and low-income families remains questionable” (p. 709). Therefore, providing more pertinent parent-training models for African-American families may offer some solution to the problem in this study, as will be discussed in Chapter VI.

Nevertheless, considering all of the above, ill-preparation of prospective graduate students is sometimes confounded by racial insensitivities. (See the section on race and gender differences between students and professors.) For example, Abraham and Jacobs (2006) focused more pointedly on Lovitt’s (2001) conditions as they applied to African-Americans in predominately white institutions. Such institutions “... may be insensitive to what these students really need to be successful in graduate studies” (p. 28). Shears, et. al. (2004) had earlier addressed the matter of insensitivities with respect to African-American men from HBCUs seeking to complete their doctoral studies in predominately white institutions. Harrison (2001) had even earlier presented this view in a paper presented at the Annual National Conference of the National Association of African-American Studies and the National Association of Hispanic and Latino Studies. She
reported that there was a problem in changing the mindset of whites who were resistance
to the presence of African-Americans on campus.

There is some positive balance of factors in this subject on ill-preparation.
Considering both the broad category of all candidates and the more narrowly defined
group of African-American candidates, two encouraging factors came from the findings
of two researchers. First, Faghihi, Rakow, and Ethington (1999) were concerned about
the dissertation progress. Querying 97 students in three different departments, they found
no relationship between these students' background characteristics on the dissertation
process. They determined that students' self-efficacy and the relationship they had with
their advisors and their committee members were the factors that effected completion of
the dissertation. Second, Malone (2001), using regression analysis to determine factors
that best predicted program prediction, found minimal differences in the Grade Point
Average (GPA) and age of graduated and non-graduated doctoral groups.

Ill-preparation for success in achieving the doctorate has been reported as a factor
affecting all candidates. Nevertheless, it could be argued that racial and gender
insensitivities to the particular needs of African-American candidates may be confused
with these students being ill-prepared.

Specific Studies Referring to the Complexity of Financial Support and Climate of
Graduate School Departments

Some investigators argue that the changed environment in higher education must
be considered to improve the plight of all candidates for the doctoral degree. In outlining
some of the barriers for completion of the doctoral degree, Golde and Walker (2006)
cited the following: (a) evolving and expanding boundaries of the academic disciplines; (b) the complexity of financial support; and (c) ill-preparation of graduate students to function within their academic environments.

Later, Hauptman (2007) expanded on this notion by citing the mixed record of policies and funding, as follows:

- Funding and policy priorities favor access over readiness and success;
- Federal and state policies are not well targeted toward low-income students;
- There is a disconnect between policy design, implementation and effect.

(p. ix)

More specifically with respect to the financial support of African-American candidates, Losco and Fife (2000) note that 17% of all professional degrees earned by African-Americans come from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). These authors are forthright in citing the financial struggles of HBCUs to remain solvent. In combination with issues pertaining to financial struggles, HBCUs have had to continuously challenge the notion of being “Academic Disaster Areas” (Gasman, 2006). It follows that the absence of HBCUs from the picture of higher education in the United States would, in turn, further diminish the flow of African-American doctoral candidates.

Gravois (2007) has revealed another apparently disheartening finding with respect to the financing of the doctorate in education for African-Americans. According to this writer, African-Americans seeking doctorates in education face an economic hardship because student-aid money is more likely channeled to scholars in the sciences.
Consequently, scholars in the arts and education must resort to taking out large loans. Because the field of education pays less than the sciences, repayment is difficult.

A variety of other conditions relating to the complexity of financial support and climate of graduate school departments have had an effect on all students. Yet, a number of studies describe the negative experiences African-American graduate students have shown after enrollment; the gaps in their knowledge; their need for self-motivation and self-direction; and their struggles for survival. Clear examples have been reported by Nettles (1990a, b), King et al. (1996), Kluever, Green, and Katz (1997), the National Science Foundation (1998), Nyquist, Manning, Wulff, Austin, Sprague, Kraser, Calcagno, and Woodford (1999), and Nettles (2006).

But most illustrative for this grouping of studies on the subject of "climate" is the one conducted by Lewis, Ginsberg, Davies, and Smith (2004) at a predominately white Carnegie I Research University in the Mid-West. They reported that, "the most powerful theme that characterized the experiences of the African-American doctoral students interviewed in this study was the sense that there were many feelings of isolation once they arrived on the predominately white campus" (p. 4). Nevertheless, these researchers reported also that "there was an incredible notion of 'self-reliance' among the students we interviewed. They persisted in spite of all the difficulties encountered" (p. 9). This appears to be a function of self-efficacy, a concern of this study.
Moderator Variables that Affect Completion Rates

*Relationships with Professors*

In general, both Golde (1994) and McFarland and Caplow (1995) found contradictions in the relationships between doctoral students and their faculty advisors. These contradictions had negative effects on students' persistence, and they were not mutually exclusive to African-American students. On the other hand, Holland (1993) found a relationship more specifically between African-American doctoral students and their major advisors. He conducted interviews with African-American doctoral students; 23 current doctoral students and 19 former doctoral recipients. Holland organized the interviews around five types of relationships: (a) formal academic advisement, (b) academic guidance, (c) quasi-apprenticeships, (d) academic mentoring, and (e) career mentoring. The formal academic advisement relationship was found to be the most unsatisfactory for African-American students.

A more negative finding in African-American graduate student relationships with professors was reported by Gasman, Pepin, Anderson-Thompkins, Rasheed, and Hattaway (2004). The researchers used what they termed as “negative inquiry” to study relationships between two Caucasian faculty members and three African-American graduate students.

In summarizing this group of studies, it appears that the relationships African-American doctoral scholars have had with their professors are, indeed, factors that cannot be overlooked. Doctoral scholars may offer significant reasons for the gap in doctoral graduation rates.
Race and Gender Differences between Students and Professors

These differences appear to represent a theme that moderates completion rates. Fields (1980), expressing observations about “Making Mentorship Count,” gave the example from one university . . . “that the critical mass of diversity tends to make race less of a factor” . . . (p. 3). Nevertheless, a number of studies in the literature reported race as a noticeable factor.

For example, Burrell (1997), in an effort to understand experiences and perceptions of racism, gave open-ended interviews to seventeen doctoral students in psychology who identified themselves as African-American, black, or biracial. Responses from these students were organized into three categories: (a) general life experiences of racism, (b) experiences of racism within education, and (c) experiences of racism particular to graduating training in psychology. As regards to the latter, Burrell found examples of racism in “problematic relationships with professors and academic advisors” (p. 1).

Harrison (2001), drawing data from interviews with African-American graduate students at a predominately white institution, stated that nearly one-third of her interviewees reported race-related difficulties. According to Harrison’s report, institutional efforts to recruit African-American students apparently did not change the mindset of whites on campus who were resistant to the presence of African-Americans on campus.

In a 1980-1990 longitudinal study of minority Ph.D.s in the areas of science and engineering at the University of California-Berkeley, MacLachlan (2006) conducted 158
interviews with African-Americans, Chicanos, and Native Americans. From these interviews, MacLachlan surmised good relationships between the African-American students, their advisors, colleagues, and peers. Nevertheless, MacLachlan continued to report that “there was always tension between being a graduate student and being an African-American graduate student” (p. 7).

Increasingly, researchers appeared to be reporting the association of race to the problems of African-American graduate students. For example, in Chapter Five of Wulff and Austin’s *Paths to the Professoriate: Strategies for Enriching the Preparation of Future Faculty* (2004), James Antony and Edward Taylor exclaim, “Black graduate students . . . pursue and ultimately attain academic careers less often than their white counterparts . . . even among the most academically prepared, black students in the field of education, an alarmingly high rate change their initial academic career aspiration” (p. 92). Nettles and Millett (2006) report that “. . . underrepresented students in doctoral programs, especially African-Americans and Hispanics, appear to be lagging behind whites and Asian Americans on major indicators of success” (p. 2).

On recalling Golde’s (2001) view that students “. . . feel powerless and unable to speak up . . .” (p. 44), Nettles and Millett (2006) bring attention to another apparently contributing factor:

Race differences in student social interactions with faculty center on the differences between African-Americans and other groups, mainly in the fields of engineering and sciences and mathematics. The low representation
of African-Americans in these fields does not appear to help them in terms of social interactions with faculty. (p. 92)

Problems in race are often accompanied by problems relating to gender differences between doctoral students and their professors. Bepku-Betts (2004) gave a review of this phenomenon in her qualitative study of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, and class against women-of-color scientists. She concludes:

It [the study] reveals that the educational process for women in science is complex and requires a more nuanced understanding of how women are differently positioned according to the varied conditions of their lives, the power relations which structure their various locations, and the strategies they employ to address these concerns. (p. 131)

Earlier several researchers had already given reference to Bepku-Betts’s conclusions. Turner and Thompson (1993), Ellis (2001), and Johnson-Bailey (2004) provide examples of studies that report problems that emerge as a result of differences in gender. Ellis investigated the experiences of 42 graduates of doctoral programs and 25 matriculating doctoral students. The numbers included African-American males and females, as well as Caucasian males and females. Using content analysis in a qualitative study, race was found to be a salient factor in the doctoral experiences of these students. African-American doctoral females appeared to be affected more by race than the other race/gender groups in the study. According to Ellis, African-American females reported more “confrontational” relationships with their advisors. Stevenson, Wagoner, and Morrow (2007) echoed this observation by the following:
Campus leaders often face uncharted territory when informed by a staff member of the intent to transition to the other gender. Transgender people encounter a difficult environment on most college campuses. They confront internal physical and emotional battles and a society that fails to understand and provide for their unique needs. (p. 17)

Johnson-Bailey (2004) theorized that African-American females stand apart from other female groups and men in terms of their life’s experiences. Using a narrative analysis from the stories of 10 African-American females, Johnson-Bailey placed emphasis on collecting the stories, while at the same time preserving the holistic nature of the stories. This researcher found two major issues that affected the participation of these female students studied: (a) the encouragement and accessibility that would come from graduate coordinators, and (b) the personal recruitment that would come from African-American mentors and peers. Nevertheless, as stated by Johnson-Bailey, “the micro and individual academic lives of these students were constrained more by race than by their social class, age or gender” (p. 344).

An interesting view of race comes from an article by Sue et al. (2007), entitled *Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life*. According to the authors, these microaggressions take the form of (a) microassaults—explicit racial derogations, (b) microinsults—communications that convey insensitivity and rudeness; and (c) microinvalidation—communications that exclude, negate, and nullify psychological thoughts, feelings of a person of color. It could be argued that the examples of conflicts
due to race and/or gender are manifestations of such "racial microaggressions" (see Chapter VI).

In sum, the current literature reveals that race and gender are *covert-institutional factors*—not overt physical episodes—that do, indeed, matter with respect to the aspirations of African-Americans seeking the doctorate. Race and gender are captured in this study as *moderator* variables (see Chapter III).
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

First, this qualitative study was essentially one involving ethnographic research. It focused on an entire ethnic group, African-Americans. Creswell (2007) clarifies qualitative design of ethnographic research when the researcher "... describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language of a culture-sharing group" (p. 68). A variety of very specific techniques may be employed in qualitative research for this purpose (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). In this study, the technique utilized was "Keyword-in-Context," wherein the interviewer interpreted words in the interview with a contextual theme. The process was one of identifying these words with some of the personal and underlying themes associated with African-Americans' pursuit of the doctoral degree.

Second, although this study was qualitative in nature, it borrowed some commonly utilized terms from quantitative research—*independent, dependent, intervening, and moderator* variables—to bring attention to the problem area shown in Figure 1. In the process of moving from the *independent* to the *dependent* variable, a problem is recognized when a distinctively smaller percentage of African-Americans complete the process, (and are awarded the doctorate) than the percentage of Caucasian degree recipients).
INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTORATE
- Preliminary Course Work
- Financial Payments
- Courses of Study
- Preliminary Examination
- Qualifying Examination
- Dissertation Prospectus
- Prospectus Defense
- Dissertation Writing
- Dissertation Defense

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

THE DOCTORATE
- Completion of all Requirements

THE PROBLEM
Distinctively Smaller Percentages of African-Americans Receiving Doctorate than Caucasians

A Theory Relating the Behavior of Doctoral Candidates
Applicable for the completion of The Doctorate (The Getzel-Guba Model)

The Research Questions
1. Are the lower percentages of African-Americans awarded the doctorate a function of institutional requirements alone?
2. Are the lower percentages a function of the candidates' own lack of self-efficacy?
3. Are there racial/bias conditions in the U.S. culture that hamper their completion of the doctorate?
4. Are there certain internal themes relating to self-efficacy that may be used to overcome racial/bias conditions?

Themes Associated with the Independent Variable
- Background
- Course Content
- Finance
- Policy Matters
- Time

Themes Associated with the Intervening Variables
- Family
- Mentoring
- Networking
- Passion or Interest
- Climate and/or Support
- Surprises
- Strengths/Weaknesses

Themes Associated with the Moderator Variables
- Race
- Gender

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework of the Study
However, on the immediate surface, it is not known if this disproportionate percentage for African-Americans stems from the general requirements for receipt of the degree (*independent* variable) or from some additional factors that impinge on the group. Completion of the doctoral degree presents a host of challenges for all candidates seeking this terminal degree, and for African-Americans the challenges appear to be more difficult. The *dependent* variable for this group is recognized as the percentage of degrees awarded. U.S. Census data show that this percentage consistently appears to be disproportionately lower for African-Americans than Caucasians. Additionally, studies from the literature suggest that *moderator* variables of racial and gender bias in graduate schools are contributing factors to the lower percentages of doctoral degrees for African-Americans.

Thus, the methodology of this study in ethnographic research was one that used keywords-in-context to arrive at *themes*. Concepts from quantitative research were used to associate these *themes* with variables.

Paraphrasing the flow of information in Figure 1, the requirements for the degree represent the *independent* variable. As mentioned in Chapter I, there is a group of requirements that appear universal amongst all doctoral granting institutions. Generally speaking, this group of requirements must be met by ALL candidates for receipt of the doctorate, and completion represents the *dependent* variable. However, a problem emerges. Census data consistently reports lower percentages of African-American candidates receiving the doctorate than Caucasians. A theory from education (Getzel and Guba Model) may explain part of the problem. Four questions then arise to propose three
sets of *themes*. One set of *themes* is associated with the *independent* variable itself; the other two sets are related to *intervening* and/or *moderator* variables that have the potential of influencing completion for the degree, the *dependent* variable.

As for the theory, Jacob Getzel and Egon Guba (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2004) have proposed a model from educational administration that could be used to decipher the problem. Getzel and Guba contend that in institutions there are both "... roles and expectations that will fulfill the goals of the system..." (p. 74) in conjunction with "... individual, personality, and need-dispositions... of persons within that system" (p. 74). Overlaying this model on doctoral-granting institutions and their African-American doctoral candidates, four research questions can emerge (see Chapter I).

Table 1 recaptures information shown in Figure 1 to place the types of internal *themes* with variables.

Table 1

*Themes Associated with the Independent, Intervening, and Moderator Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes Associated with Completion of the Doctorate</th>
<th>Themes Associated with the <em>Intervening</em> Variables</th>
<th>Themes Associated with the <em>Moderator</em> Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Background</td>
<td>1. Family</td>
<td>1. Race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Course Content</td>
<td>2. Mentoring</td>
<td>2. Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Finance</td>
<td>3. Networking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Policy Matters</td>
<td>4. Passion or Interest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Time</td>
<td>5. Climate and/or Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Surprises</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Strengths and Weaknesses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interview questions were used to trigger keywords-in-context, which were used to identify themes. Then, the identified themes were associated with the: (a) independent variable, (b) intervening variables, and (c) moderator variables. The proposed rational follows in this matter: First, there are themes associated with institutional requirements—the independent variable—that impact on candidates’ abilities to complete these requirements. Second, there are themes that develop in the course of graduate study that further affect completion. These are themes that intervene in some hidden fashions and are designated as intervening variables.

Third, drawing from references in the literature, African-Americans’ race and/or gender appear as a further set of themes that affect their completion of the doctorate. These are not hidden. They are observable conditions seen in this study as moderating these candidates’ success toward the doctorate, and were designated as moderator variables.

In sum, it was the open-ended interview questions (see Appendices C and D) that searched for “keywords-in-context” that could surface themes associated with three variables to show more deliberately HOW and WHY an African-American candidates’ progress toward the doctorate may be either enhanced or retarded.

Design of the Study

Parts I and II

The study was organized into two parts—Part I and Part II. Part I was a pilot study designed to determine the feasibility of the entire study. Also, it was organized to estimate the anticipated array of themes (proposed in Chapter I) that could emerge. The
interviewees in both parts were: (a) matriculating scholars and (b) program graduates.

The number and type of interviewees for each part is show in Table 2.

Table 2

*Number of DSP Interviewees in the Study*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Interviewee</th>
<th>Interviewed in Part I (Pilot)</th>
<th>Interviewed In Part II</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate of the Program (Doctorate)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matriculating Scholar of the Program</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-completing Scholar of the Program</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Selection of Interviewees*

The interviewees in both parts were African-Americans who had been admitted to the State-Doctoral Scholars Program (DSP) sponsored by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) in Atlanta, Georgia. All of these individuals were either pursuing their doctorates (matriculating scholars) or had graduated with their doctorates from predominately white doctoral-granting universities in the southern or southwestern United States.

Program graduates in Part I (the pilot) were selected randomly from a pool of graduates living in the greater Atlanta area. Matriculating scholars in this part were currently pursuing doctoral studies at Georgia public colleges and universities that offer doctoral degrees. Six of the seven interviewees in Part II were DSP graduates (Ph.D.s)
who were volunteer program administrators at DSP’s 14th Annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, October 25-28, 2007, in Arlington, Virginia.

Graduates and scholars admitted to the DSP generally reside in the sixteen states of the Southern Regional Education Board. However, admitted scholars may attend doctoral programs at institutions outside the 16-state area. DSP limits its admissions policies to public institutions offering the doctoral degree.

Thus the study sought to analyze themes reported from both groups to determine conditions that could relate to the disproportionate attrition rates of African-American candidates seeking the doctoral degree.

**Origination of the Doctoral Scholars Program (DSP)**

In April of 1992, three publicly-appointed regional educational policy organizations—the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE), the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), with support from The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Ford Foundation—began an 18-month planning initiative to determine how states could become instrumental in producing more minority Ph.D.s. The result of this initiative culminated in a unique partnership of regional, federal and foundation programs that would focus on minority graduate education and faculty diversity. The partnership became known as the *Compact for Faculty Diversity* (Wagoner, 1993).

Chief among the Compact’s recommendations was the call for an annual institute that would “... provide opportunities for students and faculty to build networks of support and to develop teaching excellence...” (p. 25). This annual institute became
known as the Institute on Teaching and Mentoring. In 1996, the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program (DSP) became the manager and chief financial steward of the Institute.

Reasons for Selecting the DSP for this Study

The DSP was selected for three reasons: (a) the maximum support it offers to doctoral candidates as an external agency, (b) its prominence in conducting the Institute, and (c) its consistency in obtaining an 87-90% annual graduation rate for its admitted doctoral scholars. As of the date of this study, this rate still compared very well to an overall national graduate rate of 50% for all doctoral candidates and approximately 37% for African-American candidates (Abraham & Jacobs, 1999).

Over the past three years, the Institute has been hailed as the largest annual gathering of racial/ethnic minority doctoral scholars in the United States. It had been widely acknowledged as the chief reason behind the DSP’s distinctive annual graduation rate of 87-90%. An example of an acclaim came for Gardner (2007).

Scholars admitted to the DSP are required to attend three of its annual institutes. Teams of nationally recognized college faculty present sessions to share insights and survival tips for success in graduate work; to build community among the scholars and the faculty representatives; and to enrich the research and teaching skills of the prospective doctoral candidates. Additionally, the Institute benefits the attending faculty members by helping them to develop mentoring skills and strategies to ensure departmental environments of support for scholars of color.

Yet, in spite of accolades, the DSP had received little or no additional information about what actually takes place within its doctoral scholars’ personal and school
environments to contribute to DSP’s high annual graduation rate. DSP scholars receive practically the maximum amount of mentoring and counseling support in addition to financial stipends. If this high degree of mentoring and counseling could be considered a constant factor, the self-reported personal stories from the DSP African-American graduates and matriculating scholars could have the capacity to uncover additional and previously uncovered reasons behind the disproportionate graduation rates between African-Americans and Caucasians.

*Background Information on the DSP*

As of June 2007, a total of 718 scholars have been admitted to the DSP from its inception in 1993; 367 had graduated with Ph.D.s. This population included African-Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans and American Indian/Alaskan Natives. A general profile of the DSP scholars as of June 2007 (all ethnic groups combined) was as follows:

- 614 African-Americans in the total of 718 (less than 1% of the African-American population non U.S. native born)
- 468 female; 250 male
- 521 full scholars; 197 dissertation only scholars
- 23% in science & technology
- 21% in social & behavioral sciences
- 20% in humanities
- 10% in business & management
- 8% in engineering
- 7% in health professions
- 6% in education
- 5% in mathematics
- 30 is the average age at entry

Scholars seeking admission to the DSP must have been accepted as a full-time doctoral student at an accredited college or university. Annually, April 1 is the deadline for applications to the DSP office. In addition to having been fully admitted to a doctoral program, candidates must meet the following requirements.

- Must be a U.S. citizen or legal resident
- Must be a racial/ethnic group minority
- Must not be employed outside the discipline/department
- Must plan to become a full-time member of a postsecondary institution upon completion of doctorate

The DSP coordinates with the state legislatures in its sixteen-state area to provide for accepted scholars with: (a) tuition/expenses, (b) a monthly stipends, and (c) mentoring services at its annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring. There are two types of funding: (a) full doctoral scholar (3-4 years); and (b) dissertation only scholar (1 year).

Annually in April, the credentials of candidates for the DSP are reviewed by a screening committee of staff at the DSP. Accepted candidates are then referred to education officials in state education offices that contribute to the funding for tuition/fees and monthly stipends. These individuals make the final selections pending annual
funding allocations by their state legislatures. The state offices of these officials, as of June 2007, were as follows:

Alabama—Special Programs, Alabama Commission on Higher Education
Arkansas—Financial Aid Office, Arkansas Department of Higher Education
Delaware—(not a participating state as this study)
Georgia—The University System of Georgia
Florida—(not a participating state as of this study)
Kentucky—Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Louisiana—Commissioner for Special Projects, Louisiana Board of Regents
Maryland—Maryland Higher Education Commission
Mississippi—Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning
North Carolina—(not a participating state as of this study)
South Carolina—South Carolina Commission on Higher Education
Tennessee—Tennessee Office of Interagency Grants and Programs
Texas—(not a participating state as of this study)
Oklahoma—(not a participating state as of this study)
Virginia—State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
West Virginia—West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

Methods of Data Collection

Permission to conduct interviews for Part I was granted by the DSP. Permission for the continuation of interviews in Part II was pledged early and satisfied. In return for this permission, the DSP made it known that various concerns and interests it has about
DSP scholars must be incorporated, in some manner, in all interview questions. Given this mandate, two sets of open-ended questions were drafted and approved by the DSP. Eight questions were approved for graduates (Appendix C); 10 were structured for matriculating scholars (Appendix D). The questions for each group were worded differently in accordance with their group memberships in the DSP—graduates or matriculating scholars. A unifying thread of similarity between the two sets of questions had been employed to facilitate analyses (see Chapter IV).

The interviewees in Part I were advised, at the outset of their interviews, that following each question the interviewer would ask additional questions for clarity. The same procedure applied in Part II. Interviews in both Parts I and II operated from 25 to 30 minutes. All interviews in Part I were conducted face-to-face in the office complex of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). Interviews in Part II were conducted in the same office and during the 2007 Institute for Teaching and Mentoring, October 25-28, in Arlington, Virginia. Interviewees in both parts gave permission for the interview sessions to be audio-taped for the production of printed protocols. The printed protocols were judged as essential for the analysis of themes (see Chapter IV).

Methods of Data Analysis

The responses from the first interviewee in the pilot, Part I, were used to confirm a flow of themes for the entire study, both Part I and Part II. Thirteen themes had been anticipated before this first interview from a review of the literature (Chapter II) and previous informal discussions with DSP staff. Using the keywords-in-context technique,
responses from the first interviewee in Part I did lend themselves to the following themes to connect with the variables shown in Table 1:

1. Background
2. Course Content
3. Family
4. Finance
5. Mentoring
6. Networking
7. Passion/Interests
8. Policy Matters
9. Race
10. Strengths/Weaknesses
11. Support/Climate
12. Surprises
13. Time

Next, three coding sheets were developed for Part I to record questions that would illicit interviewee responses that could be categorized under these themes. It was determined that this procedure would continue to be satisfactory for Part II to enhance the reliability of the study. Again, the questions were used to extract themes that could be interpreted as personal factors that allegedly impacted on African-Americans' progress toward the doctorate—factors in addition to the maximum of mentoring and counseling needed for success. A separate form was used for each of the three groups. The
questions were coded numerically on the question sheets. The procedure for analyzing these coded questions is described in Chapter IV.

Data Validity and Reliability

The other procedures to establish data validity and reliability were as follows:

- Impressions of individual scholars and graduates were obtained from DSP staff and selected faculty representatives. The latter group consisted of faculty persons who served as mentors for the scholars and who had participated in DSP’s 2007 annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring.

- Responses from a six-item Likert-scale questionnaire to 16 collegiate faculty members were employed to solicit their perceptions of self-efficacy in doctoral candidates. Self-efficacy was defined operationally for this group as: *The efficiency of an individual in using his or her abilities to accomplish a task or objective in spite of obstacles to that task or objective.* (See Appendix A.)

- Printed interview dialogues were reviewed by the DSP staff to validate what was expressed during the interview and what was confirmed by other evidence.

- A selection of printed interview protocols was mailed to interviewees to confirm the accuracy of the transcripts for possible follow-up interviews.

- The official records on file in the office of the DSP were reviewed to authenticate the status of interviewee as either a doctoral scholar or a PhD graduate.
Definition of Terms

_Climate_—The prevailing temperament or environment of an office, department, or classroom as it affects individuals within that office, department or classroom.

_Covert Racism_—Indirect and/or hidden projections of prejudice or discrimination against an African-American.

_Hypothesis_—An explanation of the direction of a phenomenon or a set of relationships proposed by a theory.

_Likert-Scale_—A graduated series of categories used in survey investigations to determine the degree to which respondents agree or disagree with statements.

_Independent Variable_—Stimuli which remain constant; for this study, departmental requirements for award of the doctoral degree.

_Intervening Variable_—A factor that affects observed phenomena but cannot be seen (Tuckman, 1999).

_Keyword-in-Context_—A technique in qualitative research that searches for words in a contextual framework or dialogue that have underlying meanings and/or inferences.

_Mentoring_—A reciprocal and collaborative learning relationship between two (or more) individuals who share mutual responsibility and accountability for helping a mentee work toward achievement of clear and mutually defined learning goals (Zachary, 2005).

_Microassults_—Explicit racial derogations, per Sue and colleagues (2007)

_Microinsults_—Communications that convey insensitivity and rudeness (Sue et al., 2007).
Microin and Invalidation—Communications that exclude, negate, and nullify psychological thoughts and feelings (Sue et al., 2007).

Moderating Variable—A type of secondary independent variable, one that can be measured and manipulated (Tuckman, 1999).

Networking—An informal system of communications wherein the individuals in the system have common interests and help each other, or a designated person in the system, toward a desired goal.

Support—Assistance or help provided for an individual to achieve a desired goal.

Qualitative Research—Studious investigation and interpretation of facts or theories that rely heavily on inductions from observable dialogues, events, and historical analyses.

Quantitative Research—Studious investigation and interpretation of facts or theories that rely heavily on deductions from descriptive and/or inferential statistics.

Passion—The intense internal driving force an individual may have to accomplish a desired objective or goal.

Self-Efficacy—The efficiency of an individual in using his or her abilities to accomplish a task or objective in spite of obstacles to that task or objective.

Theme—An idea, perception, or thought an individual possesses (sometimes hidden) that affects accomplishment of a goal or objective.

Limitations of the Study

There are four recognized limitations of this study. First, the individuals interviewed in both parts of the study represent a highly selective group of matriculating
scholars and graduates. The findings from this study could be at odds with findings from a less selective group. Second, only one non-completing DSP scholar participated in the study. Thus personal reasons for not completing graduation requirements were limited. Third, the exclusion of interviewees from private institutions of high education—a condition imposed by the DSP—may confound the findings. Fourth, the interviewees were 14 females and 6 males. Although this gender representation approximated the consistent enrollment percentages of candidates in the DSP since its beginning, the involvement of more male participants could have altered the conclusions. These limitations may be worthy of a repeat study by other investigators.
CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The heart of this ethnographic qualitative study was on interviews with African-American doctorates and matriculating scholars pursuing the doctorate. The methodology in Chapter III presented the theoretical framework for obtaining data from these interviews to provide answers to the four research questions presented in Chapter I. Nevertheless, data from four additional sources, in concert with a rather unique hypothesis development process, are required to substantiate interview data and bring meaningful order to the reasons behind this study. This is the role of Chapter IV: Analysis of Data.

Reflections from the Literature Review

Ill-preparation of graduate students; the complexity of financial support and the climate of graduate school departments; relationships with professors; and race and gender differences between students and professors were highlighted in the review. Each of these headings was associated with variables that had a relationship to students’ completion of the degree. The analysis of these findings is presented to reveal a history of the problem and its apparent resistance to improvement.
Reflections from the Keywords-in-Context Analysis and the Coding Process

As mentioned by the very title of this study, it is assumed that there are a variety of "underlying" factors or themes that could account for or play a part in African-Americans' role toward the doctorate. Certain words in the interview process have the potential of revealing these factors or themes. The analysis of this aspect brings to light various subtleties that are often overlooked by graduate school administrators and faculty.

As cited in Chapter III, the DSP required definite input on any questions that would be presented to its scholars and graduates. Two sets of questions were developed and approved by the DSP. The questions were used in both parts of the study for graduates (Ph.D.s) and matriculating scholars. Each interviewee was audio-taped to permit transcriptions into a written document for the purpose of visually determining words representative of a theme.

All questions carried a distinguishable number for recording responses on a coding sheet according to a theme (Appendices E, F, and G). For example, using the keyword-in-context technique, if a question brought forward a word indicative of funding or finance, the number of that question was entered under the theme heading of "Finance" on the coding sheet. If a question reflected some difference between the interviewee and his or her professor, the response was coded under "Race." If a question resulted in several words throughout several sentences relating to more than one theme, the most prevalent theme was selected, and the question was earmarked with that theme for recording on the coding sheet.
After recording all questions under *themes* on the coded sheets (from both Part I and Part II), the analysis tallied the number and percentage of *themes* from each of the interview groups in as follows:

1. Number and percent of themes relating to the *independent* variable: conditions REQUIRED for receipt of the doctorate, and
2. Number and percent of themes relating to *intervening* and *moderator* variables: conditions NOT REQUIRED for receipt of the doctorate.

Then, summaries of the dialogues from the actual interview protocols were produced for comparisons with the information retrieved in the literature. Next, official DSP records and opinions from collegiate officials were reviewed to aid in the interpretation of the interviews and project the significant *themes* that appeared to have some association with the lower number of African-Americans receiving the doctorate—the HOW and WHY. The audiotapes of the interviews were replayed again to assist in translating the “feeling tone” of the printed protocols.

Thus, instead of merely asking a direct simple question related to the survival of an African-American in a doctoral program—a procedure used in the many of qualitative surveys—this study determined *themes* that emerged from non-direct questions. The DSP demanded the use of these questions in return for permission to interview its scholars. This procedure was employed to bring to surface the reasons and/or the etiology behind a response. The detail is intended to provide the comprehensive direction to guide corrective action for the problem statement identified in Chapter I.
Reflections from the Stories Told by the Interviewees

Irrespective of the various keywords-in-context, each interviewee had a story from his or her personal life that had a bearing on success or failure to obtain the doctorate. The summation of patterns from these studies provides data to corroborate the underlining theory of this study, as proposed by Getzel and Guba (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2004). Again, this theory proposes that the rules and regulations of an institution may or may not be concomitant with the needs, wishes, expectations, motivational aims, and self-efficacy of the individuals in the institution. An adaptation of the theory for this study proposes that a college or university’s rules and regulations for the receipt of a doctorate may or may not be consistent with the individual needs of the doctoral scholar seeking the doctorate.

All twenty of the interview transcriptions were reviewed after the audio-taping to develop summaries of what was told in the interview. Copies of the transcriptions were mailed to the interviewees for their use in editing grammatical errors to convey the clarity of what they said in the interview. However, they were cautioned that any edits should not change the context of what they said during the interview; deadlines were set for the return of their edited comments.

After reviewing the transcriptions, a matrix of findings, conclusions, and recommendations per each interviewee was developed to discern patterns of responses. This document was for internal use only in developing the findings, reported in Chapter VI.
Reflections from a Survey of Faculty Opinions About Self-Efficacy

One research question wonders if the lower percentage of African-Americans achieving the doctorate is a function of their own self-efficacy. To this extent, an opinion survey was administered to sixteen college professors hailing from doctoral-granting institutions across the country. Data from this survey are important to give credibility to some of the interviewee success stories.

The Hypothesis Development Process

The particular aim of this ethnographic study was to disclose those individual needs as manifested via various themes. The direction of the need—to persist forward toward the doctorate or retreat backwards—was given clarity via a hypothesis. The hypothesis development for this qualitative study was in the general generic format described by Merriam (1998) under the heading of analytic induction (p. 160-161). Merriam recounts five basic steps in this type of hypothesis development from Robinson (1951), as follows:

You begin your study with a tentative hypothesis or explanation of the phenomenon under study. (p.160)

You purposefully select an instance of the phenomenon or see if the hypothesis fits the case.

If it does not fit the hypothesis, you reformulate the hypothesis; if it fits the hypothesis, you select additional cases to test against the hypothesis. (p. 160)
You purposefully seek cases that apparently do not fit the explanation as formulated (negative or discrepant cases); the discovery of one negative case disproves the explanation and requires a reformulation (Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 405).

The process continues until the reformulation covers all cases studied or no negative cases can be found. (p. 160)

Following this procedure paraphrased from Robinson by Merrium, the corresponding procedure of this study—to determine some personal underlying themes or factors associated with African-Americans pursuit of the doctoral degree—were established as follows:

_Tentative hypothesis:_ In addition to institutional rules/regulations that impact on all doctoral candidates, African-American candidates for the doctoral degree are affected either negatively or positively by racial and/or cultural conditions in the U.S. environment. Positively means that these candidates can be inspired by either positive or negative circumstances to _persist successfully_ in their journey toward the doctorate. Negatively means that their race and/or gender can be an underlying detriment that contributes to their _unsuccessful_ journey toward the doctorate.

_Phenomenon that fits the hypothesis:_ The number of African-Americans awarded doctoral degrees is far short of the number of doctorates awarded to Caucasians.

_Reformulation of hypothesis:_ In addition to institutional rules and requirements that affect ALL candidates for the doctorate (_independent_ variable) and some conditions that affect self-efficacy (_intervening_ variables), African-American candidates for the
doctoral degree are affected by conditions that stem from the continuing U.S. national atmosphere of institutional racism and/or gender bias (moderator variables). The latter variables especially have the potential to either propel or eliminate African-Americans' journey toward the doctorate—the direction can go either way depending on a candidate's self-efficacy. Such racism and/or gender bias can be reflected in a set of internal themes of African-American doctoral candidates—themes not commonly disclosed in studies.

_Purposeful cases that do not fit the explanation for unsuccessful pursuit of the doctorate:_ The Southern Regional Education Board's State-Doctoral Scholars Program provides financial, mentoring, and networking supports for its scholars. The program is successful in maintaining an annual graduation rate 87% to 90% amongst its graduates. Also, all of the doctoral candidates in this program have the advantage of receiving the maximum receipt to external benefits that affect ALL candidates for the doctorate, as surmised from the literature. Therefore, the restriction of interviewees in this study sample to scholars and graduates in what could be called one (single) "state-of-the-art program" eliminates factors that could arise as a function of conditions (intervening variables) arising from different doctoral programs.

If additional personal internal themes in this rather exclusion group can be determined, more meaningful information may be at hand to assist colleges and universities in helping African-American scholars to persist toward the doctorate. Such assistance may aid departments to reduce, or even eliminate, the existing gap in doctoral awards between African-American and Caucasian candidates for the doctoral degree.
CHAPTER V

FINDINGS FROM THE ANALYSIS

Chapter I proposed the etiology for the overlooked heritage of African scholarship and its apparent cause for the dearth of doctorates awarded to contemporary African-Americans. Be that as it may, the persistence of this phenomenon can be revealed in four external sources. The findings from this analysis bring forward information from these sources to amplify the subtitle of this dissertation: *A Revelation of Underlying Factor and Themes.*

Findings from the Literature Review

First, ill-preparation of graduate students for doctoral work was cited as a cause that affected all students for this degree. That is to say, all doctoral candidates must comply with the graduate school requirements—the *independent* variable. However, in some situations on predominately white college campuses, ill-preparation with respect to African-American doctoral candidates has not been identified as being mutually exclusive from a racial insensitivity. Such insensitivity seems to come into play during relationships with professors, especially when there is a difference between the race and gender of the student and the professor.

Second, the complexity of financial support and the overall climate of the graduate department have a great influence on completion rates. Some researchers contend that the general environment in higher education must be changed for the benefit
of all persons seeking the terminal degree. On the other hand, other investigators have noted that the struggles of HBCUs to remain solvent present a more acute challenge for African-American candidates. HBCUs continue to provide a significant share of doctoral awards; hence their solvency may be identified as an important factor in closing the gap in awards between African-Americans and Caucasians.

Findings from the Interviews

All 20 of the interviewees had personal stories to tell with reference to their journey toward their doctorate. Some of these stories reflected joys; some told of trials and tribulations. It was noted that practically all of the graduates—and the majority of the matriculating scholars—had used or were in the process of using their internal strengths to convert personal struggles into goals in order to become successful. The common ingredients for success were cited as (a) the amount of support and networking they received from outside sources—i.e., family and the DSP, (b) the positive relationships they had established with their faculty advisors, mentors, and dissertation committee persons, and (c) the general climate of their graduate departments. Additionally, several said that their religious faiths were the supreme factors that led to their persistence toward the degree.

As regard the influence of race and gender bias, there was an observation that was not picked up from the literature reviews. Success in graduate school does not necessarily demand that the race and gender of the student and professor be identical for the student’s success. A few of the African-American interviewees found this difference
to be a hardship. Nevertheless, an equal number found more positive relationships with their Caucasian mentors/advisors than their African-American mentors/advisors.

Findings from the Keyword-in-Context Analysis

This analysis used words in context to develop themes that could be associated with the independent, dependent, intervening, and moderator variables. Tables 3 and 4 show the corresponding numbers and percentages for themes RELATED and NOT RELATED to requirements for the doctoral degree, per the type of variable.

Table 3

*Number and Percent of Themes Relating to the Independent Variable: Conditions

*REQUIRED for Receipt of the Doctorate*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background/admissions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.38%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.70%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26.79%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30.43%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Content and Dissertation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.04%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Matters</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.71%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.87%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2.56%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>39.96%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Rounding error in calculation of percentages
Table 4

*Number and Percent of Themes Relating to Intervening and Moderator Variables:*

*Conditions NOT Required for Receipt of the Doctorate*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Number and % of Themes from the Graduates</th>
<th>Number and % of Themes from the Scholars</th>
<th>Number and % of Themes from the Non-completing Scholar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15.28%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14.58%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion/Interests</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11.81%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.56%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths/Weaknesses</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.56%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support/Climate</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>31.94%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surprises</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.94%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Themes Relating to Requirements for the Doctorate

Of the four themes relating to REQUIREMENTS, the *theme* pertaining to course content/the dissertation was elicited more often by all three groups—graduates, matriculating scholars, and the one non-completing scholar. Time to degree was popular for scholars; *themes* pertaining to background, finance, and policy appeared insignificant for all three groups.
Background

This theme made reference to preliminary course requirements for doctoral study. For the graduates, interview questions concerning the beneficial attributes of the Doctoral Scholars Program (DSP) and the matter of mentoring and advising drew themes relating to background. Matriculating scholars produced this theme in reaction to questions about unexpected hurdles and joys in their studies.

Four graduates, CA, KB, RO, and OS gave responses to questions that could be categorized under this theme. OS made an interesting comment to suggest that preparations for the doctorate should begin early during the high school years:

I felt that if I had a more balanced sense of understanding of how difficult the process was even from my high school days, I could have a better understanding of grad and at the beginning of grad school how to strive for the Ph.D.

The comment was echoed by six doctoral scholars, BW, DW, MW, SD, TC-A, and TG, reacting to the question about the most difficult or unexpected hurdles of graduate school. For example, DW, the single non-completing scholar, said more pointedly:

I did not think that graduate school would be this hard. The classes are extremely difficult . . . There is a lot that I have never seen before and I was not prepared for so my first semester I did get a C in a class . . . Some of my teachers are not very approachable and are not always there to help . . . I wish someone had set me down and told me that this is a completely
different environment and that it is a unique situation. It is something I
have never experienced before and I’m not sure if you can even mentally
prepare yourself for it.

Thus, responses under the background theme asked about the overall academic
preparation for graduate school. Although academic preparation is a requirement for
ALL candidates, later responses under the race theme revealed that sometimes the
candidate’s race may confound efforts by the candidate to overcome ill-preparation—as
reported by some studies in Chapter II.

Course Content

All questions for graduates triggered responses that were categorized under this
theme. For scholars, all questions brought a response except questions dealing “with
motivation to study” and the “chosen discipline and things they wished they had known
before graduate school.”

KB and MH were the graduates who provided most of the themes labeled under
course content. For example, KB gave a comment to indicate his lack of course
preparation for his intended doctorate, “Having come from a different discipline I was not
versed in some of the broad literature in science and technology. My master’s degree
was in mechanical engineering and I switched.” On the other hand, MH told the story of
being extended in her lab work because of an issue with her professor:

. . . When I first came to the university, I was assigned to a particular lab
and I thought I was going to stay in the lab for at least one year. After I
stayed here I found out by accident that the professor was not going to
keep me in his lab. He was holding a spot for a student that was never
admitted to the program and never came back.

MH later continued to explain how she finally graduated with the doctorate after
six years: “It was God and serendipity.”

In sum, course content to include lab work was important to these interviewees, a
matter not mutually exclusive to African-American candidates. Nevertheless, surprises
(to be discussed later), like the one reported by MH, reveal situations that could impact
negatively on completion.

Finance

In this theme area, completers (Ph.D.s) gave responses chiefly to two questions:
(a) What helped you most to finish? and (b) What other things could the (DSP) has done
that would have been useful? Scholars’ responses were more scattered, responding to
questions about: (a) projected completion dates, (b) changes in the completion date,
(c) unexpected hurdles, and (d) the DSP being beneficial. The theme of finance did not
appear to be of any consequence for either group, graduates or scholars.

Nevertheless, in many scholarship programs for graduate students, the focus from
the benefactor’s point of view is on the money delivered for his or her study. Two
graduates, NN and OS, gave interesting comments relating to the finance theme—
comments that could be especially revealing to graduate departments seeking to increase
their enrollments of African-Americans, as follows:

WJ, interviewer: Is the Doctoral Scholars Program beneficial? If so, in what
way?
NN: Yes, Financial. They don’t require extra stuff from you. With other programs, there is always some stuff that is required of you to give, and it may be stuff you don’t want to give.

OS: ... but it’s more than the money. It’s the people you meet, the contacts you meet, the intangibles such as support, the sharing, the congratulations ... I got so many congratulations.

There were not many responses that could fit into the finance theme. Yet, finance is an obvious gatekeeper for any student seeking the doctorate, the financial means to pay for graduate school.

**Policy Matters**

The theme of department policy matters seemed to emerge extemporaneously from a variety of questions from the interviewer, such as: What motivated you to seek the Ph.D.? What other things could the DSP have done that would have been useful? What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering grad school?

Three scholars, PD, SD, and BW, gave comments that appeared to bring attention more aggressively to policy matters, as follows:

*WJ, interviewer:* Directed reading [training in this area] would help you?

PD: Yes, it would be two of my electives for graduation. But they offer limited classes in the summer.

*WJ, interviewer:* Two more classes, and then you start your exams. So you are scheduled to graduate now on this track?
BW: No. I think the most challenging thing was that the core courses for the program are every other year.

WJ, interviewer: So there are no African-Americans on your committee?

SD: No! [institution] doesn’t have any African-Americans Ph.D.s in the biology department that could be on my committee. To be on a committee you have to run a lab. There are only two black lecturers and they don’t run labs. They are both adjunct professors and work part-time.

BB appeared for the interview only one day after successfully defending his dissertation. Early in the interview he eagerly exclaimed that “... prayer and divine intervention had to play a key role.” He later elaborated on a factor that could be stretched to be positive for policy matters, not negative as quoted by the three scholars above. BB: “But I also think I was really fortunate in that I was in a good department. I feel like there were at least a couple of faculty members that had a genuine interest in helping me.”

In sum, departmental policies affect the ebb and flow of graduation rates. Sometimes policies may interface unknowingly and unintentionally. As cited above, policy matters may support or aggravate the graduation of African-Americans.

Time

Time toward completion of degree requirements extends over several years; it commonly emerges as a most important consideration for prospective graduates. Sometimes the length of time is a function of the specific discipline area. For example, earning a doctorate in the humanities has been documented as nine years between entry
into graduate school and receipt of the Ph.D. (Ehrenberg, Jakubson, Groen, So, & Price, 2005).

In these interviews, the matter of time toward degree was one of the first questions to graduates. They talked about time toward degree when asked these two questions: (a) How long did it take you to complete your degree? and (b) Were you enrolled part-time during the program? KB responded that it took him six years, from 1999 to 2005, because he had to improve his literary background. OS stated that it took him five years after his master’s, and the funding from DSP really helped. And MH stated that it took her six and a half years because she had three years of unusable research (see the surprises theme).

More concrete explanations about time as a theme came from the scholars, as follows: NN, “I’m now looking at August 2007 . . . part of what happened [the extension] was dependent on my getting a job . . . I [finally] got a job . . . My job starts in August.” In offering advice to future candidates, PD said:

Don’t be a graduate student that takes five, six, or seven years to finish the degree. Get it done and get out and experience life, because there are other things past school that you need to experience . . . Some students have been there five and six years and just need to defend their dissertation. And these people are sometimes holding onto fellowships that could go to new students!
DW said: Of course, I have to spend extra time I don’t have on my courses. Between being a teaching assistant and being in class, I don’t really have time for anything.

BW said: According to my program, it is one of the longest at the school, so I knew it was going to take a few years to navigate through.

Finally, SD commented: Finishing! [a joy]. It’s different now because I can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

It appeared that the theme of time (time to degree) was fairly interrelated with the other themes earmarked in this study as being related to requirements for the degree. Does time to degree interrelate with themes NOT related to requirements for the doctorate? The following analysis addresses this point.

Themes NOT Relating to Requirements for the Doctorate

Climate and support emerged as the prevalent themes for both graduates and scholars. For graduates separately, the apparent rank order of themes after climate and support were as follows: (a) mentoring, (b) networking, and (c) passion/interests. For scholars, the theme of race emerged next in importance after climate and support, followed by passion/interests and networking.

Family

This theme drew some interesting comments even though it was not frequent in appearance. It was a response to questions about the reasons for selecting a course of study—support outside of the department, matters that helped the candidate to finish, and
advice to other potential candidates. Here are examples from graduates AH, JT, KB, MH, RO, and OS:

\textit{WJ, interviewer:} What really helped you most to finish your degree?

AH: I think I felt like I owed it to my deceased parents to complete the degree. I would also say that the support I got from family and friends and the support from SREB were crucial.

\textit{WJ, interviewer:} Aside from your advisor being so helpful, what else was beneficial in getting you to complete so rapidly?

JT: Support from my family, a strong faith in God and support from this program was very helpful.

KB: . . . you have to have some support mechanisms . . . it might be your family, a wife, whatever.

\textit{WJ, interviewer:} What helped you most to finish? What inspired you to persist in spite of the hardship?

RO: . . . I'm the first person in my family to get a Ph.D., so I felt like I needed to complete for myself and my family.

\textit{WJ, interviewer:} Were there any unexpected hurdles or surprises that confronted you in your quest for the Ph.D.?

OS: I would say no in the sense that you know it's going to be tough . . . from talking with your family and people in the program . . . God blessed me.

Although the graduates focused on past family matters, two matriculating scholars, BW and TC-A, connected with the family \textit{theme} by looking ahead in the future.
They stated that they planned to work with African-American families upon receipt of their doctorates.

In sum, the family theme emerged as a guiding force for both graduates and matriculating scholars.

**Mentoring**

Both graduates and scholars gave almost universal praise to the DSP for proving the quality of mentoring necessary for their successes. Except for the question about enrollment part-time, all 12 of the graduates gave responses to the other seven questions in their group that could be fitted under the theme of mentoring. The matriculating scholars gave few responses that could be coded under mentoring. Graduates’ responses to several questions seemed to fit under a theme of mentoring.

However, in some instances the quality of mentoring by professors was different from the quality universally provided by DSP. The most negative comments in this regard came from graduates AW, MH, and scholar SD.

*WJ, interviewer:* Do you think you had adequate faculty mentoring and advising?

AW: Mentoring, I would say no. I was supposed to have a mentor and everyone is given one; however, my mentor left and I was never assigned a new one.

*WJ, interviewer:* What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering graduate school?

AW: How difficult it can be to get people on your dissertation committee and keep them there.
WJ, interviewer: So could we say that it would have been helpful to have had a network of mentor?

MH: Yes, not just form the graduates of the program to the current situation, but from the students who need guidance from faculty members.

The scholar SD gave a rather lengthy response that fitted also under the theme of race.

WJ, interviewer: Do you think you are receiving adequate faculty mentoring, advising and support?

SD: That’s a hard question. I’m receiving mentoring and advising but not from my major professors or from the people on my committee. Our graduate coordinator is black—I talk to her. I talk to my parents. I talk to other scholars in different disciplines. I’m not necessarily getting mentoring from my major professor and my committee members. I’m not getting the same type of support he might be giving to other students in my lab.

However, in contrast to AW, MH, and SD, graduate AR was emphatic about the positive mentoring experience with her professor.

WJ, interviewer: Do you think you’ve had adequate faculty mentoring and advising in your route towards the Ph.D.?

AR: Absolutely.

In like manner, scholar NN expressed very positive feelings about the subject of mentoring from her professor: “I feel really lucky . . . I have a mentor, you know, Dr. J, and I also have a really good dissertation advisor who is very supportive.”
NN was making reference to the fact that Dr. J is a Caucasian professor at her predominately white university. NN successfully defended her dissertation during the time of this study.

Thus, mentoring from the DSP was hailed by both graduates and scholars. The theme of mentoring by professors appeared to be a function of the persons involved. However, is there some differential aspect of mentoring for African-Americans? This question will be discussed in Chapter VI.

**Networking**

Both the graduates (Ph.D.s) and the scholars were quick to praise the DSP for providing them with the networking that inspired them to pursue the doctorate. Examples of networking from the graduates were given as follows:

*WJ, interviewer:* Let’s talk about the DSP. How has it been beneficial to you?

*KB:* In some ways it has been beneficial by providing me with this network of people who are concerned for your success.

*WJ, interviewer:* Give me an example of what kind of contact information was given to you.

*OS:* Can I say the name? Ms. LH, she works at [company]. Dr. A told me before the Compact that there was a person I should talk to about the career path, and I made sure I met with her the first day of the Compact.

[As cited in Chapter III, the Compact is sponsored by the DSP and conducts the annual *Institute on Teaching and Mentoring*. DSP scholars are required to attend three Institutes.]
Essentially, responses coded from the scholars came in reply to questions about benefits of the DSP. PD stated:

Outside of the financial support, the networking has been great. A lot of people that I met at the Institute are scholars that are at my school, and I’ve had a chance to talk to them about their experiences. Just the networking is great.

Although scholar SD made a negative comment about mentoring from her professors, she praised the DSP for both mentoring and networking—“When I went to the Institute, I loved it. I had never seen so many minorities working toward their Ph.D. I made friends there . . . It was motivational to see people experiencing the same that I am.”

It appears that the DSP has zeroed in on an important ingredient to promote success toward the doctorate—networking. Again, is there any uniqueness about networking for African-Americans? The question will be reviewed in Chapter VI.

Passion/Interests

TG was quick to give credit to Divine Intervention when asked the first question in her group, What motivated you to seek a Ph.D. in this area [Public Health]? TG responded,

. . . So then when I looked up [institution], like they actually had like a doctoral program that was perfectly suited to what I love to do, so I was like wow. Is this what I’m supposed to do? And I felt like that actually came from God, and then I was actually applying to [institution].”
But the bulk of responses that resulted in a *theme* of passion/interests, from both graduates and scholars, came from a question at the end of the interviews: What advice would you give scholars entering a Ph.D. program? Graduates AW, BB, KB, MH, and OS responded as follows:

**AW**: Find out as soon as possible what you are going to do. Know exactly what you plan to do and have a backup plan as well.

**BB**: So I think any person considering this degree would be wise and prudent to spend maybe years thinking about it, meeting with professors, doctoral students, understanding the different tiers of schools, understanding the difference between research and teaching and how they might be balanced.

**KB**: It may be that you are passionate about it, but you have to be clear about why you are doing it. [Earlier in the interview, KB gave a passion-related comment about his fellow students: For some reason, I expected the people in the program to be more passionate, but they weren’t.]

**MH**: Only do it if it is truly your passion and desire, because it is too difficult to do it for someone else.

**OS**: You have to persevere through the pain while combining your God-given brain to essentially gain the thing.

On the scholar side, NN said, “. . . write down the reason why you’re entering, what your goals are and what you hope to accomplish when you’re done.” SD commented, “Be strong. There is only one way out. Just make sure you are really committed to what you plan to do. It takes a lot of commitment.” TC replied, “Have a
tough skin when you go into these programs, especially if it is a program that is
predominately white.”

Therefore, the theme of passion came from the replies of both graduates and
scholars that one must really be serious about entering a Ph.D. program.

Race

The interviewees in this study were African-Americans selected purposefully
because they were receiving support from a nationally recognized agency, one organized
to increase the number of doctoral candidates, the Doctoral Scholars Program (DSP).
Nevertheless, the interface of issues pertaining to race or gender emerged in interviews to
disclose both problems and advantages that seemed to have impacted on completion.

This theme was captured initially during the first interview with the graduate KB.
His reply set the stage for race being one of the themes, as follows:

\[ WJ, \text{ interviewer: } \text{What other things could the DSP have done that would have} \]
\[ \text{been judged by you as being useful?} \]

\[ KB: \text{Given the kind of climate where schools are reluctant to engage in anything} \]
\[ \text{race-related, given the declining performance of African-American students, and} \]
\[ \text{given the new immigrant dynamics, it just requires a new thought and process. As} \]
\[ \text{a body, it could be useful for all of us to think about how to make the SREB} \]
\[ \text{model adapt to the new conditions.} \]

With the exception of the one question that asked scholars to give reasons for selecting
their discipline, all of the remaining nine questions to scholars brought replies that were
to be positioned under a theme of race:
TC: Bottom line, last year [at the Institute] I learned that I need to pick my battles when it comes to racial remarks.

PD: Being an African-American, we think about different things. At [institution] we have a sex and gender track. Some of the things they [whites] talk about, we would not talk about as African-Americans. There are things that are personal parts of your life that they [whites] talk about. It’s different. We discussed an issue in race class the other day about the differences. We don’t want it to be that way, but it is.

WJ, interviewer to SD: Do you think that has anything to do with this situation [being given more work unexpectedly to finish]?

SD: I do, considering there are only three black Ph.D.s in the biology department at [institution]. There are a lot of black master’s students, but most Ph.D. students are Caucasian or Asian. And then I am a female, too.

BW: We do not have one single African-American faculty mentor . . . I wish I had known more about what is available at our institution for students in a Ph.D. program and for students of color or women.

WJ, interviewer: You are telling me there are only five African-American females in your incoming class. How is this affecting you? Or is it affecting you, the fact that you are immersed in a culture that is predominately white?

DW: It is definitely affecting me. People are different, so I can’t generalize anything, but I can say that at [institution] the chemistry areas are all separated.
Since I’m on the organic chemistry track, I would say that those people aren’t as friendly as some of the others, if that makes any sense.

Apparently on some predominately white college campuses, subtle negative racial issues between African-American doctoral scholars and their white professors emerge on occasion.

TC: I have experienced on several occasions a professor who will make a remark that is culturally inappropriate. It wasn’t so much like it was racial slur, it was just insensitive . . . these remarks have come from white professors

SD: Just something that my advisor said in conversations when we met about not wanting people to hire me based on my looks. Some of these backhanded compliments are very weird, but he is a strange person.

Nevertheless, some unexpected positive racial experiences can occur. TC-A gives this account of experiences with African-American and non-African-American professors at a predominately white institution:

The person who is over that program, I was hoping to get more mentorship from her. She is an African-American and I am not getting that and it is somewhat disappointing. I am not getting the mentoring from her I was hoping to receive. I also just recently signed up to do some independent research with a non-minority professor and he has been very supportive.

A similar response was given by AR:

WJ, interviewer: Do you think you would have been better served by an African-American mentor as opposed to a Caucasian?
AR: That’s a good question. I don’t think necessarily because the key characteristic is that she cared and was selfless, and I think that’s regardless of color or race. I did appreciate that she herself was aware of my issues that I might have as an African-American female.

Thus negative insensitivities under the race theme have occurred. However, these insensitivities do not rule out positives experiences in between African-Americans and Caucasians.

*Strengths/Weaknesses*

Interviewees DW, JT, KB, OS, and PD brought attention to strengths/weaknesses that affected the course of their studies, as follows:

*WJ, interviewer* to DW: What do you mean the material?

DW: There are a lot of things that were not covered in undergraduate classes, so I am playing a lot of catch up . . . I didn’t prepare myself as well as I should have.

*WJ, interviewer:* What detracted you from becoming a medical doctor?

JT: I did not score high enough on the MCAT after three attempts. I then put it in God’s hands and he guided me to get the Ph.D.

KB: Having come from a different discipline, I was not versed in some of the broad literature in science and technology. My master’s degree was in mechanical engineering, and I switched . . . I didn’t have to take additional courses, but I had to do research and improve my literary background . . .
OS: I had a unique situation, one physically at [institution] and the other at [institution]. It was difficult collaborating with the two different ideas of how your research could go and the faculty that wasn’t local. I read a lot.

WJ, interviewer to PD: Are you still on track for finishing in three years?

PD: . . . I don’t have strong writing skills, so I may push things back to take a writing course. Writing is definitely one of the things I have struggled with, having to write and then re-write in a social setting.

Later in the course of the interviews, JY brought up a point about the building of faculty relationships. This was not an original theme; however, now it appears to indicate a needed strength in doctoral scholars.

WJ, interviewer: If asked if the Doctoral Scholars Program beneficial and in what ways, what would your answer be?

JY: In many, many ways, the Doctoral Scholars Program was fantastic. The relationships you develop at the Institute were crucial.

WJ, interviewer: So we could say that the development of relationships was an added bonus towards completing the Ph.D.?

JY: Absolutely; I couldn’t have done it without it. One of the things I ran into was that I had a wonderful professor who wanted to be a part of my committee, but the rest of my committee did not like her and were not willing to work with her. In order to keep the rest of my committee intact, I had to ask her to step aside, and it taught me how important relationships are to the process.
Thus questions to both graduates (Ph.D.s) and scholars supplied evidence of strengths and weaknesses as a theme important for completion of the doctoral degree.

Support/Climate

The DSP prides itself on providing support. Thus at the outset of this study, a theme of support/climate was established. Six of the eight questions to graduates (Ph.D.s) spurred comments that fitted into the support/climate theme. For example, KB said:

I think I have had strong support, but I don’t think I’ve had mentoring . . . She [his advisor] was supportive, but I needed someone who could take a complete interest in what I was doing and avail me to opportunities you might not otherwise seek.

OS said, “Funding! I greatly appreciate the funding that I received from the SREB program. I also received support beyond the funding from family members and friends (other African-American students) that were in the program.” MH commented, “I think it’s a blessing to the graduates that they are always a part of a program . . . a resource to consider faculty positions as you graduate or as you come back into academia . . . to know that you have a support network.” Unlike the graduates, the scholars gave commentaries on support chiefly when asked about it in a direct question. They continued to give episodes of positive support from the DSP and some of their professors.

However, two matriculating scholars were quick to mention aspects of negative support similar to the comment from KB. For example, DW, the non-completing scholar) said:
Some of my teachers are not very approachable and are not always there to help... all of my professors are very busy... it's kind of hit or miss with them, they may or may not be able to keep an appointment or give you help.

TG said:

And in terms of support, I mean I felt like I was supported to, yeah you can do it, you know, go ahead and do whatever you want to do; but I didn't really feel like I was being mentored and advised for most of the time.

The above comments gave added credence to the importance of the "support themes." Departmental and outside supports are both components of this factor that affect a candidate's completion of degree requirements.

Surprises

KB mentioned that he expected people in the program to be more passionate, and they were not. This was interpreted to be a surprise, and a theme of this name was added at the outset. A wide variety of surprises were reported in response to the questions, as follows:

WJ, interviewer: When you entered graduate school did you have a projected completion date?

SD: I did, but that has changed now.

WJ, interviewer: Tell me how that has changed.

SD: I thought that I would finish in a total of four years, but my major professor extended that date by a year. He said that he wanted me to do more work to publish more papers. I've actually completed everything else.
WJ, interviewer: What are some of the difficult or unexpected hurdles you are encountering now?

TC: When I elected to do the portfolio route, I didn’t fully think about how I would have to actually have two articles published [to move into candidacy].

WJ, interviewer: Is there anything about your classes that is a surprise to you now?

DW: Yes, there is a lot. The classes are extremely difficult.

But the biggest surprise came from MH who found a new direction for her study and a new advisor after being told that two years of work on her research project was unusable.

WJ, interviewer: So once again, tell me how did you find this wonderful person? Was it by accident? How did it happen?

HM: It was the good Lord and serendipity! I didn’t seek him out.

Thus, surprises may affect graduate study in either fashion, positive or negative. They are components in the “support theme.”

Findings with Respect to Self-Efficacy

Two of the basic research questions in this study make reference to graduate students’ self-efficacy in completing requirements for the degree. In order to determine more information about the interaction of self-efficacy in this regard, a brief five-item Likert Scale questionnaire was administered to sixteen randomly selected college faculty members (see Appendix A). These individuals, representing a variety of colleges across
the country, were presenters at the DSP's 2007 Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, in Arlington, Virginia.

There were some slight variations in responses as a function of the respondent member's race and gender. However, the general opinions' about self-efficacy can be summed up as follows: Self-efficacy is important for ALL graduate students seeking the doctoral degree. However, for African-American graduate students, it appears as a more important ingredient for success, considering all other ingredients that may be confounded or mixed up with it.

To sum up findings, information from the literature review; stories told during the interviews, keyword-in-context analysis, and self-efficacy questionnaire to professors were found to be very substantial to address the four research questions. The conclusions and recommendations from these findings are shown in the following Chapter VI.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The doctoral degree is hailed as the academic recognition of scholarship in western cultures. African history documents African-Americans’ heritage for scholarship centuries before the conceptualization of the doctoral degree. However, interruptions in African-Americans’ recognition of scholarship (see Chapter I), and in turn the doctoral degree, stem from the Diaspora of Africans and their slavery in the United States. Recovery from this disquieting observation began in the mid-late 1800s. Nevertheless, when the current percentage of awards to African-Americans is contrasted with the corresponding percentage to Caucasians, the recovery is still dismal according to census data.

Over the past several decades, there have been efforts across the country to increase the pool of qualified African-American candidates for the doctoral degree to rectify the problem. More African-American doctorates have been provided through these efforts; nevertheless, the overall disproportionate percentages between African-Americans and Caucasians being awarded the degree have not changed, as evidenced both by U.S. census data research surveys.

Most of the efforts to produce more African-American doctorates were limited only to the distribution of more financial aid. However, in April of 1992, a partnership of three regional agencies, the Compact for Faculty Diversity, determined that increased
financial aid alone was insufficient to promote more doctorates for racial/ethnic group candidates, especially for such candidates to enter the professoriate. The Doctoral Scholars Program (DSP) grew out of this Compact to provide increased mentoring and advising along with monthly stipends to its admitted program. Key in the latter regard is an annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring that all DSP scholars must attend on three occasions. And the DSP became nationally recognized for maintaining an 87-90% annual graduation rate for its admitted doctoral scholars.

Nevertheless, it was not known if there were other reasons behind the success story of the DSP. Indeed, if there were other factors, they may be useful in helping to eliminate the percentage gap in awards between African-Americans and Caucasians. Hence, the idea emerged that there may be relatively hidden personal themes of African-Americans that impact on graduate study, themes irrespective of increased funding or support in general.

This idea of searching for themes was at the heart of this study. If any such themes were present they would likely emerge from individuals who already had satisfactory financial funding and virtually the maximum of support in other ways. Hence, the subjects in this study were a purposeful selection of matriculating scholars and graduates from the DSP.

Chapter V has presented the findings from this search for themes in concert with findings from a literature review, an analysis of stories told by the interviewees, and an opinion survey from college faculty members at doctoral granting institutions. What
follows are the conclusions and recommendation from this mix of findings to answer the four research questions.

Question 1: Are the lower percentages of African-Americans awarded the doctorate a function of institutional requirements alone?

Conclusion for Question #1

The lower percentages are not attributable alone to institutional requirements. This question implied that the lower percentages are outgrowths of separate standards for the two ethnic groups. In this study, standards were identified as ones associated with themes pertaining to: (a) background, (b) course content, (c) finance, (d) policy matters, and (e) time. Collectively these themes represented the independent variable.

As regards institutional requirements, “time to degree” was not the popular theme from respondents; however, time to degree interlocked with the other themes in response to several questions. The respondents in this survey, both graduates and matriculating scholars, did not reveal any themes about time to degree that could be mutually exclusive to any institution. Instead, two patterns in the dialogues told how respondents responded to the issue of time: (a) maintaining a PASSION to graduate and (b) personally taking matters in hand to stay on track toward graduation. Of course, as all interviewees hailed from public institutions, there could be a layer of distinguishable themes more attributable to private colleges and universities, a limitation of this study.

The most prominent piece of outside evidence in answer to this question comes from the study of Golde and Walker (2006). They outlined the following three barriers applicable to all contenders for graduate degrees: (a) evolving and expanding boundaries
of the academic disciplines; (b) the complexity of financial support; and (c) ill-
preparation of graduate students to function within their academic environments. Thus,
the implication is that these are barriers that challenge all students to varying degrees
irrespective of their ethnic background. More research beyond the scope of this study
would be needed to determine if these barriers alone account for fewer African-
Americans receiving doctorates.

Recommendation for Question #1

African-Americans seeking the terminal degree should be passionate about their
course of study. African-Americans should maintain an extremely high level of
seriousness throughout all course work and the dissertation. These potential candidates
for the doctorate should select their course of study based more on their passions for
learning about the discipline, not for the glory of obtaining the doctorate.

Potential candidates should always be alert to time to degree. The recognition of
time has an impact of many things, including funds for graduate study, getting a job
thereafter, enjoying the benefits that come from obtaining the doctorate, and having the
time to experience other joys outside of graduate study.

Upon graduation, new African-American doctorates should seek mentoring and
advising opportunities to bolster the passion and aspirations of other African-American
candidates for the degree. Two questions should be brought to the attention of new
candidates: (a) How much time is required for the degree? and (b) How much time can
you [the new candidate] give toward completing the degree?
Question 2: Are the lower percentages a function of the candidates’ own lack of self-efficacy?

Conclusion for Question #2

From the literature review, the noticeable drop-out rate for all candidates suggests the role of self-efficacy in completing degree requirements. However, self-efficacy may be a more important factor for African-American candidates. This study gave an operational definition of self-efficacy that set the tone for success in terms of the candidates’ efficiency in using his or her abilities to overcome obstacles. Using this definition, sixteen college professors agreed first that self-efficacy was important for all degree candidates. But they agreed also that self-efficacy was more important for African-American candidates, an apparent answer to this question.

Some of the interviewees in this study reported on their self-efficacy in terms of managing their dissertation committees to graduate on time. Others reported on being efficient in balancing their home life with academic matters. Three interviewees disclosed how they were efficient in drawing on her own will-power to overcome a racial incidents related to their course work (see also question #4). One interviewee described how he had to be efficient in reviewing new and unknown material to update his knowledge of the discipline.

Thus all but one of the interviewees in this study described how they were successful through the use of their own self-efficacy. This one interviewee was the individual who dropped out. Without a larger representative group of interviewees who were not successful due to the lack of their self-efficacy, a clear answer to this second
question cannot be provided by this study. Hopefully, a reader of this dissertation will accept the challenge to follow-up on this question with a sufficient number of African-American graduate students who were not successful in completing their studies.

Recommendation for Question #2

In the keyword-in-context analysis, there were more responses leading to the theme of *course content* than any of the other twelve *themes*. This suggests a role for advisors and mentors in graduate school departments. Namely, there should be a maximum effort on the part of these professionals to insure that the reasons for the various courses are clearly understood by candidates. The focus should be on how the various courses fit together to produce a “doctoral-level” comprehension of the subject matter. This is a kind of critical thinking that is often omitted in undergraduate courses where just memory of the ideas is important. In middle and high schools that serve a majority of African-American students, teachers should enhance this idea of how subject matter courses fit together toward a BIG IDEA in the discipline. This could inspire PASSION on the part of students to seek unknowns that contribute to the body of information: SCHOLARSHIP.

Finally, graduate school academic advisors should help African-American candidates to become extremely aware of their academic strengths and weaknesses on the path toward the doctoral degree. One interviewee told of the problem he had in changing his subject virtually in midstream toward the degree; another told of not being aware of the critical writing task; another explained about unforeseen surprises in the course of study. Early in the candidate’s graduate study (in the first year), departmental advisors
should be alert to pitfalls like these to insure the candidates' success. In other words, advisors should be proactive, not retroactive, in eliminating potential problem areas.

Question 3: Are there racial/bias conditions in the U.S. culture that hamper their completion of the doctorate?

Conclusion for Question #3

Yes, there are enough reports in the literature to conclude that racial/bias conditions in the U.S. culture that hamper African-Americans completion of the doctorate. Several interviewees in this study provided responses that were coded under the race theme to substantiate this conclusion. Most of these themes were negative; although, a few were positive (see question 4).

In sum, moving beyond some positive findings concerning the interactions between students and faculty, both the literature and interview data cited insensitivities in race and gender issues that worked to have negative effects on African-American doctoral candidates’ progress toward the doctorate. All of the interviewees were attending, or had attended, predominately white institutions where they were in the clear minority. Therefore, it is not known if such insensitivities occur on predominately black institutions, like at the HBCUs. Improper race and gender relations between students and faculty may not be prevalent across all institutions. However, based on some responses from scholars and graduates in this purposeful sample—individuals at predominately white institutions who were receiving, or had received, both satisfactory financial aid and almost the maximum of academic advice and support—racial and gender bias appear to
have emerged as one of the most direct conditions that could account for the gap in awards.

It should be noted that in this study the interviewees described race and gender bias as covert experiences, not overt episodes. Sue and colleagues (2007) give a description of these covert experiences in their article, “Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life.” They are paraphrased again, as follows:

- **Microassaults**—explicit racial derogations
- **Microinsults**—communications that convey insensitivity and rudeness
- **Microinvalidation**—communications that exclude, negate, and nullify psychological thoughts, feelings of a person of color

In this regard, it was interesting to note that when interviewees described a racial or gender bias, they gave the description in terms of one of the “microaggressions” presented by Sue and colleagues (2007).

The theoretical framework of this study postulated that race and/or gender serve as observable separate conditions—*moderating* variables—that influence African-Americans’ attainment of the doctoral degree. Again, these conditions were readily inferred from reports in the literature review; they were conferred more specifically from the keyword-in-context technique and the dialogues drawn from the interviews.

**Recommendation for Question #3**

The first implication from this question is that some manner of sensitivity training on race and/or gender bias should be incorporated routinely in the duties and responsibilities of college faculty members. College divisions of student affairs or
student support services may be in the best positions to introduce or expand on such training. In order to emphasize its seriousness, sensitivity training, perhaps incorporating Abraham’s model for cultivating change (Chapter I), should be incorporated in the process leading to faculty tenure.

The second implication stems from a cited factor in the Golde and Walker (2006) study, *Envisioning the Future of Doctoral Education*. These authors contend that policy design is not connected to its implementation and effect. The translation for this recommendation is that departmental policies may have the potential of affecting negatively the ebb and flow of graduation rates. Moreover, sometimes policies may interface unknowingly and unintentionally with issues of race to aggravate further the graduation of African-Americans. This means that graduate school departments should move far beyond examining all of the qualifications for candidates’ admissibility and entry and give special attention to those policies that encourage and enhance completion of the degree. Such policies should apply especially to African-American candidates enrolled in institutions that are predominately white. Special attention should include the following:

- Making arrangements to assist candidates in selecting advisors and committee members
- Alerting candidates of all avenues for financial support
- Clarifying early all of the requirements for award of the degree
- Arranging for mentoring and tutorial support as needed
- Emphasizing the need for networking with peers and potential employers
Question 4: Are there certain internal themes relating to self-efficacy that may be used to overcome racial/bias conditions?

Conclusion for Question #4

This question is a spin-off of questions #2 and #3. If scholars’ self-efficacy is acknowledged as a factor that could impede graduation, and if racial and gender bias continue to operate in some graduate departments, it is appropriate to ask if a scholar’s self-efficacy has any function in ameliorating the outcomes of racial and/or gender bias.

An operational definition of self-efficacy was stated as the efficiency one has in drawing upon personal skills to overcome an obstacle in the path of his or her goal. Responses from some of the interviewees indicated abilities to be efficient in using their skills to overcome some racial and gender bias situations.

For example, one graduate explained how she was confronted with no support and advice from faculty members in her first graduate department. All of these faculty members were Caucasians. She and other African-Americans in the department were labeled as misfits for the doctoral degree. However, instead of crumbling under this adverse situation, she transferred to another department [same university] where the climate for support was considerable better. Of course, this move lengthened her time to degree. But she used her self-efficacy skills to achieve her life-long dream of achieving a doctorate.
A matriculating scholar explained how she encountered some seemingly racial and gender insensitivities in classroom discussions about race and sex. Being the only African-American female in the class, she stated that some of the dialogue was too personal for open discussion in class. She used her self-efficacy skills to voice her anguish to outside supporters. This process relieved her anxiety and allowed her to continue her diligent study for the qualifying examinations.

In answer to the specific question, the keyword-in-context procedure revealed the following six themes that were judged to be NOT REQUIRED for receipt of the doctorate: family, mentoring, networking, passion/interests, strengths/weaknesses, support/climate, and surprises. Consequently, these themes were seen as conditions that intervene in some invisible manner, intervening variables—not like the observable moderating variables of race and gender. In turn, these six themes were seen as the ones that could provide the background environment for a scholar to pull upon his or her self-efficacy skills. This means that when the environment includes these themes, self-efficacy skills have the opportunity to thrive and help the scholar extricate himself or herself from a racial or gender bias situation. This was true in both of the examples provided above.

The college professors who responded to the questions on self-efficacy did agree that there were other ingredients besides self-efficacy that impacted on completion of the degree. It is assumed that some of these six themes were the ingredients the professors may have had in mind when responding to the survey.
Recommendation for Question #4

When an African-American scholar arrives at the conclusion that he or she should seek the doctoral degree, the next focus should be on the institution. In addition to any prestige factors—faculty, endowments, library facilities—African-Americans should ask if the institution is one where they can survive and be successful in accomplishing their goal. Counselors and advisors in undergraduate colleges and universities should be more aggressive in counseling students about the departmental climate of proposed graduate schools. Sometimes the climate may favor the skills and personal needs of the scholar; sometimes it may work against completion of the doctorate. To this extent, the climate of the HBCUs for African-Americans should be given serious attention. Graduate school deans, counselors, and advisors should assist prospective doctoral students specifically with:

- Maintaining some manner of positive communications with family and/or significant others during their student years
- Monitoring their financial budgets and responsibilities
- Finding mentors who can stay involved with the scholars throughout the course of study toward the doctorate
- Seeking support from governmental and private agencies that could provide internships, post-doctoral opportunities, and professional jobs for doctoral graduates
Implications for Future Research

Based on the findings and recommendations from this study, closing the gap between the award of doctorates to African-Americans and Caucasians implies more specific research in two areas: (a) the extended pipeline of potential African-American doctoral candidates prior to graduate school admission, and (b) the graduation rate of these admitted candidates for the doctoral degree after their admission to doctoral-granting institutions in higher education. Research in the former area would indicate the likelihood of closing the gap from available candidates within designated time frames. It would enhance the body of information that institutional enrollment planning services need to diversify their graduate classes with African-American candidates. Research in the latter would provide feedback to collegiate enrollment planning services. That is, this research would detail the degree of workability and/or modification of an institution's diversification efforts to graduate more African-Americans with the doctorate.

A Final Note

Early encouragement for the doctorate and candidates' building of faculty relationships were two additional themes that developed in the course of this study. These two aspects may be the factors that could increase the pipeline of African-Americans seeking the doctorate, decrease somewhat the inequity with Caucasians receiving the degree, and strengthen the recognition of African-American scholarship. The early involvement of parents in recognizing and encouraging their high-achieving children to pursue the doctorate may also enhance the pipeline. Middle and high schools should provide parent-training models in this regard.
Except for the acknowledgement that racial and gender insensitivities still operate to preclude some African-American candidates’ progress toward the degree, this study eventually exposed factors that impact on all candidates, irrespective of their racial/ethnic group membership. Prominent in this regard were the themes of mentoring, networking, support, and passion. The interviewees were African-Americans who had received, or were in the process of receiving, the maximum of advantages associated with these themes. Therefore, it is recommended that these themes be given highlighted and accelerated attention by all graduate schools serving African-Americans.

Perhaps, the underlying personal dispositions of African-Americans could have been better exposed if comparisons would have been made between the themes of African-Americans and Caucasians. Furthermore, personal themes could have been seen more readily if comparisons had been made between successful and unsuccessful African-American candidates for the doctorate. The hope is that some readers of this document will launch research to determine more definitive answers in this final regard.
APPENDIX A

Interviews with Doctoral Scholars Program Graduates

Interview with AH

WJ: I am speaking with AH. Today is October 26. My first question is how long did it take you to complete your degree?

AH: It took me about seven years to complete the degree. I had a lot of things going on. I was a non-traditional student. I was already in my mid-thirties when I started the program. Most of the others in my program were in their mid to late twenties. At the end of the first semester my mother passed away which was also difficult. I was responsible for my father who was blind and I had to juggle a lot of responsibilities. My father passed away a few years later.

WJ: You had a few situations that really impacted on your completion date didn’t you?

AH: Yes. I had to deal with that and grieve while dealing with graduate school. I was also at an institution where I did not feel I had the amount of support I needed.

WJ: My second question is whether or not you were enrolled part-time or full-time in this program.

AH: I was enrolled full-time.

WJ: What really helped you most to finish your degree?

AH: I think I felt like I owed it to my deceased parents to complete this degree. I would also say that the support I got from family and friends and the support from SREB were crucial. Participating in this program allowed me to attend conferences and to interact with other scholars of color. I met people from my same campus who could relate to my struggles. It was also interesting to meet scholars from other places and recognize that even though we were in different places we were having similar experiences and similar nightmares. I thought that the sessions were very encouraging. Leaving the conference always left me feeling more empowered.

WJ: How was the Doctoral Scholars Program beneficial to you? Any other ways you have not mentioned?
Appendix A (continued)

AH: This was a great opportunity to realize that there is a major shortage of black scholars and faculty on university campuses. Everything about my experience has been wonderful for me. I have met people who keep in contact with me over the years, and we continue to support and encourage one another. The exposure to the professional knowledge has been great as well.

WJ: What other things could the program have done that would have been useful to you?

AH: I can’t really think of anything else. I remember the first time I came to the conference I was so impressed. I have never been to a conference where you were given access to so many different kinds of knowledge and networking opportunities.

WJ: The next three questions will ask about some of your thoughts and feelings. Do you think you had adequate faculty mentoring and advising in your program?

AH: I would have to say that to a certain extent I did feel like I had mentoring. I was mentored by more than one professor. My major professor was pretty good as a mentor, but I later learned that she was not reliable and was very difficult to deal with. She was not consistent, and was one of these people that made you feel welcome some days and not others. There were other days were I felt like I was being a bother. She was an African-American female like myself. I assumed because of that we would be a good match as an African-American female in a predominantly white institution. I was also actually older than her. I think sometimes she crossed the line between mentoring and controlling.

WJ: Can we say that you made certain assumptions about her being an African-American female in a predominantly white institution that did not pan out?

AH: Yes. I assumed that she would be eager to lend a certain kind of support and nurturing to students of color because she was of color.

WJ: Was advising adequate?

AH: I would say that as an advisor she was ok. I would say the same about her as I did about her mentoring – she had her good days and bad days. Sometimes her personal feelings would interfere with her ability to advise on a professional level. For example, if you wanted to take a class with someone she didn’t care for then she would discourage you from doing it. There was an extra curricular activity that I wanted to participate in and she responded in such a drastic way so I decided against it. She had been known to tell people that she would not work with them if they got married or had a baby.
APPENDIX A (continued)

WJ: Did you have any association with Caucasians in this institution and did that impact on you negatively?

AH: Yes. I had positive and negative. I ended up having to switch major professors because I could not trust the African-American female as far as judgment and actions. Her behavior was too erratic. Because of that I switched to a major professor that was a white male. It worked out wonderfully. He was a wonderful mentor and advisor. On a negative note, I did not feel at this institution that I had a lot of support from white faculty. There was one class in particular that I took and it was obvious to me that this particular professor was trying to make me feel like I was not competent and did not belong in the program. I can remember her grading a paper in front of me and then she went back and changed the grade and wrote derogatory comments on my paper. I complained to my mentor about it and he checked my records and another student who was African-American. We both had derogatory comments in our file. The effect of this just made me more determined to finish my program. Having her in my face insinuating that I did not belong only made me more determined. I told her that I was not going anywhere.

WJ: So this was a negative incident that really inspired you to be more persistent?

AH: Yes that is correct. I told her I belonged here as much as any else. It made me more determined to not let her or anyone else make me feel like I wasn’t competent.

WJ: Was there any further investigation about this professor’s activities?

AH: No there was not. We were told not to pursue the issue. I had a second situation in a different department with another professor who questioned everything that I did. When I tried to talk to her about my grade, she didn’t want to talk to me about it. She was a Caucasian female. Her actions were so obvious that my major professor called me at home on the phone and talked to me about her grades and her class. He told me not to worry about it and that I was a wonderful student and not to let anyone make me think otherwise.

WJ: What do you think you wish you had known before entering graduate school?

AH: I wish I had known much earlier in life that this was an option to do at all. I also wish I would have had a little more structure and more of an opportunity to talk to people who have gone before me through a doctoral program. They could have taught me to establish more right away in terms of writing and research. This would have made the dissertation process much easier.

WJ: What advice would you give a scholar who just starting a Ph.D. program?
AH: I would suggest that they talk to as many people as they possibly can who have already embarked on this journey. Talk to those in different stages – those who are just starting coursework, those who are ABD and those who have reached the other side. I think that students starting on this journey need a real sense of what they have to look for and what they will experience. This will help them ensure they have the proper tools to make this a successful journey.

WJ: Thank you. Is there anything else you would like to mention?

AH: Just one thing. I think this research that you are conducting is wonderful because I think that even though we know that people of color are earning Ph.D.’s, the last few decades we still have a major shortage of people of color with Ph.D.’s. Many of our students and people are encountering racism and discrimination. I had a young woman talk to me at the university I am currently employed at. She came upon my name and found me to talk about problems in a department with discrimination. I felt sorry for her because she had not been privy to a program like SREB, so she felt isolated and didn’t know who to talk to. I tell people about this program as much as possible because I think we need more black doctoral scholars.

WJ: It has been wonderful talking to you. All the best to you as you continue helping others in your professor.
Interview with AR

WJ: Hello today is Thursday, May 10, 2007. I'm Walter Jacobs from the Doctoral Scholars Program and I'm speaking with AR a recent graduate. Thank you for coming and we are pleased that you have successfully defended your dissertation and that you are now in the world of the professoriate.

AR: Thank you. My pleasure.

WJ: Here are a few questions. Again this is to help this organization get a better understanding of the scholars and the graduates as they move towards their doctorates and also towards the professoriate. As I ask these questions I will probably follow up with a few other questions to determine more specifically how this was accomplished. So if you are ready, lets start with question one, which says: How long did it take you to complete your degree and please explain your degree?

AR: Alright. So my degree is computer information systems. Out of the business school at [institution], and this program is scheduled to be completed in four years; the average is five and it took me five years to complete.

WJ: Why five years?

AR: I suspect it was getting married half way through. So the first two years is course work. Then there're qualifying exams, and then you start working on your dissertation which typically takes that last two years. Right after I passed my qualifiers is when I got engaged and then married. And so I suspect in enjoying my blissful time there and working on projects in the lab I was affiliated with, it took me an additional year.

WJ: Well that's understandable. Let's go to the next question I may come back to that one. Were you enrolled part time during the program? If so why?

AR: I was a full time student.

WJ: All the time.

AR: All the time.

WJ: So there was nothing that increased your time because you didn’t take the full load of courses.

AR: That's correct.
Appendix A (continued)

WJ: Good. Well what helped you most to finish.

AR: That’s a multifaceted response. The first is I had a buddy through the program. So there was another female student in my cohort and we basically paired up to get through courses. We took all of our courses together. If there were other courses that we needed to schedule, we made sure we scheduled them together and so we studied together. We helped keep each other boosted through some of the harder emotional times when perhaps a project didn’t go right or we got feedback that wasn’t as favorable. We would say, “you can’t quit because it’s not about you, it’s about me. So you have to stay in it.” So we both kept each other going there.

WJ: How did you find that buddy?

AR: I guess it was just the way it was supposed to be. There were four people in my class. Two males and two females and we just happened to click.

WJ: Are you the only African-American in your class?

AR: In my cohort, that’s right.

WJ: So there are two females.

AR: And the other one she was a white female.

WJ: So three females. Two African-Americans, correct?

AR: No. So in my class there are four students total - two males who were both Asians and two females which included myself, and the other female was white.

WJ: Ok. I’m going to come back to that one.

AR: So that was just for my class though there were other African-American females.

WJ: Ok.

AR: Ahead and behind.

WJ: I’ll come back to that one, but let’s talk about the Doctoral Scholars program. Was the Doctoral Scholars program beneficial in any general way in helping you to complete?

AR: Yes. The things that I got the most out of it were connections. So I also have another mentoring program that was helping me through which was through the
Appendix A (continued)

KMPG Ph.D. Project. So from the Doctoral Scholars program it was especially connections to female role models in the professoriate. Each year at the institute there was a specific session for women in academia and I always made a point to attend that session, and always got something different and new out of it. So that’s something I look forward to.

WJ: Good. We put a special effort in that session.

AR: And it was well worth it.

WJ: You’ve attended how many times now?

AR: Three.

WJ: Oh. Great I’ll tell the professors that you are one of their star benefactors. You benefit. Ok. Any other ways the Doctoral Scholars Program has been a benefit to you.

AR: It’s also helped me kind of codify what I’ve been doing. So even though Robbie gets a lot of headache about doing status reports – progress reports from us, but actually it’s helped me to summarize my progress each semester so I can see specifically what I’m doing. So at the end of my tenure, I actually relinquished my scholarship money from SREB because I have an NSF Fellowship but was still participating in the institute. And so with NSF, I also have to do an end-of-year report. And so it’s very helpful to be able to track that knowledge along the way, and not at the end of the year try to think of what did I do, and as I track my progress have that record.

WJ: So we can say that the program has helped you stay on track. That’s what we need to know.

AR: Connections and staying on track. There’s a lot of learning that happens in reflection.

WJ: You’re right. Well we’re at number five which is into this. Namely, what other things could the Doctoral Scholars Program have done to have been useful?

AR: Ok.

WJ: What could it have done?

AR: Well, I think the thing that would be beneficial is ... it’s a large program. It may not seem that large, but to a student participating in the institute there are
numerous students, numerous disciplines. If there is a way to connect the students within the specific disciplines with a support group to one another, that would be good. So you heard me talk about my buddy system. I think that is where improvement could be made.

WJ: So some kind of smaller group activity.

AR: Yes.

WJ: Within disciplines.

AR: That's right. So that it's not just a general connection to other students that's being made but specifically within your discipline or research area.

WJ: When should this take place?

AR: I know that there are tables for states, and I don't remember if there is for disciplines within the institute.

WJ: At the institute.

AR: That's at the institute but there has to be a way to facilitate it outside the institute. So perhaps a “listserv” created for each discipline.

WJ: OK.

AR: That might be helpful. So students looking for information or research assistance which they may be intimidated by perhaps from their own professors at their institutions to get. They can ask other students. I mean it could be as simple as I'm doing this kind of study. How do I set that up or are there any references?

WJ: So there should be something external to the Annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring?

AR: Yes, I think so, and then the Institute would also serve as a reunion of sorts.

WJ: Ok. Ok. I know this is something we've been trying to find out. Well let's go back to your faculty. Number six, and I may jump back to one of the previous questions. Do you think you've had adequate faculty mentoring and advising in your route towards the PhD?

AR: Absolutely. First, I think I need a non-traditional experience with my advisor. We connected prior to me starting the program, when I was interviewing at different
schools and I came to [institution] specifically to work with her. Because we had such a synergistic encounter. And so I’ve been working with her all five years. And have appreciated her selflessness that she has advised me to do what’s best for me. I’ve had other opportunities to work with different professors, and she has said, “Do what you want? I could be selfish and say ‘no’ to work with me, but if that’s what you want to do then you should do it.” But ultimately I decided to continue working with her and stay with her and I’m very thankful for that. So that’s one area.

WJ: Has this person . . . Is this person an African-American?

AR: No she’s not. She’s a white female.

WJ: Caucasian?

AR: That’s right. And so we had similar backgrounds coming from computer science, and I have an engineering background, and then being placed in a business information systems program and finding our way with very technical experience and interests.

WJ: Ok. I’ll ask this question. Do you think you would have been better served by an African-American mentor as opposed to a Caucasian? You don’t have to answer that but I do have to ask it.

AR: That’s a good question. I don’t think necessarily because the key characteristic is that she cared and was selfless and I think that’s regardless of color or race. I did appreciate that she herself was aware of my issues that I might have as an African-American female. Which I was surprised to learn that she was very aware of [institution] and the other HBCU’s here. Which I’ll tell you I was surprised many of the other professors have no idea from being here in [city] that these historic key institutions are here.

WJ: Tell me a little bit about the issues in other words. What are the issues they should have been alerted to?

AR: It’s hard to think of a specific issue but just understanding that there may be different concerns as an African-American female. Just a sensitivity that you know, ultimately. I’m female, but I am also Black. And so I’m not hiding that. I was aware there could be things that arose. Fortunately I don’t feel like anything did. I felt I had a very supportive department. All of the professors were very open; it was truly a colleague in training situation which I don’t think I would have gotten at every institution that I may have enrolled in.
WJ: So your institution did provide an atmosphere that supported you.

AR: Yeah, absolutely. I was able to author papers and was on a first name basis with everyone. I very much felt like I was a colleague-in-training.

WJ: Do you think this atmosphere is generalizable to the other students?

AR: At [institution]?

WJ: Yes.

AR: In computer information systems?

WJ: Yes. Stay within your department now.

AR: Yes. I don’t see that they discriminated for me verses any other students. I think every student there got similar opportunities to authors papers and work with prominent professors; and get mentorship from key individuals in the field.

WJ: OK. Let’s go back to number three. Do you think your having had an African-American mentor would have expedited you finishing. Yes or no?

AR: So I guess I should clarify. That was my advisor who was not African-American but I do have other mentors who are African-American, but in this case it came through the Ph.D. Project in my discipline. So Black female professors were in various institutions whether they do research; actually they were all at research focused institutions, and one woman in particular I connected with her because I heard her make a statement during a panel that she was happily married to a Black man.

WJ: Ok.

AR: And that was before I had got married and I was still dating.

WJ: Ok.

AR: For me that was very important because I had heard along the way you’ll have to sacrifice your social life or many people get divorced instead of married during the program. Especially as an African-American female, the stakes are so much harder now especially at this level for you to find someone to be your mate. I’m thankful that that was not the case for me. And hearing her make that statement it just really resonated as being something important because I wanted to also get married.
Appendix A (continued)

WJ: So you were fortunate. Do you think this is the case for other African-American females?

AR: I did not see it being the case. So there were others. There was another African-American female a few years ahead of me in the program. She had trouble dating, she said finding people even though she was here in [city]. And another female who graduated from the program ahead of me and was a professor who I connected to through being an alumni of my program; she got divorced shortly after and it sounded like it was a mounting strain from her program. So I don't know if it's necessarily the program or if it's the people and their circumstances. It's just a lot of coincidence around that.

WJ: So we could say that there are other external circumstances that may have an impact on your completion if you are an African-American female?

AR: Absolutely. I don't think you can separate out the social from the professional.

WJ: Ok. Let's go to number seven then. What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering graduate school?

AR: Well...I actually feel like I was prepared coming in because I had a summer with the Ph.D. Project that gave me a heads up. And then both programs the – Ph.D. and SREB – gave tips on what to look out for during the program. So I don't feel like I had any surprises. One thing is about scheduling your committee. No one talks about it. But really the big hang up is getting these four members who are all very busy to agree on a time. Even though its one to two hours and it's never going to happen again, trying to get on their schedule, that was a challenge that was perhaps even harder than I mean the writing and all that. That was on me. But coordinating those schedules is something that is not discussed.

WJ: Thank you. Now what advice would you give scholars entering the Ph.D. program?

AR: So although they may hear that they have to tell all their friends and family, “so long, farewell, see you later.” It's not true and I don't think it can be true. If you are a complete person, you have to consider the social aspects as well. So whatever is important to you – whether it be your family or religion – they should continue to be important to you and come first. That's the first thing. If you can find a buddy. The person doesn't have to be at your institution, but it's very important that you find a buddy. This goes beyond the “listserv” or general connection. This is a specific person that you can feel comfortable crying to, sharing triumphs with, that will celebrate with you all, of those things. And that is very key.
Appendix A (continued)

WJ: Anything else. Those two seem very important.

AR: And ultimately my favorite is... the best dissertation is a done dissertation. So if your committee says do X, then do X. You can do Y later.

WJ: I can appreciate that very much. A done dissertation.

AR: That's right.

WJ: Well it seems as though you have followed your own advice and again congratulations on having defended successfully. Is there anything else you need to add?

AR: At this point, no; but I certainly appreciate the follow-up and especially Dr. A's phone call afterwards.

WJ: I know he'll be glad to hear that. He's out of town now but I'll make a note that he gets that comment. Well thank you so very much. We'll send this information back to you. We call it triangulation so you can check to see if what we record is actually accurate. Thank you very much

AR: My pleasure.
Appendix A (continued)

Interview with AW

WJ: I am Walter Jacobs, consultant for the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program. I am speaking with AW, a graduate of the program. I have a few questions to ask you about your experiences as a scholar and about some of the things you are going through now. The idea is to determine what we can do better for other scholars. First question is where are you currently employed as a professor?

AW: I am currently employed at [institution] in [city]. I am in English.

WJ: How long did it take you to complete your degree?

AW: It took me about eight years. It took me about 2 1/2 years to complete the coursework, about two years to do my qualifying exams and about two years to do the dissertation. One year I sort of messed around and took my time reading. This was all at [institution].

WJ: Was there anything unusual in this time period that extended your studies?

AW: It was my studying for qualifying exams. I didn’t take it as seriously as I really should have. About four months before I was scheduled to take them, I got serious and did pass them. I also spent another year trying to get my chapters back from committee members.

WJ: So it was not being as serious as you had to be?

AW: Yes, at one stage.

WJ: Were you enrolled full time?

AW: Yes.

WJ: What really helped you most to finish?

AW: It was the help of my friends and the other African-American students who had finished and were in the program with me. Seeing them finish and work so hard was very motivating for me. Seeing two of them finish – it was like following a big sister or brother and knowing that if they can do it, then I can do it. Other people doing the program with me were very encouraging and took time to read my work.

WJ: Had you not seen that, do you think you would have still been successful?
Appendix A (continued)

AW: Most definitely – I was definitely going to finish, but it was a major motivating factor.

WJ: So then witnessing what they had done helped you stay the course? You needed someone else to say this is what you can do?

AW: I didn’t need them, but seeing what they were doing let me know it was definitely possible.

WJ: Was the Doctoral Scholars Program helpful and if so, in what ways?

AW: It was definitely beneficial. It allowed me to get out of the classroom. I did TA, but then when I got that money from the program, I could concentrate on my dissertation. It allowed me to not have to depend on work. It paid for my tuition and reimbursed me for items I bought. These were the most beneficial. Going to the Institute was great and seeing others around me doing their thing and finishing was motivating.

WJ: Tell me more about it getting you out of the classroom.

AW: I didn’t have to teach, so I could concentrate on my studies.

WJ: Did that give you more time to work on exams and other areas?

AW: Yes, everything; it really helped with that.

WJ: Anything else beneficial about the program?

AW: I really enjoyed the Institute every year. I attended three. Seeing the people get their awards was really helpful. I could see myself moving from one stage to the next and it was great getting my award at the end. Whenever possible, I tell people to check out the Institute. I’ve told several people about the SREB program.

WJ: Are there any other things the program could have done that would have been useful?

AW: Two things come to mind. This is very minor, but parking was an issue at the university. If that could have been handled as well as tuition – that would have been helpful. I also would have liked to have had a liaison – someone who would have called me once a month to just encourage me and check in on me. I know that those people exist if you call them with issues, but I never did that. I think a mentoring component could be very beneficial for students who are matriculating through the universities.
Appendix A (continued)

WJ: So we could say that more mentoring from the program would have been beneficial to you? Just being more in contact with you on a regular basis.

AW: Absolutely.

WJ: Do you think you had adequate faculty mentoring and advising?

AW: Mentoring, I would say no. I was supposed to have a mentor and everyone is given one, however my mentor left and I was never assigned a new one. By the time he left, I had become pretty independent and depended more on my peers than the faculty to mentor me and inspire me.

WJ: Did you get another mentor? When in your studies did this happen?

AW: No, I never got another mentor and this happened in year three.

WJ: So for four to five years, you were without a mentor? Was this an obstacle?

AW: It wasn’t a terrible obstacle, but it would have helped to have someone help me stay focused and offer support. We have other faculty mentors and I’ve seen others have really strong relationships with their mentors. I did wonder that maybe if I had that would I have done better.

WJ: Do you think you had adequate advising?

AW: Again, I think I got more advice from my peers that from any faculty mentor or the people on my dissertation committee. My peers were going through the same things as I or had gone through it so they could relate. A friend of mine told me to work smarter, not harder. She told me to try and stay focused and not do too much. She told me to stay focused on my exams and my dissertation, and not to try and do too much.

WJ: Let me ask some specific questions about race and gender. What was the mix of your classmates?

AW: Most of my classmates were white and mostly female.

WJ: How many other African-American males were with you in your class?

AW: I was the only one when I started the program. As I matriculated, two more came aboard. Both of them have finished.

WJ: What was the composition of your faculty?
Appendix A (continued)

AW: Overall, they were mostly white. My dissertation committee was comprised of
two black and four whites.

WJ: Did you see this mix as being advantageous in terms of race and gender?

AW: I enjoyed the mix. My chair was a Jewish woman, and it worked well. They were
reading a lot, but sometimes would take forever to get back to me. Overall, I was
satisfied.

WJ: So you didn’t see any issues as far as their perceptions of you as an African
American male?

AW: Not at all.

WJ: What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering graduate school?

AW: How difficult it can be to get people on your dissertation committee and keep them
there. The selection process is not easy and some people are not as serious about
reading your work as you would like them to be. Sometimes they would leave and
go to another school. Trying to keep everyone together was difficult and I did not
know that. My chair left and that was difficult. Choosing members and keeping
them was very difficult.

WJ: Can we say one thing you wish you had known was that you would have to
manage your professors and coordinate them?

AW: Yes – trying to find out who would stay the course was a challenge. Trying to keep
everyone together was hard. I had to interview numerous people before I got to the
ones I ended up with. Two people left, and I started to feel like it was never going
to happen. It was a mess.

WJ: What advice would you give to other scholars seeking the Ph.D.?

AW: Work smarter, and not harder. Stay focused. Don’t try to do too much. Don’t joke
around too much. Find out as soon as possible what you are going to do. Know
exactly what you plan to do and have a backup plan as well. Get to know your
faculty members in your field and department. Publish before you finish – at least
two articles. I would also say find a mentor, whether that person is in your
department or not, find one. When it comes to your dissertation, try not to work
and just sit down and write it. I know that is easier said than done, but when I
really focused and sat down to write it, I got it done. That is what it is going to
take. Stay on top of your committee members and make sure they are on course
and they get your work back to you.
Appendix A (continued)

WJ: We will definitely communicate this to others. Anything else?

AW: Overall, I really enjoyed my experience with SREB. I tell everyone I know to look at this program. I want to encourage all of you to stay the course and continue doing what you do!

WJ: Thank you. We need more professors like you and appreciate your time.
WJ: Today is June 18, 2007. I'm Walter Jacobs, senior consultant for the Doctoral Scholars Program. And I am speaking with BB who just completed his defended successfully his study. BB, thank you for coming. Let me ask the first question. What is your discipline? What was your area of study?

BB: My area of study is marketing. I'm in the marketing department at [institution].

WJ: Ok.

BB: I should say I was at...I just defended last Thursday but yes marketing at [institution].

WJ: Wonderful, Wonderful. I have a list of about eight questions here, and they are all aimed at getting at your underlying feelings and perceptions as you work towards the doctoral degree. How long did it take you to complete this degree? Please Explain.

BB: Well four years. So there’s not much explanation to it. I finished in four years. I started in 2003 at [institution] in the summer of 2003 and here it is June of 2007.

WJ: Boy that sounds good four years. Were you enrolled part time during this period here?

BB: Full time

WJ: Ok so you completed it in four years. Wonderful. What helped you most to finish?

BB: That's a tough question. I don't know if I could say there is one tangible thing that helped me. I think there is a combination of things certainly and maybe we'll cover some of them as we continue our discussion. Certainly, I think being motivated, and focused, and driven, and determined and those sorts of things must have played an important role. I came in on a mission if you will. There was a lot at stake for me. I left corporate America. And I'm married and I have children. So making a decision like that is not really... A lot of people beyond me being affected by this decision, and so I came in absolutely determined that I was going to do it as efficiently as I could. Now that's not the only thing. I think prayer and divine intervention had to play a key role. Because there were certainly times when I just didn't know how I was going to pull it all together with all my school obligations not to mention my personal obligations. My second child was born
Appendix A (continued)

during my second year, a few months before comps. So I remember that vividly. Probably see the strain on my face but I recall it.

WJ: Ok.

BB: But I also think I was really fortunate in that I was in a good department. I feel like there were at least a couple of faculty members that had a genuine interest in helping me. I’m sure the word mentor will come up later on in discussion. I guess depending on how you define it. You can call them mentors. But I felt like they did have my best interest at heart and that certainly helped, and it turned out that a couple of them were . . . Had the respect of the department. And I think if you’re going to have a mentor then you better get one that can get other people to listen to them when they have an opinion. They were very supportive.

WJ: What about your experiences in corporate America, was any of this developing while you were still in that role?

BB: Are you asking me my interest in the Ph.D. or the reasons for my success?

WJ: I guess I’m trying to get the etiology, in other words how did all this begin as you working?

BB: Oh my decision to pursue my Ph.D.

WJ: Yes.

BB: Well I think one of the benefits of the experience is being able to learn a little bit about yourself. What you’re good at and what you like. What you’re maybe not as good at and what you don’t like. I was in a transition in a sense and it allowed me to think about what I wanted to do next. I could have continued down the corporate. I used to work at Coke and got my MBA at [institution]. So I had opportunities to continue down that path.

WJ: You were in marketing at Coke?

BB: Yes.

WJ: And could we say that this kind of contributed to your success?

BB: Oh yes. To continue so as I really thought about different options combined with a desire to find a career that was a bit more self fulfilling and maybe as much as that allowed me to have more autonomy and differentiate myself. Just to sort of not be just another corporate person. And I liked marketing. I worked in branding at
Appendix A (continued)

Coke. I was a brand manager so it was no coincidence that my dissertation is on branding. I feel like it was a strategic decision to pursue the Ph.D. and particularly my expertise in branding my professional background is completely consistent and complimentary of my Ph.D. studies. It was building up on the corporate.

WJ: Good, very good. So you had . . . were there multiple avenues behind you which led to your doctoral pursuit?

BB: Yes. There’s no question, I didn’t just stumble on this sometimes miserable experience. It was definitely a kind of an influence of different factors personal and professional that suggest that, hey, maybe consider the Ph.D., maybe you can get what you professionally and personally from that pursuit.

WJ: Ok. Well let’s focus a little bit on the doctoral scholars program. We know it was beneficial in providing you financial support. Were there any other things about the DSP that helped you?

BB: Well you know I’m a dissertation fellow. So I really was just privy to this resource towards the tail end of my doctoral studies – really as much if not more than the financial support which of course is critical. You can’t discount that I already told you about my family situation, but of course I was fortunate to have a working spouse. But nonetheless more than financial, I think what I got or at least as important is the time factor and what I mean by time. The financial support allowed me to reduce my teaching load. I would have had to really teach much more in my last year of my dissertation year had it not been for the financial support. So this is not something that can be belittled. I probably would have had to teach a couple of classes multiple preps on two different campuses. If you teach, you know that if you want to do it well, there is a time commitment and I was able to reduce my teaching load such that I could focus on what I really needed to do which was to complete my dissertation, and I can directly relate that to the doctoral studies program.

WJ: So the financial support helped you to not be dependant on other sources of income?

BB: That’s right.

WJ: To get you through?

BB: I would have been obligated to teach or do something else to make a little extra money. Not only do you know not only for personal obligations, but even just to fund my research. There were monies . . . I would have had to make some
Appendix A (continued)

choices. I needed money to complete my dissertation, and by not having to teach it kind of freed me up to do things much more efficiently.

WJ: Were you teaching before this?

BB: Yes.

WJ: May I ask where?

BB: [institution].

WJ: [institution] ... Undergraduates?

BB: Undergraduates mostly, but I also taught MBA’s one semester. And I would have taught MBA’s in my last year if I hadn’t, but that’s a demanding role teaching MBA’s and I probably would have had to teach two classes maybe an MBA class and an undergraduate class so yes, I didn’t have to do that. Where as I was doing it before and by not doing it that meant that at least certainly in my spring semester. I focused and I could focus without much guilt because that attributed to the funding.

WJ: Let me ask another question ... insert another question with your Ph.D. now do you see yourself moving more into teaching or returning to the corporate world?

BB: I’m 100% committed ... 100% committed to academia. I’m going to be. I’ve accepted a position as an assistant professor at the [institution] this coming fall and I spoke a little bit about my corporate experience and I enjoyed that. Got a lot out of that and really can say that that had a lot to do with me pursuing this. But I don’t really want to go back there. I feel like I have a new opportunity and with all the benefits of being an academic. I like teaching and that’s fulfilling. I like my research which is on branding, which is what I would want to do and really you don’t get to do that much of when you’re in corporate cause there’s so many other things going on. And I like the autonomy that I’m going to get. I’ll still be able to work with business people. I really feel like I have an opportunity to do something that I’m good at and I like; With me dictating my schedule.

WJ: Well we’re certainly happy to hear that, because you know the whole purpose of the Doctoral Scholars Program is to increase the percentage of African-Americans in the academic world.

BB: I have no desire to go back to corporate. I want to be a professor. So that’s what I’m going to do.
WJ: Ok. So well let’s ask some other questions about your progress. Do you think you had adequate faculty mentoring and advising. Now you mentioned that before but let’s separate those two mentoring and advising. Do you think you had adequate mentoring and adequate advising?

BB: Well I’ll say this. I mean. I guess I would have to say it was adequate because I’m finishing in four years and I’m all set in a lot of ways. I am certainly in a better position than many. So adequate maybe I could say yes to that, but I should add that there are a couple of advantages and opportunities that I had wanted. Like I said, I had some faculty members that you know really were interested in me. I didn’t, in one case, the faculty member never taught me and I never did any research with him. We just kind of knew each other and seemed to like each other, and he gave me some insight and advice and sort of career advice and even sometimes, you know, do this more don’t do this as much kind of behind the scenes advice over coffee a couple of times. So that’s a mentoring role to be sure. I also had the advantage of an organization similar to SREB. It’s mission is similar and that’s the Ph.D. project. Unlike SREB in the institute, the Ph.D. project is solely focused on Business people and business majors and it’s a similar mission in terms of attracting and helping minorities matriculate and then fine careers in academia. That organization connected me with some other black faculty and other black doctoral students and certainly there support and insight, and even just two weeks ago I didn’t know how to do some analysis and I called somebody; she’s a professor at [institution] and we met each other through this program and she called me back.

WJ: So that was something that you found out about in addition to the doctoral scholars program?

BB: Yes. So let me add I think it’s I found out about that program prior to pursuing my Ph.D. I found out about SREB towards the latter part. So SREB was played an important role. I talked a little bit about that but I didn’t find out about SREB enough or early enough I guess I should say to really get some of the advising and the mentoring, and then of course SREB is an institute not... There are some specific needs that you might have in the business department versus some of the other disciplines of course. So I think I have to say that both organizations played a role and then of course there’s sort of the luck or good fortune of having actual professors that didn’t mind opening the door to you from time to time.

WJ: As an African-American, how did you receive any difficulties in the support and the mentoring that you received at your institution at your doctoral institution?

BB: I can’t say that there was anything over. I can’t say that I perceived anything negative towards me. I don’t know.
Appendix A (continued)

WJ: Ok. I had to ask that.

BB: I know it’s an important question. It’s one I think of. It’s one that even when I was in corporate, you wonder about some things and decisions. How come I’m doing this? How come you’re doing that? How’d that person get that opportunity? And you scratch your head sometimes. But I can’t say in my case that there was any tension or sort of obstacles. So it isn’t to say that there wasn’t any but I just kind of put my head down and kept moving forward and what ever the obstacle was I tried to find a way to get around it over it or under it. And I did have the help of other faculties that were white. There weren’t any African-American faculty that were sort of holding my hand, so I can’t really say that that was an issue for me.

WJ: OK very grand. Well just a couple more questions now. What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering your doctoral program?

BB: Well there are lots of things that I probably would have benefited from, I guess pertaining to this conversation. I guess it would have been nice to be aware of SREB sooner. I took advantage of SREB through the dissertation fellowship in my last year and that was great and certainly beneficial but you wonder I certainly wonder if I could have gotten much more if I had really a relationship as you mentioned. Dr. Abraham he doesn’t know me and I don’t really know him. I know who is but that’s more a result of the fact that I’m a late entry. So that could have been helpful I think.

WJ: Anything else that you wish you had known? Anything that may have started in your master’s degree studies?

BB: Well you know honestly if you really go back I didn’t even really know of the Ph.D. as an opportunity I never really considered it. It was something I felt like I stumbled on in recent years. I mean when I left undergrad it wasn’t until I said well maybe I might be a Ph.D. I didn’t know anybody doing it. So from that standpoint it could have been helpful if I had known even just more about the career opportunity. Because I feel like I found out about it a little bit later. But I don’t think that’s directly related.

WJ: Could you say what point in your life did you really think about the Ph.D. as something that would be beneficial for you? Was there any point?

BB: Well it was certainly an evolution. I think I liked my undergraduate and graduate experience. I went to the [institution] and I went to [institution]. They are great schools and I have really good experiences. I had genuinely thought about, wow, it would be cool to work in an academic setting but I didn’t really realize what was required what the Ph.D. entailed and how demanding it was how demanding it was
and things like that. I probably didn’t really fully learn about the Ph.D. and the benefit and just the challenges to get the degree probably like 5 or 6 yrs ago.

WJ: So this interest probably just evolved?

BB: It evolved. You know like I said after I worked more you know year after year you start to think this is ok do I want to do it for another 20, 30 years. Oh I don’t know what else might I do and you start thinking about different career paths. My peers, some of them have gone on to smaller businesses or start their business, you know everybody at a certain point maybe ten years out of business school you start going ‘hmm’ what else is out there because this doesn’t seem to be as fun or as interesting as I thought for me that’s probably when I started thinking well what else is out there and I learned about the Ph.D. and once I learned about the Ph.D. and the skills that are required and the life style and benefits and I matched those up with what skills I felt like I had. And what I had to offer then I sort of said well maybe there’s a match here.

WJ: Last question. What advice would you give scholars entering a Ph.D. program?

BB: Well I think a real important piece of advice that I would share is to really understand what this is all about. I think particularly for minorities the Ph.D., just like I’ve eluded to, is kind of a black hole its an unknown and you think its just teaching or maybe you think its you know working just a couple hours a week because your teaching three classes. And I don’t think people really and maybe even some Ph.D. students I don’t think they really fully understood what this degree is about and what there career is all about. Just like you were asking me do, I expect to go into academia or into corporate; I think some naïve students might think, ‘oh I want to be a consultant or maybe just a little step up from a master’s degree or its going to be great light job cause I don’t have to work in the summer.’ You know there are a lot of misconceptions about what the degree is about and what life is as an academic is all about. So I think any person considering this degree would be wise and prudent to spend maybe years thinking about it meeting with professors, doctoral students understanding the different tiers of schools understanding the difference between research and teaching and how they might be balanced. Understand the demands of the Ph.D. study, what a dissertation is all about. What contributions to academia is all about. There are a lot of questions that should be. You know you not going to be fully prepared, cause its one of those things where you just got to get hit in the head. Once you start you get hit in the head. You can’t prepare for the blow but to the degree that you can get a sense for what you are trying to do and what you are trying to accomplish and what life is on the other side. That can help you with the decision, first of all whether to pursue it or not and secondly what school or what degree,
Appendix A (continued)

what area and those kinds of things. It would be a smarter choice a smarter
decision.

WJ: Your last comment I think was very insightful and I’m grateful for you for
mentioning it. Anything else? That concludes the list of formal questions.
Anything thing else you wish to add?

BB: Well you know I think organizations like SREB and its sort of affiliated
organization and the Ph.D. Project, which I mentioned, any organization that’s out
there trying to if nothing else inform potential students about this degree. I think a
lot of minorities are missing out on even just considering this as an opportunity.
It’s just not even an option for most of us. Maybe it’s not a good option for
everyone but it’s just not even an option, and I think organizations that can help
inform prospects about it and then help us get through it financially or maybe in
other ways. In mentoring, answering a question, and then the network beyond. I
think the network that is sort of a fraternity that can be created with just minority
Ph.D.’s. Just having that resource is great. This is a resource. I learned about it a
little bit late, but not to late for it to benefit me and that’s why I didn’t mind sort of
working together with you to try to find a time for us to get together. I know I
kind of want to pay back a little bit.

WJ: Well thank you; we’re most appreciative of this. That concludes our interview
here. Dr. BB, again thank you.

BB: I still laugh when I hear that.

WJ: Congratulations and all the best in you career in academia.

BB: Thank you.
Interview with CA

WJ: I am speaking today with CA, a graduate of the Doctoral Scholars Program. How long did it take you to complete your degree.

CA: It took me six years to complete the Ph.D. It took me six years because my dissertation director didn’t really have a plan. I was the first person she had directed and I don’t think she really knew what she was doing. I had a few defense dates cancelled. I turned in two drafts of the completed dissertation but it still took far longer than I expected.

WJ: So the abilities of your chair delayed you?

CA: Yes.

WJ: Were you enrolled part-time or full-time?

CA: I was enrolled full-time for the first two or three years until I did my comprehensive exams. After passing my exams you don’t have to be enrolled full-time, so I taught part-time and registered part-time while doing my dissertation.

WJ: Did teaching part-time impact on you negatively in the course of getting your degree?

CA: I found that teaching was a positive experience. Part of the dissertation process was putting your ideas in a form that people other than yourself can understand. Going into the classroom and teaching in my field translated well back into my dissertation and having to do the theoretical explanation for my dissertation in terms that people outside of my field can understand. I very much enjoyed teaching.

WJ: What helped you most to finish?

CA: Taking control over my dissertation committee helped most. Once it became clear that my chair was not doing the job she should have been doing, I called the Doctoral Scholars Program for advice. I was told that although I may want to get rid of her, that might not help me finish and might extend the process. It was suggested that I go to the second reader and ask what to do to get the dissertation in a state where it would be approved. It took less than a month for me and the second reader to come to accord. I felt like the communication between the chair and I deteriorated.

WJ: Was the second reader part of your committee?
CA: Yes. I had picked this person for my committee. There were four individuals on my committee.

WJ: So it really took an external person to give advice on re-grouping and getting things going. How else was the Doctoral Scholars Program beneficial?

CA: Just the advice is what I needed. They always offered good, solid advice. When doing the dissertation you are wrapped up so emotionally in it and you need an outside voice of reason to offer advice.

WJ: The external person not only gave advice but had to have knowledge about the procedure?

CA: Yes.

WJ: What other things could the program have done to be useful?

CA: During the process I always felt like it was just me so hearing experiences from other scholars about the process was helpful. I think we all feel isolated during the process.

WJ: Do you think you had adequate faculty mentoring and advising?

CA: Mentoring in my Ph.D. program, no. We were not assigned mentors nor were we encouraged to seek out mentors. Mentor was not even a word frequently used in our program. It was more about taking classes and getting the dissertation done. There was very little about professional development or networking, things I learned later when I had mentoring. As far as advising, there was more advising. It wasn’t really advising that I found helpful. I always wanted to know how to prepare myself for the kinds of positions I wanted to get when I went on the market so I always tied my courses and reading list to that goal. I found that the faculty I worked with wasn’t about that same goal, they were more about knowledge for knowledge’s sake.

WJ: So we give a no to advising as well as mentoring?

CA: Yes.

WJ: What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering a Ph.D. program?

CA: I think the one thing I wish I had known is that as a graduate student you have to take control of your own career. I think that we are used to being in the teacher/student kind of model and we rely on teachers to tell us what we need to
do. In my process I found it more beneficial when I took responsibility for things. If I needed something I took the initiative to find someone to help me. I think that the one thing I wish I had known was that as a graduate student I need to rely on myself to get through the program.

WJ: What advice would you give other students seeking the Ph.D.?

CA: I would tell them to find people who are interested in your success and work with them. Be broad about that. There may be a faculty member not in your area who is interested in seeing you succeed and get through the program. Use that faculty member as much as you can. They may have access to avenues that you need and may be able to put you in contact with a dean, program or publishing opportunity. Just seek out people wherever they may be and ask for help.

WJ: Thank you. That concludes our interview. Is there anything else you’d like to add?

CA: Not really, but I tell the program all the time that I would not have completed the Ph.D. without this program’s support. I am writing a book and the program will definitely be thanked in my book.
Appendix A (continued)

Interview with JT

WJ: I am speaking with JT, graduate of the Doctoral Scholars Program. How long did it take you to complete your degree?

JT: It took me three years and two months to complete.

WJ: That seems like a record time. What helped you to graduate so rapidly?

JT: When I first began I talked to my advisor. Because I am not a traditional student, I wanted to do what I needed to do and then go on with my career and life. What we decided to do was have me take classes and do research at the same time.

WJ: So your advisor really helped you to get your degree so early?

JT: Yes, we had talked about what I would have to do in order to accomplish this at the speed I proposed. He told me exactly what to do.

WJ: Were you enrolled part-time or full-time?

JT: Full-time.

WJ: Aside from your advisor being so helpful, what else was beneficial in getting you to complete so rapidly?

JT: Support from my family, a strong faith in God and support from this program was very helpful. Coming to these conferences and getting rejuvenated was very helpful. I got so much information from here that I could use to help me complete. Whenever I returned from the conference it really jump-started me to do the things I needed to do.

WJ: Was the Doctoral Scholars Program beneficial in any other way?

JT: Yes, in meeting the staff and everyone always being so helpful. It was very supportive. Anytime I had any issue you were there.

WJ: Do you think you could have dealt with the issues without the support of the program?

JT: Financially I could have, but as far as my mindset I know I could not have done it without the program. You are being hit with so many different things and you have to get the work and research done and you need the support.
Appendix A (continued)

WJ: What other things could the program have done that would have been useful?

JT: In my state of mind at that time, the program did everything I needed. There wasn’t anything else I needed.

WJ: So you can say that the program did everything necessary for you to achieve your Ph.D.?

JT: Yes.

WJ: Do you think you had adequate faculty mentoring and advising?

JT: I think I had adequate mentoring and advising. As far as mentoring was concerned, I had a lot of different people mentoring me through this process including people in business and in academia. I was working full time in the industry, so I had lots of mentoring from the vice-president and others pushing me to get my Ph.D. I had a great experience. Most of the people who were my mentors were also my advisors.

WJ: So you were privileged to have many external people to help you with mentoring and advising?

JT: Yes, and it started as early as my bachelors degree. I had people guiding me along from the beginning.

WJ: Did you have anything in high school guiding you?

JT: No, just my parents telling me they wanted me to go to college. They advised and mentored me as well.

WJ: You really had mentoring and advising from external sources even before you went to college?

JT: Yes. My advisor in my Ph.D. program was like a father to me. His wife was also very supportive – she was the vice president of the company I was working for, and they helped me throughout the entire process by advising and mentoring me. They introduced me to the contacts I needed and told me know what I needed to do. They also constantly put me out there so the right people could see me.

WJ: Great. What is the one thing you wish you had known before beginning a Ph.D. program?
Appendix A (continued)

JT: I think everything plays out the way it should play out. If I had it my way, I would have gone straight through the bachelor’s degree to the Ph.D. but that’s not what was supposed to happen. I was supposed to work in industry before entering the Ph.D. Everything was just in order for me. I was originally going to be a medical doctor until I got to college and learned about the Ph.D.

WJ: What detracted you from becoming a medical doctor?

JT: I did not score high enough on the MCAT after three attempts. I then put it in God’s hands and he guided me to get the Ph.D. instead of the medical degree. I originally decided to start with the Ph.D. just to see what happened. Every door started to open for me and fell into place so I knew it was meant to be.

WJ: What advice would you give other scholars entering the Ph.D. program?

JT: Get a good mentor. A good advisor is great as well, but a good mentor who will guide and direct you is essential. This is the most important thing. You need to know in your mind what it is you want to do and what you are trying to accomplish. Then you need to talk to the people that will get you going in that direction. Have a good mentor and a good advisor, and know what you want to do as far as your career is concerned. I think that is the most important thing.

WJ: Thank you so much JT. This is very helpful to us. Unless you have other comments this concludes our interview.

JT: I would like to say so much more, but I think I got the important items mentioned. Thank you.
Appendix A (continued)

Interview with JY

WJ: I am interviewing JY, a graduate of the Doctoral Scholars Program. My first question is how long did it take you to complete your degree?

JY: It took me two years and nine months.

WJ: That was a short period of time. Explain how you completed that so rapidly.

JY: I didn’t have to worry about much or work. All I had to do was go to school. I taught one class a semester, but otherwise I was able to dedicate all of my energy to my classes and then to working on my dissertation.

WJ: Great. Were you enrolled full-time or part-time in classes?

JY: I was enrolled full-time the entire time. That really helped me get through quickly.

WJ: What really helped you most to finish?

JY: The mentorship and support from the Doctoral Scholars Program is what really helped me the most. Also the networking at the Institute was crucial.

WJ: Were you aware that mentorship and networking were important parts of finishing this process?

JY: No sir. I thought that I would have to do it all by myself.

WJ: So you did learn something about other components in addition to mastering your subject matter as an important part of getting the Ph.D.?

JY: That’s correct.

WJ: If asked was the Doctoral Scholars Program beneficial and in what ways, what would your answer be?

JY: In many, many ways. The Doctoral Scholars Program was fantastic. The relationships you develop at the Institute were crucial. Even if I wasn’t talking to someone about my research or field, it really helped to know that there was someone out there that looked like me that could relate to the process. I learned that I was not alone. At the Institute I would even meet people at my own institution – people I still keep up with.
Appendix A (continued)

WJ: So we could say that the development of relationships was an added bonus towards completing the Ph.D.?

JY: Absolutely. I couldn’t have done it without it. One of the things I ran into was that I had a wonderful professor who wanted to be a part of my committee, but the rest of my committee did not like her and were not willing to work with her. In order to keep the rest of my committee intact, I had to ask her to step aside and it taught me how important relationships are to the process.

WJ: That’s interesting. How did you resolve that issue?

JY: I let the rest of the team know that I would recruit a new member and asked if they were in approval of the new person. The more difficult part was notifying the one faculty member that I did not need her on the team. She was not the chair and just a member.

WJ: So the chair and other member agreed on your new selection? Did that take time to get that resolved? Or did it delay you?

JY: No, not at all. Being a student of color who I think they considered bright, I felt like they wanted to attach their names to me.

WJ: Were the other two professors minorities?

JY: No, only one was. My chair was not a person of color.

WJ: Was there any friction in regards to the person of color and the chair?

JY: No, not at all. I had worked with my chair as a research assistant before starting the dissertation, so he and I already had a comfortable relationship. I worked with him in an area that was closely aligned to his work.

WJ: So this development of relationships is one that you think should be one that develops before you begin the Ph.D. process?

JY: Yes, if it’s possible. I don’t always see how you can do that but it should be something you begin the first day of classes.

WJ: What other things could the doctoral scholars program have done that would have been useful to you?
You are asking me to talk about an organization that has done everything right for me. To determine what they could have done to be more useful is probably a more challenging task than you realize.

So you think there is not much more they could do?

No. Look at the success rate and the growth and how fast I got through. And I don’t credit my mom or my dad or my professors and classmates. I credit the Doctoral Scholars Program for my success.

Do you think you had adequate faculty mentoring and advising?

At the university, I did not get adequate mentoring or advising. Faculty members often think that they can relate to you, but they have not had your experiences, particularly white faculty members. I felt like they could not understand my experiences or the obstacles I faced as a minority.

So it was the lack of understanding of your experience that affected you in the mentoring process?

Yes, there were social issues to contend with in addition to scholarly issues, and these people just couldn’t understand. Perhaps there are a select few who could, but they would have had to do their homework and really try but they weren’t willing to do that. I felt like they looked at me as if I was whining if I had a complaint related to treatment or perception. The mentorship I received was better than the advice I received. I did have an African male who understood that there were issues for people of color in a southern area. Because he wasn’t from the United States, he could not empathize but he did sympathize. There was also an individual at the center for diversity that kept his door open all the time.

So the issue was primarily with mentoring, not advising.

I’m saying that the mentoring was better than advising. Advising at my university was not good. There was no one at the university qualified to advise me in my area of study.

Mentoring was better but had its problems; but advising was non-existent?

Exactly. The majority of my mentoring and advising came from the Institute and making connections because it was so poor at the school. I would also say that when I was involved in other conferences I received a lot of advice from faculty members and graduate students that I connected with.
Appendix A (continued)

WJ: What do you think is the one thing you wish you had known before entering graduate school for your Ph.D.?

JY: Can we pause while I reflect on this one?

WJ: Sure. What advice would you give scholars entering a Ph.D. program?

JY: Network with all the faculty you can the day you get there, so you can determine who would look out for your best interest and who can relate to you the best and who is most likely to want to spend extra time with you. Begin those relationships early on. Become involved and send out papers to conferences so that you can network early on, and so you can become known in your field. Relationships with faculty and other students and study groups are a great asset. Volunteer to sit on panels, if you can, that are specific to your discipline.

WJ: I think you might have answered my previous question with that answer.

JY: I think you are right.

WJ: What you have said is wonderful, and that’s what we need to tell potential Scholars. Do you have anything else you wish to add?

JY: No, but I would like to say something. One of the biggest things for me in earning the Ph.D. was being hooded. I constantly thought about what it would mean to be Dr. JY. Closely connected to that dream was standing in front the SREB people and making that final speech declaring that I made it. You might be surprised to know how many scholars sit and dream about that moment and how much it motivates them to complete.

WJ: Thank you. That was great.
Interview with KB

WJ: I am Walter Jacobs, Senior Consultant for the Doctoral Scholars Program. I am speaking with KB, graduate from [institution] in the department of Public Policy. Thank you for consenting to this interview. The purpose of this interview is to get a feeling for the joys and tribulations that led to your receipt of the Ph.D. I have a list of questions here. The first question, I guess you might say this is a big one, is how long did it take you to complete your degree?

KB: It took me six years from 1999 to 2005.

WJ: Was there anything that determined why it took you six years? Any pitfalls or things that you didn’t expect?

KB: There weren’t unexpected problems. I was on track with my coursework. The way my program is set up you are allocated two years to complete your coursework and then you take your comp exams. I did those all on schedule and passed everything on time. Having come from a different discipline I was not versed in some of the broad literature in science and technology. My master’s degree was in mechanical engineering and I switched. After having taken the exams, the expectation is that in the next year you will have a dissertation proposal ready to be defended.

WJ: So you are saying that you had to go back and take additional courses?

KB: I didn’t have to take additional courses, but I had to do research and improve my literary background.

WJ: How did you overcome that?

KB: I read a lot. So there were two things against me, the shift in the area of study and the subject that I chose. I chose something that was a personal interest of mine, so there were not really any faculty members doing what I wanted to do - there wasn’t anyone for me to latch onto. My advisor was broadly interested in the subject, so she was able to support what I was doing. But I do think it took me longer because of the subject I chose.

WJ: So you did get the support you felt you needed, but it took you longer because of the switch in disciplines?

KB: Yes. And also in our field the graduation rate is about 5 and half years, so it did not take me much longer. Most of the engineering programs expect it to be between 3 and 4 years from your masters to your doctoral degree.
Appendix A (continued)

WJ: Where you enrolled part-time in this program?

KB: No, I was enrolled full-time the entire time in school.

WJ: What really helped you to persist and finish in the time span that you did finish, aside from just reading more?

KB: There was never really any question about not finishing. I didn’t have any real struggles or drama. My doctoral experience was, with all things considered, very smooth. I had support from the people I needed support from personally. Financially I was also covered, so that it wasn’t an undue hardship. I never had to sacrifice eating or anything. I didn’t have those kinds of problems. I had a fairly uneventful experience. Towards the end when it became clearer what I was doing, the subject meant more and more to me. I was studying science and technology in the Caribbean and the discipline itself is a largely European and American dominated field, so a lot of the assumptions they make about the way innovation works are rooted in Europe and the U.S.

WJ: So as you proceeded in your new direction, you became more interested in it, more encouraged?

KB: It wasn’t so much that I was more interested as it is that I became more determined to make the point. It seemed to transform itself in my mind from a point of intellectual curiosity to a point of advocacy. Some of the issues we deal with are overlooked by the people in the Caribbean and they make assumptions about the way we do things.

WJ: So you had this interest before you applied to [institution]?

KB: I did. My general interest in this came from being in engineering and learning that there is an entire body of people who don’t have access to the science enterprise. Before [institution], I worked for the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering to help rectify this problem. This was just a more personal extrapolation of that, a desire to bring this to people who don’t have access to it. I’m from the West Indies, and we are a part of that.

WJ: So your experience at [institution] accelerated your aims in the long run?

KB: Yes.

WJ: Let’s talk about the Doctoral Scholars Program. How has it been beneficial to you?
Appendix A (continued)

KB: In some ways it has been beneficial by providing me with this network of people who are concerned about your success. You feel like you are part of an institution that’s working for your success. The Institute provided the same function as any national conference. Its great to be involved with a body of people who understand your struggle and what you are going through.

WJ: Do you think you would have acquired this kind of networking outside of the Doctoral Scholars Program?

KB: I think the kind of networking makes a difference. The disciplinary networks I could have gotten without the program, but the academic and social networking were key. The Doctoral Scholars Program is a network of people who have similarly broad academic interests, and that’s not something you can find easily. The program is important for providing that support.

WJ: It has hit on this special niche that you say is important, the social and academic networking?

KB: Right.

WJ: What other things could the Doctoral Scholars Program have done that would have been judged by you as being useful?

KB: It would be important to try and get some of us while in the process to think about ways to address the issue of minority participation in the science fields. The way it’s structured is that the Institute seems to be the focal point of the SREB program and the rest of it is just paper being shuffled back and forth. The Institute highlights our accomplishments, but I also think it can diminish the amount of critique we bring to the process. It is celebrating us, which I appreciate, but because we are so celebrated as being so special, so unusual as a black Ph.D. student, I think it can offset the amount of critique we bring to how this process works in a sustainable fashion.

WJ: Any ideas about how we can help with this issue?

KB: I don’t know the limitations of your resources. I think it would be useful to have regional or school based meetings to let the students know the information that you know. This program holds onto a host of information that the students need to know. Even though the information is there in newsletters and such, it isn’t as easily accessible to people.

WJ: So we need to expand the awareness to the campuses and such instead of just one annual event?
Appendix A (continued)

KB: I realize that would take enormous resources.

WJ: But it is still a great idea?

KB: I think that the issues confronting us are really serious and require our analytical tools to solve them. I think the motto has been the same. We are going to put money behind the students so they can focus on their academic success. I’ve benefited from it and so have others. Given the kind of climate where schools are reluctant to engage in anything race related, given the declining performance of African-American students and given the new immigrant dynamics, it just requires a new thought and process. As a body, it could be useful for all of us to think about how to make the SREB model adapt to the new conditions.

WJ: Let’s focus more narrowly on the support you did or did not receive at the Institute and at [institution]. Did you think you had adequate faculty mentoring? You mentioned that you had a good advisor.

KB: I think I have had strong support but I don’t think I’ve had mentoring. Mentoring in some ways is nebulous; my idea of mentoring may be different than yours. In my view of mentoring I don’t think I had a good one. She was supportive, but I needed someone who could take a complete interest in what I was doing and avail me to opportunities that you might not otherwise seek. I think with my specific advisor, I just didn’t see her as a good mentor.

WJ: Could we say that she was supportive to the extent that she helped you get through the sequence of academic hurdles but that’s about it?

KB: Right. That’s important to know. One of the other things she does that is commendable is that during the public defenses she served an important role. She was very good at drawing the line with my committee and helping with my defense. Those are the little things that matter.

WJ: What’s the one thing you wish you would have known before you entered [institution]?

KB: This is program specific. The program I entered was different. For some reason I expected the people in the program to be more passionate, but they weren’t. They were very detached. But that is a program specific comment. The environment was not one of direct engagement. There is an attitude where everyone is more concerned about their politics than about the issues.

WJ: There seems to have been a focus on immediate personal concerns instead of issues that could affect the entire human race?
Appendix A (continued)

KB: Exactly. What I wish I had known was that the climate was like that. I would not have come to that school if I had known. I already had a plan to go to a similar school. I would have looked more carefully for other schools if I had known about that environment. Faculty members wouldn’t say what they thought in public because of the repercussions.

WJ: In spite of that, you were still motivated to finish your coursework and complete?

KB: Yes. Having a program that is policy oriented helps the students in a number of ways.

WJ: What advice would you give to other scholars seeking a doctoral degree program?

KB: It is important to make sure that a few things are in place. One is that you choose a discipline for the right reasons. The right reasons are personal, but it has to be something you can endure and sustain throughout a complicated process. It may be that you are passionate about it, but you have to be clear about why you are doing it. Another is to recognize personally what type of support you need. I don’t think at the outset you can envision the difficulties involved, but you will have some sense of what your weaknesses are and you have to have some support mechanisms in place so that when they come about you are prepared. It might be your family, a wife, whatever. Make sure that support is there. Make sure that you understand what the requirements are to get this degree. The brochure for the school might not be the best place to get that type of information. Try to find out what the passing rates are, learn those things up front. They might affect the way that you operate. If you are coming in full of confidence and ready, then you might be better in a place that the exams come up early. But if you are coming in like I did with a change of field and not sure what is involved, then you don’t want those hurdles that put your head on the chopping block right at the beginning. Be clear about your personal strengths and weaknesses, what you are able to do and enjoy. Make your best faith effort. Figure out what the program is and what the hurdles are and if they suit you.

WJ: That’s wonderful. I think that is a marvelous conclusion. We will take this information and use it when we bring in our next group of students. Best of luck to you in all of your endeavors.
Appendix A (continued)

Interview with MH

WJ: I am Walter, Jacobs and I am speaking with MH, a 2002 graduate in the Doctoral Scholars Program. Good afternoon MH.

MH: Good afternoon.

WJ: There were some questions that I want to put before you, to get an idea of what you and your class mates had to deal with personally and maybe accidentally in order to move forward to get your doctoral degree. This information will be used coded of course to help the Doctoral Scholars program better inform other candidates for this degree. So here’s the first question, how long did it take you to complete your degree?

MH: Six and a half years. In fact, I had to get an extension for my graduation date. The reason that it took so long is that I had three years of unusable research.

WJ: How did it get to be unusable?

MH: When I first came to the university, I was assigned to a particular lab, and I thought I was going to stay in the lab for at least one year. After I stayed there, I found out by accident that the professor was not going to keep me in his lab. He was holding a spot for a student that was never admitted to the program and never came back. And so that was six months of unusable data. Then, for the graduate assistantship that I had at the time which was before I was a member of SREB, instead of them allowing me to work in a laboratory environment, they put me in the stock room for my graduate assistantship. So I worked in the supply stock room for the research facility at the university.

WJ: So, the university put you in some situations that you knew nothing about?

MH: Right. All I knew was where my graduate assignment was, in the stockroom for a year.

WJ: You found out about it by accident?

MH: Right.

WJ: How did you feel about that?

MH: I wasn’t happy because I thought I was at least owed the explanation from the professor that he should have told me instead of having me operate under the assumption that I was going to be there. And it was more painful because the
student that he was holding the spot for had not taken the necessary graduate exams. So she wasn’t even an official graduate student, and he was holding a research spot for her. I was admitted to the program and had already done my first semester and had done really well in his lab. The last year of unusable data came from going to a research project where part of the materials that we needed never came. They had to be created by a lab at another institution, and that never happened.

WJ: Did this unfortunate situation impact on you tremendously or were you able to overcome this?

MH: Well, it impacted the length of time that I had to stay in school. Because I jokingly tell my colleagues from my graduate study program that I should have tenure because it took me so long. I saw people come after me that graduated before me and it impacted me from that standpoint; making my graduation longer than other students. It had a positive impact because I found my graduate advisor, the person who was the one who broke the bad news during my first semester. He took me under his wings and understood some of my apprehensions about working with animals and was wiling to take a chance on me and stood by me.

WJ: Good. I’m glad that you mentioned that. Let’s skip to another question which is related. The one that says how do you think you had adequate mentoring or advising? So let’s tie those together. You found your advisor through this experience. So tell me a little about what happened and how this person helped you.

MH: He was the one who broke the news to me about not being placed in the lab that I thought I would continue in after my first semester. He pretty much talked to me during those time periods that I was not doing useful research. Then he helped me to develop my graduate student project. He supported me at the end of my graduate research because I wasn’t speaking to my graduate advisory counsel. Whenever they would challenge something, he would always promise me that no matter what he knew that I would get out. Whether it was to transfer me to [institution] where we were located or whatever it took, he promised me he would do what it took.

WJ: So he interceded for you?

MH: Right. And he was very honest with me about the things that my graduate committee was saying about me.

WJ: Was he on the committee?
MH: He was the head of my committee. But the others on the committee I pretty much did not speak to.

WJ: Was that a problem for you? Not speaking to them? How did you see that?

MH: I viewed it that they did not want me to get my degree.

WJ: And you got your degree primarily through your advisor who insisted?

MH: He persisted and I dealt with him only via email or written communication at the end. I had one meeting that I had to go to and that was when I was told by my advisor that he thought I was ready to defend, and my graduate committee said that they had no idea that I was near completing my project and they had me come from [state] for a meeting with them and a graduate research counselor and they grilled me on my project. They even asked me how much of the project was my own. It was literally a project that no one else in my lab could have done because it was a totally different research area.

WJ: So once again, tell me how did you find the wonderful person? Was it by accident? How did this happen?

MH: It was the good Lord and serendipity. I didn’t seek him out. But I went to a very small school and we would have joint meetings and they probably only had four or five faculty members within the department. He was my teacher for some of those classes and he ran some of the lab courses that I had so we had interactions from that standpoint but I didn’t seek him out as an advisor. He just kind of took me under his wings. So I was blessed from the standpoint; and blessed that he didn’t abandon me.

WJ: Were you enrolled part-time anytime when you were completing your graduate studies?

MH: No. I was fulltime.

WJ: Any kind of part time help? Would it have helped or hampered you?

MH: I think it would have hampered me just because the area that I was in was neurotoxicology and it had research components to it. So I may have been able to do the course work part time, but the research required you to be on campus and for you to be there, so it was difficult for you to try to do it part-time.

WJ: What really helped you most to finish?
MH: Besides a lot of prayer; I would have to say my graduate advisor and my fellow graduate students.

WJ: Grad students and your advisor?

MH: Yes. And of course some of the faculty members like administrative assistants for the department and things like that.

WJ: Let's talk about the Doctoral Scholars Program. How has this program been beneficial to you as a graduate?

MH: Well, I didn't even realize that the program existed until I had another faculty member who basically gave me a minority scholarship and enrolled me in the doctoral scholars program.

WJ: So once again serendipity brought about somebody else.

MH: The person who actually had started me out on the pursuit of graduate school who was then the dean of the college that I was in, and he somehow found out about the program and signed me up and I found out that I was no longer a graduate assistant under the normal track when I didn't get a paycheck one month. And I had to go somewhere else to get a pay check and that's when I figured out that I had a scholarship and not an assistantship anymore. I went to my first compact in [state] and it was invigorating to me to see other minority students with their faculty members. Because the one drawback was that my major advisor never got a chance to come to any of the compacts, and I remember thinking how nice it would be to have a faculty member that supported you and truly cared about your success. And the point that I had gone to my first compact, I didn't really know how much support I would end up getting from my graduate advisor. It was nice to go to the lectures to hear some of the things that I didn't necessarily get from my experience in graduate school. It was talking to Dr. Abraham and some of the other SREB staff about ideas on how to handle different topics that came up.

WJ: What other things could the Doctoral Scholars Program have done if anything else that would have been useful to you?

MH: I know that several years later they established a mentor-mentee program for the graduates of the program to the current students. But when I think about the situation that I was in during the early years when I was in graduate school and when I was having a true mentor, if there were other faculty members who would be willing to guide students from a distance. I was in school in [state] and I didn't have a graduate advisor who could mentor me in the way that I needed. If there was a faculty mentor from lets say the [institution] which was my school from
undergraduate; or someone who would have been willing to share some of the amount . . . maybe not guide my research or anything like that, but help me through other situations.

WJ: So could we say that it would have been helpful to have had a network of mentors?

MH: Yes, not just from the graduates of the programs to the current students, but from the students who need guidance from faculty members.

WJ: Across institutions?

MH: Yes, across institutions.

WJ: That’s a good recommendation. Restate that again.

MH: Similar to the current mentor-mentee program, graduates of the program are mentoring the current scholars, and we do it via email or maybe even phone calls or we network and go to the compact. This is for students who don’t have that strong faculty advisor in their corner or don’t have a person they can go to as a mentor. If there is a faculty mentor that is willing from some other institution to be a telephone or email mentor to that person similar to what we do for the graduates to the current students, then that would be very helpful, especially for those people who don’t have a faculty member supporting them.

WJ: That’s a wonderful suggestion there. Thank you. So, we know now the Doctoral Scholars Program has been beneficial to you. Are there any other ways that you can think of that it’s been helpful to you?

MH: I think it’s a blessing to the grad.
Interview with RJ

WJ: I am speaking with RJ. I have about eight questions to ask you. Please tell me your answers and how you feel about each question that I ask. My first question is how long did it take you to complete your degree?

RJ: About seven years but let me explain that. I began coursework in the fall of 1994 at the [institution]. I took the qualifying exam for the first time and did not pass. I re-took it and passed the second time. There were very few support systems in place at the school when I was enrolled there. I went on to write and successfully defend my dissertation in February 2001.

WJ: Can we say that not being able to pass the exam the first time extended your time?

RJ: Most definitely. I left the university after I passed the exam (second time) to take an administrative position with the state. In essence, I was writing my dissertation and collecting data while working full-time after leaving the university.

WJ: Were you enrolled part-time?

RJ: No, I was always enrolled full-time. It is my belief that if a student decides to sit out a semester or decides to enroll part-time, it is more difficult to establish and maintain relationships with the professors. I think that translates to difficulty in the student finishing the dissertation and the doctoral degree.

WJ: What really helped you most to finish given the circumstances you mention?

RJ: In my department [at the time I was enrolled] I came in as the only African-American doctoral student. There were no African-American professors. There had been one who was asked to leave for non-performance. I began enrolling in courses in the [college of -] because there were African-American female professors in that college. I was looking for someone with the same interests as myself, regarding African-American issues and how they impact students. In the [college of -] I found support I was unable to find in my department of. I DID NOT change departments; I simply took classes in another college at the university.

WJ: The absence of African-American females was a gap?

RJ: Yes, I felt the mentorships were significant. I needed someone to offer guidance and assistance, and I found that in the [college of -]. If not for their assistance, I don't think I would have finished.
WJ: Do you think you had adequate faculty mentoring and advising? Please speak about each separate.

RJ: I did not have sufficient faculty mentoring. The professor that oversaw my dissertation called myself [and other students] as misfits. Our research interests did not coincide with his. He stated that he always had the students that nobody else wanted, and that was insulting to me. As far as advising goes, he did not offer good direction or guidance in regards to the courses I would need. I felt very much alone and isolated.

WJ: So you are saying you did not receive adequate mentoring or advising?

RJ: Not from the [- department]. Now when I went over to the [college of -] to take classes, I received as much guidance as the two African-American professors could offer me.

WJ: Did you perceive any kind of racial overtones in the [- department]?

RJ: Yes I did. It seemed that many of the white professors were uncomfortable with the African-American students. Oddly enough, I wrote a dissertation on African-American students [-----]. Because of what I went through, I wanted to see what variables were in place to either assist students in obtaining a degree or identify barriers that prevented it. After I enrolled in 1994, the university began bringing in African-American doctoral students in record numbers. If you look at the statistics four or five years later, there was a discrepancy in the number they enrolled, versus the number that received the Ph.D.

WJ: As a female did you perceive anything like a gender bias in addition to racial bias?

RJ: I did. There were some professors that preferred to work with white males. There were many cases when professors allowed only white males on their research grants. There were times when professors took students out after class, and after hours. It seemed that the white males were more often informed about opportunities. I think it applied to both race and gender. There were times when African-American students, male and female, were excluded from extra (additional) information that would have been beneficial to us.

WJ: So this [- department] had both racial and gender bias?

RJ: Yes.

WJ: Then you moved to the [department of -]? Was the perception there different?
RJ: Yes, but that was because I was working directly with African-American females. I did NOT move to another department. I simply enrolled in classes in another college, and was mentored by African-American faculty.

WJ: In addition to the financial support from the Doctoral Scholars Program, how else was it beneficial?

RJ: My first experience with the program was at the Institute in [state]. I had never experienced anything like being in a room with hundreds of minorities working on doctoral degrees. I was able to meet other students with similar research interests as myself as well as network and build relationships that extended past that year. It was a great support system. I came to learn and understand what “more than a check and a handshake,” [the program’s motto] meant. I learned so much that I wanted to continue to give back, not just financially, but also by volunteering to help students confront the same barriers I had confronted. The Institute was a wonderful experience.

WJ: Can we say that the Doctoral Scholars Program enhanced the idea that you needed to pursue relationships to help further your success?

RJ: Yes.

WJ: What other things could the program had done to be more useful?

RJ: I recently had an opportunity to work with the NSF postdoctoral scholars, and I was able to visit the NSF research center. The scholars were all engaged in something called a chalk talk/elevator talk. I believe the Institute organizers should set aside time during the conference for this type of activity.

WJ: What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering graduate school?

RJ: I wish I had known about the SREB program when I began the doctoral program. I believe I would not have had as many difficulties, because I would have been informed about networking and other things including support systems before entering graduate school. I know that establishing relationships and mentoring are very important.

WJ: What advice would you give brand new scholars entering a Ph.D. program?

RJ: I would encourage them to network and to establish and maintain faculty relationships from their undergraduate and master degrees.
Appendix A (continued)

WJ: So you would advise prospective scholars to start this networking before they enter the Ph.D. program?

RJ: Absolutely. Mentoring is key. They should start early in their academic careers. In my research, I learned that many scholars who are successful received support from prior mentors. When a student is unable to find support at the doctoral institution, they can reach back to the mentors from their bachelor or masters program.

WJ: Do you have anything else you wish to add?

RJ: No, but I thank you for your time and wish you well with your doctoral degree.
Appendix A (continued)

Interview with RO

WJ: Good morning. I am speaking with RO, a graduate of the Doctoral Scholars Program. My first question is how long did it take you to complete your degree?

RO: It took me about six years to complete my degree. I had some things going on in my personal life. My father passed away and I was also working full-time. That took a lot out of me.

WJ: So you were able to persist in spite of those hardships?

RO: Yes.

WJ: Were you enrolled part-time or full-time?

RO: I was always enrolled full-time.

WJ: What helped you to finish most? What inspired you to persist in spite of the hardships?

RO: Several things. The more I got into the program the more invested in it and was unable to walk away from all the hard work. I also had a lot of people inspired by what I was doing. I’m the first person in my family to get a Ph.D. so I felt like I needed to complete for myself and for my family. I figured if I could do it, then it would show others that they could do it.

WJ: So you were really an example for others?

RO: Yes. That is very accurate.

WJ: Let’s talk a little about the Doctoral Scholars Program. In addition to the financial support, was the Doctoral Scholars Program beneficial to you?

RO: Yes, very much so. I was appreciative of the financial support, but what I found most beneficial to me was the other support. There were people I could talk to that had been through this process that I could talk to at certain points. They could encourage me. I had wonderful examples of people who had hardships equal to mine and even greater. The social aspect was nice. Once a year I could come together with others and feed off the energy of everyone else in a similar situation. That inspired me and encouraged me to finish because I wanted my time on that stage.

WJ: Seeing others get up on stage to receive their award was inspiring to you?
Appendix A (continued)

RO: Yes and I knew it could be done.

WJ: What other things could the program have done that could have been useful?

RO: I think the program covered all the bases with the support provided. They would call in and check on me and they were there for me to call into the office and get advice in rough situations. I don’t think there is anything left uncovered. This program fills in a lot of the gaps that exist for people like myself.

WJ: Do you think you had adequate faculty mentoring and advising?

RO: As far as faculty advising, when I was getting my masters I was working with someone who was new faculty and they were getting acclimated to the graduate school at the same time as me so they could not help as much as needed. I think that was a bit of a time mismanagement issue that could have been invited. When I was in the doctoral program I think I had average mentoring. The guy I was working with was the chair of the department, so I learned a lot of things on my own. The project that I was working on was just outside of his area of expertise, so I leaned on other faculty members for mentoring.

WJ: Do you think that the issues with mentoring contributed to the delay in getting your degree?

RO: Yes, I think it did. I think if I could have had someone to really tell me what was important I could have made some better choices in the overall process.

WJ: What do you think is the one thing you wish you had known before entering graduate school?

RO: Good question. I wish that I had known that this process is really more in my control than I realized. I wish I had known that it is really up to me to push the envelope and not just allow the envelope to be pushed by whatever the forces are that exist. I needed to make sure that I got my committee set up and set my own deadlines to move things along. As a graduate student, you tend to be overwhelmed by things and you go along for a while and then you realize that nobody else is going to do it so you have to do it. I wish I had realized this sooner and had been more pro-active and not so passive about the process.

WJ: Being a Ph.D. means being more aggressive about your studies and not just waiting for someone else to guide you along?

RO: Exactly. I think that expectation grows out of your undergraduate degree when
everything is brought to you. At the doctoral level you have to go out and get what you need.

WJ: Great. What advice would you give to a prospective Ph.D. scholar?

RO: I think one of the most critical parts of the Ph.D. process is to know who you will be working with. Most of us don’t think about this and those of us that do know don’t do a good job of covering this ground. When you first go into graduate school, you are being interviewed but you really need to be the one interviewing the faculty and people you are talking to. Find out if they are publishing. Find out if they are funded. Find out how many people they have graduated and what they are doing after graduating. I think scholars should get on top of this type of information early because you can spend a lot of time messing around with people who aren’t doing anything more than looking in the door and making sure you are there every day. You need more than that at the doctoral level.

WJ: Good. We’ll make sure to let others know that. Is there anything else you’d like to add?

RO: One other thing I liked to say is that it really is instrumental to close the gap that exists with minorities in the graduate school process. I think there is an incubation stage with this whole process, and the longer we stay with it, we will eventually reach critical mass and the numbers will start to ascend as we would like to see them. I think we have to be persistent with what we are doing and we are administering the right medicine for the problem.

WJ: That’s true. We are persisting and we are looking forward to those increased numbers. Thank you for your time today.
Appendix A (continued)

Interview with OS

WJ: I am Walter, Jacobs and I am speaking with OS, a very recent graduate from [institution] in Electrical and Computer Engineering. Today is March 20, 2007. Good afternoon OS.

OS: Good Afternoon.

WJ: Thank you for coming. I have about eight questions that I am going to ask you. Just respond as best you can. First question, how long did it take you to complete your degree?

OS: The Ph.D. degree took five years; that’s after my master’s.

WJ: Were there any interruptions?

OS: No. No interruptions.

WJ: Were you enrolled part time?

OS: Full time enrollment.

WJ: All the time?

OS: Yes.

WJ: Did you feel the need for any kind of part-time employment that might not have been offered to you?

OS: No.

WJ: Well, what helped you most to finish during this period of time?

OS: Funding. I greatly appreciate the funding that I received from the SREB program. I also received support and beyond the funding from family members and friends (other African-American students) that were in the program. It is very difficult for you if you are graduate student to conduct research if you don’t have the funding. There are other obligations that distract you from your research. So, I’m very appreciative to have had that.

WJ: I’m assuming that SREB was beneficial. Was there anything else associated with the funding that the Doctoral Scholars Program could have done?
They did a lot! In a year, I got a lot of support. So there aren’t many things I can think of. I had people give me contact information before the Compact. I feel that SREB provided me with everything I needed.

Give me an example of what kind of contact information that was given to you.

Can I say the name? Ms. LH, she works at General Electric in [state]. Dr. Abraham told me before the Compact that there was a person I should talk to about a career path, and I made sure I met with her the first day of the Compact. We had a good conversation and she was important.

What did she do? How did she help you?

She talked about ideas on patents, potentially if I wanted to do a research career with General Electric. I have always had ideas about how my research could fit at General Electric if I wanted to pursue that industry path. She gave me insight if I wanted to go straight into academia. So I basically got advice as to how I could have a career in research or in academia.

So essentially, she helped you get a better understanding of what you wanted to do after you were done with the program?

Yes.

That sounds great. Is there anything else that the Doctoral Scholars Program did for you that was beneficial?

Oh yes. In addition, a lot of people focus on the money, but it is a real friendly environment. When you come in, it is good to know that people know your name and your face. They talk to you and know if you are going to get engaged or not. They really care about you and really know you as a person. So those things are so immeasurable. I can call Ms. Robbie Ouzts up; she’s a part of the program and I can discuss issues with her in terms of, “What do I have to do to turn in my thesis?” or “Would it be a problem if I defended in the summer verses in the fall?” That kind of idea, although that was not my issue, it’s nice to know that you have people who you can turn to for that kind of support.

So that kind of support from the office here was of value to you?

Oh most definitely. The Ph.D. experience is not all roses, so knowing that you have someone you can call for advice good. Its nice to have people who are supporting you along the way like at the institute “this is going to be Dr. O”. It is a little embarrassing, but good to have.
Appendix A (continued)

WJ: Do you think you had adequate faculty and mentoring in advising?

OS: I could have had a little bit more in terms of as a dissertation fellow. . . you come into the program at the end of the term. So the situation that you have with your faculty advisor . . . you already make . . . with it. I had a unique situation, one physically at the [institution] and the other at the [institution]. It was difficult collaborating with two different ideas of how your research could go and the faculty that wasn’t local; you missed out on conversing with them or sharing ideas in person rather than on the phone.

WJ: Can you tell me a little bit more about how you tried to blend together these two sources of advice?

OS: There were teleconferences in which all of the parties were together. But more often than not, teleconferencing, remotely, internet, email . . . it was very challenging. And then sometimes the faculty advisor at the [institution] would fly down.

WJ: What do you think was most useful to you?

OS: My research applied signal processing tools to epilepsy. So the faculty advisor at the [institution] had the medical aspect and my local advisor at [institution] provided some of the engineering background. More so that I had the idea and I could run that by him or by some of his former students. It was interesting; you had to get feedback from the medical advisor or the engineering advisor. I needed both of them.

WJ: It seems like an unusual situation. How did you find the person in [state]?

OS: They have an ongoing collaboration and it stems back a decade or so ago; most recently in the last eight years. The medical advisor originally was here in [city] at [institution] and my advisor that is here at [institution] . . . Now [institution] has a “buddying” program. They were actually in the early stages of that before he left for the [institution]

WJ: So you were on the “ground floor” so to speak in getting this kind of assistance; outside of [state]?

OS: Yes. But I did benefit from their collaboration.

WJ: Were there any unexpected hurdles or surprises that confronted you in your quest for the Ph.D.?
Appendix A (continued)

OS: I would say no in the sense that you know its going to be tough; yes in the sense that you don’t know exactly how. I have dated some people as I went through the program . . . and if you are trying to have a serious relationship, you don’t know where exactly that is going to take you. From talking with your family and people in the program about how difficult it could be trying to have a relationship.

WJ: But you were able to overcome . . . ?

OS: Yes, now I’m able to overcome because I’m engaged. God blessed me and now I have a situation where I have been successful at balancing a relationship as well as education.

WJ: What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering graduate school?

OS: I think I’m unique in a sense of . . . there are a lot of very talented people. But I came into grad school a little naïve. I thought undergraduate work was much like grad school in a sense that when I started undergraduate, I felt that the high school material . . . I thought undergrad was like grad school and I thought grad school was like the Ph.D. Program. I felt that if I had a more balanced sense of understanding of how difficult the process was even from my high school day, I could have a better understanding of grad and at the beginning of grad school how to strive for the Ph.D. By the time I started Grad school, I began to get a better understanding that if one was to go into the Ph.D. program, what kind of character, contacts and education they would need. I wish I had that so more up front. Just like it’s a road map and if you know your destination where you were headed and the details of it. I wish I had known more in terms of how to network with professors in academia, persons in industries, and persons with patents . . . that type of thing. For a person like me, had I known that it takes to actually be a daily university professor or what it takes to secure funding or apply for funding, I felt that those things are the things I should have known in addition to what it is to be a graduate student. Because then I could plan better and work harder and know how to align my contacts.

WJ: Could we say that getting an understanding of all these things you have to deal with as far back as high school is something you wish you would have acquired early on?

OS: Yes. It is interesting, since we are talking about high school. I was blessed to have gone to an engineering high school. Programs like SREB are reaching back to the high school stage and I’ve been a participant of outreach and through that . . . High school students are getting knowledge that I didn’t get until I was in college. I’ve been blessed with talent, but there are many other people coming in
Appendix A (continued)

with talent and changing the way things move . . . faster, especially with the internet. I think I am a good example of how times have changed.

WJ: What advice would you give scholars who are entering the Ph.D. Program?

OS: You have to persevere through the pain while combining your God given brain to essentially gain the same. If you hear its going to be tough, but will it be tough in terms of the balance that we talked about? You have to balance your life inside and outside of the academic process. The things that I wish I had known, I offer that to the future students . . . know that you have an opportunity to become a head of a department and so on. Learn not only the research you are doing, but who you need to know to become those things that you want to be. You need more than yourself, you need to collaborate, and you need to network. It will be challenging, but if you persevere through it, you can achieve all your goals.

WJ: Wonderful. Is there anything else you want to add?

OS: Yes, again, I’m very thankful to the program, because a lot of time people take the money, but its more than the money. It’s the people you meet, the contacts you meet, the intangible such as the support, the chairing, and the congratulations. . . I got so many congratulations. I’m still trying to get use to being called a doctor, but again I’m thankful to everyone, and most thankful to God.

WJ: Thank you very much for sharing your thoughts with us today.

OS: Thank you.
Interviews with State Doctoral Program Scholars

Interview with BW

WJ: I am Walter, Jacobs and I am speaking with BW, a doctoral candidate in counseling and psychology at [institution]. This is an interview to get a better understanding of your ideas and wishes as you pursue your degree. I'll be asking a few questions. The first question is what is your discipline? What motivated you to seek a Ph.D. in this area?

BW: My discipline is counseling and psychology, and I was motivated to return to graduate studies because as a psychologist I could not do the things I wanted to do beyond the traditional approach to school psychology including assessment and testing for placement into special education. I wanted to do more research, connecting research to practice and some work with building relationships with families and communities. Being in a school setting your resources are limited. Returning to graduate school has given me the flexibility to do more research in the areas I am interested in. It also allows me to connect that to the experiences I have had.

WJ: I gather that you were a master’s degree psychologist? Did that prevent you from certain things?

BW: I was. You need to at least have your license for many things, and to get your license you have to have your Ph.D.

WJ: That explains it.

BW: Yes.

WJ: Any other thing that motivated you to seek your Ph.D.? Or is that it?

BW: That’s the larger reason but there were some other things. I’ve always had an interest in being a teacher in higher education. To work with graduate students you have to have your Ph.D.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: Ok, next question. When you entered graduate school did you have an expected completion date?

BW: According to my program, it is one of the longest at the school so I knew it was going to take a few years to navigate through. My expected completion is in four years, and so far I seem to be on track. I have two more classes before I start qualifying exams.

WJ: Two more classes? And then you start your exams? So you are scheduled to graduate now on this track?

BW: It would be after my internship of 1,200 hours so I expect to finish in spring 2009.

WJ: Has this date changed? You just told me that it did change and you are still on track. Have there been any surprises associated with staying on track time wise?

BW: No. I think the most challenging thing was that the core courses for the program are every other year. If you are incoming and all of the previous students are ahead of you, then you have to wait two years for those courses.

WJ: Has this delayed you?

BW: It has not but I could have been finished with coursework earlier.

WJ: What are the most difficult or unexpected hurdles you are encountering now if you have any? If you don’t have any that’s ok.

BW: At this time I don’t have any and I hope not to have any. My dissertation topic on literature may become a little challenging and difficult, but at the present time I don’t have any.

WJ: You’ve been to an Institute?

BW: I have not. I was admitted mid-year after the Institute so I have not attended one yet. I hope to attend this year.

WJ: Are you receiving adequate faculty mentoring, advising and support?

BW: Adequate faculty mentoring, no. I would say that we have differing definitions on what mentorship looks like and what it is. I have experienced good mentorship before and I have not experienced that at [institution]. Advising, yes. I do see that as far as them telling you how to navigate through a program of study. I do see that there. Because I have aligned myself with other support systems, I would
say support from the faculty is minimal. They don’t stand in your way of what you want to do but they are not hunting you down to present you with opportunities. They are not hindering you but they are not guiding you either.

WJ: Could we say that they are not aggressive in providing support?

BW: Correct. But if you take the initiative to ask then they do advise well.

WJ: Let me ask another question. You are African-American. Are any of these people who are supposed to be mentoring or advising you African-American?

BW: No. We do not have one single African-American faculty mentor.

WJ: Do you see the absence of this a problem or a hindrance?

BW: As far as getting through the course work, no. I have not started the dissertation and I plan to work with African-American families so I don’t know. That would be a good question to ask me a year from now. Some faculty members have expressed an interest in African-American research work.

WJ: Are there any other students like you that are African-American seeking the Ph.D.? Females?

BW: Yes to both.

WJ: So you do have some persons like you who are doctoral scholars, but there are no faculty members?

BW: Right.

WJ: Do you see this as a detriment?

BW: Yes.

WJ: What are some of the joys you are encountering in your studies? What’s exciting?

BW: One thing I will say, I absolutely love about our program is that you can choose and design your own program. It can be a more rewarding experience because you can choose things you are interested in. The additional six classes you take are the classes you design. You can become interested in other areas and do things that are in line with your passion. That is the biggest joy - being able to go outside the program and do other things.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: Do you think this will eventually help you when you start writing your dissertation?

BW: Yes.

WJ: Let's talk about the Doctoral Scholars Program. Is it beneficial to you and in what ways?

BW: It's beneficial in many ways but Mrs. Ouzts was the one person that has made it the best. She has made sure that I am connected to others in Georgia and locally. Because of that I was able to connect with another student who is already on her internship and can tell me what things are like. This student was able to show me many things I would not have known about if it wasn't for SREB and that type of networking.

WJ: It's the networking that's important?

BW: Exactly. The networking is helpful which leads to support. You need support to get through the Ph.D. program.

WJ: What other things should the Doctoral Scholars Program do to be helpful to you?

BW: I think I would get a better sense of the program after the Institute. I know about the program because of previous scholars. A lot of their feedback has been related to the Institute and what happens after it. You get a lot of information but it's what you do with the information that is so important. Having access to information, job announcements and access to others is so important.

WJ: What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering graduate school?

BW: My dissertation topic. Some say they always knew. I was not like that. It was difficult to narrow down.

WJ: Anything else?

BW: I wish I had known more about what is available at our institution for students in a Ph.D. program and for students of color or women.

WJ: Last question. What advice would you give to scholars entering a Ph.D. program?

BW: They need to know that the coursework is only 20% of the process. The other 80% is building relationships with your committee and your advisor so that when it is time to do that independent work you have a good relationship and good
Appendix B (continued)

communication. By this point you have been to classes, the one thing that separates the Ph.D. is doing that dissertation and navigating through that and working well with staff and faculty. You have to be able to have an ongoing dialog that does not become adversarial. That’s how ABD’s are made.

WJ: Anything else that you might want to add at this time?

BW: Not that I can think of. Those were great questions. It will be interesting to see how this connects to everything. I’d love to know the end result.

WJ: Great. Thank you for your time.
Appendix B (continued)

Interview with DW

WJ: I am speaking with DW who is a first year graduate school scholar at [institution] studying chemistry and biochemistry. Let’s start with a few questions about what’s going on in your area and with [institution]. What is your discipline and what motivated you to seek a Ph.D. in this particular area?

DW: My discipline is chemistry and biochemistry. I had no idea what I wanted to do coming out of undergraduate education. I originally tried to go to pharmacy school and that didn’t work out.

WJ: What do you mean pharmacy school didn’t work out so well? What happened?

DW: I didn’t prepare myself as well as I should have. I did not get accepted.

WJ: So you did apply to pharmacy school?

DW: I had already been accepted at [institution] but still wanted to try Pharmacy school.

WJ: So you are on track towards a Ph.D. in biochemistry, is that correct?

DW: Correct.

WJ: When you entered [institution] did you have a projected completion date? A time when you expect to finish?

DW: No, I didn’t really know what to expect from grad school. I hope to finish in the next four to five years.

WJ: Are you still on track towards completing in four to five years?

DW: Since this is my first year, I’m still taking classes. I also just started in my research lab so I would say I am on track as I can be.

WJ: Is there anything about your classes that is a surprise to you now?

DW: Yes, there is a lot. The classes are extremely difficult.

WJ: What makes them difficult?
There is a lot that I have never seen before, and that I was not prepared for. So my first semester I did get a “C” in a class. In my program, that is unacceptable and I have to make up that class.

Anything else that makes these courses more difficult.

The teaching style is different that anything I’ve ever experienced.

Tell me more about the teaching style.

Some of my teachers are not very approachable and are not always there to help.

Can you give me an example of a teacher not being approachable?

All of the professors are very busy. On top of teaching academics, they have professional groups, they travel a lot and they have other things going on. Its kind of hit or miss with them, they may or may not be able to keep an appointment or give you help. Other challenges are more so than the material.

What do you mean the material?

There are a lot of things that were not covered in undergraduate classes, so I am playing a lot of catch up. A lot of people have an upper hand on me.

What do you mean playing catch up? Does that mean extra courses or you are spending extra time on everything?

Mostly extra time.

How does this impact on what you have to do in your regular coursework? So you are spending more time catching up - does this hurt your regular routine?

Of course. I have to spend extra time I don’t have on my courses. Between being a TA and class, I don’t really have time for anything.

Do you think you will get out of this situation by the time you reach your second year? Will you be done catching up?

I hope, but don’t think so.

Are there any other unexpected hurdles you have encountered at [institution]?

Not really.
Let's go into my next question about adequate faculty mentoring. Do you feel you are getting this? You mentioned professors that were not approachable, do you think this is impacting on the support you should be getting?

Definitely. Of course, coming from a HBCU. I had a lot of faculty support that I felt comfortable going to. I don't have that at all at [institution].

So this is a big surprise? You had support at your HBCU, [institution], but now transferring to [Institution] was almost a shock?

Yes, a big shock.

Let's talk about something more enjoyable. Are you having any joy at all in terms of what you are studying? What is joyful about this? Are you having fun with your studies?

The lab that I just joined is wonderful. My advisor is nice and approachable. She is one of the few people that are approachable. The other grad students in my group are also very helpful.

You are happy with the other grad students and your lab advisor, is that about it?

Yes and a few others.

Is there anything else you can say that is enjoyable? I'm getting the feeling that there is not too much you are enjoying about this process?

I don't want to say that.

Let's ask another question. How has the Doctoral Scholars Program been beneficial to you?

This is a very supportive environment. At the Institute, I met a lot of people interested in the same things as I. It gave me encouragement and helped me see the light at the end of the tunnel.

So being with others has helped you and given you the confidence to continue? Anything else this program has done to help you? Do you think you would be able to progress without the Doctoral Scholars Program?

No, not at all. Because of the financial and mentoring support I could not do it with them.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: What other things would be beneficial to you from this program?

DW: I would say one suggestion I could give would be for you to have some kind of program for a first year student to be assigned a specific mentor, someone who would call them on a regular basis and check up on them. We need someone that could help at the very start of the program to lead us and give us guidance, maybe someone who has completed or is at the end of their program. It would be nice to have someone committed to checking up on their mentee.

WJ: Is there anybody at [institution] assigned to grad students like that? You just do the work and are essentially on your own?

DW: Yes. I will say that the person who got me in touch with SREB and helped me get the fellowship, Dr. O, his office is always open. He does work with the chemistry department.

WJ: How did you get in touch with him?

DW: I did a program the summer before as an undergraduate and met him through a friend. He gave me the packet to apply to [institution] and we have always kept in touch.

WJ: Do you have any other type of outside support other than the Doctoral Scholars Program? Family or friends?

DW: Yes, my family and friends.

WJ: What about colleagues?

DW: The support is not there. In my incoming class of 50, they accepted only 5 black females.

WJ: Try to be as honest with me as you can regarding the racial atmosphere there. You are telling me there are only five African-American females in your incoming class. How is this affecting you? Or is it affecting you? The fact that you are immersed in a culture that is predominantly white.

DW: It is definitely affecting me. People are different, so I can’t generalize anything but I can say that at [institution] the chemistry areas are all separated. Since I’m on the organic chemistry track, I would say that those people aren’t as friendly as some of the others if that makes any sense.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: Is there something about the group that contributes to these people being the way they are?

DW: No, I think it’s just by chance that I happened into a group that is not as personable as other groups.

WJ: Do you see this being a detriment to you as you proceed in your studies? Will you overcome it?

DW: It’s nothing that I can’t overcome.

WJ: What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering graduate school for your doctorate?

DW: I wish someone had set me down and told me that this is a completely different environment and that it is a unique situation. It is something I have never experienced before and I’m not sure if you can even mentally prepare yourself for it.

WJ: You are saying it would have been helpful for somebody to have told you more about what you would have to contend with?

DW: Yes.

WJ: With this in mind, what advice would you give other Ph.D. candidates like yourself?

DW: I would tell them to decide whether this is something that they really want to pursue. If it is, they need to make a decision within themselves to stick with it no matter what.

WJ: Good advice. Anything else you’d like to tell others?

DW: It’s going to tough and there is no way around it. I have never heard of any graduate story being simple or easy.

WJ: It is tough, but we are counting on you to persist. Those are the questions I had to ask you. Is there anything else you wish to add at this time? I thank you for taking the time to share your ideas and comments with us. We will use this information to help others as we get an idea of what is really involved in studying for the doctoral degree.
Appendix B (continued)

Interview with MW

WJ: Today is Friday, May 11, 2007, I'm Walter Jacobs from the Doctoral Scholars Program and I am speaking with a MW from [institution], and we are going to ask a few questions about what she’s doing. Thank you, MW, for joining us. It shouldn’t take you long. Here are a series of questions. And just take your time and respond as best you can.

MW: Ok

WJ: First Question. Well the first one is what are you studying what is your discipline and what motivated you to seek the Ph.D. in this area?

MW: I’m receiving my Ph.D. in counseling psychology, and the reason I chose this particular area is because my master’s is in guidance and counseling and the majority of my work experience that I consider in my career trajectory has been in counseling on college campuses, uh, so I knew that my Ph.D. would be in psychology and then I had to decide would it be in clinical, would you know what discipline in Psychology would it be. And I chose counseling psychology because its more when you look at science practitioner models of psychology; counseling psychology fit with my personality the best.

WJ: So it fits with your personality and also in terms of what you want to do in the future. Is that we say that?

MW: Right. I’m still trying to determine exactly where I want to be when it comes to my professional career. I know definitely that it’s within the higher education arena. Eventually I’d like to advance into administration. So I chose counseling psychology over higher education administration because I felt like it was more academic

WJ: Anything else that really motivated you to go beyond the master’s degree

MW: My job prior to acceptance was with [institution’s] Upward bound program. And I worked a lot with students, African-American Students in particular, encouraging them and motivating them and giving them the resources necessary to be successful in college; but then I also realized that when they got to college, there were no teachers that looked like them.

WJ: Ok, so you alert to one of the reasons why we’re doing this.

MW: Right.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: Wonderful. Next question when you entered graduate school did you have a projected completion date.

MW: Yes. Our program is an accelerated four-year program. The goal of the department is to bring post-master’s degree students in and have them complete their degree in four years.

WJ: Are you on track for this now?

MW: Yes I am.

WJ: So when do you expect to get your Ph.D.?

MW: August 2009

WJ: August 2009? We will monitor you all the way on that.

WJ: Well, third question. Do you anticipate that this date will change?

MW: No.

WJ: And you’re still on track

MW: Yes, still on track

WJ: You don’t anticipate any surprises that will lengthen this time for you getting your Ph.D.?

MW: There are only two unexpected things that could happen to prevent me from graduating in 2009. One is the concept of internship. Because I’m in applied area of psychology, in order to have the degree conferred you have to complete a year internship but there’s no guarantee that you will get placed in an internship provided you have to apply. So that is a challenge, but I don’t anticipate that being a problem. I feel very well prepared to go through the application and interview process for internship.

WJ: So there are some administrative angles involved in getting an internship. Is that what you’re saying that could delay your getting the degree?

MW: Well you have to . . . Its almost like applying for a job. So if you don’t you know if you’re not selected, you can’t participate in an internship.

WJ: Will the school help you select and get an internship? Will your department help?
Appendix B (continued)

MW: Well yes they do. The process is for our department. You apply for an internship after you successfully completed your comps, and I sit for comps August 2nd, 3rd, 7th, and 8th of this year. So after I sit for comp and if I pass everything thing in the fall, I will enroll in an internship course and this course is taught by the director of training of our department, and what he does is he walks you through the application process. So you complete all of your essays. He reads over them. Your classmates read over them. He goes through the process of how to get your recommendations completed, filling the out the APEX application, which is pretty complicated, and they review all of your information before you actually mail it off. They also help you in selecting which sites your going to interview or you’re going to apply to. They encourage us to apply to between 12 and 15 sites. Because it’s pretty competitive I think this year; over 900 students applied for internship.

WJ: Ok. I know this may be an issue. But probably you’re working smoothly towards this now.

MW: Right. I feel comfortable and I feel confident that I will get an internship.

WJ: The next question is related to that. What are the most difficult or unexpected hurdles you are encountering now or you foresee in the immediate future?

MW: The second year of our program is very challenging because you are still in course work. I’m just completing my second year so you’re still in course work and you’re also in your practicum year where I maintain the client case of eight clients providing clinical services to them and you’re required to complete psychological assessments. You have to complete six which isn’t a big number, but on top of all the other things your doing that year it can be overwhelming.

WJ: The course load you say could be overwhelming

MW: Well all of it. The course load on top of the practicum requirements and the assessment requirements are overwhelming. And you also have to finish a publishable paper which they’d like for you to actually submit for publication. All before you sit for “comps.” So we had to do all of that in this year.

WJ: You’ve done it?

MW: I’m not done. I’m finished with the course work. I’m finished with my clinical experience. I have two more assessments to complete and my paper.

WJ: Ok. You’re making good progress?
MW: Yes.

WJ: Ok. They aren’t really unexpected because they told you in advance.

MW: Right. But it was unexpected how much time it would take to do all of it.

WJ: Oh it was the time. Ok. Next question is related. Do you think you are receiving adequate faculty mentoring, advising, and support? Now those three things they can be separate—mentoring, advising, and support.

MW: I feel very fortunate in that I receive... I believe I’m receiving adequate mentoring, advising, and support. I think I’ve developed really great relationships with the faculty. Not just one either. And I’m really pleased with it. Professors seem to be interested and invested in my development as a professional. So personally I’ve had a good experience on all three of those.

WJ: Ok. Well I’m going to ask you this question. Now since you’re an African-American female do you see this as being an advantage or a detriment to your progression towards a Ph.D. at your University? Now that’s a continuum where you can be anywhere in between.

MW: Yeah. Mmm. That’s a tough question. Let me think about it

WJ: You don’t have to answer it, but I had to ask it.

MW: Ok... I think our program is pretty diverse. There are about 35 students in my program and its almost half and half white and black. So I think it’s an interesting dynamic when you look at my department and how people, how students receive mentoring, support, and advising. Because I don’t think if you talked to everyone in my department, they’d say that they feel what I feel. And I don’t think I don’t think its based on race. I don’t know. I don’t know why I have good relationships with my faculty members.

WJ: So could we sum up and say that you are having good relationship, but you’re not quite sure if this applies to all of your classmates.

MW: Right.

WJ: Have you gotten any hints as to some of the things that may be irritating to them, especially if they are African-American.

MW: Ok I told you that there were 35 in our program; thirty five students. If you look at just my cohort, the students that came in with me, there are 11 of us and 6 of
us are African-American. And I actually think that most of these students would say that most of the African-American females would say that they get the support. I think the people that don’t get support in our program are people that don’t live up to the expectations set forth by the department. Does that make sense?

WJ: Sure. In other words the department sets up the rules and regulations, and they don’t live up to them and then there’s reaction from them. Is that what you’re saying?

MW: Yeah, that’s how I perceive it.

WJ: Ok. That’s well stated. Well let’s go to the next question - more favorable. What are some joys you are encountering now as a graduate student?

MW: Now I think it’s finally starting to hit that I’m almost done. It’s exciting and it’s a little scary, because after this summer then it’s the only thing standing in my way is the dissertation.

WJ: Ok.

MW: It was a little scary. It’s exciting but scary at the same time.

WJ: But you are having joy knowing that you are closing the gap and moving toward finishing.

MW: Yeah. Yeah. And another joy is being excited about internship because it’s an opportunity to learn what’s professional and to be seen more as a colleague than a student. And I can be anywhere in the United States and that’s exciting too.

WJ: Good. Let’s talk about the Doctoral Scholars program now. How has it been beneficial to you other than the fact that you receive a stipend?

MW: I think one of the most beneficial things, and I talked to Robbie about this a little bit before, is that when I got the award I think it shaped the way my department looked at me.

WJ: Ok, tell me tell me a little more about that.

MW: Like I think they thought I was a good, student but then I got this prestigious award and they were like, wow Monica, you’re the first person in our department to ever get this. You know this is such an honor. You’re interested in the academy and you know I think it just kind of it paved the way for me to have
Appendix B (continued)

those supportive relationships that I now have with the faculty. The other thing I think has been real beneficial about being a doctoral scholar is the Compact and going and being able to sit in those workshops and get the support to get the knowledge. Like I remember my first Compact, the first thing I went to was statistics. Cause I was so deathly afraid of statistics. And even though I probably really didn’t understand anything she was saying. I really didn’t. But just being in there and the lady that did it was from [institution] and she was so nice. And she was like if you have any problems just email me and just being in there feeling the anxiety that everybody else is feeling and having this lady you know just say, “Hey your not at my school, but you’re a scholar, and I’ll help you.”

WJ: I’m glad you said that. As you may recall, I presided at that session.

MW: Did you?

WJ: And it has been taking me years to get that session ingrained.

MW: It meant a lot, I still have the handouts and everything

WJ: Wonderful. We’re going to repeat it every year

MW: Yes you should. You should never let that go.

WJ: Ok.

MW: The workshops are critical. Like professionally, I’ve been to conferences and you kind of just go where you want to go, but I really see the Compact as my line. Like being able to prepare for things that are coming. It is a real advantage for me you know nobody else in my department has that advantage

WJ: Oh that’s good to know. Well, what are some other things that the program could do that would be helpful, if you could think of any. You mentioned several now. Is there anything this program can do to be beneficial to scholars like you?

MW: Well one thing that I could speak about is the challenges with health insurance for graduate students. And just I don’t know to the extent the doctoral scholars could do this, but I see different avenues like one avenue would be just to advocate on campus that if you’re going to require health insurance of graduate students. Like at [institution] they do. And they pay a certain portion of the premium for graduate assistance for fellowship students. But they don’t consider scholars to be fellowship recipients, if they are not also receiving an assistantship from the university so they won’t pay the premium for us and just kind of advocating that they take the responsibility for that as well.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: So that something that the Doctoral Scholars program could probably do is urging that this requirement be taken over.

MW: Right, and through the influence of SREB because I think that universities should really appreciate the Doctoral Scholars Program because it allows them to enroll more students at less cost so you could at least be willing to pay the premium for their insurance. If you’re only required to fund them for two years instead of the four, or if you know some programs... program is pretty accelerated you know most doctoral programs are six years so they are getting a good deal. They could at least pay the extra hundred dollars to have health insurance

WJ: Two more questions.

MW: Ok.

WJ: What’s the one thing you wish you had known before entering graduate school?

MW: I think it would be just the impact it would have on me personally.

WJ: What do you mean?

MW: It just changes everything about who I am. It’s a life changing experience. Getting a master’s degree wasn’t. But getting a Ph.D. for me has really reshaped the way I think about things, the way I respond to things, the way I react, the way I look at things and I knew that it would do that a little bit but I didn’t realize that it was going to be to this extent. I mean even my career path like, and this is sad to say here at an interview in the Doctoral Scholars program. When I started my Ph.D., I was 100% going to be faculty like that was my goal you know my students need to have a face in the classroom when they get to college that they can resonate with. Now it’s been challenged because I see how difficult it would be to be faculty. Not that I’ve ruled it out but it’s made me really, really look at it and question can I can I be an effective faculty member can I really do this.

WJ: So you’re thinking about something now that you hadn’t thought about before graduate school? Ok, last question.

MW: Ok.

WJ: So what advice would you give scholars entering a Ph.D. program?

MW: I have lots of advice.

WJ: Give me about to or three.
Appendix B (continued)

MW: Make a commitment. You started it, finish it. And that’s probably a lot tougher than the little three words I used to describe it, but make a commitment. The other would be to utilize your faculty. You’re not going to get through the program without having faculty support. You know so you want to find faculty that you relate to that are going to have your best interest at heart. And you want to be able to receive their constructive feedback.

WJ: Sounds good.

MW: Is there another one, let me think. Have support systems outside of school. Because the process can swallow you if you let it, and you probably wouldn’t be happy if that happened.

WJ: Wonderful. Sounds like you are well on the way towards getting that degree and we are going to be pushing for you. Anything else you need to tell me?

MW: No.

WJ: Thank you so very much.

MW: Thank you.

WJ: This concludes our interview and we look forward to seeing you in Arlington this fall.
Interview with NN

WJ: I am Walter Jacobs, and I am speaking with NN a doctoral candidate at [institution]. Today is March 19, 2007 at 2:15 p.m. Good afternoon NN; Thank you for coming. This is a study to determine some of the joys and tribulations that you may have as a doctoral candidate at [institution]. I have about ten questions that I am going to ask you. Just respond as best you can. I understand that you are in computer information systems. Is that correct?

NN: Yes.

WJ: What motivated you to seek a Ph.D. in this discipline?

NN: I was motivated by some of the professors I had back in undergraduate school. I attended [institution] and I thought that I one day wanted to have a job like they had. So, although I worked in the industry for several years to the point that I was getting bored doing the same thing over and over as a software engineer, and I decided I wanted more of a challenge. So I decided that I would go back to what I had wanted to do in the first place, and that was a college professor.

WJ: So you were inspired by your college professors in undergrad?

NN: Yes. Although I had no idea what a college professor did . . .

WJ: And you are still motivated?

NN: Yes. This hasn’t changed my mind yet.

WJ: When you are in graduate school, did you have a projected completion date in mind?

NN: Yes. I assumed it would be a four year project, so I projected the date of May, 2007.

WJ: Are you still on that good track?

NN: No.

WJ: What happened?

NN: I’m now looking at August 2007. Part of what happened was . . . my leaving was dependent on my getting a job.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: You’re leaving where?

NN: My leaving the Ph.D. program. I was going to stay a year later if I did not get a job at a university. So the job market is kind of tight . . . so technically I could go. Obviously I’m going to wrap up by August. I can graduate in August; otherwise if there wasn’t any type of job opportunity, I was going to stay in the Ph.D. program for another year and start looking then for jobs. The way the cycle runs . . . we usually start looking for jobs in August.

WJ: So what happened then?

NN: I got a job offer. But that still doesn’t explain the August to May gap. I really wasn’t targeting because I didn’t that . . . what happened was, in fall of last year I thought I’m probably not going to get a job so I didn’t really push myself to stick with any time frame and stay around longer.

WJ: So you are now working? Right? Or you did work or you are working at [institution] at the same time?

NN: I’m working on my dissertation. No. My job starts in August.

WJ: You’ve finished your course work?

NN: Yes. I finished my course work after two years. I’m still in school fulltime. But I did accept a job that starts in August. So now I have motivation to hurry and finish. Whereas before there was no reason to stop because I wasn’t going to have a job. So I was going to stay a student a little longer.

WJ: Was this a surprise to you?

NN: Yes.

WJ: To what extent? You thought you were going to get a job?

NN: No I didn’t think I would get a job this year at all; because I want to stay in the [city] area. So I wasn’t looking throughout the entire country. Even though I applied for jobs in [city] . . . its so competitive . . . I didn’t have high hopes that I was actually going to land anything.

WJ: I see; you were surprised that you did get an offer?

NN: Yes.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: What are the most difficult, unexpected hurdles you are encountering now?

NN: It is finding a job and negotiating job offers. Even negotiating the one job that I have . . . it was difficult because I didn’t know what to expect as far as the salary was concerned. I mean, I have some ideas for like research universities but for undergraduate, liberal arts colleges, I didn’t have a good idea of how they paid and how to negotiate that. And that was a little bit of a hurdle. But even more than that . . . the biggest hurdle now is finishing. And also dealing with four years of not having a good income, there are pressures that you have to hurry up so you can start paying all that stuff that you owe now that you’ve been putting off and house repairs and all that other stuff.

WJ: Do you think you are receiving adequate faculty mentoring, advising and support?

NN: Yes. I feel really lucky . . . I have a mentor, you know Dr. J and I also have a really good dissertation advisor who is very supportive. Dr. J is not even on the dissertation committee. And support from SREB and another organization called the Ph.D. Project, which is very helpful.

WJ: What enjoyment are you getting out of your studies? You are having enjoyment, right?

NN: I can come up with some things to say there. One of the joys is really publishing and receiving some recognition for research. The last conference I went to in December was great because me and my co-authors got best paper for track for two different tracks. That was like the best conference ever. I wish it could happen all the time, but of course it won’t. So I feel like I’m making a contribution and some of the hard work is paying off. And I would hope to be able to be cited one day. Another joy would be mentoring other students.

WJ: Is the Doctoral Scholar Program beneficial? If so, in what ways?

NN: Yes, Financial. They don’t require extra stuff from you. With other programs, there are always some stuff that if required of you to give, and it may be stuff you don’t want to give. And of course the conferences; I’m beginning to appreciate them more.

WJ: How many conferences have you attended?

NN: Three.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: So you’ve satisfied all the requirements as far as the Doctoral Scholars program is concerned?

NN: I didn’t realize that. I was going to keep going.

WJ: Well, we’ll see you in Arlington one way or another. So what are some other things the Doctoral Scholars Program can do that will be helpful to scholars like you . . . perspective Ph.D.?

NN: I can name things . . . they’re only finesse things. What you are doing is great. One idea that came out of the last conference was having a dinner club. I think it was some of the students in [state]. They had a hard time facilitating it. I was thinking if we had some type of social activities throughout the year and if SREB helped to coordinate it, then maybe it would make it a little easier. I don’t have any additional things. Whenever I call, I get the support that I need.

WJ: Well what is the on thing you wish you had known before entering Graduate School?

NN: Persistence and stubbornness are more important than intelligence.

WJ: And you didn’t know that when you were an undergraduate?

NN: No I did not. I thought it was about how smart you were and that smart people have Ph.D.’s. That’s not true. I’ve seen people leave the program that were just as smart as any other student, and they left.

WJ: So the two things you think are persistence and stubbornness?

NN: Yes. I think they are related.

WJ: They very well may be. What advice would you give scholars entering a Ph.D. program?

NN: One thing I would say is write down the reason why you’re entering. What your goals are and what you hope to accomplish when you’re done. Because as you go through that, there are going to be different things that people will try to tell you to change you and your reasoning. I would say that you are taking care of yourself physically and spiritually as though you were taking care of your own house. Its not about intelligence . . . I mean everyone that enters the program is smart, but you are of no good to anyone if you are burned out or if you get sick. I know that after the first semester, I was so sick. And I didn’t want to do anything over the break. You got to take care of yourself. It is important to be healthy.
Along the same lines, you need to try to have some fun. Some professors have actually said that things get worse for you when you become a professor and that this is the most time that you have to focus on your research when you are a Ph.D. student. I would say that you need to try to find the fun in it. Also, keep an open mind as far as with everything like what your research is going to be and who your advisor is going to be. Some people come in and know right away what they want to research . . . and they come in and are so focused. Keep an open mind about research and who you want to work with and what you want to do when you graduate. This is about you and not anyone else. That’s what I would tell them. Be true to yourself.

WJ: Is that anything else you want to add?

NN: Thanks to SREB and Robbie for listening to me.

WJ: Thank you for taking time to be with us today.
Appendix B (continued)

Interview with PD

WJ: I am speaking with PD, a doctoral student in sociology at [institution]. Thank you for coming here. We are trying to ask some questions to determine some of the wishes of our students. What is your discipline is and why were you motivated to seek a Ph.D. in this area?

PD: My area of study is sociology with an interest in race and urban studies. What motivated me is that I am an epidemiologist with a master’s in public health and I found myself doing a lot of behavioral research. I wanted to learn that side of things and then bring it all together.

WJ: There were some things after your master’s degree that led you to want to get your Ph.D.?

PD: Yes, one of those things was a research project that I had run but they preferred the Ph.D.

WJ: When you entered graduate school did you have an expected completion date?

PD: I began as an older student in my thirties so I had the goal in mind to be completed within three years, in part because I need to work to support myself. It’s hard to go back to being a graduate student and living on that budget when you’ve been working for 12 years. You have to give up a lot of things to go back to school.

WJ: Are you still on track for finishing in three years?

PD: I am still on track. I am completing my second semester and I’m almost done with all of my core courses. I only have 2 core courses left. I will take my qualifying exams next May and then begin work on my dissertation.

WJ: Have you changed your completion date? You just mentioned that you don’t perceive any changes.

PD: I don’t as of yet. However, because of my background I don’t have strong writing skills so I may push things back to take a writing course. Writing is definitely one of the things I have struggled with, having to write and then re-write in a social science setting.

WJ: The difference is in writing?

PD: I did not expect to encounter that issue. With my research methods, the difference is in how you write the proposal.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: Would you say this was a surprise?

PD: It was. I had never had a sociology class before. Everything for me has been very science based. This is my first sociology setting.

WJ: Then you would say changing from one type of science to the other was a difficulty?

PD: It's definitely a transition. I would advise future students to take a close look and visit the social science department you've been accepted to. Take the time to read some of the publications so you will have an idea of what you are expected to do.

WJ: What are the most difficult or unexpected hurdles you are encountering now?

PD: I think one of the things that is difficult for African-American students in sociology at [institution] is that there are not a lot of African-Americans. I've taken an urban sociology class and a race and ethnic relations class, both were taught by white males. That's interesting within itself because it doesn't give us the different spin that would be given by an African-American teacher.

WJ: Do you see that as a barrier?

PD: I don't think it was a barrier. For instance, I'm taking race and relations and my professor always talks about as a white person the advantages they had growing up. I think the perspective of an African-American would be different.

WJ: Do you see adequate faculty mentoring and support?

PD: I think the two African-American teachers we have in the department don't interact a lot with the graduate students. We don't have a lot of one on one interaction.

WJ: Do you think they should have more impact with students like you?

PD: I think they do. With the next schedule in the fall, those teachers are making the transition to some graduate courses so the graduate students will have a chance to interact with them.

WJ: With all of the current hoopla like the racial incident with DI have you perceived any issues at your institution.
Appendix B (continued)

PD: I haven’t had any issues like that at my institution. When you are in the department, you are in the department. We don’t have a whole lot of outside interference. Everybody is pretty friendly, open and honest.

WJ: The support from the faculty members is adequate?

PD: Yes, it’s adequate for everyone. They have a great support system. What I do find difficult is the fact that we can’t have directed reading classes. I inquired about it, and was given an answer that indicated that obviously they don’t get paid for that. I was told wait until next semester. I was a little taken aback by that.

WJ: Directed reading would help you?

PD: Yes, it would be two of my electives for graduation. They offer limited classes in the summer.

WJ: How are you going to overcome this shortfall when the professor says he doesn’t have time?

PD: I went to see the graduate director and she is going to do a directed reading with me in the field I’m in.

WJ: So you had to be aggressive?

PD: Yes. I had to find another way.

WJ: Let’s talk about some of the joys you are experiencing in your studies. What’s delightful about what you are doing?

PD: It’s making me think outside the box, especially my ethnic relations class. It’s making me think a lot more about race. In my former field everything was direction towards health disparity and you never really think about race. It’s just a component, you never actually delve into it and talk about the issue. Taking these race relations classes and these urban classes has allowed me to look at things differently on a societal level.

WJ: This is a joy for you?

PD: It is because I am leaning a lot of new things.

WJ: Let’s talk about the Doctoral Scholars Program? In what ways has this program been beneficial for you?
Appendix B (continued)

PD: Outside of the financial support, the networking has been great. A lot of people that I met at the Institute are scholars that are at my school and I've had a chance to talk to them about their experiences. Just the networking is great. The support that the staff offers is tremendous. When my grandmother passed away, Robbie Ouzts called me every day. I talk to Dr. Abraham frequently. It's just the support system they offer, you really do feel like you are part of the family.

WJ: That's good to know. Are there any other things that the program could do to be of help to you?

PD: I think that maybe if we could meet others from our university that are part of the program, it would be great. We see each other once a year but more contact would help. If we don't go to a conference then we don't know there are other students in our area. I just discovered a student in my department that is also a doctoral scholar and I didn't know that until I went to the conference and saw her name on the list.

WJ: So do you think we need to have specific discipline area sessions at the Institute?

PD: Yes, so that you can discuss what is going on in your discipline area. You can talk about personal issues or what you are encountering as a student in the field. Being a minority in a predominantly white field, even though sociology does have a lot of black educators, it's good to know what's going on and what is being experienced at other universities.

WJ: How is this affecting you? Being a minority in a predominantly white field?

PD: Being an African-American, we think about different things. At [institution] we have a sex and gender track. Some of the things they talk about, we would not talk about as African-Americans. There are things that are personal parts of your life that they talk about. It's just different. We discussed an issue in race class the other day about the differences. We don't want it to be that way but it is.

WJ: It seems as though we are encountering the same thing. With the DI situation, he said he heard that term in the black community.

PD: Exactly. He heard a conversation, and in that community it flowed easily for them. It bothers me that he felt comfortable saying something from another community on a national radio station. It bothers me. His apology meant nothing.

WJ: I'm bringing that up because it seems to relate to what we are doing in this program. We want to understand your feelings as an African-American in a
predominantly white instructional situation. Onto a new question, what is the one thing you wish you had known before entering graduate school?

PD: Don’t wait until you get as old as I am to go back to graduate school. I think that your mentality is different at this age and you have so many other life issues to deal with because life continues to happen. When you are younger life happens but it is ok because you can go home to mom and dad. Being an older student you can look back and wonder if you were really that care free at a younger age.

WJ: You are saying don’t wait?

PD: Don’t wait. The more you put it off, the harder it is go back and the more your attention span shortens. It is harder when you are older because you have other things going on.

WJ: Anything else you want to offer other scholars seeking this degree?

PD: Find a networking system and a social support group that works for you. You will always need to talk about something. If you have issues you may not always want to go to a professor without getting a second or third opinion from someone else. Always feel comfortable enough to have a support system you can count on for guidance and support.

WJ: What advice would you give scholars just entering other than this? Anything else?

PD: I would just like to say don’t stretch it out. Don’t be a graduate student that takes five, six or seven years to finish the degree. Get it done and get out and experience life because there are other things past school that you need to experience. It’s great that you love to teach but if you are done the graduate. Some students have been there five and six years and just need to defend their dissertation. And these people are sometimes holding onto fellowships that could go to new students. So I say just finish and get it done.

WJ: This is impacting other students who need help?

PD: Yes. Don’t stretch it out. Finish it if you can.

WJ: Thank you so much. This has been very enlightening.
Interview with SD

WJ: I am Walter, Jacobs and I am speaking with SD from [institution]. We will start with some basic questions. What is your discipline and what motivated you to seek a Ph.D. in this area?

SD: My discipline is microbiology. My parents motivated me to seek a Ph.D. because they both have Ph.D.'s in biology. They are both teachers, so sometimes I would go to school with them. I soon learned that I really liked science.

WJ: Where do they teach?

SD: My dad teaches at [institution] and my mom teaches at [institution].

WJ: When you entered graduate school did you have a projected completion date?

SD: I did but that has changed now.

WJ: Tell me how that has changed.

SD: I thought that I would finish in a total of four years but my major professor has extended that date by a year. He said that he wanted me to do more work; to publish more papers. I’ve actually completed everything else.

WJ: So you have finished all of your coursework?

SD: Yes. I am just doing writing and research now.

WJ: When do you think you’ll have this finished?

SD: I plan to walk in December 2007.

WJ: Wonderful. For the record, what is your dissertation title? What are you studying?

SD: Let me simplify it. I’m trying to clean up the environment with bacteria. I’m removing oil from different soil environments.

WJ: Has this process been much of a surprise to you, him changing the date?

SD: Yes. I was under the impression that once I had completed everything in my dissertation proposal that I could defend and leave. But then he started adding extra projects. I think in the beginning he did not think I could complete this work
so quickly, but I’ll come in on a weekend if it gets the work done. It’s almost like I finished the work too quick so he added more work.

WJ: Do you think he did this because he thought you were going through it too rapidly? Or was there something missing in what you have done?

SD: I’ve seen the papers that others in my field have published, and I think what I had was enough to graduate. I don’t know why he is adding more things to my project, but I have to deal with it.

WJ: Do you think there is any ulterior motive behind what he did?

SD: Sometimes I think so, but then I try not to think bad thoughts about my professor. I think that he has different expectations for certain students as opposed to others. There are many different students. What he puts on my plate is different than some of the other students who came into the program at the same time as me.

WJ: You are African-American, is he?

SD: No he is not.

WJ: Do you think that has anything to do with this situation?

SD: I do, considering there are only three black Ph.D. students in the biology department at [institution] There are a lot of black master’s students but most Ph.D. students are Caucasian or Asian. And then I am a female also.

WJ: So being black and being female could play a role in you having to do more work?

SD: Sometimes I think so. I mean, yes I do. Just something that my advisor said in conversations when we met about not wanting people to hire me based on my looks. Some of these backhanded compliments are very weird but he is a strange person. I know I’ll have to deal with that later on in life anyway.

WJ: Is this affecting you in any other way? Affecting your completion date?

SD: Yes, I do think so. If I were white and a male, I think I would graduate in May or August.

WJ: This leads into the next question. What are the most difficult or unexpected hurdles you are encountering? You may have explained it already. Is this a hurdle?
Appendix B (continued)

SD: Of course this is a hurdle, but you learn to deal with them. I’m almost finished.

WJ: You will finish in December 2007?

SD: Yes.

WJ: Do you think you are receiving adequate faculty mentoring, advising and support?

SD: That’s a hard question. I’m receiving mentoring and advising, but not from my major professors or from the people on my committee. Our graduate coordinator is black - I talk to her. I talk to my parents. I talk to other scholars in different disciplines. I’m not necessarily getting mentoring from my major professor and my committee members. I’m not getting the same type of support he might be giving to other students in my lab.

WJ: How many committee members do you have?

SD: I have four.

WJ: Are they are Caucasian?

SD: The three males are, and the female is Korean.

WJ: So there are no African-Americans on your committee?

SD: No. [institution] doesn’t have any African-American Ph.D.’s in the biology department that could be on my committee. To be on a committee, you have to run a lab. There are only two black lecturers and they don’t run a lab. They are both adjunct professors and work part-time.

WJ: Do you think it would have helped to have had an African-American on your committee?

SD: Maybe. There are still four people on your committee so you could still have three who aren’t on your side.

WJ: You are receiving advice and mentoring, but not from your advisors?

SD: Correct.

WJ: What are some of the joys you have encountered in this process? What is gratifying?
SD: Finishing. It’s different now because I can see the light at the end of the tunnel. I am still having fun. I have fun teaching. It’s not related to my research but I really enjoy what I do regardless of the professors or whatever. It will help me later on.

WJ: You are teaching as a teaching assistant?

SD: Yes.

WJ: Are all of your students undergraduates?

SD: Yes, they are all getting their bachelor’s degrees.

WJ: This is helping you?

SD: Yes, when I teach the class I usually have a very diverse class. The students are so positive so I can’t go in there being down. They have their problems to.

WJ: In a sense, you are mentoring them?

SD: Yes.

WJ: That’s great. Let’s talk for a moment about the Doctoral Scholars Program. How has it been beneficial to you?

SD: I was just accepted this year. When I went to the Institute I loved it. I had never seen so many minorities working towards their Ph.D.. I made friends there. Everyone was in different fields and we were all getting our doctorate. It was very motivating to see people experiencing the same things I am.

WJ: The Institute by itself was motivational to you?

SD: Oh yes, it was three days of networking. I thought it was great.

WJ: What are some other things the program could do that you think would be beneficial for all doctoral candidates like you? What do you think we should be doing for all candidates?

SD: It would be helpful if we had meetings once a month. Nothing too big; but a meeting where you can show up once a month for an hour and talk to people about what’s going on with your program. I keep in regular contact - Robbie Ouzts calls often. That’s the only thing I could suggest.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering your doctoral studies?

SD: That’s it is going to be hard. I think especially when you come from getting a master’s, you think you will just come in and ace it. I did not think that graduate school would be this hard. Not the classes as much as the research and dealing with the professors. That’s hard because you can study for classes but you can’t study to handle different personalities.

WJ: That is interesting. How are you dealing with the different personalities? How are you dealing with the person giving you the extra time and work?

SD: I haven’t really thought about it. I think he can read my facial expressions and can tell that I am frustrated but I still don’t say anything. I just kind of internalize it and walk out.

WJ: You just said it. That’s what we are starting to find out, that you feel it but cannot respond to it openly.

SD: That’s right because he has the power of the pen.

WJ: Last question. What advice would you give scholars who are entering a Ph.D. program?

SD: Be strong. There is only one way out. The hardest part is getting into the program. It’s hard dealing with the different professors but there is only one way out. Failure is not an option.

WJ: Anything else you want to add?

SD: You just have to make sure you are really committed to what you plan to do. It takes a lot of commitment.

WJ: This has been a wonderful interview. We have learned a lot. Thanks.
Interview with TC-A

WJ: Today is March 23, 2007 and I am speaking with TC-A, a doctoral candidate at the [institution]. Thank you for coming to speak with me today. What is your discipline and what motivated you to seek a Ph.D. in this area?

TC-A: I’m in the Department of Child and Family Development, but specifically on marriage and family research. I was interested in pursuing a Ph.D. in this area because of my interest in . . . I’m very pro-family and I wanted to do more and to find out ways of intervening with African-American families; in terms of doing some interventions. I was hesitant at first because I have my masters but I’m not disappointed. My master’s is in social work. With some motivation and encouragement I did decide to pursue the Ph.D.

WJ: That’s wonderful. Since you are in graduate school do you have a projected completion date?

TC-A: I started in 2004. I think I will probably finish in 2009. I figured it would take about five years. I am hoping to stay on track with one possible deviation.

WJ: What might that deviation be?

TC-A: There are a few life factors that may extend that a little bit. I definitely plan on finishing but I’ve shared with the staff that I do want to have a baby. I recently got married in 2005 and would like to get pregnant this year. I also want to pursue a Fulbright as a student and not as a Ph.D. If I decide to do that, then I might postpone my graduation to have enough time to pursue the Fulbright. Those are just some of the factors.

WJ: So you are definitely going to complete?

TC-A: Definitely. These are factors that may lengthen my time to degree but I will complete.

WJ: Have there been any surprises in this process or things you did not anticipate?

TC-A: In some regards, I have been under the impression that when you go to a predominantly white school you really want to make contact with the African-American professors. It seems that sometimes there is this misconception that African-Americans faculty will be your primary mentors. In actuality, I found that I have gotten very good mentorship from people who aren’t of color. It was somewhat of a “wow”, you think “I’m going to connect with all of these black
fols, and then it doesn’t have to be that way. I anticipated that I would have had more mentorship from the African-American professors, but I didn’t.

WJ: What are some of the more difficult or unexpected hurdles you are encountering now?

TC-A: A big difficulty and challenge is that our program changed options. You can either take the traditional comp exams or you have a portfolio route where you have different things dealing with service and other items. I elected to do the portfolio route. For individuals who are considering teaching it gives you a good footing. Part of the requirements is that you have to have at least two publications before you move into candidacy. When you are thinking about applying for positions you already have two articles; that is helpful. In building this new process, they have not put in something to help students with manuscript writing. For example, in another department they actually have that as a part of the curriculum. They have classes devoted to helping you do these tasks because it is a requirement. I feel as if I don’t necessarily know everything that was involved in manuscript writing and would like help on it.

WJ: So it was something you didn’t expect?

TC-A: When I elected to do the portfolio route, I didn’t fully think about how I would have to actually have two articles published. Its one thing to sit down and take exams, it’s another to have something published. You have to find editors and journals that will embrace your research and will actually publish your articles. That was something I didn’t fully think about when I elected to go that route. The hurdle for me is really wanting some real help in manuscript writing and knowing how to navigate that process.

WJ: Do you think you are receiving adequate faculty mentoring, advisement and support?

TC-A: I’m getting it in the sense that, for example, my current major professor has been very embracing of my research. It was not an area of focus for him before I came into the program. My area is something completely new to him, and he has really taken it on and I really appreciate that. My assistantship is right in line with my area of research. The person who is over that program, I was hoping to get more mentorship from her. She is an African-American and I am not getting that and it is somewhat disappointing. I am not getting the mentoring from her, I was hoping to receive. I also just recently signed up to do some independent research with a non-minority professor and he has been very supportive. So I am getting a good research experience but who I thought I would get my mentoring from is not happening.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: You anticipated you would get lots of mentorship from African-American professionals, but on the other hand you find you are getting it more from the non-African-American professionals. That is very interesting. What are some of the joys you are encountering as you proceed through your doctoral studies?

TC-A: What I'm finding exciting is the area of research that I'm doing. I feel like the agenda that I have created has some future possibilities in terms of funding and in terms of doing some things abroad. It's exciting in terms of it making the work worthwhile in the end.

WJ: Is the Doctoral Scholars Program beneficial?

TC-A: Oh yes, in more ways than one. You know the motto is "more than a check and a handshake," and it really has been. I absolutely love the program. Every time I find out about a person of color who is pursuing a Ph.D., I talk about the program. More than that is attending the Institute each year. The first year I was awestruck to see all of the people of color there pursuing their Ph.D. Seeing so many people of color in the sciences and STEM programs was very exciting. The second year was refreshing. I had come to a bump in the road and wasn't feeling very scholarly and I just needed something - that "you can do it". Every year I get that. The staff is great. I've called them many times and come up with research ideas. I could go on and on about how great the program and the staff is.

WJ: What are some other things that the program could do that would be helpful?

TC-A: Because the writing piece is such an important part of the process, they could consider having a writing retreat. Something under the SREB program would be a nice addition.

WJ: What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering graduate school?

TC-A: It's not that I didn’t know there was a lot of reading, but it was more than expected. On a personal level, I wish I had better time management before entering. My lack of time management skills has definitely had a consequence. Being at a predominantly white institution, a lot of the time I am one of the few minorities in a class. I have experienced on several occasions a professor who will make a remark that is culturally inappropriate. It wasn't so much like it was a racial slur, it was just insensitive. There are times when I have tried to correct them. One of the things I learned last year at the Institute was to pick which battle to fight. Another was the need to come up with a list of professors from schools you are interested in. This is a small community. Can these professors
say something nice about me? It makes me wonder what the repercussions of correcting some of these professors might be. These remarks have come from white professors. Some of these remarks have been insensitive, so I have said something in class about it. Bottom line, last year I learned that I need to learn how to pick my battles when it comes to racial remarks.

WJ: That’s very important. I’m glad you said that. Last question, what advice would you give to other scholars seeking the Ph.D.?

TC-A: The last piece I mentioned for sure. I’m not suggesting that you be passive and don’t say anything, but just know when and how to say something so that it is received well. I would tell them to not believe the hype. Every person of color is not where you will find your resources at. If you find a person that isn’t of color who is supportive and willing to back you, then embrace that person. Have a tough skin when you go into these programs, especially if it is a program that is predominantly white. Connect with the people who are going to best help you navigate and be in your corner. I also suggest that you not be afraid of challenges. Even though sometimes it might be hard, if you can sense that the challenge is for your own good just know these people are pushing to make you better. Don’t be afraid of the challenge.

WJ: Wonderful. Thank you so very much. Anything else you want to add?

TC-A: No. Thank you.
Appendix B (continued)

Interview with TG

WJ: Today is June 19, 2007. I’m Walter Jacobs with the Doctoral Scholars Program, and I’m speaking with TG a doctoral scholar at [institution]. Good afternoon. This questionnaire is to ask some questions about your opinions and feelings about being a scholar. I have about ten questions to ask you so please give this your best response. And here is the first question: Namely what is your discipline or subject area and what motivated you to seek a Ph.D. in this area?

TG: I’m actually in the public health field, and my actual degree is in health promotion and behavior. What motivated actually to seek my Ph.D., actually I would say it was actually spiritual because I have a master’s in public health, and I was fine with that and I loved the work that I did. So one day, I dreamt that I was getting my Ph.D. at [institution] and I was like, well that’s weird because, one I never knew they had a school of public health, and two like I never thought about getting my Ph.D.; but it felt like it was right. And so then when I looked up [institution], like they actually had like a Doctoral program that was perfectly suited to what I love to do, so I was like, “wow,” is this what I’m supposed to do. And I felt like that actually came from God, and then I was actually applying to [institution]; but I actually don’t like the cold and so I was like OK. God is this really you. You know I don’t really like the cold. Are you just telling me that I should get my Ph.D., or are you telling me that I need to go to [institution]? So I looked up programs because I was working at [institution] cause they didn’t quite have a Ph.D. program in my field. They like had just started and it was just like super selective. And they didn’t even want people who graduated from [institution], and plus I knew all the professors there and their classes weren’t even that much. And so I found [institution’s] program, and it like fit perfectly; and it just felt like the right thing to do so I just felt like I was getting guided and I actually scratched [institution], and only applied to [institution] and that’s part of my motivation then. And then as I started to continue, I realized that I wanted more autonomy myself by being a doctor and designing my own projects, and so it just really started to feel right.

WJ: That’s wonderful, so you said it was really something spiritual that really pushed you into this Doctoral program?

TG: Yes, I believe that.

WJ: That’s wonderful. Next question. When you entered graduate school . . . ? Now we’re talking primarily about the Doctoral Scholars Program.

TG: Doctoral program.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: Did you have a projected completion date?

TG: I started in the fall of '05, and I wanted to graduate in three years so I wanted to graduate in 2008.

WJ: So you’re projected for 2008?

TG: Yes, that was my projection.

WJ: That was?

TG: It’s my projection, but that will go to the number three question. It’s still 2008, it could be 2009. It’s been little hurdles that have been thrown my way. So we’ll see how that goes.

WJ: Well let’s talk about the hurdle now. I’ll ask you later, but tell me a little bit about what is the hurdle which may push you into 2009.

TG: Uh huh. I was on track finishing my course work in two years. And I actually took my written comprehensive exams at the end of May. And then I was supposed to defend on yesterday, but I just found out. I found out on Sunday that I didn’t pass two of my written comprehensive exam questions, so I have to revise them and then prayerfully defend in September. So ideally I would have been working on my first three chapters of my dissertation this summer, but I can’t work on that until after I pass my oral comp.

WJ: So you got two questions to rewrite on your comps?

TG: Yes, yes.

WJ: How did that make you feel?

TG: Horrible. I mean I’m still processing. I do feel I’m coping. I felt really bad about it. I was really surprised. I thought I did good. And yesterday I actually had to go up to [institution] for a meeting for another project that I’m working on with my advisor that we had scheduled for after my comps, and so it was hard going up there cause I was actually in the same room I was supposed to defend in. But my advisor did make me feel better. She said she was actually really surprised that I actually failed those two questions, and she was like I thought you did a really good job. And then I talked to one other person why I failed their question, and I totally understood where she was coming from and that made me feel better; and she was saying that I didn’t really write a bad answer but she was looking . . . I had to write to make a conceptual model which I had never done.
Appendix B (continued)

before, so she said it was OK, but she really wanted it to be better and she felt better failing me than to give me a marginal pass, and that she didn’t want me to look at it as failure but you know its easier to say. And I haven’t heard yet. We just got in touch with the other one to see what happened. But I just felt good that at least my advisor said I did a good job.

WJ: So this just happened yesterday.

TG: This just happened, yea.

WJ: And here I am interviewing you today.

TG: Right, so hence the hurdle to either graduate depending on how this goes, I have to start my dissertation later, so it’ll either be the end of 2008 or 2009 at the latest in May.

WJ: Well, we have all hope that you will really come through this in September.

TG: Right. Yeah.

WJ: September.

TG: Yes. Yes.

WJ: Ok. Do you feel that the people who gave you this information were fair in telling you about this?

TG: I really totally understand the one I did talk to. I don’t know yet about this other person. I really wanted to hear from, because the question I did have the most difficulty on was the one I talked to yesterday, and I totally understand that. So I’m really curious about this person who I haven’t heard from yet, because I mean question . . . was totally like what’d I do. So I don’t know if I just was totally in left field. So I still have to call my advisor later to find out his comment.

WJ: OK. Well we’ll wait to hear from you. OK. OK. Well now we’re really in number four. Maybe we can expand on it. What are the most difficult or unexpected hurdles you just mentioned? Well, have there been any other unexpected hurdles?

TG: Um . . . Other than that, well I mean that definitely was a big thing. And other than that, not really; but even within this, my advisor she was saying that one of the people who was on my committee now, the one I hadn’t heard from yet. She was telling me other information about him, and she was suggesting that I might
Appendix B (continued)

not want to have him on my dissertation committee anymore, and I might have to look for another dissertation member so I wasn’t expecting that because I selected . . . the people I did to help continue . . . guide me on my dissertation.

WJ: So now you may have to change?

TG: Yes.

WJ: And you didn’t anticipate?

TG: Right.

WJ: Needing dissertation committee member?

TG: Right exactly.

WJ: That can be a hurdle.

TG: Right.

WJ: Ok. How do you expect to overcome that? Do you have some other people in mind?

TG: I do. I do. Actually, I do because I already one other member on this comp. But she said she’ll be on my comp now. And if it’s a fit, she’ll be on dissertation; but I had already a case. I wasn’t anticipating having a male person; but if she didn’t want to be on my committee, I already had someone else in mind. So I may not have one or two people in mind, but I have what I have to get . . . But I do have at least one person in mind.

WJ: You are an African-American female?

TG: Yes I am.

WJ: Are there other African-American females like you studying in the area at [institution]?

TG: Yes there are actually. There are two other older doctoral students who are further along so.

WJ: And what about your mentors and advisees; are there any African-Americans who are mentors?
Appendix B (continued)

TG: It’s interesting because my advisor, she’s not African-American, but she’s Asian so she is a woman of color, but it’s still a different perspective. And one of my other committee members, she’s African-American; but she’s new and I haven’t really interacted with her much, so I can’t say that. There is one . . . one person who is on my team that I feel like she is a mentor. It’s like two maybe two, but they’re not in my field.

WJ: Do you feel that any differences between your ethnic group membership and their ethnic group membership would make a difference?

TG: Maybe . . . And I thought about that because one of the things that the woman who failed me was telling me yesterday, and yet she’s African-American. She was saying also another reason why she failed me that she felt like as an African-American people are really looking, are going to look at me more, and she wants me to be really tight with my information and relaying it, and so she wanted me to really make sure I felt like I understood, and explained was able to explain things well. So I don’t think I would have gotten that from someone else who wasn’t African-American saying that to me.

WJ: Wait a minute now, the person who told you this was one who graded your performance?

TG: Yes, but she was saying right, and she did right; and she was just telling me, I mean she was saying, more so like thinking about my dissertations like she was saying this is going to help me with my dissertation. And she was saying that she wants me to understand stuff now; she said because later like if you are explaining your dissertation, different things they’re going to look at you more cause you’re black.

WJ: OK. So this was helpful and it was coming from another African-American.

TG: Right. Yes.

WJ: And you don’t think maybe a person that was Caucasian would have given you this type of information?

TG: No; I’ve experienced this, like, you know how they look at us - like somebody else who is white is not going to say that to me. Or even my Asian advisor:

WJ: OK. Number five. Well this is related. Do you think you are receiving adequate faculty mentoring, advising, and support? Now those three things can be different.
Appendix B (continued)

TG: Right.

WJ: You can respond to them collectively or differently; mentoring, advising, and support.

TG: OK. This has been a process that has changed for me. Initially I would say no to adequate mentoring and adequate advising, because I felt like it was actually something it was trying me; and some other doctoral students are trying to change, but I felt, like, more like a fish out of water having to sort of find my own way in our department, and our departments are not really good at mentoring or guiding, and so I felt like, its like, on one hand you’re supposed to be open; you know a doctoral student can select and create your own path. But it was just like, here create your own path; but I don’t have any guidelines or help to how I can create my own path. So I felt like I was alone on a lot of things. And in terms of just support, I mean I felt like I was supported too, yeah, you can do it, you know go ahead and do whatever you want to do; but I didn’t really feel like I was being mentored and advised for most of my time. And then probably maybe, like, two months ago, like, my vision has changed with at least my faculty advisor. Like, she has actually been super in support, super advisement, and super in mentoring; and she’s been really great through this process right here. But I don’t know if she was just kind of waiting for me to get to my finish my course work, or just had so much faith in me that she didn’t need to really advise me but once I started getting towards, like, I need help with my dissertation because I’m out there and I need to narrow it down. Like, she’s just been really great about all that and then just also trying to push me to publish some pieces and different things like that.

WJ: This faculty advisor was the same one that told you about the reason for your problem?

TG: No. The one who told me the reason is just on my comps committee.

WJ: OK. But tell me how this faculty advisor fits in.

TG: She’s my chair, yeah, so she’s my chair, my advisor all that.

WJ: You haven’t talked to her yet about what happened yesterday?

TG: No. She’s the one who cause it has to . . . my committee . . . my comps committee had to submit their scores to her, and so then she sent the email out saying my oral defense would be postponed. So she knows, and that’s the one who was talking to me yesterday, and the one who said that she felt like I did a good job.

WJ: Yeah. That’s what I’m trying find out, and she’s African-American?
TG: No. She’s Asian.

WJ: She’s Asian. OK. So the results of your qualifying examinations were not the best and this information was channeled to your chair?

TG: Yes.

WJ: And your chair was the one that told you?

TG: Yes.

WJ: And she was also the one who advised that this would help you in the long run?

TG: No. That was another committee member.

WJ: Another committee member?

TG: That was a committee member.

WJ: OK.

TG: But I passed my advisor’s question. You know I passed her question; she said she really liked my question. So at least my chair, my advisor, at least, you know, she liked my stuff.

WJ: OK. We’re clear. We’re clear. Mentoring and advising are questionable. Support is OK. Can we say that?

TG: It was for most of my time; but in the past two months all three have been great.

WJ: OK. OK.

TG: It’s really just been a shift now.

WJ: That’s good to know. Well let’s focus on something more positive. What are some of the joys you are encountering now in your studies?

TG: I’ve really gotten into the groove of just being a student and enjoying myself, and I really liked a lot of classes I took. I’m also getting a certificate in qualitative research. I loved all the classes I took in qualitative research, and just learning more about it. And I just feel, like, I’m more competent as a qualitative researcher, and I feel, like, I can say I’m a qualitative researcher and know the
Appendix B (continued)

basics of what I’m doing. I really enjoyed that, and I’ve also had the opportunity to teach and so that’s been great.

WJ: OK. You are developing a sense of confidence?
TG: Yes.
WJ: Especially in this area? Is your dissertation going to be qualitative?
TG: Yes it is.
WJ: OK.
WJ: Now let’s talk about the doctoral scholars program. Is it beneficial, and try to focus on ways other than the financial support it gives you?
TG: I like having access to jobs. I like the opportunities, like, what we have at the Teaching and Mentoring Conference to be able to network with other colleges and universities; and you see about job opportunities. I like how friendly the staff seems. It seems if you are struggling or need help, you know they’ll give support. Last summer, I had a multiple regression class, and I asked Robbie to pray for me, and you know she did. I feel, like, there is support there and they congratulate you with your successes and pat you on the back for your failures. I feel, like, it’s a good support system in place.
WJ: What are the other things this program can do that could be helpful to scholars like you?
TG: I wish I knew. I wish it was better networking for others. It would be good to know who the other doctoral scholars are at our individual universities.
WJ: What do you mean?
TG: I can’t really navigate all of the scholars who are at [institution] that are in the program. I randomly run into people in class and then somebody says something, and I’m surprised to find out if they are a scholar.
WJ: So other scholars within the same institution?
TG: Yes.
WJ: Maybe within the same department if possible?
Appendix B (continued)

TG: Well, I mean I know that’s more spread out; but at least if you know who they are in the university, which would be helpful.

WJ: And that’s something that the program could do that would be beneficial for you?

TG: Yes. I feel like I would be able to network better.

WJ: Anything else that the program could do that would be helpful for scholars like you?

TG: I think that’s the main thing.

WJ: Ok let’s look at number nine which is really one of our focuses here. What’s the one thing you wish you had known before entering graduate school?

TG: Just knowing that people are really watching you move. If you breathe the wrong way the word gets out. Just being able to just know that, and how people really talk. Just to be aware of that. I don’t know how to better say that, but people are watching you. I didn’t really think about that or realize that and they will take things out of context sometimes.

WJ: So at the doctoral level, there’s much more than just absolving concepts and ideas; and it’s related to the intense watching or the intense scrutiny?

TG: There’s a scrutiny in them watching you. They know what’s going. Word gets around. That was another thing. I was worried everyone’s going to know I failed my comps in my department. I don’t want to go there. But they know everything.

WJ: OK. So that’s something that you wish you had been more aware of before entering graduate school?

TG: Yes.

WJ: That’s something we need to make others aware of. What advice would you give scholars entering Ph.D. programs?

TG: Do not beat yourself up if you don’t feel like, you know, what you’re doing and when you’re first starting and you feel like you’re just going crazy, and if you don’t feel that smart. That’s not the case and you just have to at some point . . . There will be a point where you settle in being a doctoral student, and you’ll relax but it might be a little rocky in the beginning; but don’t beat yourself up and just hang in there it will get better.
Appendix B (continued)

WJ: Sounds good. Well we’ve gone through our ten questions is there anything else you want to add?

TG: No.

WJ: It’s been very helpful talking with you here, and I’m certain that we’ll all profit from what you’ve said here. Again this is a qualitative study to get more in-depth information about what’s going through the minds and perceptions of African-American scholars. That’s what we’re interested in. OK, we’ll see what we can do to make this a better program. OK. Thank you so very much, and this ends our interview for today.
APPENDIX C

Interview Questions for Graduates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question #</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>How long did it take you to complete your degree? Explain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Were you enrolled part-time during the program? If so, why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>What helped you most to finish?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Was the Doctoral Scholars Program (DSP) beneficial? In what way(s)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>What other things could the DSP have done that would have been useful?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Do you think you had adequate faculty mentoring and advising? Explain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering grad school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>What advice would you give scholars entering a Ph.D. program?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D

Interview Questions for Matriculating Scholars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question #</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>What is your discipline (subject area), and what motivated you to seek the Ph.D. in this area?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>When you entered graduate school, did you have a projected completion date? Please explain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Has this completion date change? Are you still on track? Have there been any surprises?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>What are the most difficult or unexpected hurdles you are encountering now?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Do you think you are receiving adequate faculty mentoring, advising, and support? Explain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>What are some joys you are encountering now in your studies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Was the Doctoral Scholars Program (DSP) beneficial? In what way(s)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>What other things DSP can do that would be helpful to doctoral scholars like you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>What is the one thing you wish you had known before entering grad school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>What advice would you give scholars entering a Ph.D. program?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E

Coded Questions that Drew Responses from Graduates*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate Interviewee</th>
<th>Background</th>
<th>Course Content</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Finance</th>
<th>Mentoring</th>
<th>Networking</th>
<th>Passion/ Interests</th>
<th>Policy Matters</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Strength/ Weakness</th>
<th>Support/ Climate</th>
<th>Surprises</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AH</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AW</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BB</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JT</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JY</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KB</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MH</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RJ</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QS</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Number in each cell represents the interview question (Appendix A) that drew a response.
APPENDIX F

Coded Questions that Drew Responses from Matriculating Scholars*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate Interviewee</th>
<th>Course Content</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Finance</th>
<th>Mentoring</th>
<th>Networking</th>
<th>Passion/interests</th>
<th>Policy Matters</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Strengths/Weakness</th>
<th>Support/Climate</th>
<th>Surprises</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DW</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MW</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NN</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PD</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC-A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Number in each cell represents the interview question (Appendix B) that drew a response.
APPENDIX G

Talley of Responses from College Faculty Members on Graduate Students’ Self-Efficacy* (N = 16)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total Faculty</th>
<th>Male (6)</th>
<th>Female (7)</th>
<th>Male (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy is an important ingredient for ALL graduate school students seeking the doctoral degree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 13</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 5</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 5</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree 3</td>
<td>Agree 1</td>
<td>Agree 2</td>
<td>Agree 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undecided Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided Strongly Disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy is a MORE important ingredient for African-American graduate school students seeking the doctoral degree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 7</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 3</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 1</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree 6</td>
<td>Agree 2</td>
<td>Agree 1</td>
<td>Agree 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undecided Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided Strongly Disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy is a LESS important ingredient for African-American graduate school students seeking the doctoral degree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 6</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 1</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 2</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree 10</td>
<td>Agree 3</td>
<td>Agree 2</td>
<td>Agree 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undecided Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided Disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy is of EQUAL importance ingredient to other ingredients for African-American school students seeking the doctoral degree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 3</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 1</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 2</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree 6</td>
<td>Agree 3</td>
<td>Agree 1</td>
<td>Agree 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undecided Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided Strongly Disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

200
Appendix G (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total Faculty</th>
<th>African-American Faculty</th>
<th>Caucasian Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male (6)</td>
<td>Female (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy is confounded or mixed with other ingredients for</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 1</td>
<td>Strongly Agree 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American students seeking the doctoral degree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree 2</td>
<td>Agree 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Undecided 1</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree 2</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES


