An Exploration of Generative Conversations During Faculty Meetings in a University Setting

by

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Abstract

The environment in which universities operate continues to shift and change consequent to economic realities, changing demographics, and changes in technology. Planning in higher education must be creative and responsive to address multifaceted demands. To sustain post-secondary education, institutional leaders need to develop skill sets that promote effective dialogue, group work, and generativity within internal organizations. Concepts of leadership for the 21st century shift focus away from the previous approaches of making incremental improvements to already existing processes toward discovering possibilities, exploring potential innovations, and generating actions (Burgess & Newton, 2015; Webber, 2016).

Building on existing frameworks for understanding generativity in group work and planning, this study sought to understand generative processes and conversations that compel people to act upon thoughts and feelings arising from social interactions. A descriptive study design was utilized to explore and summarize the experiences of faculty involved in three different group planning processes: brainstorming (Osborn 1953, 1957, 1963), a force field analysis (Lewin, 1947), and a variation of an appreciative inquiry process (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). The development of a generative conversations survey tool focused on how the faculty participants perceived the qualities of their experiences. A key outcome of the research was the creation of a set of recommendations for thinking about the design of group sessions and meetings that can transmethodologically enhance chances for generative results.

Keywords: Generativity; generative dialogue; generative outcomes; organization development; appreciative inquiry

Dedication

This work could not have been realized without the love and support of many beings.

My sons, Jason and Brendan, who always conveyed to me I am enough, and inspired me to know that my health and well-being were the most important. Their love and presence in my life is everything.

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List of Acronyms

4D	Discover, dream, design, and destiny phases
AI	Appreciative inquiry
CYC	Child and youth care
GCS	Generative Conversations Survey
HE	Higher education
OD	Organization development
POS	Positive organizational scholarship
SAGE	Slavik's assessment of generative engagement

Chapter 1.

Introduction

> "One good conversation can shift the direction of change forever" (Lambert, as cited in Good News Network, 2009, para. 1).

This thesis is a report of a descriptive study of processes that are claimed to lead to generative conversations in organizations. To generate is to produce something, or cause something to come about ("Generate," n.d.). The term generative refers to having the power or function of generating, originating, producing or reproducing ("Generate," n.d.). For the purposes of this study, I define a generative conversation as a dialogue that compels participants to act upon thoughts and feelings produced as a result of the interaction. These definitions have been inspired by the writings of several authors (Avital & van Osch, 2013; Bushe, 2013; Erikson, 1950; Gergen, 1978; Marshak, 2004; Zandee, 2004) and are described further in the Review of Literature (Chapter 2). The term dialogue may be defined as an interaction between two or more people or groups, especially one directed toward exploration of a particular subject or resolution of a problem, a description compatible with the focus of this study on generative conversations.

The study described in this thesis was situated in academic departments within a post-secondary institution (a regional university) and utilized three different group planning processes that are claimed to have generative potential: brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963), force field analysis (Lewin, 1947), and a variation of an appreciative inquiry process (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). The study aimed to determine if there were important differences in generativity as experienced by the participants involved in the three approaches. This first chapter of the thesis situates my role, as the researcher, and provides the background of the study. The chapter also describes the significance of the study, along with an overview of the methodology used and concludes with a description of the organization of the thesis.

1.1. Researcher lens

Throughout my career as a psychiatric nurse, child and youth care practitioner, child life specialist, and educator, I have both participated in and facilitated change initiatives. As a self-declared lifelong learner, I approach change with a sense of optimism and curiosity. It is an undeniable fact that, regardless of who we are and our positions, we are all headed to the same place, the future (Kaufman, 2008). Although it is not suggested people share common futures, change is a constant in individuals' personal lives and in the development of the organizations to which they may belong or be members. Thus, it makes sense for people to wish to have a role in shaping the nature and direction of changes, whether personal or organizational, and to influence decisions that will affect future outcomes and directions.

In some planning and change initiatives of which I have been a part, I felt engaged, energized, and viewed creativity to be abundant among the participants. Further, the decisions made were carried forward into actions and led to the implementation of innovations. At other times and settings, it seemed participants were disengaged, going through obligatory motions, anxiously waiting for the time to "just get back to work." In my experience, when the leaders of planning processes attempted to gain broader engagement and participation and to provide participants with opportunities to influence decisions, the results were more generative. My sense is that relationships and dialogue influence the degree to which participants engage with the process and will act upon planned change. As a counsellor I understand the value of relationships as contexts for positive change. It is within relationships that possibilities for change are explored and decided upon. While skilled counsellors can facilitate such explorations, the likelihood that a client will act upon goals is significantly increased when the client generates those goals themselves and has a sense of ownership of proposals. I have wondered whether this view was applicable to organizational change and queried whether leaders can create positive environments for change through constructive and collaborative relationships. Further, I asked when members of an organization generate goals for themselves are they more likely to act upon those goals? If so, what processes are likely to promote an environment where generative conversations occur and what are the steps that facilitate patterns of group dialogue that can mobilize energy for action? To be realized, plans need to be acted upon—to be implemented.

I first heard the term appreciative inquiry (AI) as a member of the planning committee for the 2003 *International Child and Youth Care Conference*: *Promise into Practice*. Another planning team member had recently attended a workshop and excitedly related the notion that AI was a strength-based approach to understanding organizations and that it fit well with child and youth care (CYC). Indeed, given that one of the core elements of CYC practice is to focus on competencies and strengths rather than problems and deficits, AI was something most CYC practitioners could embrace with ease. The eventual title of the conference *Promise into Practice* reflected our conversations about focusing on what we do well in CYC. It was at this point in my career that I chose to learn more about AI. Concurrent with my doctoral studies at Simon Fraser University, I completed the *Appreciative Inquiry and the Practice of Positive Change Certificate Program* and the *Appreciative Leadership Development Program,* through the Corporation for Positive Change (Positive Change, n.d.). My interest and familiarity with AI as a method for organization development subsequently shaped this research.

1.2. Background of the study

Universities are complex organizations experiencing a period of rapid change and facing many challenges (Beach, Boadway, & McInnis, 2005; Bess & Dee, 2012; Charbonneau, 2013; Grant, 2016). In my capacity as a program head for two different academic departments at a regional university and as a faculty representative on the university senate, I have served on committees addressing new program development and graduate studies as well as memberships on the research advisory council and committees exploring academic planning and priorities. From these experiences I have learned that there are expectations for universities to do more to reach out to students and their communities and respond to the market realities of decreased funding, increased costs, changing demographics, and changes in technology. Like most organizations, a university needs to plan for its success. With the reality of the rapidly changing environment in which universities operate, planning in higher education must be creative and responsive to address multifaceted demands. Higher education is changing. Universities are redefining and redesigning how they operate and are transforming their practices (Amrhein, Bloom, & MacKay, 2013). In order to sustain higher education institutions during this period of change, post-secondary leaders need

to develop new skills sets for new markets and a changing world (Bess & Dee, 2012). Leaders will have to develop and deploy the capacity to sense and enact upon emergent opportunities (Fullan, 2001; Scharmer, 2009). Concepts of leadership for the 21st century shift focus away from the previous approach of making incremental improvements to existing processes towards discovering possibilities for innovation and generating actions (Burgess & Newton, 2015; Webber, 2016).

This study was concerned with generativity (a generative state) and generative conversations (dialogic processes) that compel participants to act upon thoughts and feelings produced as a result of the interactions. Conversations have been identified as the building blocks of organizations (Bright, Powley, Fry, & Barrett, 2010; Cooren, Taylor, & Van Every, 2006). Block (2010) claimed people who are interested in how new ideas are generated and how learning and change take place must observe conversations. Watching change in action, one does not see minds working but rather observes people meeting and conversing with each other. In this context, the way people experience coming together becomes a major concern for how change happens (Block, 2010). In everyday experience, people do not see what precedes action and generativity. They do not see the full process of coming-into-being of action: they do not see its descending movement from thought and consciousness to language, behaviour, and action. People see what others actually do, how they act (Scharmer, 2009). In short, the ultimate evidence for generativity is productive action, action consistent with and appropriate to intents—not what is said, but what is done. However, all the same, it can be important and useful to seek to appreciate how the participants in planned and organized dialogues and conversations perceive and reflect on their experiences.

1.3. Problem statement

Universities are often characterized as large and stable institutions and, as a result, are not seen to be particularly nimble or collaborative (Kezar, 2009). In my experience, post-secondary environments tend to be organized in departmental silos and are framed by bureaucratic or hierarchical administrative structures and policies. Steeped in tradition, the norms and values of this sort of complex administrative structure may limit communication, renewal, and innovation (Bess & Dee, 2012; Burgess & Newton, 2015; Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006). People in a hierarchical or bureaucratic structure are encouraged to share information along the line of command, reproducing

certain patterns of communication and limiting others. Cross communication or horizontal patterns of interactions are more difficult in this formalized and traditional structure (Scharmer, 2009). Mintzberg (1979) found that there is a body of evidence that suggests the older the organization, the more formalized, routinized and standardized its behaviour. As organizations age, all other things being equal, they repeat their work, with the result that it becomes more predictable, and so more easily formalized (Mintzberg, 1979, p. 228).

Vertical organizations shaped by control-and-command leadership with well-developed standard policies and procedures that dictate behaviour and ensure uniformity fit well with previous approaches to leadership and planning, which often involved creating a fixed strategic plan and working toward incremental improvements of already existing processes (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006; Scharmer, 2009). Mintzberg (1979) proposed a relationship between external control of an organization and the extent to which it is centralized and/or bureaucratized (p. 288). The greater the external control of the organization, the more likely its structure is formalized. Emergent opportunities, discovering possibilities, innovation, and generating action are stifled by bureaucratic process in which standardization or conformity rather than innovation are the cultural norms (Laloux, 2014).

In traditional and more stable environments, the way we do things governs people's actions (Deal & Kennedy, 2000). The unknowns are perceived as blind spots or threats to be managed rather than nurtured as undiscovered possibilities. In today's more organic and dynamic environments, the intangible dimension (i.e., the generative domain of human action and relationships) is moving from the periphery as something to be managed and into the center stage as something to be cultivated (Scharmer, 2009). For generative conversations to happen, a process must be in place whereby communication in an organization flows more freely and the emphasis on individualistic work and the reporting of such is consciously changed. Redesigning conversations to discover emergent ideas and compel actions is a process that universities can utilize to redefine and redesign how they operate and transform practice in meaningful ways (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012; Lipmanowicz & McCandless, 2013; Laloux, 2014).

1.4. Research questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate which processes are likely to lead to generative conversations in post-secondary organizations. The study explored three research questions.

1. What considerations are critical to the design and implementation of organized meetings and social interactions planned and structured to foster generative dialog?

2. Do the experiences reported by the participants in group meetings organized by processes claimed to foster generative outcomes indicate that the meetings supported generative capacity?

3. Do follow-up reports from the meeting participants and the results of an independent review of the meeting outcomes indicate that the sessions were generative?

In considering both the preparation and implementation of group processes I was interested in observing if there are antecedents of generativity. Antecedents are (a) preceding events or conditions or (b) a sequence of activities or conditions that influence behaviours and outcomes. An antecedent is a precursor. In the context of groups, antecedents can be the moderating or mediating conditions that trigger cognitive schemata and subsequent thoughts, feelings, and behaviours (Antoni & Hertel, 2009; Rentsch & Klimoski, 2001).

1.5. Significance of the study

This research project has both theoretical (deductive) and empirical (inductive) objectives. The theoretical objective was to build upon existing frameworks for understanding generativity in group work and planning through an exploration of existing work and theories (Bushe, 2007, 2013; Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987; Elliot, 2002; Gergen, 1978; Marshak, 2004; Paranjpey, 2013; Topp, 2000). Attention was also directed toward previous writings in appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987; Cooperrider, Barrett, & Srivastva, 1995; Watkins & Mohr, 2001; Bushe & Kassam, 2005; Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2009; Bushe, 2009, 2010, 2013). In addition writings in positive organizational psychology (Fredrickson, 2003; Losada & Heaphy, 2004; Peterson, 2008; Lopez & Gallagher, 2009; Linley, Joseph, Maltby, Harrington, & Wood, 2009) were reviewed and the concept of generativity was defined and clarified.

The empirical objective was to derive evidence and verify findings through a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures. The study included the development of a survey tool in which each item was derived from literature that described indicators of generativity. Having reviewed the literature and developed a conceptual understanding of generativity as a construct, the construct was then studied in practice. The survey focused on how the participants in meetings that were structured by processes that are claimed to foster generativity actually perceived the qualities of the experience.

It was the aim of this thesis to add to the current understanding (Beach et al., 2005; Bess & Dee, 2012; Burgess & Newton, 2015; Webber, 2016) of how the participants in interactions that were described as designed to generate actions for effective change were actually perceived and interpreted by the participants. The research is situated in the context of an institution of higher education. The results of the study may provide a useful and appropriate framework for the management of change agendas in higher education and aid in improving practices in this area. The research attempted to identify specific steps and strategies that may contribute to generativity, while exploring and extending this construct. The emphasis was placed on the human experience of meetings structured deliberately to foster generative conversations in typical settings often found in college and university organizations.

1.6. Limitations

This study was conducted in a mid-sized university within a selected geographical area, utilizing specific departments and schools within a single, larger faculty. The sample size was small (five groups, 27 individual respondents, and three independent reviewers). As a result, generalizing the findings of this research project to other organizations and settings is limited.

The research entailed the development of an original survey tool that was utilized for the first time in an attempt to explore and assess participants' perceptions of generativity. Further studies need to be conducted to validate the survey tool.

1.7. Overview of the methodology

In this research project, multiple strategies (i.e., mixed methods) were utilized to increase construct validity. The research entailed conducting meetings with university staff and faculty using three different group ideation processes: brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963), a force field analysis (Lewin, 1947), and a variation of an AI process (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). The research goal was to identify the antecedent conditions, group properties, and ideation processes that lead to generative conversations as well as to determine participants' perceptions of generativity resulting from these sessions. In each case, the different sessions were facilitated and arranged using the protocols normally prescribed for each process. In order to control for bias, the selected group ideation processes were randomly assigned to the study groups.

Data were collected from the following sources. First, a Generative Conversations Survey as developed for the project (see Appendix A) was administered to solicit the participants' experiences of generativity. Semi-quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to analyze the data from the survey. Second, three independent reviewers were selected to review the ideas produced by the groups and complete a survey rating the total pool of ideas produced by the sessions in terms of their novelty, practicality, and whether or not they were compelling (toward actions; see Appendix B). An examination of the group processes utilized in the groups studied sought to discover the mediators and conditions that aid generativity. Further details of the methodology are described in Chapter 3.

1.8. Organization of the study

This chapter explored my positionality as the researcher, the background of the study, problem statement, and specific research questions. This chapter also considered the significance of the study, provided a brief an overview of the methodology, and outlined the organization of the thesis.

Chapter 2 focuses on a review of the literature and explores definitions of generativity. Social construction provides the frame through which the relational and dialogic nature of generativity is examined. A social construction perspective proposes that the way the world is organized is a human creation realized individually and in

groups (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). “Organizational reality is created and recreated everyday through interpersonal interactions” (Bess & Dee, 2012, p. 59). The history and trends of organization development (OD) are considered, including the influence of positive psychology. Proposals regarding the constituents of generativity are explored, and three different methods for creating generative conversations are described. As this study was situated in a university environment, a brief section on OD in higher education is included.

Chapter 3 reviews the methodology used in this study: mixed methods quantitative and qualitative research design, and includes a description of how the group participants and independent reviewers were selected, a review of limitations to the research, and describes the development of the research tools. Chapter 4 provides study findings in response to the specific research questions posed and describes the study groups’ experiences and participants’ perceptions of the generative qualities of the sessions in which they participated.

Chapter 5 concludes the study by providing an overview and discussion of the findings summarized in relation to the literature review and the thesis questions. Chapter 5 also provides recommendations and suggestions for future research as well as my reflections as the researcher on the qualities desired in social environments intended to foster generativity.

Chapter 2.

Literature Review

2.1. Overview and scope of the review

This chapter offers a review of the literature relevant to the construct of generativity and explores definitions of the term. The relational and dialogic nature of generativity is examined through the frame of social construction. History and trends in the field of organization development are considered, including the influence of positive psychology. The review includes studies of three different group ideation processes that have been proposed as creating generative conversations: AI (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963), and force field analysis (Lewin, 1947.

As described in Chapter 1, this research project explores generativity and generative conversations, particularly in the context of meetings among university faculty members. Conversations have been identified as the building blocks of organizations (Bright & Cameron, 2010; Cooren et al., 2006). Scholars have claimed that those who are interested in how new ideas are generated and how learning and change takes place in organizations and groups must observe conversations (Barrett, Thomas, & Hocevar, 1995; Block, 2010; Ford & Ford, 1995). When watching change in action, a researcher does not actually see minds working. Rather, the researcher observes people meeting and conversing with each other. The way people come together and interact has become a major concern for how organizational change happens (Barrett et al., 1995; Block, 2010; Ford & Ford, 1995). Organization development (OD) is the foundational field of practice, research and scholarship that examines how people come together and interact within formally structured institutions and communities. This review begins with a description of the origins of OD and the major shifts that have laid the groundwork for positive organizational scholarship (POS) in the field over the past three decades. Underpinning this movement is the concept of social construction (Gergen, 1978), a field of concern that is explored here in the context of planning and organizational change processes and specifically the roles of relationship and dialogue. This review also considers the growth of interest and research in positive psychology as influences on OD change processes. Social construction, positive psychology, and OD

come together in AI. Further, this review offers a brief description of AI and concepts of transformational change, positivity, and generativity in order to provide a theoretical and/or conceptual framework to support the research questions. In particular, I will review existing constructs and proposals as to the nature of generativity, and a visual representation for generativity is developed (see Section 2.5, Figure 2.1) that will be defined by exploring the nature of generative ideas, what is known about the effects of different forms of dialogue on generative outcomes, and what is known about the facilitation and leadership of such processes. The impact of positive affect and OD processes on generativity are also discussed.

2.2. Organization development

Theories of OD seek to explain organizational improvement over time and the processes utilized to facilitate effective change. The field of OD is itself going through a development in which change processes are being examined from a strength-based perspective as opposed to a problem-analysis focus (Rothwell, Stavros, Sullivan, & Sullivan, 2009). This shift in the field has been characterized as positive organizational studies (Cameron & Lavine, 2006) and positive organizational scholarship (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003).

Over the years, OD has been defined and redefined by just about every author who has written about it (Rothwell et al., 2009). Almost all the definitions relate to whether an organization is seen as initiating or responding to change. OD is more than the tools, tips, and techniques used in the process of initiating, leading, or managing change. OD is concerned with the effectiveness of organizations and organizational capacity for change. The field of OD is typically focused on long-term perspectives. The knowledge base that supports OD practice has its origins in psychology and behavioural science, and later in systems theory (Katz & Kahn, 1966). OD started with small groups and with action research as a way for creating organizational change. Subsequently, practitioners placed an emphasis on changing individual members and on how leadership attributes can affect OD. Finally, practitioners recognized that change had to do with taking the whole system into account, which is how the field presents itself today (Rothwell et al., 2009). In *Practicing Organization Development: A Guide for Leading Change*, Scherer and Alban (2010) defined the field.

> OD is the application of behavioural science, action research, and systems theory to organizations and larger human systems, using participative processes that involve all those affected, with the objective of increasing the internal and external effectiveness of the organization, especially in managing change. (p. 92)

Kurt Lewin (1947,1958), known as the father of social psychology (Wheeler, 2008), and the grandfather of applied behavioural science (Scherer & Alban, 2012), developed much of the understanding of action research, feedback, and small group dynamics that underpin OD practice. Lewin's work contributed significantly to OD. The use of data gathering to inform subsequent interventions, which is one of the fundamental principles in OD, is attributed to Lewin. Taylor, Lewin, Bion, and McGregor (as cited in Scherer & Alban, 2012) stated,

> The fundamental truth the OD elders handed down to the field, is finding what is actually happening (research), and why it is happening (diagnosis), and getting all that data on the table where it is seen and discussed by stakeholders in a safe environment, has the power to change people and systems (action). (p. 83)

In this description lies the expression of the diagnostic nature of early OD practice. Historically, the operating assumption was there are problems to be fixed and solutions to be found in organizations. Traditional OD originated from a positivist, modern perspective that assumed a single truth or objective reality existed and could be discovered; as such, discovering or inventing a solution to problems was the aim of intervention. In the past two decades, a different form of OD practice has surfaced in which the underlying assumptions are not consistent with some of the basic historical principles of OD (Bushe & Marshak, 2009, 2015). The assumption in traditional OD methods is that there is an objective reality that can be investigated and that a problem-solving process can be applied to influence change. The new form of OD, termed dialogic OD, is characterized by a more constructivist orientation, one in which multiple subjective realities exist, are negotiated through conversations, with narratives being utilized to influence desired patterns of organizing. The targets of change in Diagnostic OD are people's behaviours. The targets of change in dialogic OD are the frameworks for conceptualizing change and how people make meaning of change phenomenologically. People's behaviours arise from held values and beliefs that are socially constructed through previous experiences. Further contrasting diagnostic and dialogic OD, dialogic OD operates from a post-modern, pluralistic perspective, in which

reality is temporal in nature, socially constructed, and there are multiple realities (Bushe & Marshak, 2009). This shift towards new methods and patterns of practice emerged in the 1980s (Axelrod, 2010; Bushe & Marshak, 2009). In the practice of dialogic OD, change occurs by changing the nature of conversations. In his book *Terms of Engagement*, Axelrod (2010) identified new change management principles that widen the circle of involvement, connect people to each other, create communities for action, and promote fairness. Practices of honesty, transparency, and trust are taken together with the principles that create engaged organizations. The new methods entail high-involvement and high-commitment creating change, rather than the high-control and leader-driven, change selling (pitching) approaches of old (Axelrod, 2010). To facilitate significant, transformative changes in organizations, changes need to be made to how people interact (Kimball, 2008). Robust communities of practice support the principle of broad engagement and a whole system approach. In second edition of *The Change Handbook* (2007), Holman, Devane, and Cady reviewed over 60 methods and processes (the first edition contained 18 methods). It seems clear that there has been a dramatic change and growth in practices in the OD field.

The assumption that organizations are man-made and socially and relationally constructed is grounded in social constructionist theory (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Gergen, 1978). When one is not seeking a "natural order," organizations have unbounded possibilities confined only by the human imagination and collective will. This is the perspective of appreciative inquiry (AI), an approach that can be described as both dialogic OD and a strengths-based approach. A considerable amount of the research and practice in positive organization has come from AI. POS is the study of what is positive in organizations and among the people who comprise them (Bright & Cameron, 2010). Positive can be taken to mean OD that is strengths-focused, has extraordinary positive outcomes (and the processes that produce them), or is virtuous (with outcomes emphasizing doing good above doing well). POS explores how organizations flourish. In contrast to traditional OD, in which the aim is to find, fix or close the deficit gaps, POS aims to elevate the organization or close the abundance gaps (Bright & Cameron, 2010). In the *Appreciative Inquiry Handbook,* Cooperrider et al. (2009) summed it up in this way:

> We may have reached the end of traditional problem solving. AI is a powerful approach to transformation as a mode of inquiry capable of

> inspiring, mobilizing, and sustaining human system change. The future of OD belongs, instead, to methods that affirm, compel, and accelerate anticipatory learning involving larger and larger levels of collectivity. (p. 2)

2.2.1. Organization development in higher education

The research described in this study was situated in a post-secondary environment. This fact raises the question, "What is known about planning and organization change in post-secondary institutions?" A scan of the literature in this specific area yields much less than the literature about OD generally. I found a lack of organization and management theory in higher education (HE) and that this body of theory seems to be consistently neglected by HE scholars (Best, 2006; Birnbaum, 2000, Fife, 2003). Businesses and universities are organizations with mission statements, employees, management and organization systems, and goods and resources (Birnbaum, 2000). While businesses and universities share some characteristics, they perform quite differently. There are several notable differences between HE institutions and business corporations, including time frames for planning cycles, leadership and management models, value systems, customer and client base, and the context for change (Lerner, 1999). Perhaps the methods developed for corporate or business organizations are not a good fit for HE? Birnbaum (2000) noted that a way in which business and higher education are similar is their propensity to adopt new management techniques that often turn out to be fads (p. xiii). He suggested that fads can be useful when they provide leaders with new understandings that can be incorporated into professional practice (Birnbaum, 2000). However, Birnbaum warned fads have costs as well as benefits, and leaders must learn how to use them wisely (p. xiv). He further noted the lifecycle of management techniques from genesis to adoption or abandonment is predictable and that the academy adopts these techniques later than business and the corporate world and offers the sentiment that HE does not need more good management techniques; it needs more good managers to address the challenges in applying concepts of OD and AI to higher education (Birnbaum, 2000). Attempts at management techniques that are adopted and fail may be a result of incompatibility with the culture (Birnbaum, 2000). Adapting techniques for HE may prove to be a better strategy than adopting from other sectors (Griffin, 2006).

In contrast to Birnbaum (2000), Lamal (2001) asserted that with the movement toward the corporatization of higher education, the model for HE ought to be the

business world. His rationale was that, by adopting the structure and practices of the corporate world, HE will be better able to meet its current challenges (Lamal, 2001, p. 65). The implications of this view will be speculated upon in the closing chapter (see Chapter 5); however, a detailed exploration of corporatization in HE is beyond the scope of this study.

2.3. Social construction theory

The new OD methods view reality as socially constructed. Social constructionism emerged onto the American sociological scene with Berger and Luckmann (1966) and with the work of Ken Gergen (1978), who while working in the field of social psychology contributed to the thinking of the day with his ideas on how relationships and dialogue contribute to meaning, reality, and to how one views the self. In his book, *An Invitation to Social Construction*, Gergen (2009) described five key assumptions.

> 1) The way in which we understand the world is not required by "what there is".
> 2) The ways in which we describe and explain the world are the outcomes of relationship (words acquire their meaning through how we use them).
> 3) Constructions gain their significance from their social utility (rules and patterns of language).
> 4) As we describe and explain, so do we fashion our future (shared languages and descriptions constitute life/culture).
> 5) Reflection on our taken-for-granted worlds is vital to our future well-being (sustaining traditions and creating alternatives). (pp. 5–12)

According to Gergen (2009), from a constructionist perspective, actions are not constrained by anything traditionally accepted as true, rational, or right. The moment and the future is a vast spectrum of possibility, an endless invitation to innovation (Gergen, 2009). As such, a constructionist perspective does not require ignoring or rejecting empiricism as a source of constructions; rather, it favours social interactions as the source of constructivist insights. Social relationships and the interaction and dialogue that occur within them are at the root of Gergen's (2009) description of social constructivism. It is within these relationships that the world is constructed in one way or another. For example, by challenging traditional beliefs it is possible that "problems" don't exist since positive or negative values are constructed. If the conversation can be changed, "problems" can be reconstructed as "possibilities." In other words, (socially

constructed) reality is the outcome of the conversations in which we are engaged (Gergen, 2009).

For those operating from a constructionist stance, these assumptions embrace critical reflexivity, acknowledging the attempt to suspend what seems apparent and be open to alternative frames and multiple viewpoints. In reviewing these key assumptions, one can clearly see the origins of dialogic and strengths-based OD methods.

2.3.1. Trends

What was it about the period when the above shifts began to happen that allowed these new frameworks to evolve? Why was there an uptake of social construction theories among researchers and scholars of OD? Rothwell, Prescott, and Taylor (1998) identified six key changes that impacted the workplace and organizations: changing technology, increasing globalization, continuing cost containment, increasing speed in market change, growing importance of knowledge capital, and increasing rate and magnitude of change (p. 18). As these trends emerged, leaders needed to develop skills and competencies to respond to the changes. With increased global mobility and the rapid advancement and wide dissemination of communication technology, OD methods needed to provide a means of exploring common grounds for people from different backgrounds and cultures (Holman, Devane, & Cady, 2007). Methods that speak to multiple perspectives in which collective needs can be addressed and possibilities for change can be co-created could help navigate the impact of post-modern society's trends. Is it possible that as people came to construct reality in new ways, new methodology developed that was grounded in social constructionism?

2.4. Positive psychology

As described earlier in this paper, the movement toward strengths-based OD methods can be linked to understanding the social constructivist perspective of re-constructing reality toward a positive perspective with endless possibilities. The other major influence of this movement is the work done in positive psychology and positive emotion. Positive psychology is the scientific study of what makes life worth living (Peterson, 2008). Positive psychology is an appeal to the psychological sciences to be as concerned with strengths as it has traditionally been with weaknesses, a move away

from deficit discourse. Maslow (1943, 1954) and Seligman (1991) are noted early scholars who called for this change (Lopez & Gallagher, 2009). The intention of the field is to complement and extend the knowledge base that exists about the world of problems. Positive psychology applied to the world of work and organizations is an emerging discipline (Linley et al., 2009). Cooperrider (1990) noted people tend to seek and draw upon positive energy (see Also Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). The heliotropic hypothesis states, "Human systems have an observable tendency to evolve and move in the direction of those positive images that are the brightest and boldest, most illuminating, and promising" (Cooperrider et al., 2009, p. 13). Research in this area has shown that people tend to become more creative and experimental when experiencing positive emotions, such as joy, love, appreciation (Fredrickson, 1998). In contrast, negative emotions tend to limit thought-action patterns and decrease cognitive abilities. Fredrickson (2003) discussed the broaden-and-build phenomenon, in which positive emotions "broaden people's momentary thought-action repertoire and build their enduring personal resources" (p. 166). Positive emotions (e.g., joyfulness, love, or appreciation) enlarge cognitive perspectives. People can take in more information, attend to more information, and encounter more creativity when they experience positive emotions. A positive climate enables people to cope with negativity in productive ways (Bright, Fry, & Cooperrider, 2006). From a base in positive psychology new methods have emerged for OD, including the concept that it is beneficial to create positive, strengths-based conversations as a means of promoting positive environments. Strength-based OD approaches are claimed to ultimately open possibilities and creative thinking.

In a study that looked at connectivity and positivity in business teams, Losada and Heaphy (2004) found differences in discourse among high-, medium-, and low-functioning teams. When people talk to each other in teams, analysis may show that they demonstrate a focus on self or others, ask questions of others, or defend their own points of view. In their study, Losada and Heaphy measured connectivity on a scale of high to low. High-functioning teams were shown to be more highly connected and had balanced inquiry/advocacy as well as balanced other/self-focus. The authors stated,

> We need to have organizations with teams that are highly connected. We need to have organizations where the polarity of other and self, of you and I, is integrated into a sense of *we*; where the polarity of inquiry and

> advocacy, of questions and answers, can drive a productive and ongoing *dialogue.* (Losada & Heaphy, 2004, p. 761)

2.5. Generativity

To be able to answer the research questions posed by this thesis, a definition of generativity should be developed and understood. The dictionary definition of generativity is: the ability to power, or generate, or produce something ("Generative," n.d.). A simple-appearing definition, but one that is not so simple when embedded in the concept of generative theory (Gergen, 1978), particularly when it was first introduced into a community of scholars who viewed social science from a logical positivist stance (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). This was a bold shift in attention whereby theoretical accounts are no longer judged in terms of their predictive capacity, but instead are judged in terms of their generative capacity: their ability to foster dialogue about that which is taken for granted and their capacity for generating fresh alternatives for social action (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987, p. 69). Gergen (1978) proposed, "It is the generative theory that can provoke debate, transform social reality, and ultimately serve to reorder conduct" (p. 1346). It is through engaging in the act of challenging prevailing assumptions that the potential for generating new possibilities is created. New thoughts potentially lead to new actions, to the extent that actions are generated from beliefs, values, and thoughts. In developing AI methodology, Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) noted, "It has one and only one aim—to provide a generative theoretical springboard for normative dialogue that is conducive to self-directed experimentation in social innovation" (p. 97). AI "opens the status quo to possible transformations in collective action" (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987, p. 97). By focusing on a paradigm that moved toward generating possibilities, AI transformed action research away from a continuous problem-solving model for organizations. These few quotes support the notion that the positive focus in AI is useful, but it is not its purpose. The one and only aim, the purpose of AI, is to generate new and better futures (Bushe, 2007). From its inception, the concepts of generative theory have clearly been core to AI.

Table 2.1. Generativity as defined or applied in the works of various authors

Authors	Key concepts and definitions of generativity
Erikson (1950)	Stage of adult development – generativity vs stagnation.
Jung (1953)	Generative Archetypes.
Freire (1970)	Linguistic discourse, Generative words, Dialogic generative themes as part of pedagogy.
Gergen (1978)	Meaning making, relational dialogic.
Schön (1979)	Generative metaphor.
Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987)	Methodological aim of AI – generative theoretical springboard, Generative capacity, generative possibilities.
Topp (2000)	Generative conversations – creative linking of concepts, emergence of new themes.
Elliot (2002)	Importance of generative questions.
Zandee (2004)	Relational and open-ended nature of inquiry as a generative process.
Marshak (2004)	Generative conversation – dialogic versus diagnostic.
Kikoski and Kikoski (2004)	Inquiring organization – mutually generative – humanistic perspective of collaboration.
Chait (2005)	Sense-making, reframing the work.
Scharmer (2007)	Presencing – generative flow.
Bushe (2007)	Generative questions, generative conversations, generative action. Synergenisis.
Bright et al. (2010)	Generative state.
Bushe (1998)	Generative images.
Bushe (2013)	Generative process, generative capacity, generative outcomes.
Avital and van Osch (2013)	Black box of idea generation – fundamental mechanisms based on Jungian (1953) generation of process ideas – thinking, feeling, sensing, and intuiting.
Paranjpey (2013)	Generativity is created when people gather together and produce ideas that they believe in and that help in creating a collective action for the future.

How else has generativity been defined and expressed? The concept of generativity as it relates to people, interactions, and behaviours can be found in the literature of the mid-20th century. Erikson (1950) described a stage of adult development

in which in later life one feels compelled to give back or leave something of substance for the next generation. Since this early reference in social psychology the concept has been utilized in various other frameworks by authors interested how and why people relate to each other in specific ways. Table 2.1 notes some of the ways generativity has been characterized by various authors, and further description of the conceptual terms follows the table.

In an early article, Barrett and Cooperrider (1990) described the use of "generative metaphor" (p. 219) as an intervention with an organization experiencing conflict. The use of metaphor allowed the work group to refocus on another (metaphorical) organization that was free of the dysfunctional schemas of their own organization. Distanced from their issues and feeling a sense of safety with the process, the novel situation stimulated interest among the group members. They became active inquirers in another domain. Metaphor is generative to the extent that it serves to reorganize schemas and helps provide positive and compelling images (Barrett & Cooperrider, 1990). A technique I have personally used in AI methodology is to have the group generate a graphic representation or metaphor of the core strengths they have identified during the inquiry process. It has been my experience that the energy and excitement around this process is palpable and will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 5 when considering the implications of the study described in this thesis. (Graphics facilitation can be a powerful tool in this approach of imaging, metaphor making, or scenario building.)

Based on his community development work in Uganda, Charles Elliot (2002) described the importance of asking generative questions in the process of AI. In this case, the facilitators found they needed to demonstrate the difference between generative and non-generative questions. The examples moved inquiry from a traditional authoritarian, problem-focus to appreciative and empowering questions that are open-ended rather than being closed or rigidly bounded.

A question like, "Do you play with your children?" (A closed question in that it could be answered with a yes or no) was transformed into "What games does your child most enjoy playing? Can you show me? Which do you most enjoy? (Elliot, 2002, p. 4). The training continued with the trainees being asked to come up with what generative questions look like. An acrostic on the English word generative was developed:

G=generous; E=enthusiasm; N=non-judgemental; E=energy; R=respectful; A=affirming; T=trust; I=inquiring; V=visceral (from the heart or guts); E=easy (they are not meant to test competence; Elliot, 2002, p. 6). In this study a similar acrostic utilizing the language of the participants, Luganda, was then created. While there was no exact equivalent, the word that was used was *ekisomooza*, which when translated meant something like provocative, challenging, driving at something (Elliot, 2002, p. 7). These wonderful examples seemed to really deepen the understanding of generativity, not only for the people in the situation but also for future readers of the article. The piece goes on to describe how reframing negative comments that surfaced during the generative conversation were managed. A two-part response was developed that could identify the underlying value or aspiration that is being denied, resulting in a negative reaction, and helping the interviewee getting in touch with that value or aspiration (Elliot, 2002). In this fashion, a reframe allowed desires and aspirations to be generated from a negative comment. Elliot (2002) closed with a couple of stories in which the use of generative questions resulted in unexpected action and stated, “One thing is clear; those who have worked with generative questions will never go back to problem focused questions if they can avoid it” (Elliot, 2002, p. 11).

What is the relationship between hope and generativity? In the AI process positive, hopeful images are generated through discourse. Does hope then generate action? In reviewing the literature across a range of fields, Ludema (2005) suggested there are four enduring qualities that give hope its power in social and organizational transformation: it is (a) born in relationship, (b) inspired by the conviction that the future is open and can be influenced, (c) sustained by dialogue about high human ideals, and (d) generative of positive affect and action (p. 529). Ludema claimed that hoping is an essential ingredient in social and organizational transformation because it spawns generative action (p. 534). Further, the methods utilized in the AI process have the potential to structure and support vocabularies of hope.

What elements can make AI generative? Bushe (2007) suggested generativity can and should be built into the design and facilitation of AI through generative questions, conversations, and actions (p. 4). Generative questions have the following four qualities: (a) they are surprising, (b) they touch people’s heart and spirit, (c) talking about and listening to these stories and answers will build relationships, and (d) the questions force people to look at reality a little differently, either because of how they ask

individuals to think or because of who they are listening to (Bushe, 2007, p. 5). Generative conversations can be supported by making “space” (Bushe, 2007, p. 5) for both positive and “negative” (p. 5) feelings. By reframing the inquiry to find out what is missing for them, or what they want more of, questioning is likely to be more generative. Bushe (2007) described a process “synergenesis” (p. 2) that is a generative way to stimulate discovery. Stories from the discovery process are written up and small groups meet so that everyone in the group can read the same story together. Group members go on to discuss the images and ideas the story provoked in them in a kind of stimulated brain storming (Bushe, 2007, p. 5). When a group has exhausted the discussion of a story, the group members move on to another story until reading more stories stops yielding new ideas.

Generative actions can be nurtured by ensuring that people believe they have permission to act. Leaders need to clarify what the boundaries of authority are and then get out of the way (Bushe, 2007). When everyone makes commitments to some kind of action, leadership should acknowledge any and all acts that move the organization in the collective desired direction, and those efforts should be elevated and supported. In this way leaders are supporting generativity. Generativity in application to OD practice occurs when a group of people discover and create new ideas that are compelling to them and others and provoke new actions (Bushe, 2009).

Bright et al. (2010) suggested that AI, properly understood, focuses on fostering generativity, rather than positivity. Through an exploration of cynical conversations, Bright et al. (2010) highlight the nature of negative and positive sentiments in relation to generativity. Sentiment refers to the lasting affective attachment people experience with the narratives they hear and share. Positive sentiment promotes engagement and commitment in people, while negative sentiment tends to erode trust and promote scepticism. Sentiments are “conversational markers” (Bright et al., 2010, p. 147), indicators of the degree to which people find their narratives and metaphors to be hopeful and motivating, or discouraging and undesirable. Negative sentiment has been shown to have a greater impact on attentiveness than positive impact (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005). The implications for this is that positive sentiments need to be nourished and built to dominate the ratio of positive to negative. Bright et al. (2010) characterized the cynical mode as dominated by negative sentiment and the anticipatory mode as one full of positive sentiment. The anticipatory mode is foundational if generativity is to

emerge in dialogue. A person is in a generative state (Bright et al., 2010) if they can consider new, future possibilities. Generativity emerges from the anticipatory mode when positive sentiment is directed towards the enactment of hopeful, organizing images and possibilities. Figure 2.1 presents a graphic representation of generativity.

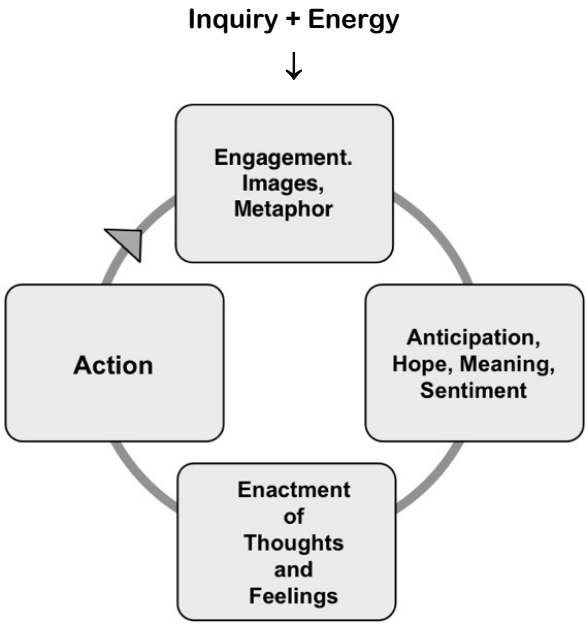

Figure 2.1. Representation of the components of generativity

In considering the range of work reviewed an understanding of generativity emerges. The crucial element is the process of inquiry and discovery in which conversations and dialogue begin. It is there that narratives and dominant modes of conversation are shared. If people feel valued and heard, positive sentiment with its arousal state and energy are created. Generative questions can foster this process. The result of this is an anticipatory mode that is foundational to generativity. Through generative conversations, hopeful images of the future can be shared and co-constructed resulting in a generative state. Building on positive sentiments and energy, the possibilities and positive images can fuel generative actions. The creation of positive images on a collective basis open up consideration of the future. As they emerge, these positive images can be captured and developed, for example, through graphic facilitation or concept mapping. Generative actions can be nurtured through freedom to act and the belief that one has the authority and permission to do so. Hope, shared publicly, is stronger and can sustain actions. A guiding image of the future exists in the living dialogue that flows through every institution (Cooperrider, 1990).

Applying the concept of generativity to organizations means that people come up with new ideas, challenge the old ways of acting, and foster possibilities of a collective future, thereby transforming the social reality. Generativity can be thought of as driving change in organizations (Paranjpey, 2013). It is not like a personality trait within individuals; rather, it is a concept that links individuals with the society. It is a relational construct comprising multiple individual and social constructs (Paranjpey, 2013). Generativity is (or arises from) a social-psychological environment from which (or in which) the potential for actions is enhanced or potentiated. Group ideation processes directed toward change can also be viewed as learning processes that take place in communities of practice. By reassessing the way work is conducted in groups as learning opportunities, it is possible to redesign organization work to enhance generativity.

2.5.1. Generative conversations

What has the literature reported about the factors that create generative conversations? Much like the representation of generativity described in Figure 2.1, there is a pattern of involvement in generative conversations. People come together, converse, and co-construct meaning. This form of experience expands thoughts, promotes learning, and is dynamic. People are continually generating a sense of what is real (Gergen, 2009). Through listening, learning is possible and new ideas and images are generated. Generative relational processes are catalytic; they inject relations with vitality. New and enriching potentials are opened through the flow of interchange (Gergen, 2009, p. 47). The first stage, then, of a generative conversation is engaged listening and learning.

Hope is an essential ingredient in social and organizational transformation because it spawns generative action (Ludema, 2005, p. 534). The next stage of a generative conversation relates to the experience of thoughts and feelings of hope and anticipation. Hope promotes the sort of listening or hearing that is not confined merely to having one's own discourse somehow confirmed (Ludema, 2005, p. 534). Hope is most generative when it is inclusive; it inspires collective action most powerfully when it is shared with other participants in a dialogue (Ludema, 2005, p. 536). Together, the first two stages of a generative conversation are about expansion.

With the pump primed for generativity, the next stage of a generative conversation involves the enactment of thoughts and feelings. The concept that the future is being constructed when people engage in meaningful conversation with others is at the heart of enacting ideals. Once people begin to talk to one another, co-construct new structures and systems of working together, they can make enormous progress toward ideals (Ludema, Whitney, Mohr, & Griffin, 2003, p. 23). Having socially constructed the vision of a future that is important to them, thoughts and feelings are now oriented toward a collective focus and action. Results are gained through connection, making meaning, and, ultimately, taking action, the final stage of a generative conversation. Generative conversations help groups learn and mobilize collective action.

I define a generative conversation as a dialogue that compels participants to act upon thoughts and feelings produced as a result of the conversational interaction. A conversation is generative if ultimately there is some productive or practical action that can be seen to have occurred. Having explored the literature on what sorts of thoughts and feelings create generativity, I utilized the key concepts to develop a generative conversations survey tool for this study. The survey, which contains 17 items, was constructed to reflect general concepts of generativity in groups and was derived from the review of relevant studies on generativity and ideation, with an emphasis on the application of processes intended to foster these (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2. Generative conversations survey items derived from related research

Research & Scholarship related to the Survey Item	Survey Item
Gergen (1978) Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Topp (2000) Marshak (2004) Bushe (2007, 2013)	1. I heard new information when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.
Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003) Bushe (2007, 2013)	2. I learned from a colleague when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.

Research & Scholarship related to the Survey Item	Survey Item
Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Ludema et al. (2003) Ludema (2002) Bushe (2013) Schon (1979)	3. I was surprised by what I heard when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.
Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) Ludema et al. (2003) Bushe (2013)	4. As a result of participation in this group process I have developed an action plan related to the topic of an exceptional practicum experience.
Gergen (1978) Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987)	5. I experienced the group process as creative.
Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Cockell and McArthur-Blair (2012) Bushe (2007, 2013)	6. I was fully engaged in the group process.
Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Cockell and McArthur-Blair (2012) Bushe (2007, 2013)	7. I feel motivated to act as a result of the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.
Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Cockell and McArthur-Blair (2012) Bushe (2007, 2013)	8. I felt emotionally engaged during participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.
Barrett and Cooperrider (1990) Yaeger and Sorensen (2005)	9. I was able to suspend self -interest during participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.
Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Ludema et al. (2003) Ludema (2005)	10. As a result of participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience I think there will be some change in what we do.
Gergen (1978) Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003)	11. During participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience I felt a sense of connectedness to my colleagues.
Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Ludema et al. (2003) Ludema (2005) Cockell and McArthur-Blair (2012) Bushe (2007, 2013)	12. During participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience I felt energized.

Research & Scholarship related to the Survey Item	Survey Item
Gergen (1978) Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Topp (2000) Marshak (2004) Bushe (2007, 2013)	13. I heard new ideas when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.
Gergen (1978) Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Topp (2000) Marshak (2004) Bushe (2007, 2013)	14. My thoughts were expanded when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.
Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Cockell and McArthur-Blair (2012) Bushe (2007, 2013)	15. As a result of participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience I feel a sense of hopefulness.
Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Ludema et al. (2003) Ludema (2002) Bushe (2013) Schön (1979)	16. I saw old things in new ways as a result of participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.
Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) Ludema et al. (2003) Ludema (2005) Cockell and McArthur-Blair (2012) Bushe (2007, 2013)	17. Participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience compels me to act upon the points raised.

Note: This table refers to group exploration of a topical question, the nature of an exceptional practicum experience, that was relevant to the participants and their organizational units within the university where the draft survey was trialled.

2.6. Comparative group ideation processes

Groups are often the basic work units for bringing together differing ideas in an organization. By and large, organizations typically use groups to plan and implement change (Schwarz, 2002). As stated in Chapter 1, my interest and familiarity with AI (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987) shaped this research project. However, in designing the study and bringing together differing ideas I needed to consider other group ideation processes to utilize as a comparison to AI and to widen a search for more generic

attributes of processes intended to foster generativity and openness to organizational change. Those studying and working with AI claim this approach is a more generative form of inquiry process than traditional problem-solving approaches (Bushe & Paranjpey, 2014). In addition to exploring AI, I decided to utilize and explore brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963) and force field analysis (Lewin, 1947), each widely used problem solving-oriented group ideation processes in order to explore more generally the production of generative conversations.

2.6.1. Appreciative inquiry

AI has been described in many ways. Cooperrider et al. (2009) offered the following practitioner-oriented definition:

> appreciative inquiry is the cooperative co-evolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. It involves the discovery of what gives "life" to a living system when it is most effective, alive, and constructively capable in ecological, and human terms. AI involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential. The inquiry is mobilized through the crafting of the unconditional positive question, often involving hundreds or thousands of people. AI interventions focus on the speed of imagination and innovation instead of the negative, critical, and spiralling diagnoses commonly used in organizations. The discover, dream, design, and destiny model links the energy of the positive core to changes never thought possible. (p. 3)

An AI process (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005) is comprised of a cycle of discover, dream, design, and destiny (4D) phases in which participants engage in a specific process of inquiry that allows a group to identify its core strengths in order to design systems that promote an effective and sustainable future. AI, as a theory, criticizes the logical positivist inference that organizations are problems to be solved (Cooperrider et al., 1995; Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). It represented a shift away from the traditional approach to organizational change, a move from a deficit-based view toward a positive theory of change. AI is the study of what works well; it focuses people on their most positive qualities and leverages those qualities to enhance the organization. A central premise of AI is that the appreciative process of knowing is socially constructed and that knowing takes place through relations with and within a social system.

David Cooperrider developed AI in the early 1980s, when he was a doctoral student at Case Western Reserve University (Cooperrider et al., 2009). While completing an organizational analysis utilizing the traditional problem-solving approach, Cooperrider also explored the issues and concerns with the human side of an organization (Cooperrider et al., 2009). The emergent AI theory continues to be shaped and explored and in its brief existence has made substantial impact on the field of OD. AI provides a new lens that differs from a deficit model toward a strengths-based approach to planning and change. Where a traditional OD process asks, "What problems are you having," AI asks, "What's working well?" Instead of defining problems and fixing what is broken, it searches for solutions that already exist and amplifies what is working.

Cooperrider drew upon the notion of generative theory and social constructionism in the development of his work (Cooperrider et al., 1995; Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). His view of OD is a departure from the focus on systems, processes, and the belief that there is a natural order to organizations. In a unique fashion, he highlighted human interaction and social construction, with an emphasis on how organizations are symbolically and relationally constructed. In this post-modern philosophical view, all social organization is an arbitrary social construction. People's ability to create new and better organizations is limited only by their imagination and collective will (Bushe, 2005).

The assumptions of AI are embedded in the theory and serve as the principles that move the theory into action. AI theory assumes that all organizations have positive aspects. It assumes that people in organizations are willing and able to focus on those positive aspects and experiences. Implicit to AI is that entire organizations can engage in planning processes, not just the leadership.

The notion of assumptions is itself a key part of AI. Assumptions are to be challenged and replaced with positive, life-giving thoughts. As discussed briefly earlier in this paper, the heliotropic hypothesis is an important assumption embedded in AI theory. This hypothesis implies that social systems within organizations grow toward the most positive images they hold of themselves. Based on the directional growth of plants in response to sunlight, this hypothesis contends that in individual, team, and organizational contexts, people tend to grow most rapidly and healthily in the direction of

positive, affirming images (Cooperrider, 1990). AI assumes that these sometimes unseen and unconscious images exist and need to be shared and discussed to come to fruition.

Recent work exploring the utilization of AI has focused on the concept of generativity (Bushe, 2007, 2010, 2013). Some people argue that generativity, rather than positivity, is the most central and important factor contributing to sustaining change (Bushe, 2007, 2010; Bright et al., 2010). In his comparative study of eight AI interventions in a school district, Bushe (2010) found the level of positive affect or positivity did not predict the level of change, but generativity did. The experience of psychological safety has been identified as serving as an entry point to anticipatory images and transformative dialogue (Bright et al., 2010, p. 4). Bushe (2009) stated, "It seems that generativity and positivity are both possible without each other, but that without generativity, positivity by itself does not promote change" (p. 11). While there are many positive stories about the application of AI, Bushe (2013) suggested research needs to go beyond this to examine aspects that could extend or deepen people's understanding of the process.

Generative theory (Gergen, 1978) is core to AI. What is generativity and what do generative conversations look like? Bushe and Paranjpey (2014) noted,

> While the impact of AI in the past 25 years has been immense, very little empirical research exists explicating how one increases the generativity of any organizational change effort, nor has there been much research to study any of the claims made about it. (p. 2)

In an article for the *AI Practitioner*, Bushe (2012) addressed the criticisms AI has received. He described the critiques as arriving in three waves (Bushe, 2012). The first wave of criticism originated with OD scholars with a perspective grounded in modern, positivist beliefs, who contended that a balanced exploration on both positive and dysfunctional organizational aspects is a more valid approach. Bushe (2012) cited the writings of Golembiewski (1998, 2000) as examples of this criticism.

The second wave of critique is said to have come from scholars grounded in social construction who felt AI as a research method had engaged in little self-reflection or critique (Bushe, 2012). These scholars proposed that critical theory provides a useful lens to develop an evaluation of the process (Grant & Humphries, 2006).

Bushe (2012) described the third wave as coming from “scholar practitioners” (p. 14) whose concerns concentrate on the issue that AI’s “focus on positivity during the discovery phase will invalidate the negative organizational experiences of participants and repress potentially important and meaningful conversations that need to take place” (p. 14).

Building on the scholarship of AI and the renaissance of the importance of generativity, the study described in this thesis was aimed to add to the current understanding of the key, common elements of processes for generating actions for effective change. In part, a goal was to move beyond arguments about the differences in merits or efficacy of specific methodologies or process models and look for generic criteria for the design and implementation of social environments that can support generativity—criteria based on the personal, phenomenological interpretation by participants in structured dialogues and conversations proposed to promote generativity. “Generativity is ascending as an important meme in organizational studies” (Bushe & Paranjpey, 2014, p. 2).

2.6.2. Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a process for generating ideas through group discussion. “In his influential book, *Applied imagination*, Osborn (1953) suggested “brainstorming as a method of group problem solving that considerably increases the quality and quantity of ideas produced by group members” (Diehl & Stroebe, 1987, p. 497). Participants are encouraged to generate creative, freewheeling ideas and are asked not to judge the suggestions no matter how far-fetched or unrealistic they may seem. The initial aim of brainstorming is quantity of ideas generated, not quality. Only after all ideas on a particular topic have been exhausted by a group is an evaluative discussion and critical analysis conducted. “Since Osborn (1953) proposed the rules of brainstorming, the technique has become an ubiquitous feature of the ideation or divergent phase of group problem solving” (Bushe & Paranjpey, 2014, p. 5).

Many studies have explored and critiqued brainstorming as a method of idea generation. One particular aspect of evaluation of the process has centred around the claim that brainstorming produces a greater quantity of creative ideas. A number of studies have found that production blocking occurs during brainstorming because only

one participant may offer an idea at any one time. The resulting productivity loss accounts for a number of results in which brainstorming was found to generate fewer ideas than individuals working separately (Diehl & Stroebe, 1987). In a meta-analysis of research on productivity loss (the loss of production of ideas) in brainstorming groups, Mullen, Johnson, and Salas (2010) found brainstorming groups are less productive in both quantity and quality of ideas than nominal groups and individuals. Social loafing and evaluation apprehension have been identified as other factors that may negatively impact the effectiveness of brainstorming (Akdere, 2011; Diehl & Stroebe, 1987). Social loafing occurs when equal efforts are not made by group members and evaluation apprehension arises when group members restrict or hold back their ideas for fear of negative evaluation (Akdere, 2011). Despite the number of critical reviews, "brainstorming continues to be widely applied in organizations of all kinds" (Stroebe, Nijstad & Rietzschel, 2010, p. 198).

In examining the literature that offers a critique of brainstorming, it is important to consider that the way the process has been researched and studied is not without flaws. Isaksen (1998) conducted a review of brainstorming research in which he suggested many of the studies have disregarded fundamental principles outlined by Osborn (1953) when he conceived of the process. Isaksen aimed to conduct a wider and more inclusive review of the previous research of brainstorming. He outlined six major issues in the empirical literature on brainstorming:

> Misuse of the term brainstorming. Brainstorming is a group tool for idea generation and as such needs to be compared to other real group procedures, not arbitrary conditions.
>
> Issue of knowledgeable and skilled facilitation. Not all studies have utilized adequately trained facilitators.
>
> The extent to which Osborn's guidelines for training and preparation are followed. Studies have not necessarily included adequate orientation to the process for participants to prepare them for a productive session.
>
> Attention to task. Clear problem statements with adequate background information have not always been part of the research design.
>
> Subject sampling has not always utilized real organizational contexts.
>
> Variety and inconsistency of criteria utilized to assess outcomes of brainstorming research. (Isaksen, 1998, pp. 9–10)

On the basis of his review of 50 empirical studies and related literature, Isaksen (1998) suggested brainstorming may be the most researched and least understood

creative thinking technique (p. 20). Isaksen has written a full discussion of the critique of this body of research and offers suggestions on how to improve future brainstorming evaluation research,

2.6.3. Force field analysis

Force field analysis is a time-honoured problem-solving and action-planning technique first described by the psychologist Kurt Lewin (1947; see also Schwering, 2003, p. 361). Developed from his work in field theory (1947), Lewin's construct of force field analysis considers and evaluates the forces working for change and the forces working for maintaining the status quo or resisting change (Rothwell et al., 2009). A force field analysis is a strategic way to explore the forces working for or against a specific topic. In practice, the participants in a group systematically analyze the factors that either support or hinder change, progress, or goal attainment. The intended outcome of a force field analysis is to yield ideas for strategies that can strengthen the positive forces, weaken the negative forces, or develop new positive forces (McFadzean, 1999, p. 114). Force field analysis is often put forward as a fairly basic technique for identifying forces for and against change (Burnes & Cooke, 2012). Critics of utilizing force field analysis without consideration of other components of Lewin's field theory suggest force field analysis is a variant of field theory. Field theory, especially as applied in physics and as an element of systems theory, is much more complex.

> In this watered-down version of field theory, elements within the life space, including important relationships and the overall context, are either ignored or not recognized. At best, just focusing on a few obvious driving and restraining forces, and ignoring the complex psychological conditions' that make up the entire life space, will only provide a very partial understanding of the situation, if not a misleading one. (Burnes & Cooke, 2012, p. 417)

Cronshaw and McCulloch (2008) went as far as to say, "Practitioners fundamentally misinterpreted Lewin's work when they extrapolated force field analysis from his writings" (p. 90). A number of authors have suggested modifications to the way force field analysis is conducted to bring it into greater alignment with Lewin's (1947) original field theory (see also Burnes & Cooke, 2012; Cronshaw & McCulloch, 2008; Schein, 1996; Schwering, 2003). Strategies include assessing organizational field conditions beyond forces for or against as either facilitating, constraining, or blocking, along with a recognition of force as dynamic and occurring over time (Cronshaw &

McCulloch, 2008); taking a stance where change is better defined as learning and involving the change target in the change process (Schein, 1996); and implementing cognitive prompting in combination with the existing force field analysis technique (Schwering, 2003).

2.6.4. Conversation, discussion, dialogue, and debate

It is worth pointing out that when it comes to group ideation processes, a number of terms are used to describe how people interact: conversations, discussion, dialogue, and debate. These terms are often utilized interchangeably so as to become conflated. Senge (1990), in his book *The Fifth Discipline*, described two primary forms of discourse, dialogue and discussion, and claimed both are important to a team capable of continual generative learning (p. 240). Senge made a distinction between the two, describing discussion as opposing perspectives being presented and defended and dialogue as people freely and creatively exploring ideas, listening deeply to others, and suspending their own views in search of a common understanding. A discussion can turn into a debate of one idea over another, and in an the extreme, a person can dominate a discussion to try and get support from others. In a dialogue people explore complex issues from many points of view (Senge, 1990, p. 241).

2.7. Chapter summary

This study focused on generativity in faculty group processes in a university setting. An analysis of the literature revealed the concept of generativity has origins in social psychology (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987; Gergen, 1978, 2009) and is currently animated in studies related to OD (Rothwell et al., 2009). In the study of AI there has been a clear trend in interest away from the sole focus on the positive nature of the process toward the generative capacity of this transformational change process (Bushe, 2007, 2013). Inquiry and dialogue in the context of relationships with others seems to be a foundation for generativity (Bushe, 2007, 2013). Within inquiry and dialogue, the potential for seeing things differently and a sense of being compelled to act upon new thoughts and feelings is at the heart of generativity (Bushe, 2007, 2013). This review has highlighted the view that generativity is important to dialogic organizational development processes. Generative processes can produce generative capacity and generative

outcomes (Bushe, 2013). I conducted this study with the intent to contribute to the growing body of literature with an interest in understanding generativity through a phenomenological approach exploring the perspectives and perceptions of participants in experiences designed to foster ideation and generative conversations.

Phenomenology is a type of qualitative research that focuses on the exploration of an individual's lived experiences (Neubauer, Witkop, & Varpio, 2019). Phenomenology is essentially a way of studying phenomena as they occur. Van Maren defines phenomenological research as the "description of the experiential meanings we live as we live them" (Van Manen, 1990, p.11). Phenomenological research is systematic in that it uses specifically practiced modes of questioning, reflecting, focusing, intuiting, etc. (Van Maren, 1990). This kind of research is explicit since it attempts to "articulate through content and form of text, the structures of meaning embedded in lived experience" (Van Manen, 1990, p.11). In exploring the phenomena of generativity, this approach is suited to this study as it attempts to understand how people define and engage in experiences or processes that are generative.

Chapter 3.

Methodology

3.1. Chapter overview and context

This chapter describes the design of this study, beginning with an overview of the research questions, followed by a discussion of the study design, research methods, population and sample, as well as the instrumentation. The data collection procedures and process for analysis of each research question are provided. Finally, the chapter describes specific challenges and how they were addressed.

The purpose of the study was to examine the experiences described by participants who had been involved in meetings structured by processes that are widely claimed to support generative conversations. The focus of the study was on whether the participants in the studied processes perceived their conversations as having attributes of generativity. The participants were all members of faculty and staff in a post-secondary organization. Chapter 2 reviewed existing ideas about the nature of conversations in which participants engage, make meaning, see old things in new ways, and have a sense of anticipation and hope leading to generativity, a state in which people feel compelled to act and take action (Bright et al., 2010; Bushe, 2007; Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987; Erikson, 1950; Gergen, 1978; Ludema, 2005; Paranjpey, 2013). The research questions that were to be addressed centred around the processes and actions of several small group meetings situated in the campus of a post-secondary institution. The questions were as follows:

1. What considerations are critical to the design and implementation of organized meetings and social interactions planned and structured to foster generative dialog?

2. Do the experiences reported by the participants in group meetings organized by processes claimed to foster generative outcomes indicate that the meetings supported generative capacity?

3. Do follow-up reports from the meeting participants and the results of an independent review of the meeting outcomes indicate that the sessions were generative?

In Chapter 1, I noted not all group processes lead to generative outcomes, namely those in which participants feel compelled to act upon the results or report perceptions associated with generativity in general. If some group processes do not foster effective ideation and actions, then it becomes important to understand what aspects of group process can lead to generative outcomes.

3.2. Overall methodological approach

The overall concept of this study was grounded in an action research approach in which research is initiated to address an issue or problem identified by the members of a community of practice. Action research often has a practical focus and is focused on a researcher's own practice (Creswell, 2008). Action research "is a disciplined process of inquiry conducted by and for those taking the action. The primary reason for engaging in action research is to assist the actors in improving and/or refining their actions" (Sagor, 2000, p. 3). For this study, lack of generativity, in other words, inaction on the results of group process deliberations, was the identified problem in the particular context of post-secondary communities of practice. My premise was that understanding the processes that can lead to generativity could potentially provide practical approaches to improve group process outcomes and subsequent actions.

This field-based study was conducted utilizing multiple strategies (i.e., mixed methods). "To ensure reasonable validity and reliability, action researchers should avoid relying on a single source of data" (Sagor, 2000, p. 5). A mixed-methods approach recognizes that both quantitative descriptive data and qualitative data taken together can address the research questions. In mixed-methods studies the research questions are answered through an integration of qualitative and quantitative methods (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006; Morse, 2010). A mixed-method approach can overcome the limitations of a single method design and increase construct validity. Mixed-method research offers an opportunity for researchers to implement research approaches that can describe and further develop strategies or techniques that are actually used in practice (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

In deciding how to explore or identify the attributes of generativity in action, I conducted a literature search to see if an existing tool would be suitable for use in this study. As discussed previously, the origins of the term generativity is most often

associated with Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial development. Subsequent studies that sought to construct and validate a tool to measure generativity, such as the Loyola Generativity Scale (Northwestern University, School of Education and Social Policy, 2009) and the Generative Behavior Checklist (Northwestern University, School of Education and Social Policy, 2009), relate to this late adult psychosocial stage (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992; McAdams, Hart, & Maruna, 1998). These tools involve self-report measures that examine prosocial behaviour in adults (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992). In another instance, adaptations of the Loyola Generativity Scale and the Generative Behavior Checklist (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992; McAdams et al., 1998) were utilized to develop a brief questionnaire for specific use with palliative care patients to measure generativity and ego-integrity (Vuksanovic, Dyck, & Green, 2015).

Given the focus on the psychosocial development by individuals of these existing tools, I determined that they did not adequately address the context of the current study because of my focus on group discussions and organizational behaviour. Consequently, an original survey tool was designed for this study. The survey tool is discussed in further detail later in this chapter. A mixed-methods approach is suitable and helpful in establishing the validity of the tool by cross-validating the results within the study. A visual model representing the sequential mixed methods design for this study is illustrated in Figure 3.1.

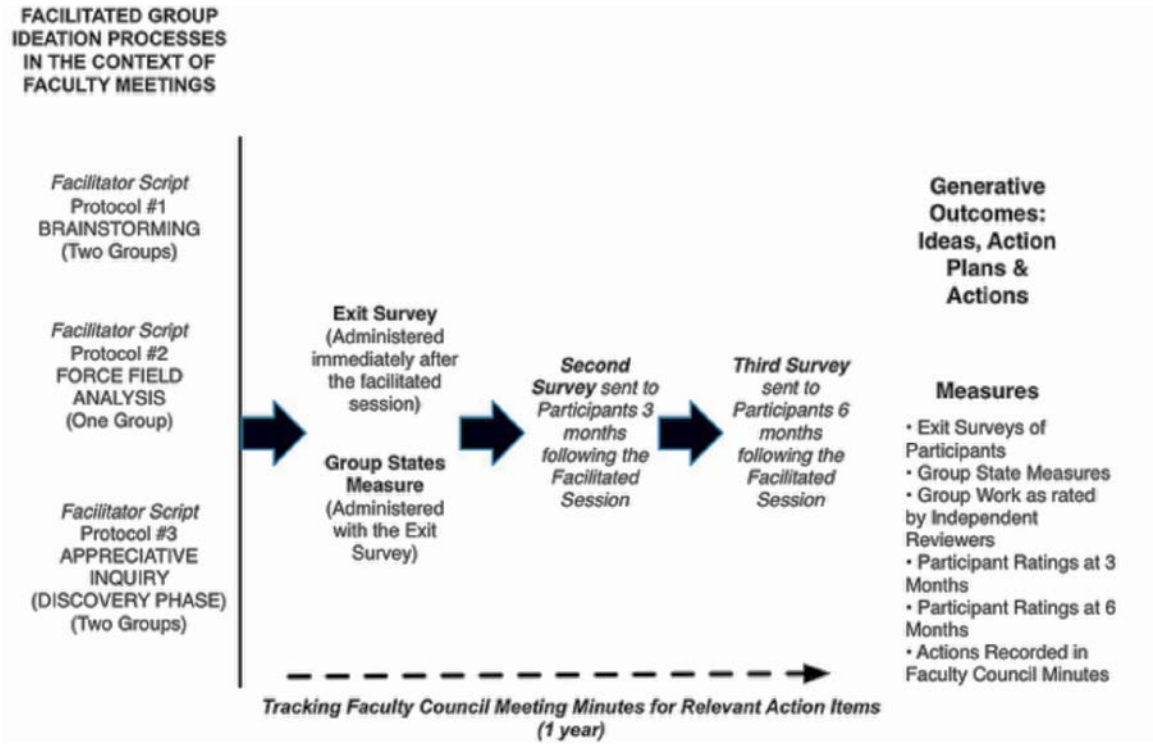

Figure 3.1. Sequential mixed-methods design: An exploration of generativity in faculty group processes in a university setting

3.3. Setting and participants

This study took place at a mid-sized university in Western Canada. The institution began as a college 40 years ago, came to be a university-college 20 years ago, and through legislation became a teaching intensive regional university in 2008 (Hall, 2017).

I chose the setting and selected participants through convenience sampling (Creswell, 2008), as I drew upon relationships and networks that were available and accessible to me. I have worked at the chosen organization for 2 decades in a number of faculty and leadership roles. I am currently a member of one of the departments within the faculty selected for this study, and I have a professional relationship with each of the departments and schools as well as the greater faculty grouping. I sought the support of the President of the university and the Dean of the one of the faculties in order to gain permission to access and utilize groups of faculty representing six distinct departments and schools in the study. The faculty from which the participant groups were drawn was formed when the institution was granted university status in 2008. Previously, the

individual departments and schools were part of other organizational structures. The departments and schools were brought together under a new faculty designation because it was thought there was common focus on professional education and experiential learning for students in each of the programs and departments.

Following ethics approval from Simon Fraser University and the university that was the site of the study, I made a general presentation about the planned research project to the whole faculty group at a regular faculty council meeting. This was done to familiarize potential participants with the purpose and basic design of the research. I then presented the proposal to a meeting of the heads and directors of the departments and schools, to introduce them to the general research goals and process. In their normal routines the groups chosen for this study met regularly to plan and make decisions at the school and department levels. Further, it was reasonable to assume that the question proposed as a focus for the group dialogues (i.e., What makes an exceptional practicum experience) was one that would have current or prospective future relevance to these working units. Faculty council meetings include faculty from all the departments and schools within the Faculty of Professional Studies. It is expected that all faculty members participate. The typical agenda of Faculty Council has some information and communication items, and Faculty Council is responsible for approving and making decisions related to course, curriculum, and program changes that then move forward to various other decision-making and approval bodies in the university (Undergraduate Education Committee, Academic Planning and Priorities Committee, and the Senate and the Board of Governors).

3.4. Assignment of ideation processes to participant groups

In carrying out the research design, the group ideation processes were assigned randomly and blindly to six groups. I carried out this assignment process by writing the department names on slips of paper and writing out each of the three group ideation process names on two pieces of paper. I separated the department names into one envelope and the group ideation processes into another. I pulled out one slip of paper from each envelope to form the assignment of group and process. Table 3.1 shows the group number and assignment of ideation process.

Table 3.1. Random assignment of ideation process to groups

	Group Ideation Processes		
	Brainstorming	Force Field Analysis	Appreciative Inquiry
Group 1	X		
Group 2			X
Group 3			X
Group 4		X	
Group 5	X		

3.5. Data collection

During the fall of 2013, I held a total of five facilitated group sessions involving a total of 27 faculty members. I booked each session individually with the head of department or director of the school involved, who in turn communicated this to the members of the department. As the researcher and facilitator, I requested 1.5 hours to be allotted for my session. Typically, the departments and schools meet monthly for 2–3 hours to conduct regular business. I requested that time be added to the schedule of the regular meetings, and I was listed as a guest on the meeting agendas. It is quite common in the institution to have guests attend regular department meetings in order to share information, solicit information and input, or ask participation from department members. In each case, for the purposes of my research, the faculty members had already gathered for a regular department meeting and as a guest I arrived as arranged after their business agenda was complete. To begin my section of the meeting, I gave the faculty members a verbal explanation of the project accompanied with a Letter of Information and Consent (see Appendix C). It should be noted that prior to my attendance at the individual unit meetings I had made only a general verbal presentation to the meeting of the larger faculty council. I also explained to members of the meeting that their participation was voluntary and that they could leave if they chose not to participate. If they did decide to opt out of the session, I made sure that they were aware that their choice would be without consequences for their career progress or evaluations. After receiving the signed consent forms from the participants, I acted in the facilitator role to deliver the instructions for the group ideation process that had been randomly designated for that group (see Table 3.1). As each session progressed, I made mental

notes about the group's process. On completion of each session I followed up immediately by making written observations about my impressions of particularly notable dynamics.

As described above, for the purposes of this study, I randomly assigned the meeting groups to one of the three different group processes that have been claimed to foster generativity: brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963), a force field analysis (Lewin, 1947), and a variation of an AI process (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). The focus of the research was not on the mechanics of the different approaches, but rather on making a qualitative review of the perceptions of the participants as to whether or not they had personally experienced the session as having attributes associated with generativity. The participants' perceptions of their session experiences were collected by means of an original Generative Conversations Survey (GCS), which I designed to incorporate a set of statements as representing attributes of sessions that have been claimed in previous research as fostering ideation and generativity. The participants were asked to complete the survey immediately at the end of the discussions and before leaving the session. In addition to the GCS data, I collected the ideas generated by participants during the sessions, which participants recorded in writing on large charts, sticky notes, and in other formats, for later submission to a group of external reviewers who were asked to rate the session outputs against a set of qualitative criteria.

The qualitative data sources were collected concurrently and the information from them was then merged in the interpretation of the findings. The triangulation of data sets was thereby intended to strengthen the study's inferences by offsetting the weaknesses inherent in either method applied individually (Creswell, 2008).

A further aspect of the research design was to follow up with participants after their sessions at intervals of 3 and 6 months in order to assess whether or not any actions had resulted that might be viewed by the participants as having some connections to the conversations and processes of the original meetings. Within the constructs of theory on generativity (Bushe, 2013), if conversations and dialogue are truly to be seen as generative, then they should provoke or inspire further action. The post-session follow-up approach was intended to look for evidence that the original meetings had been truly generative.

A key component of this research was the development of a GCS (see Appendix A) to capture participants' perceptions of their experiences of the facilitated sections of the faculty meetings. I developed the GCS composed of 17 items by drawing themes and statements about the attributes of generativity as derived from the literature review reported in Chapter 2.

Surveys can be an effective way to gather data for research and evaluation. The challenge is to design a survey that accomplishes its intended purpose (Diem, 2004). A survey can be employed to develop concise responses to statements describing particular attributes or conditions, to assess relationships among statements, or to compare different participant groups, each of which were intended for the use of a survey in this research. Surveys can also help identify important beliefs and attitudes of individuals (Creswell, 2008, p. 388). In this case, I wished to explore the degree to which individual group members perceived the conversations in which they had participated as having attributes associated with generative dialogues. Utilizing information gleaned from the literature review in Chapter 2, specific thoughts, feelings, and actions that have been claimed to contribute to generativity were identified and written for use as survey statements. Good survey statements or questions should be clear, unambiguous, and not confuse the respondents (Creswell, 2008, p. 399). Statements that co-relate with elements of generativity can be categorized in three ways: statements that check for whether or not a meeting or process provokes or fosters thinking (Items 1, 2, 10, 13, 14, and 16); statements that assess whether or not the respondent viewed the session as inciting feelings or emotional responses (Items 3, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, and 15); or statements that check to see if a session incites action (Items 4, 6, 9, and 17; see Table 3.2 for GCS statements). Given that It was important to ensure the quality and validity of the survey statements (Creswell, 2008), I developed a draft of the tool and shared it with an expert in the scholarship of AI and generativity in order to access their feedback and suggestions. These comments were incorporated into the final survey as it was used in this research (see Appendix A).

Table 3.2. Categories of statements as used in the generative conversations survey

Thinking	Feeling	Acting
Item 1. I heard new information when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.	**Item 3.** I was surprised by what I heard when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.	**Item 4.** As a result of the participation in this group process I have developed an action plan related to the topic.
Item 2. I learned from a colleague when I participated about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.	**Item 5.** I experienced the group process as creative.	**Item 6.** I was fully engaged in the group process.
Item 10. As a result of participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience; I think there will be some change in what we do.	**Item 8.** I felt emotionally engaged during participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.	**Item 9.** I was able to suspend self-interest during participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.
Item 13. I heard new ideas when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.	**Item 7.** I felt motivated to act as a result of the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.	**Item 17.** Participation in the group process about what exceptional practicum experience compels me to act upon the points raised.
Item 14. My thoughts were expanded when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.	**Item 11.** During participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience I felt a sense of connectedness to my colleagues.	
Item 16. I saw old things in new ways as a result of the participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.	**Item 12.** During participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience I felt energized.	
	Item 15. As a result of participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience I feel a sense of hopefulness.	

Table 3.3. Likert-type scale used in the generative conversations survey

1	2	3	4	5	9
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

For each GCS statement, the respondent was presented with the option of rating their agreement with the statement on an interval scale organized as a 5-point Likert-type scale (see Table 3.3). A Likert-type scale is the most widely utilized approach to scaling responses (Creswell, 2008). It is often utilized to quantify respondents' attitudes by asking the extent to which they agree or disagree with a particular statement. The popular Likert scale (i.e., strongly agree to strongly disagree) is arranged with theoretically equal intervals among responses (Creswell, 2008, p. 176). Since it cannot be assured that there are equal intervals among the scale points, a Likert scale is considered to represent both ordinal and interval data (Creswell, 2008). The post-ideation (i.e., exit) survey instrument included "Don't Know" as a response option. This option was provided to address the possibility that respondents who did not have a specific attitude or belief about a statement, could choose "Don't Know," rather than selecting the midpoint "Neutral," a response pattern that can introduce measurement error and bias. "Don't know" is an acceptable response, as it informs about a specific state of mind of the respondent (Manisera & Zuccolotto, 2013, p. 2). The choice of Likert-type scaling offered a method of providing data that was amenable to descriptive statistical analysis. In addition to the 17 items presented with Likert-type scaled responses, the GCS included two open-ended questions that were presented to capture broader, personalized qualitative responses The lead-in statements to the open-ended section of the GCS stated the following:

- Recalling the dialogue you participated in, was there anything that stood out for you? If so, can you share why?
- What do you think you will do, if anything, as a result of participating in this group process?

The participants in all three process groups (brainstorming, adapted AI, and force field analysis) responded to the same GCS questions. The goal here was to assess the

perceptions of the session participants as to the whether or not they viewed the experience as having generative attributes. In this sense, the research was an assessment of the efficacy and validity of the exit survey statements, given that the statements are grounded in current and relevant research on the nature of generativity. The survey did not cue the respondents to the idea of generativity, though the term appeared in the title at the top of the page of instructions (i.e., An Exploration of Generativity Faculty Group Processes in a University Setting). They were asked to respond to the statements as they were written and to respond based on their views of their experiences in the session that they attended. General instructions given to the participants at the outset of the survey are found in Appendix A.

I sent invitations out to the six heads or directors of the departments and schools within the faculty and quickly received five responses. I ensured common language was utilized on all the invitations. After several attempts to follow up with the sixth group, a member of the faculty informed me that due to time constraints and other changes and conditions affecting the group, they were unable to participate. In the fall of 2013, after obtaining formal confirmation from the head or director of a unit's participation in the study, I scheduled a time for each facilitated session. As stated earlier, I had given a general presentation and orientation to my project at a Faculty Council meeting, so individual faculty members were aware of the project. Cooperating department heads and directors placed my session on the agenda for the day of the regular meeting that I was to attend. The agenda was sent out to individual faculty members ahead of time. For each group facilitation, I formally recruited the individual faculty members in the moment, verbally and in a Letter of Information explaining the research (see Appendix C). After they read the information, I obtained written consent from the individual faculty members participating in the processes (see Appendix C).

In total, five groups participated of which only one group participated in a force field analysis (Lewin, 1947), while both brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963) and the adapted AI (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987) processes were facilitated in sessions with two faculty groups for each process. In total, 27 participants generated work from the facilitated dialogue sessions and completed the GCSs. In the spring of 2014, I sent Follow-Up surveys (different from the original GCS) to all participants by interdepartmental faculty mail, at 3 months and 6 months after the initial sessions. The Follow-Up survey had six items and focused on actions related to the initial respondent

dialogues. A copy of the Follow-Up surveys, exactly as they were presented to the participants, are found in Appendices D and E.

3.5.1. Follow-Up survey items

The statements in the Follow-Up survey were the same when it was distributed at 3 and 6 months. The statements were as follows:

1. Specific action plans emerged (either during or after) from the [*specific ideation process inserted here*] about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.
2. The school/department has taken actions related to those plans in the last 3 months?
3. I have personally taken action related to those plans in the last 3 months.
4. Others in your my school/department have taken action related to those plans in the last 3 months.
5. I have been involved in further conversations about practicums in the last 3 months.
6. I feel compelled to act upon some of the points raised during the *[Brainstorming, AI or Force Field Analysis inserted here*] 3 months ago.

As in the initial GCS, each of the six items listed above was presented with the option of selecting an answer on a 5-point Likert-type scale format (see Table 3.3), with the inclusion of the "Don't Know" option. After each survey statement, I ensured space was provided for respondents to describe their experiences, with further space provided at the bottom of the survey for any additional comments.

3.6. Data analysis

I developed the GCS (see Appendix A) to discover whether participants' reported experiences of the facilitated session indicated attributes of generativity in the session in which their group was involved. For this research, I analyzed the individual survey items as single questions, and I combined the overall responses from the items into a composite score that I then used to provide a general measure of the perceived generativity. I also examined the statements on the GCS to show the differences in

participants' responses and to compare the *thinking*, *feeling*, and *action* statement groups. The descriptive results provided some indication of differences in the responses of the participants and in their overall perceptions of the generativity of the session. I utilized a correlation matrix to measure the degree of association between the participants' responses on the GCS. The results of the correlation matrix allowed for scales to be created, and I tested those against the outcome measures (independent reviewer ratings and idea implementation). In addition, I sent the Follow-Up surveys at 3 and 6 months after the facilitated sessions, and I tracked and recorded specific actions that resulted from the group conversations (see Appendices D and E).

I assigned each group to a session that was framed by one of the group ideation processes, with each group being allocated approximately 1.5 hours in which to work with the process. Upon completion of the dialogues, participants were asked to complete the GCS about their experience of the process. At the end of each session, in addition to collection of the completed surveys, I gathered all documents or work samples created during the process for later analysis. I arranged for the written work produced by the groups (on flip charts, sticky notes, etc.) to be transcribed into digital text formats, which I in conjunction with three independent reviewers then analyzed (see Appendix B). I provided the Follow-Up surveys (see Appendices D and E) to the group participants at 3 months and 6 months. I mined the summaries of the response data from all of the surveys and open-ended questions for trends and themes in relation to the research questions.

I asked three independent faculty reviewers to look at the ideas produced by the groups and independently complete scales rating the generativity of the ideas (see Appendix B). I selected independent reviewers from faculty at a variety of departments and schools that were not participants in the facilitated sessions. The reviewers were also experienced with the choice of the focal topic, the nature of student practicum experiences, that was offered as a focus for the session dialogues. The independent reviewers had between 3 and 13 years of experience at the university and were considered to have the knowledge necessary to understand the context of the participants' ideas that they were reviewing. The survey tool used by the reviewers for evaluating the work of the groups drew upon the same body of literature that I utilized to develop the GCS. In assessing generativity, I asked the independent reviewers to evaluate the degree to which the work generated by the groups was novel, compelling,

and practical. I decided upon these measures of generativity that have been utilized in previous studies (Bushe, 2013; Bushe & Paranjpey, 2014; Paranjpey, 2013) comparing the experiences of participants during different group ideation processes. I instructed the independent reviewers to "please rate each idea generated by group members about how to improve student's practicum experiences applying the following scale with each criterion rating." See Figure 3.2 for an item example.

Item (Example):

1. This idea is **novel** and has not been done before in the school/department or organization (Rating on the scale)

1	2	3	4	5	9
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Using the same scale, each item would also be assessed against the remaining two criteria.

2. This idea is **compelling**; it evokes interest and a desire to implement it (Rating on the scale)

3. This idea is **practical** and can likely be implemented by the school/department or organization (Rating on the scale)

Figure 3.2. Item example of the independent reviewers rating scale

I collected the information produced on the flip chart paper from each group's ideation process at the completion of the facilitated session, and I transcribed the ideas generated into a Microsoft Word™ document (see Appendix F). These documents were given to the independent reviewers along with the rating scale for them to utilize (see Table 3.4.

Table 3.4. Independent reviewers tool

Ideas	This idea is **novel** and has not been done before in the school/department or organization (Rating on the scale)	This idea is **compelling;** it evokes interest and a desire to implement it (Rating on the Scale)	This idea is **practical** and can likely be implemented by the school/department or organization (Rating on the Scale)

In addition, I combined the average assessments of ideas from all independent reviewers into one score for each group on each of the three measures. I utilized an ANOVA to look for significant differences between the five groups and to look for significant differences between items in the GCS.

As the final part of the data collection process I reviewed the minutes of Faculty Council meetings for a period of 1 year following the initial group-ideation processes to determine if any changes or motions were made to programs or curriculum that could be seen as related to the topics discussed with each group during the facilitation. I clustered those groups that had actual outcomes versus those that did not and applied a *t*-test to look for significant differences between items in the GCS. Table 3.5 depicts the various data collection and analysis processes.

Table 3.5. Data collection and analysis procedures

Ideation Process Randomly assigned		**Group 1 Brainstorming (Osborn)**	**Group 2 Adapted Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider)**	**Group 3 Adapted Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider)**	**Group 4 Force Field Analysis (Lewin)**	**Group 5 Brainstorming (Osborn)**
Number of participants		7	10	6	2	2
Stated topic	**What makes An exceptional practicum experience?**	→→→ **Same for each group**	→→→ **Same for each group**	→→→ **Same for each group**	→→→ **Same for each group**	→→→ **Same for each group**
Instructions to participants		Brainstorming protocol Appendix	Adapted AI protocol Appendix	Adapted AI protocol Appendix	Force Field Analysis protocol Appendix	Brainstorming protocol Appendix
Post ideation survey	Appendix **Same survey given to all groups**	**7 completed**	**10 completed**	**6 completed**	**2 completed**	**2 completed**
Group States Measure Ideal vs Ought	Appendix Same survey given to all groups	Higher differences between ideal and ought	Least similar between ideal and ought	Lower differences between ideal and ought	Moderate differences between ideal and ought	Most similar Between ideal and ought
Follow up survey 3 months	Appendix **Same survey given to all groups**	**3 completed**	**4 completed**	**3 completed**	**0 completed**	**1 completed**
Follow up survey 6 months	Appendix Same survey given to all groups	3 completed	4 completed	1 completed	0 completed	1 completed
Independent Reviewers survey	Appendix **Instructions & reviewer tool**	**Most Practical Low novel, low compelling**	**Least compelling**	**Most Novel, most compelling**	**Most Compelling Least novel, least practical**	**High Practical Low novel**
# of Ideas Generated		58	21	20	22	38
Faculty Council Action		**0**	**1**	**3**	**0**	**2**

3.7. Challenges and limitations

In my position as participant–researcher, internal to the organization and engaged in the facilitation of the project, I needed to approach the work with an understanding that the choices I made and the environments I co-constructed could shape the nature of what emerged from each session. I developed the scripts for each facilitation protocol and followed them closely for each assigned group's ideation process (see Appendices G, H, and I). I developed a similar script to guide the work of the independent reviewers (see Appendix B).

I assigned each participating school and department one of three ideation processes through the use of the randomized process described in Section 3.4 of this chapter. I ensured each group was assigned a number instead of its regular title in order to protect the identities of the participants when their work was being evaluated by the independent reviewers. Having assigned each department and school a number, the numbers were placed in an envelope. The titles of the three ideation processes were placed in a separate envelope. As there were six groups to be assigned, duplicate titles were created for each process. In order to blind me to the selection, I drew out the pieces of paper one at a time from each envelope. This approach ensured that I had no effect on the assignment of group ideation processes. For each session, I facilitated a dialogue with the participants on a common specific topic, “What makes an exceptional practicum experience?” The topic was selected with the intent that each of the groups would be able to have a potentially generative dialogue about it. In the case of the departments and schools participating in this study, each was expected to have students engaged in experiential learning activities outside of the classroom, an experience commonly known as a practicum, but some departments or programs might use terms such as internships or coop learning to refer to these experiences.

In an effort to reduce the effect of differences in pre-existing group dynamics that might severely affect their ability to engage collectively during a group ideation process together, I acted as the facilitator for each of the dialogues. In addition, I arranged for a questionnaire related to Group States Discrepancy instrument (Bushe & Coetzer, 2007) to be administered to the participants at the close of each session in order to assess differences in group states that might affect generativity. The Group States Discrepancy instrument is grounded in the construct that group members hold cognitive representations of their group wherein individuals form an opinion of the *actual* group in which they are members compared to how they conceive groups *ought* to be in general, and how a group *ought* to be at a given point in time in their organization. A sample of the directions appears here:

> Compare this group, on that set of characteristics, to your IDEAL group. Your ideal is what you would like <u>all groups</u> you are a member of to be like. This does not change from group to group. For each actual quality of this group, in the middle column, rate how similar or different that quality is to your ideal group on the 1-5 scale provided at the bottom of the table.

1 = very different, 2 = somewhat different, 3 = neither similar nor different, 4 = somewhat similar, 5 = very similar.

Compare this group, on that set of characteristics, to how this group OUGHT TO BE. These are *the qualities that this specific group needs to be effective at this time in this organization. How a group ought to be will be different for each group you belong to. For each word, in the right side column, rate how similar or different the actual characteristic is to how the group ought to be using the same scale.*

This construct has been explored in research by Bushe (2007) and Coetzer and Bushe (2003, 2006).

It was a challenge to my original research design to secure the full participation of the faculty groups selected for the study. As noted earlier, one faculty group was unable to participate. This interfered with the intent of the original design to have two groups work through each group ideation process. As a result, only one faculty group session utilized the force field analysis (Lewin, 1947). The number of participants who completed Follow-Up surveys also dropped considerably from the number of initial respondents. While 27 participants engaged in the facilitated sessions and completed the initial survey, 11 completed the Follow-Up survey at 3 months and only 9 completed the Follow-Up survey at 6 months. Table 3.5 shows how these numbers were distributed among the participant groups.

It should be emphasized that the study fell broadly into the category of action research, in that it sought to explore and understand a component of a practice issue that relates to how groups function in a post-secondary environments. The research was also descriptive and qualitative with multiple strategies-mixed methods being utilized to determine if the participants perceived important differences in generativity among the three approaches while differences in the quality of ideas generated was assessed by the reviews of the independent raters. Given that the total number of participants in the study was small, it was difficult to apply some types of quantitative statistical analysis to the survey data. In a sense, the study may be better seen as an attempt to develop and prototype a draft survey tool designed to assess the extent to which participants experience structured group conversations as being generative.

Chapter 4 reports the qualities of the participants' responses to the structured meeting sessions and follows up over time to see whether or not the meetings led to actions around a presented focal issue. Chapter 5 discusses the implications of the

results, describes the limitations of the research design, and suggests possible improvements.

Chapter 4.

Results

4.1. Chapter overview

As stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to investigate the group processes or social-psychological conditions that may foster generativity in post-secondary organizations. This chapter presents an analysis of the data that was collected to address the research questions as posed in Chapter 1:

1. What considerations are critical to the design and implementation of organized meetings and social interactions planned and structured to foster generative dialog?

2. Do the experiences reported by the participants in group meetings organized by processes claimed to foster generative outcomes indicate that the meetings supported generative capacity?

3. Do follow-up reports from the meeting participants and the results of an independent review of the meeting outcomes indicate that the sessions were generative?

This chapter describes the experiences of five groups of university faculty in using one of three group processes that have been claimed to foster generativity and ideation: brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963), force field analysis (Lewin, 1947), and an adaptation of an AI (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987) approach. I posed a common question to set the focus for the discussions in the session groups: “What makes an exceptional practicum experience?” This topic was selected as having relevance to the university that was the site of this study at this point in time as the institution strives to excel at undergraduate education. The university had previously established a strategic direction that includes the intent to have students experience opportunities for practical engagement with their education.

This chapter is organized around the results from the five facilitated group sessions. The data sources included the Generative Conversations Survey (GCS) an Independent Reviewers survey, the Follow-Up surveys, and idea implementation. Figure 4.1 describes the chapter’s organization.

This chapter is organized around the results from the five facilitated group sessions. The data sources were:

A Generative Conversations Survey (GCS)

1. Participants' responses to a Generative Conversations Survey.
2. Correlation matrix applied to responses to the Generative Conversations Survey and scale development.

Surveys by Independent Reviewers

3. Ratings by Independent Reviewers' of the quality of ideas generated by participants in the different sessions.
4. The results of an Analysis of Variance conducted on the Ratings by the Independent Reviewers.

Follow-Up Surveys

5. The results of Follow-Up surveys of participants taken at intervals of 3 and 6 months after the working sessions.

Idea Implementation

6. Idea implementation—A follow-up review of proposed or actual changes to policies related to the topic of student practicum experiences.

Figure 4.1. Data sources for the study

Copies of the original survey forms and other data-gathering instruments are attached to the thesis as appendices. Where appropriate, data are summarized in the form of tables and charts that are included in the text of this chapter or in the Appendices (see Appendices J through to M). This chapter is broadly organized around the results of the data sources listed in Figure 4.1.

It should be noted that the total number of participants in this research was small. This meant that quantitative analysis using common statistical processes in some cases was judged as not appropriate or valid. As a consequence the results of the research are presented in a descriptive or qualitative approach, although some presentations reflect basic statistical analyses.

4.2. General organization and format of the group sessions

While there were differences in composition among the five meeting groups involved in this research, the format of the sessions was broadly similar. It is important to note that I served as facilitator for each of the sessions. In that role, I opened the sessions by ensuring that the participants understood the purposes of the research and their rights as participants, including the right to decide not to participate or to withdraw from a session at any point. I ensured that all had signed the Informed Consent forms (see Appendix C). The participants were all members of the university faculty, although some were full time and others held sessional appointments. The groups varied in size from two to 10 members. As explained in Chapter 3, I recruited participants after consultation with the department heads and directors and through a presentation made to a general meeting of the Faculty Council. I designed the research sessions to follow as additions to the agendas of regularly scheduled department meetings. The intention in this approach was to avoid treating the process as being regarded as extraordinary and to present the session formats as having attributes that could apply in any meeting of faculty in which there was a need to discuss and effectively explore options in consideration of a core question, issue, or focal problem. The sessions were intended to be 90 minutes in duration and that time allocation was cleared in advance with the departmental administrations.

At the conclusion of the meetings' regular business agendas, I was introduced to the meeting participants and reviewed preliminary details about my research goals, presented project information, responded to any questions, and ensured completion of consent forms by those who wished to participate in the research session. I then stepped into my role as facilitator and introduced the core issue and question that was to be the focus of the meeting: "What makes an exceptional practicum experience?" I then outlined the details of the approach that was planned for the particular session group, that is, brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963), a modification of the AI process (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), or a force field analysis (Lewin, 1947). I had a prepared script in each case and I endeavoured to follow it closely (copies of the scripts are included in Appendices G, H, and I). In session groups, some participants indicated familiarity with their assigned process.

Depending on the specific process used, and the physical structure of the meeting room, the sequence of events varied somewhat from group to group, as did my instructions and interventions, but I kept closely to the parameters prescribed for the particular process. In general the sessions proceeded from the opening instructions into ideation and discussion, a phase that ended when the group members indicated general agreement that they were satisfied with the results. I then asked the group to consider how they might capture and record their ideas and whether or not they saw any apparent categories or themes into which the results could be organized. Depending on the size of the group and process followed, ideas were captured by writing on large sheets of paper or post-it notes. In some cases, I acted as the recorder and in other cases participants wrote the ideas onto large sheets themselves. In some groups, participants indicated the priority of ideas by using colours or grouping, and so forth. At the conclusion of the ideation and idea capture phase, I made sure to indicate that the group's ideas would be formatted into a Microsoft Word™ document, which would be sent to their departments and that they could decide how or whether to follow up on their ideas.

Before closing the sessions I distributed copies of the GCS that was developed for this research and asked participants to please complete the forms and return them to me before leaving. After the sessions, I captured my observations in written notes made in my journal about the group's process, including my assessment of their level of engagement and enthusiasm as well as any problems or issues that were found in the process. In the sections that follow I comment further on the data generated for each group.

4.3. Analysis of data from the Generative Conversations Survey

4.3.1. Format of survey Items

As described in Chapter 3, the individual survey items were constructed in the Likert response format (Carifio & Perla, 2007). In some published reports and articles, individual items are referred to as scales, although Carifio and Perla claim that it is more appropriate to refer to the entire instrument or set of all items on a survey as a scale. They further state that referring to individual items as scales is not in keeping with the

intent of Likert's design (Carifio & Perla, 2007). In fact, these authors proposed metaphorically that a single item on a survey is like an atom in relation to a molecule (survey or entire scale) of which it is a part (Carifio & Perla, 2007). Figure 4.2 presents an example of an item format. Carifio and Perla (2007) have also stated, while it is possible and even often popular to analyze surveys item by item, "one item a scale doth not make" (p. 110).

1. I heard new information when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.

1	2	3	4	5	9
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know

Figure 4.2. Example of survey item format

In my discussion and presentation here I have attempted to address the data results from the three different treatment groups: AI (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963), and force field analysis (Lewin, 1947). I will also attempt to relate the overall pattern of participant responses to the larger research questions and assess the general meaning of the survey responses for an understanding of the conditions and/or processes that can support generative discussions in groups. Appendix J presents the combined GCS responses for each survey statement (as numbers or counts) and includes the responses from all 27 participants who completed the GCS. Table 4.1 summarizes the number of participants in each process treatment.

Table 4.1. Treatment groups and participant numbers

Process Type	No. of Participants
Group 1 – Brainstorming	7
Group 2 – Adapted Appreciative Inquiry	10
Group 3 – Adapted Appreciative Inquiry	6
Group 4 – Force Field Analysis	2
Group 5 – Brainstorming	2

Table 4.2 presents the responses to a single survey item, Item 6, from the three different process groups. Table 4.2 shows the responses to only one survey statement by participants in the AI (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963), and force field analysis (Lewin, 1947) process sessions and shows the data for the groups (representing the faculty departments) that were involved.

Table 4.2. Example data analysis table showing the participant responses for one Generative Conversations Survey Statement #6

Question 6	**I was fully engaged in the group process**								
Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2		1	1	4	4		10	4.1
	Group 3				2	4		6	4.7
Appreciative Inquiry Total			1	1	6	8		16	4.3
Brainstorming									
	Group 1				4	3		7	4.4
	Group 5					2		2	5.0
Brainstorming Total					4	5		9	4.6
Force Field Analysis Group 4						2		2	5.0

Note. The total data set for all items is included in Appendix J.

The groups are identified by number rather than the actual department names in order to protect the identities of the participants. For Group 4, Force Field Analysis, on the single group with only two participants, 100% selected “Strong Agreement” as their choice.

4.3.2. Pattern of responses to item statements on the GCS

Each of the items of the GCS is in the form of a statement intended to represent an attribute of generativity as extracted from existing research and scholarship, as shown in Table 2.2 in Chapter 2, the Literature Review. When combined the results provide an indication of the participants’ views of their experiences in the different sessions and of the three different group processes that were randomly assigned to the meetings. In Figure 4.3, the distributions of responses to Likert categories ranging from

"Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" are shown for the AI and Brain Storming session groups. (The "Don't Know" category was very seldom selected, but it is shown on the Chart in this figure.)

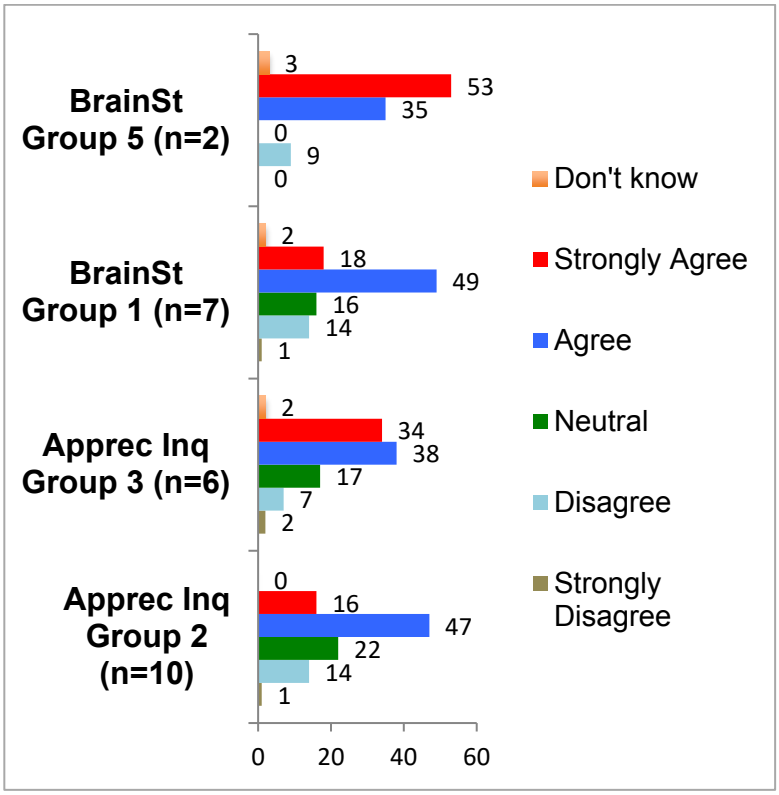

Figure 4.3 Distribution of Likert response categories among Generative Conversation Survey Items for the two Appreciative Inquiry and two Brain Storming session groups

Note. The numerals in this figure represent percentages of participants' choices.

Given that the groups that experienced the same process varied in size, the figures applied to the chart in Figure 4.3 are percentages rather than numbers. The chart shows that in the two Brainstorm groups there was a considerable difference in the percentages of "Strong Agreement" and there are similar differences in the choice of "Strong Agreement" in the two AI groups as well. The response category of "Agree" was clearly a popular choice in all the groups regardless of the process involved. These charts provide a broad indication that the participants generally found more agreement than disagreement with the survey statements regardless of the process involved in their sessions. There was only one small two-person treatment group (Group 4) that used force field analysis (Lewin, 1947) as its process for considering the general topic of the practicum experience. In that group 3% of statements were rated either with

“Disagreement,” “Neutrality,” or “Don’t Know,” while 59% of statements were rated as “Strong Agreement “and 32% as “Agreement.“ The differences in group size between the two AI and two Brainstorming Groups made statistical tests of differences between the distributions of item ratings within two groups using the same process to be of questionable validity. However, “Agreement“ was the most frequent rating in the item responses of both AI groups, while there were differences between the two Brainstorming groups in that the two participants in Group 5 selected “Strong Agreement” as a response more frequently than “Agreement” (Grouping GCS statements into themes).

As described in Chapter 3, the GCS, which I developed for the research reported on this thesis, is comprised of 17 statements. The statements are intended to reflect attributes of generative conversations as proposed by a number of scholars. The connections between the statements and existing constructs of generativity are described in detail in Chapter 2. Based on the tone of their content, I have sorted the statements into three broad themes: *Thinking, Feeling, and Acting.* Table 3.2 provides a detailed description of the items in the three themes. A statement such as that in Item 14, “My thoughts were expanded when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience,” can be proposed as reflecting the Thinking theme, while a statement such as Item 12, “During participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience I felt energized,” was proposed as belonging to the Feeling theme. Item 4, “As a result of participation in this group process I have developed an action plan related to the topic,” can be seen as suggesting membership in the Acting theme. These statements are designed to elicit participants’ reflections about their experiences of the processes in which they and their group members were involved during the group work component of the research. In Chapter 5, I comment on other ideas about the components of generative group interactions (Bushe & Paranjpey, 2014) that could possibly lead to the revision or rearrangement of the statements developed for future versions of the GCS used in this research.

The statements included in this version of the GCS do not reflect equal distribution among the themes of Thinking, Feeling, and Acting. There are six Thinking statements, seven Feeling statements, and four Acting statements. This distribution is reflected in Figure 4.4.

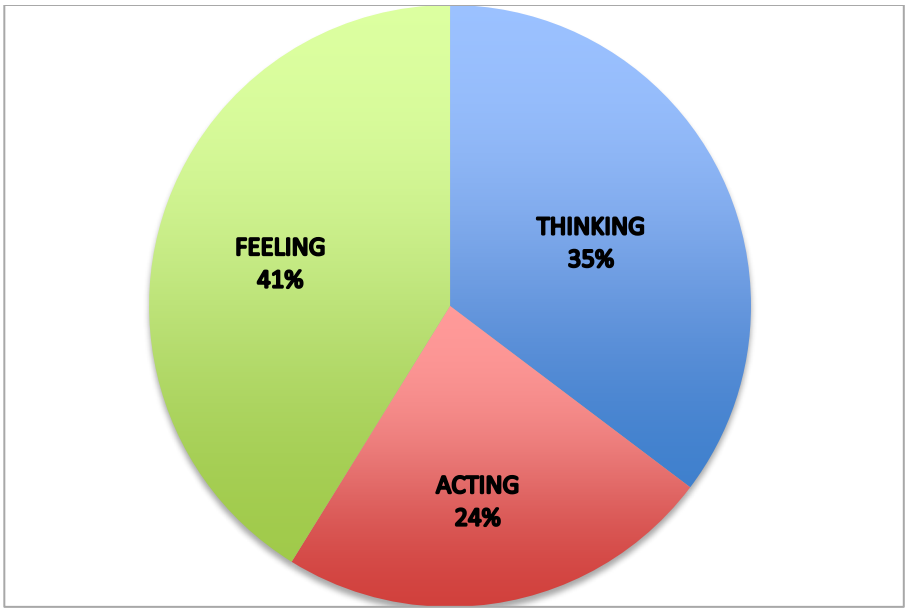

Figure 4.4. Distribution of Generative Conversations Survey statements by number of items in each category: Thinking, Feeling, and Acting

This distribution might have been different had I developed the proposed theme categories before or while I searched relevant literature for statements that demonstrated or reflected the three categories. Instead, the statements were developed based on a general literature review and the themes emerged after development of the statements proposed for the GCS. Possible revisions to the GCS, including new or different statement categories, are discussed in Chapter 5. The Thinking and Feeling category statements attracted the highest agreements among the AI participants while the Feeling category statements got the highest levels of agreement among the Brainstorm session participants, and the Acting category statements gathered positive ratings among the those involved in the Brainstorm process. It may be that the smaller number of statement items in the Acting category resulted in a general bias against selection of these statements for ratings of “Agree” or “Strongly Agree.”

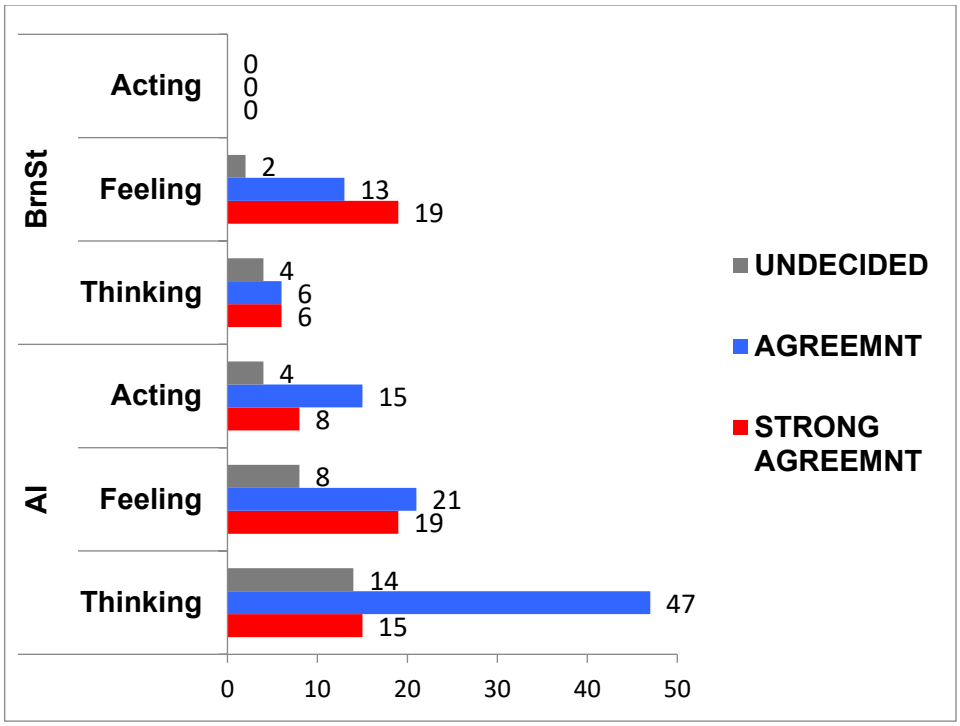

Figure 4.5. Distribution of positive Likert ratings among statements in the Thinking, Feeling, and Acting categories for the Appreciative Inquiry and Brainstorming groups.

Note. The data are numerical. AI = Appreciative inquiry.

In reviewing the overall pattern of responses to survey statements by all groups, I found that the number of choices on the positive sides of the Likert response lines (Agree and Strongly Agree) for all items was much greater than was the total number of choices made on the negative end of the Likert response lines (Strongly Disagree and Disagree). Figure 4.5 displays the distribution of positive Likert ratings in relation to the three themes of Thinking, Feeling, and Acting. Figure 4.6 displays the items that attracted a total of more than three negative choices.

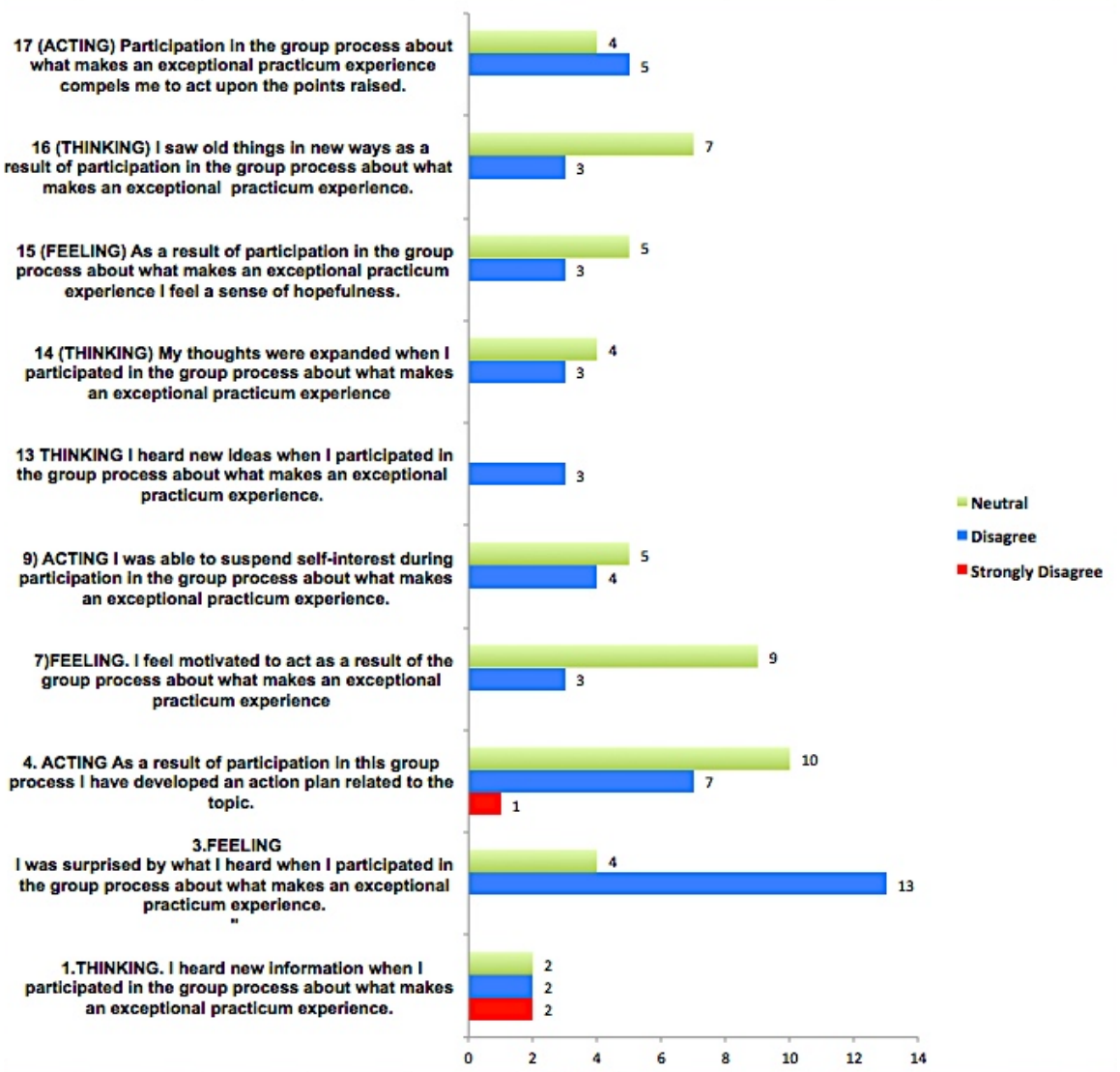

Figure 4.6. Generative Conversations Survey statements that attracted more than three negative responses in total (Strongly Disagree and Disagree) from all Session Groups in combination. (Data in numerical counts

The GCS results indicate a general agreement by participants that the sessions in which they participated demonstrated many of the attributes associated with dialogue and discussion that foster ideation and that the sessions have the potential to provoke or generate further action in response to the general issue of student practicum experiences. The ultimate test of generativity will be to observe actions or at least detailed plans with the potential to lead to action.

Surveys such as the GCS designed for this thesis are ultimately more than a set of items, questions, or statements and they reflect underlying concepts around the broad topic or question that frames the design of the survey. In Chapter 5, I explore further what the results from the survey can tell us about the conditions that can support generativity in groups and explore the extent to which the survey statements can be used to help group meeting facilitators and organizers plan and implement sessions that will nurture general attitudes toward ideation and the progression toward implementation.

4.4. Participant responses to the open-ended section of the survey

The GCS included two open-ended questions:

- Recalling the dialogue you participated in, was there anything that stood out for you? If so, can you share why?
- What do you think you will do, if anything, as a result of participating in this group process?

The number and nature of responses to these questions varied from session group to session group. The responses for members of Group 2 (AI; Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), which was the largest of the groups, generally remarked that they did not anticipate change and did not feel motivated or compelled to act. They reported being the least connected to colleagues and did not experience an expansion of thoughts. In regard to elements that stood out for them, participants made the following comments (edited to highlight the major elements of the comments):

- competitive nature of the groups;
- dynamic nature of the groups;
- participative levels of the groups;
- generated energy;
- differences between approaches;
- good, respectful sharing of experiences; and
- that most faculty do not have practicum (service learning) in their courses in this department.

In response to my asking what they thought they might do, if anything, as a result of participating in the process participants commented as follows:

- nothing;
- change the structure slightly of my project;
- ideally have more co-op practicum for students;
- perhaps we need a three-credit practicum course; and
- consider how I may incorporate practicums into my courses.

Group 3 (which also applied a modified AI process (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), was the second group to experience a modified version of the AI process. The participants commented about elements that stood out for them in their session.

- the use of metaphor as a powerful organizer of thinking;
- I liked that we changed chairs when we told our story, seemed to privilege our words;
- great process;
- each story drew out different pieces;
- I really like my colleagues and enjoy working with them;
- my colleagues demonstrated the fact we live by our values;
- I could hear every individual voice; and
- I think my colleagues are very inspiring to me.

The comments from Group 3, seemed to be more positive in nature than the comments from Group 2, and the members of Group 3 apparently regarded the tone of the session as being collaborative. In response to the question regarding what they thought they would do, if anything, as a result of the session, participants from Group 3 offered the following comments:

- carry on;
- in order to develop an action plan we need to carry on the 4D cycle;

- not sure-reminds us (department members) we have to be mindful of all the aspects of how we set up, communicate and support students in practicum; and
- may impact orientation.

Group 5 was the second of two groups to experience the brainstorming process (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963) as an approach to generativity in their session. This was a small, two-person group. The initial Group 5 GCS results produced mixed ratings about the members' experiences of generativity, with some items being rated high and others quite low. The two members of Group 5 gave a rating for *"hearing new information and new ideas"* that was lower than the other process groups (with the exception of Group 1, which also was engaged in Brainstorming). The participants in Group 5 also reported experiencing the brainstorming process as being creative and noted feeling connected to each other and being motivated, energized and emotionally engaged.

In response to the open questions on the Exit Survey about what stood out for them in the process, the members of Group 5 made the following comments:

- Having control by exploring the uniqueness of our program was so important in generating a notion of our values.
- Without having a sense of what precisely we were covering in the session, I did not anticipate having a discussion that would be so intellectually stimulating.
- I wondered how the generation of ideas would be affected by the inclusion of other group members.

In responding to the question, "What do you think you will do, if anything, as a result of participating in this group process," the two participants in Group 5 made the following comments:

- The process will inform the department's program review and discussions about workload.
- As we embark on a program review this is likely to have incredible influence over how we define ourselves.
- It may prove helpful for continued development of our practicum course.

Group 1 was the other session group that worked with the Brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963) process, and with seven members it was one of the larger groups in this research (Group 2 was the other large group with 10 participants involved with the modified AI process; Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). The initial post-ideation survey results for Group 1 produced the most negative overall ratings of all groups on three items from the survey: Item 3, which considers the degree to which a participant felt "surprised" by what they heard; Item 5, which relates to whether the participant experienced the process as "creative"; and Item 16, "seeing old things in new ways." Group 1 was one of two groups that felt the least energized by the process. In responding to what stood out for them in the process, participants in Group 1 made the following comments.

- Minor adjustments to seminar.
- I will examine what I do and incorporate ideas as possible, conscious of things voiced.
- Nothing.

Group 4 was the only group to conduct its session using the force field analysis (Lewin, 1947) approach. Here again, this was a small group of wo members from a small and rather specialized university department. The initial GCS results for Group 4 produced the highest average rating of all five study groups.

Examining specific survey items, Group 4 rated higher than other groups on the following items:

- Item 1, *I heard new information;*
- Item 2, *I learned from a colleague;* and
- Item 3, *I felt surprised by what they heard.*

The first two items belong to the *Thinking* category and Item 3 to the *Feeling* category.

The members of Group 4 also reported that they "heard new ideas" (Item 13) and that "their thoughts were expanded" (Item 14) more than any other study group. However**,** the ratings given by Group 4 participants to Item 9, "I was able to suspend

self-interest, and Item 10, I think there will be some change in what we do," were at the negative end of the Likert format.

In response to the open-ended question concerning what stood out for them in the session, the members of Group 4 responded:

- Synergy of building on each other's ideas.
- I noticed a shift from 2 people to collaborative forum of thinking and communicating.

In response to my question asking what they thought they might do the members of this group noted:

- Continue discussion of service learning in the department.
- Challenging to answer as we don't currently have practicum.
- Don't have practicum – considering service learning option – would benefit a lot.

To summarize, Group 4 gave the process generally higher ratings than were given by any other group.

While the written responses to the two open-ended questions on the GCS were limited they are somewhat informative in helping to see participant views about the formats of different sessions as well as potential limitations of the methods applied. Quantitative analysis of the survey responses.

4.4.1. Application of a correlation matrix to the generative conversations survey

Given the nature of the responses required by the participants on the GCS, the small number of participants in total as well as their distribution into three different group processes, treatment of the data from the survey using inferential rather than descriptive statistics would be questionable. However, it was possible to submit the entire set of survey response data to a correlation matrix in order to examine the quality of the survey items, and in particular to determine the degree to which the responses indicated that the item statements validly reflected different aspects of generativity.

A factor analysis reveals which questions are being responded to the same way by the majority of respondents, and therefore how many different variables the survey is actually measuring. The GCS was newly created for this study and the intention was that each item on the survey would be eliciting responses to a component of generativity. Given that it has not been validated in this way, I cannot assume that each individual question is actually measuring different things. Rather, it is more likely that different questions are actually measuring different facets of the same underlying variable.

Table 4.3. Correlation matrix: Generative conversations survey responses

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17
Q1		0.92	0.11	-0.34	0.86	0.80	**0.52**	**0.78**	0.46	0.34	0.88	0.92	0.92	0.89	0.80	**0.67**	0.45
Q2			0.21	0.39	**0.79**	**0.66**	**0.55**	**0.72**	0.29	0.29	0.89	0.92	**0.76**	0.82	**0.76**	**0.67**	0.21
Q3				**0.67**	0.21	0.21	0.36	0.10	0.82	**0.67**	0.00	0.10	0.41	0.30	0.36	0.40	0.90
Q4					-0.03	-0.16	**0.53**	-0.10	**0.63**	**0.68**	-0.16	-0.08	0.00	0.05	0.24	0.41	**0.56**
Q5						0.95	**0.76**	0.97	**0.53**	0.39	0.97	0.95	0.95	0.97	0.92	0.82	0.46
Q6							**0.55**	0.97	0.37	0.16	0.89	0.82	0.89	0.87	**0.76**	**0.62**	0.36
Q7								**0.67**	**0.76**	**0.79**	**0.73**	**0.79**	**0.71**	0.82	0.92	0.97	**0.62**
Q8									0.36	0.21	0.95	0.87	0.87	0.90	0.82	**0.70**	0.30
Q9										0.95	0.41	**0.55**	**0.68**	**0.67**	**0.76**	0.82	0.97
Q10											0.32	**0.50**	**0.53**	**0.56**	**0.71**	0.82	0.87
Q11												0.97	0.89	0.95	0.89	**0.79**	0.32
Q12													0.92	0.97	0.95	0.87	0.46
Q13														0.97	0.92	0.82	**0.67**
Q14															0.97	0.90	**0.60**
Q15																0.97	**0.67**
Q16																	**0.70**
Q17																	

Note. The pink shading and red font = Correlation ≥ 0.8 (strong); bold font = Correlation between 0.5 and < 0.8 (medium); normal font = weak correlation.

The values for correlations are known as correlation coefficients. A correlation matrix presents a visual display of the correlation coefficients for all variables in a study (Creswell, 2008, p. 362). In comparing the coefficient of variation, also known as the relative standard deviation, the frequency distribution of responses from the GCS can be explored to determine the probability that participants were answering items in a similar way. From a statistical perspective, a correlation does not determine cause and effect, but it can indicate the strength of the statistical relationship between two survey questions. The standard threshold for statistical significance is $p < 0.05$. Table 4.3 displays the correlation matrix of the GCS. Table 4.3 shows that Question 1 is strongly correlated with Questions 2, 5, 6, and 11 to 15. It has medium correlation with Questions 7, 8, and 16.

4.4.2. Independent ratings of the quality of ideas generated by the session groups

As described in Chapter 3, a group of three independent reviewers was asked to evaluate the work produced by each group and rate every idea on three dimensions proposed as significant to generativity; that is how novel, compelling, and practical the ideas were. The three dimensions are defined in Independent Reviewers Survey Tool (Appendix B). The results of the independent reviewers were mixed. When the total ratings for the work done were combined for all three reviewers, the different group ideation processes were rated higher on different dimensions of generativity. The ideas generated by the groups (Groups 2 and 3), which utilized the adapted AI (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987) process, were rated as most novel by the independent reviewers although the reviewers found that the ideas generated by Group 2 were the least compelling of all the five study groups. The ideas generated by Groups 1 and 5, which utilized brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963), were rated as the most practical. The ideas generated by Group 4, which utilized a force field analysis (Lewin, 1947), were rated as most compelling. Table 4.3 shows the combined ratings of the independent reviewers categorized by group ideation process and the three dimensions of generativity. Table 4.3 also summarizes the independent rater scores of the attributes of items generated by the AI, brainstorming, and force field analysis groups. (Combination of scores by the three raters). Table 4.4 charts the results of three different rating categories (as combined from the three raters).

Table 4.4. Independent rater scores of the attributes of items generated by the appreciative inquiry, brainstorming and force field analysis groups

Attribute of Idea		Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Neutral Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly	No opinion /Don't know
Practical	App InQ	3	14	15	28	25	2
	BrainStrm	3	10	5	51	26	1
	FFA	0	11	3	13	8	1
Compelling	App InQ	2	8	18	27	32	1
	BrainStrm	3	4	31	33	26	1
	FFA	0	1	7	8	20	0
Novel	App InQ	17	20	18	26	5	2
	BrainStrm	15	26	30	22	4	1
	FFA	1	9	5	13	7	1

Note. Combined sum of three raters. App InQ = Appreciative Inquiry; Brainstrm = Brainstorm; FFA = Force Field Analysis.

On examining the survey data, the independent reviewers found that the ideas generated by Group 2 (AI) were the least Compelling of all the five study groups, while the ideas developed by Group 1 (Brainstorming) were rated as being the most Practical among the groups, and those by Group 3 (AI) were rated as being Novel and Compelling. Group 4's (Force Field Analysis) ideas were rated by the reviewers being the least novel or practical, but they were credited with generating the most compelling. A review of the data from the ratings of Novelty and Compelling, at the group level, found these attributes to be significantly and negatively related (i.e., if something was Compelling, it wasn't Novel, and vice versa). All the items on the GCS had a negative relationship to Novelty. If the conversation was generative, as defined by the GCS, it didn't produce novel ideas. Even if a correlation of .62 is not significant it is still a strong correlation but the size of the group makes it impossible to be confident that would be true of a larger sample.

4.5. Follow-Up surveys

As reported in Chapter 3, the research for this thesis was comprised of three phases. Phase 1 involved the recruitment of faculty from five different university departments in the application and assessment of three different group processes that are claimed to foster generativity in meetings. At the conclusion of their structured meetings, the participants completed a GCS intended to assess whether their interactions had generative attributes. Phase 2 of the research involved use of a survey (Appendix E) of the meeting participants at intervals of 3 and 6 months after the facilitated sessions. The Follow-Up survey was designed to determine whether the original meetings had generated outcomes relevant to the focal issue that framed the original meetings. Phase 3 of the research involved assessing documentary or other evidence of university policy actions that could be seen as being connected to the focal issue of the original faculty meetings: the place of practicums as components of student learning experiences.

The number of participants who competed Follow-Up surveys dropped considerably from the number of initial respondents. In total, 11 participants completed the Follow-Up survey at 3 months following the facilitated group sessions and nine participants completed the Follow-Up survey at 6 months. The distribution of survey statements in the Follow-Up surveys differed from the original version in that a greater proportion of items distributed toward action in the Follow-Up surveys, with five out of six items asking about actions and one asking about feelings.

I amalgamated the overall responses to the six questions on the 3 months and 6 months Follow-Up surveys into a combined score. This data set provides information about the groups that continued to explore the topic of what makes an exceptional practicum experience. The assumption was that the higher the score, the greater the participants' perceptions of experiencing thoughts, feelings, and actions related to generativity. Tables 4.5 and 4.6 provide a combined average score, sorted by groups and ideation process. The results generally support the finding that participants in Groups 2, 3, and 5 perceived having had the most generative conversations and followed through with actions.

Table 4.5. Combined (amalgamated) score of Follow-Up surveys by groups and ideation process at 3 months

Generative Method	Likert Ratings	1	2	3	4	5	9	***Total Returned***	Avg
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2	10	12	9	12		2	4	1.79
	Group 3		6	6	40	15		3	3.72
Appreciative Inquiry Total		10	18	15	52	15			
Brainstorming									
	Group 1	2	2	12	16		5	3	1.77
	Group 5		6	6		5		1	2.83
Brainstorming Total									
Force Field Analysis	Group 4							0	

Note. n = 11.

Table 4.6. Combined (amalgamated) score of Follow-Up surveys by groups and ideation Process at 6 months

Generative Method	Likert Ratings	1	2	3	4	5	9	***Total Returned***	Avg
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2	4	18	12	20		2	4	2.25
	Group 3		2		20			1	3.67
Appreciative Inquiry Total									
Brainstorming									
	Group 1		10	9	12	20		3	2.83
	Group 5			6	4	15		1	4.17
Brainstorming Total									
Force Field Analysis	Group 4							0	

Note. n = 9.

4.5.1. General comments from session participants in the 3 and 6 month Follow-Up surveys

Three members of Group 1 sent back surveys from the first follow-up at 3 months post-facilitation. In most cases, the responses were neutral or indicated that the participant did not know if further actions had been taken. Some comments in this regard included the following statements:

- *I remember the process occurred quickly, do not remember clear plans resulting from exercise.*

- *Not certain.*

Another participant from Group 1 reported, “Have followed through with recommendations & suggestions.” This person did not elaborate.

At the second (6 month) follow-up three surveys were returned from Group 1.

The pattern of responses was similar to that at the 3 month follow-up with two participants reporting with neutral, or “don’t know” responses, and one participant reporting they were continuing to follow up.

- *It is really hard to remember the specifics. I think it helped me form a slightly different mindset in specific student experiences.*
- *We did not get to specifics as I remember. We also have not returned to the issue.*

One year after the facilitated session with Group 1, there were no reported curriculum or course changes brought forward to Faculty Council by the department for discussion about the practicum or field experiences. To summarize, in relation to their perceptions of the group ideation process of brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963), the Group 1 participants in general reported perceiving the least generative experiences.

One participant in Group 5 sent back a survey at the first follow up at 3 months post-session. The participant reported being involved in further discussions but had not taken specific further action at that time. One survey was returned from a Group 5 member at the second follow-up at 6 months post session but no comments were provided. The participant’s rating had shifted from neutral to strongly agreeing that actions had been taken. It is notable that 1 year after Group 5’s facilitated session the department had brought forward to Faculty Council two curriculum/course changes about practicum or field experiences.

Four participants of Group 2, which applied the AI process (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), returned surveys at the 3-month and 6-month follow-up points. Three of the surveys indicated that no specific action plans emerged nor that they had personally taken action. On the 3-month survey, one respondent noted, “[This] has not been discussed again as a group.” Other participant comments included the following statements:

- Practicums are not very popular with students in our school.
- Not currently relevant to my work.

However, one participant who claimed feeling compelled to act, indicated having a specific action plan, and stated that they had personally taken action. In fact, 1 year after the adapted AI (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987) session with Group 2, one new course that included a field experience component was brought through by the department (?) to Faculty Council. It is not known whether or not this action was taken by the person who indicated a compulsion to act on the matter of a practicum-type experience.

To summarize, for the Group 2 session there was distinct variation in the level of interest and engagement on the part of individual faculty members during the initial group process, with only one sub-group appearing to become really connected. However, it is interesting to note that one participant claimed that an action plan had emerged and actions taken.

Three members of Group 3, which was also involved in the AI process (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), sent back surveys from the first follow-up at 3 months post-session. The respondents either “Agreed” or “Strongly Agreed” that specific action plans emerged, further actions had been taken, and they felt compelled to act. Some comments in this regard included the following:

- We are focusing on mentoring relationships and have added this item to our agenda.
- The session coincided with part of our program review where we revisited our goals and vision.
- The focus group made space for reflection.
- We decided increased involvement in mentor training was a priority.
- We continue to reflect and utilize our discussions in shaping our program.

One respondent reported, “I believe the action focus was a start. We would need a second step to lead to more action.”

One survey was returned from Group 3 at the second (6-month) follow-up. This respondent agreed that the department had taken actions related to the dialogue and that it had personal meaning, stating, “The discussion really assisted my personal perceptions and how I can help/support my role with students.”

Group 4, which undertook a force field analysis (Lewin, 1947) in their process work, submitted no Follow-Up surveys. Further, no curriculum or course changes about a practicum or related experience were brought forward to Faculty Council by this department. It is interesting, however, to note that in their reports Group 4 gave the process a higher rating than other groups.

4.6. ANOVA results

Tables 4.7, 4.8, and 4.9 show the ANOVA results comparing the three group ideation processes, five group facilitations, and the work of the independent reviewers. The ANOVA results were not statistically significant at a confidence level of $p < 0.05$. The reviewers found no group or method effects.

Table 4.7. ANOVA results for groups and methods

	Sum of Sq	Df	F Value	Pr(>F)
Group	47.66	4	11.6056	6.81E-09
Question	66.97	16	4.0766	3.24E-07
Group: Question	87.51	64	1.3317	0.05581
Residuals	384.01	374		
Total	586.15			

There was no significant variance among the group ideation processes. There was a greater difference between two groups utilizing the same ideation process as compared to groups utilizing different processes. In other words, the data did not support one group ideation process as being more generative overall than another.

Table 4.8. ANOVA results for methods and initial Generative Conversations Survey

	Sum of Squares	Df	F Value	Pr(>F)
Method	22.04	2	9.9862	5.83E-05
Question	66.97	16	3.7925	1.36E-06
Method: Question	46.84	32	1.3264	0.1143
Residuals	450.30	408		
Total	586.15			

There was no significant variance found between the three group ideation processes and overall perceptions recorded by the groups in the study. In other words, the data did not support one group ideation process as being perceived overall to be more generative than another.

Table 4.9. ANOVA results for reviewers and methods

	Sum of Sq	Df	F Value	Pr(>F)
Reviewer	47.44	2	15.854	1.89E-07
Type	171.19	2	57.212	2.20E-16
Reviewer: Type	73.07	4	12.21	1.40E-09
Residuals	657.00	982.96	1.496	

There was no significant variance between the group ideation processes as evaluated by the independent reviewers. In other words, the data did not support one group ideation process as being overall more generative than another.

A Welch's *t*-test (Salkind, 2010) was applied to compare the GCS responses between groups that implemented ideas (Groups 2, 3, and 5) and those which did not (Groups 1 and 4). Due to small sample sizes, the responses from each group are not significantly different from each other using Welch's *t*-test. It should be noted that ordinal Likert data violates two assumptions of the *t*-test: (a) the data are not normally distributed and (b) the data are not continuous. These assumptions can be ignored if the sample size *n* is high enough, which it is not. This means that a larger more robust sample could prove differences, which are not provable in this case. The analysis found that the GCS did not predict which groups would implement ideas.

4.7. Idea implementation

The minutes of Faculty Council were tracked for 1 year after the original facilitated sessions. Three of the five groups brought forward changes to courses that were related to the topic of the discussion for this research project. Table 4.10 displays the groups that produced actions through to implementation and the nature of the ideas.

Table 4.10. Idea Implementation

Group	Implementation	Idea
1	None	
2	1 new course approved	New course with field experience component
3	3 courses presented and changes approved	Course changes related to field research, practicum, and integration of knowledge & practice
4	None	
5	2 courses presented and changes approved	Course changes to credit hours and field experience, and practicum capping project

4.8. Summary of the analysis of findings

This study was designed to discover if there were notable distinctions in generativity among three different group ideation processes. This chapter has provided detailed qualitative and quantitative findings from the group facilitations, GCI survey responses, qualitative work generated by the groups during their facilitated sessions, assessment of the qualities of the group responses by three independent reviewers, and reports on subsequent actions taken by departments in regard to the focal issue of student practicum experiences. The GCS results, especially when the survey statements are grouped into the categories of Thinking, Feeling, and Acting, revealed differences in the levels of positivity in the responses of participants whose sessions are organized according to the three different processes of AI (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), brainstorming (Osborn, 1953, 1957, 1963), and force field analysis (Lewin, 1947). Overall, the findings suggest that the GCS results are in effect an assessment of the validity of the statements as attributes of generativity and of the research claims and

proposals on which those statements were based. The next chapter will explore this notion and discuss the key findings in relation to the research questions and addresses implications for theory, practice, and future research.

The survey results have been submitted to a statistical analysis professional with the intention of identifying any significant difference among the participant responses as grouped by the three different group processes and also with the intention to assess the validity and reliability of the survey statements. While the statistical treatments point toward some directions for future research, the small sample sizes make difficult the development of valid or useful conclusions about significant differences in generative potential among the three different group processes. After periods of 3 and 6 months, the study was designed to assess whether there had been any significant or relevant actions around the focal issue of student practica in the policies and procedures of the faculty and departments in which the research was situated. The follow-up process provided some indication of the retrospective views of the participants in regard to the group process in which they had been involved and as to any actions they, or their organizational units, had taken in regard to the issue of student practica. While the responses of participants in the Follow-Up survey and comments did not reveal direct causal linkages between their group experiences and subsequent actions on the core issue, I found that some changes had been made at the faculty and departmental levels and that the group experiences had, in some cases, resulted in critical reviews of possible future directions.

Chapter 5 will further discuss the findings and comment critically on the study design and about possible revisions to the GCS. Chapter 5 will also discuss possible future research.

Chapter 5.

Reflections and Conclusion

5.1. Introduction and chapter overview

In the first chapter, I claimed that universities are currently experiencing a period of rapid change and facing many challenges (Beach et al., 2005; Bess & Dee, 2012; Charbonneau, 2013; Grant, 2016). Like many organizations, universities are impacted by rapidly advancing technology, shifts in demographics, globalization, rising costs, the significance of knowledge capital, and the speed of change (Rothwell et al., 1998). I suggested leaders need to develop skills and competencies to respond to change and that planning processes should be creative and responsive to the realities of the current multifaceted demands. To respond and to be responsive implies taking action. To take action is to be generative (Bushe, 2015; Bushe & Marshak, 2009). The problem identified as the focus of this thesis was that not all processes mobilize participants toward action; hence, this study sought to understand the experiences of participants, who were members of a university faculty, during three widely-used group ideation processes that are claimed to support generative conversations. Generative conversations were defined as those that compel participants to act upon thoughts and feelings produced as a result of social interactions. The dissertation is in the genre of a descriptive study, in which a mixed-method approach was utilized to discover and describe the perceptions of a sample of university faculty during the three different facilitated group ideation processes.

This thesis is framed by three research questions:

1. What considerations are critical to the design and implementation of organized meetings and social interactions planned and structured to foster generative dialog?

2. Do the experiences reported by the participants in group meetings organized by processes claimed to foster generative outcomes indicate that the meetings supported generative capacity?

3. Do follow-up reports from the meeting participants and the results of an independent review of the meeting outcomes indicate that the sessions were generative?

The details of the research design and conduct of the group sessions are provided in Chapters 3 and 4. This chapter addresses the research questions and focuses on whether the meetings might reasonably be seen as producing generative outcomes, on the quality of the participants' meeting experiences as elicited from their responses to a GCS and on responses to follow-up surveys conducted 3 and 6 months after the sessions. Further, a review was made of the proceedings of the Faculty Council of the university in order to investigate whether actions had been taken by the Council on the issue of student practica, which was the focus of the group sessions, and to determine if Council actions might reasonably be viewed as outcomes of the group meetings.

The study was not designed to compare the efficacy of the three different processes that were used in the facilitated faculty meetings in the production of generative outcomes or in fostering generative capacity, although some statistical analyses were done on the GCS results and on a Review Panel's assessments of the generative outcomes from the meetings. This chapter reviews the limitations of the research design, with recommendations for further study and re-design of the GCS. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the general implications of the study results for the design and conduct of group processes that are intended to be generative.

5.2. Analysis of the data

Given the small number of study participants and the manner of their recruitment, it was not possible to make statements that would quantitatively compare the effectiveness of the processes of brainstorming versus AI, versus force field analysis. However, it was possible to apply and assess the utility of the GCS as a tool to reveal whether the experiences of the session participants matched the elements of generative dialogue as proposed in relevant research and scholarship. Further, the reports of the independent raters provided another lens into the session outcomes.

Five different faculty groups participated in the facilitated sessions and each group composed ideas about what makes an exceptional practicum experience. Twenty-seven faculty completed the GCS. While differences in the formats of the five sessions and in the numbers of participants involved made statistical comparisons unreliable, a preliminary analysis of the variance in the post-ideation survey responses indicated that

there was about the same amount of variance within groups who utilized the same group ideation process as there was among the sessions that used different group ideation processes. Chapter 4 provides a detailed summary of the groups' unique experiences of the facilitated discussions and qualitative and descriptive analyses are integrated with the discussion in order to highlight specific findings.

As shown in Chapter 4, Table 4.3 presents statements in the GCS that were submitted to a factor analysis in the form of a correlation matrix. The results of that analysis suggest that many of the GCS statements, while appearing to be quite distinct in their language, actually show reasonably high correlations, indicating that results they elicit from respondents are statistically very similar. While differently worded, the statements appear to measure the same thing (or at least elicit the same or very similar responses). This pattern likely reflects the fact that the statements in the GCS were all derived from literature concerned with the attributes of generativity. The Table of Correlations (see Table 4.2) shows that the item correlations can be clustered into two scales, with Scale 1 being comprised of Statements 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, and 11–16, which all had correlations of .8 or better while Scale 2 is comprised of Statements 3, 7, 9, 10, and 17, which had medium correlations between .5 and .8. Statement 4 did not show correlation with any of the items in Scale 1, although that statement did show moderate correlations with items in Scale 2. Thus, in the correlation matrix, the item that is apparently most unique or only moderately correlated with responses to a few other GCS items is Statement 4: "As a result of participation in the group process I have developed an Action Plan." It is noted that actions are suggested in two other statements: "7. I feel motivated to act as a result of the group process" and Statement 17: "Participation in the group process compels me to act upon the points raised." These two statements show a moderate correlation with Statement 4 in the matrix. Applying Paranjpey's (2013) construct of generative capacity, Statements 4, 7, and 17 can likely be considered as descriptions of self-efficacy.

Table 5.1 shows a correlation matrix of the relationships between the items clustered in Scale 1, those in Scale 2, as well as Statement 4 (Question 4).

Table 5.1. Correlation Matrix for the relationships between Scales 1 and 2 as well as Statement 4 (Question 4)

	S1	Q4	S2
S1		0.05	0.67
Q4	0.05		0.63
S2	0.67	0.63	

Note. Q4 = Question 4; S1 = Scale 1; S2 = Scale 2.

The results indicate that Scale 1 and Question 4 have no significant correlation. Scale 1 and 2 have moderate correlation.

As noted above, the correlation matrix analysis of the GCS revealed some strong and medium correlations among specific survey items but when clustered into scales the correlations change. In examining the clusters of items that correlated with each other either strongly or at a moderate level, a new survey could potentially be created from the results and the items could be clustered into categories that describe the conditions of generative listening/learning and generative thinking/action although the elements of generative capacity as proposed by Paranjpey (2013) could also be a basis for a revision. I will comment in Section 5.5 on possibilities for the redesign of the survey.

Given the results of the correlation matrix, it could be said that the GCS statements assess participant responses to their experience of the generativity of their sessions and the survey statements are different ways of describing various facets of generativity. However, it would perhaps be useful to look more closely at the language of the statements as they cluster into the two scales based on the ranges of their correlations. However, generativity, or at least generative capacity, is a multifaceted construct. Thus, if *hope* can be seen as an element of generative conversations and generative capacity (as suggested by Paranjpey, 2013), then a question for a person planning or facilitating a group meeting is what processes can foster a climate or attitude of Hope in a group dialogue? That question will be explored further in this chapter by looking more qualitatively at the GCS statements as they reflect considerations in choosing a process or set of psychosocial conditions to foster generativity. Further, the design of the survey itself will discussed with a view to improving its utility in soliciting and assessing the quality of the experiences of participants in generative conversations.

5.3. Generative outcomes

A question that framed the research for this thesis asked, “Do follow-up reports from the meeting participants and the results of an independent review of the meeting outcomes indicate that the sessions were generative?” The sections below address this question.

If group sessions are conducted in ways that satisfy the conditions proposed as fostering generativity or generative capacity, then the session should produce generative outcomes. The ultimate generative outcome might be considered to be action taken on identified projects or shared goals. Generative outcomes can be assessed according to whether proposals and ideas generated in a group are compelling, novel, and practical. As outlined in Chapter 3, for this research, a panel of three independent judges was convened to review the ideas produced by the five working groups. The judges were asked to rate the ideas as being compelling, novel, or practical using a 5-point scale. The results of their deliberations are shown in Chapter 4, Table 4.4.

Analysis of the results of the panel’s review of the ideas produced by the meeting groups shows that in terms of the criterion of novelty, the GCS statements had a negative relationship; that is, a generative conversation as assessed via the GCS did not produce novel ideas. Further, Statement 4 on the GCS and the items in Scale 1 of the correlation matrix were positively related in terms of the criterion of compelling, although the statements included in Scale 1 of the Matrix (highly correlated) were negatively related to the criterion of practicality.

The analysis of the panel results showed no statistically significant difference between the session groups in terms of the practical or novel ratings of the ideas produced. However, the analysis did suggest that Groups 3 and 4 produced more ideas rated as compelling than Group 2, but no connection was made in the data analysis to the processes used by these groups.

Table 5.2. Judging Panel ratings of ideas (Novel, Compelling and Practical) generated by the three different session formats, for all groups

Apprec Inquiry	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**9**
Novel	17	20	18	26	5	2
Compelling	2	8	18	27	32	1
Practical	3	14	15	28	25	2
Brainstorming	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**9**
Novel	15	26	30	22	4	1
Compelling	3	4	31	33	26	1
Practical	3	10	5	51	26	1
FFA	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**9**
Novel	7	13	5	9	1	1
Compelling	0	1	7	8	20	0
Practical	0	11	3	13	8	1

Table 5.2 summarizes the panel's ratings of ideas (novel, compelling, and practical) as generated by the three different session formats, for all groups. It can be noted that the judges rated a number of ideas considered under any of the three criteria as in the neutral category on the Likert scale. The greatest number of "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" ratings (1 and 2 on the scale) were found in the area of novelty for all session formats. The largest number of ideas rated as practical ("Agree" and "Disagree") were found from the brainstorming sessions.

However, the ratings of novelty and compelling, at the group level, were significantly and negatively related. If something was compelling, it wasn't novel, and vice versa. Further, all the items on the GCS had a negative relationship to novelty. If the conversation was generative, as defined by the GCS, it didn't produce novel ideas. The analysis of the panel review data also found that there was some inconsistency among the judges in the application of the ratings of the ideas in the three categories. This might suggest a need for better orientation about the task for the judges and perhaps closer communication among them and with me as researcher during the process.

5.4. Following up on generative outcomes

As noted in Chapters 3 and 4, a goal of the design for this study was to follow up the group sessions to see whether there had been any actions taken in regard to the focal topic of the meetings, namely the development of student practicum experiences. At the 3- and 6- month points after the group meetings, I distributed a short survey to the original participants. The survey included open-ended questions. The results were somewhat disappointing, as only 11 participants returned responses at 3 months, and at the 6-month point just nine responses were returned. It was, therefore, problematic to really evaluate the degree to which perceptions of generativity persisted among all the original participants with so few responding after time passed. It is also difficult to know why the follow-up responses were so limited.

At the time of the actual meetings, some written comments from participants on the open-ended section of the GCS (Appendix D) indicated that the sessions had at least provoked some future-oriented thinking and action, as shown in the following examples of comments from Group 5 in the study. The process will inform the department's program review and discussions about workload

- As we embark on a program review this is likely to have incredible influence over how we define ourselves.

What is interesting here is that change in thinking occurs not about the core issue of the practicum as much as about the process and how the participants in the department define themselves. Changes in those factors might enable action in regard to the practicum but may be more likely to change how the department or organizational unit operates and as a secondary output that might lead to action on the practicum.

Further follow-up information was obtained from an examination of the archives of the Faculty Council agendas and minutes. This review showed that Group 2, who engaged with the AI process, put forward a new elective course that introduced a field experience component as integral to the content. The faculty member who spoke to the new course outline was part of the initial facilitation process with Group 2. In the case of Groups 3, and 5, the department head of each of the respective programs represented the departments in proposing changes to existing course outlines. The department heads were also part of the group ideation process in each instance. Both Groups 3 and

5 proposed to meetings of the Faculty Council changes to courses that were about practicum and field experience. The rationale given involved adjustments to the course description, learning objectives, and course outcomes to improve overall student learning opportunities.

Of the three faculty units that were associated with proposals to Faculty Council regarding the student practicum, and that had also participated in the facilitated dialogues, two sessions had utilized the adapted AI process and the third utilized brainstorming. However, it is not possible to make a claim that the proposals to Faculty Council were clearly direct outcomes of the sessions described in this research. Further, the data from the GCS (see Tables L4 and L5 in Appendix L) shows that the majority of participants in the three groups that were associated with the proposals to Faculty Council in regard to student practica indicated that they "Agreed" or "Strongly agreed" with the following survey statements. That is, they agreed that they (a) heard new information, (b) learned from a colleague, (c) had expanded their thoughts, (d) heard new ideas, (e) experienced the process as creative, (f) were emotionally engaged, (g) felt connectedness to colleagues, (h) felt energized, (i) were fully engaged, and (j) saw old things in new ways.

Given that proposals for changes to student practica were moved forward to the Faculty Council by the departments whose faculty had been involved in the sessions described in this research, it is possible that the participants' experiences may have played a role in generating these actions. Further, since two of the three departments that initiated actions at Faculty Council had employed the AI approach in their sessions it might be tempting to suggest that AI could be viewed as being particularly effective as a generative approach. However, coincidence or concurrence is not necessarily causation, so I am cautious in making these observations. Further, a statistical analysis revealed no significant differences in the relationships between statements in Scales 1 and 2, and Statement 4, in regard to those reporting action on the focal practicum issue and those that did not.

Table 5.3. Statistical test results for the relationship between implementation of action on the question of student practica and GCS statements in Scales 1 and 2 and for Statement 4

	Score						
Item/Implemented?	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Average**	**P value**
Statement 4 – Implemented	1	5	7	4	0	2.82	0.33*
Statement 4 – Didn't Implement	0	2	3	2	1	3.25	
Scale 1 – Implemented	1	1	2	10	4	4.1	0.89*
Scale 1 – Didn't Implement	1	1	0	5	2	4.0	
Scale 2 – Implemented	0.0	4.5	4.3	7.5	1.3	3.3	0.82*
Scale 2 – Didn't Implement	0.0	1.8	1.5	4.3	1.0	3.5	

Note. * No significant difference.

5.5. Implications for the design of generative conversations

A second research question addressed in this study was, "What considerations are critical for the design and implementation of meetings and social interactions planned and structured to foster generative dialog?"

It would seem that under certain conditions thoughts and feelings are changed and can mobilize people to act. However, the changes as reported by the participants above were not directly related to the issue of the practicum as much as they concerned how the process affected the departmental review or how the session affected how the people in the department were defined. In designing the survey tool for this study, each statement represented an attribute or condition that has been described in various research and writings as providing a foundation for a generative social environment, largely in group settings. Building on this concept, it is possible that the GCS tool can be utilized as a checklist of general design criteria for the organization of sessions intended to foster transmethodological group generativity. In other words, no matter what group ideation process is used, if the intention is to develop a social setting in which people are encouraged to ideate and generate, the statements that framed the GCS in this research can be restated as potentially useful considerations for the planning of a group session in which generative outcomes are desired or expected. Group meetings, like learning experiences more generally, can be seen as meaning driven, identity forming, and socially situated (Brown & Duguid, 2000).

The design of the study allowed groups to come together to think about context-driven, creative alternatives to best practices in regard to student practicum experiences. Good questions (or provocative issues) can stimulate generative ways of thinking that may move towards outcomes. The issue of an exceptional practicum served as the basis for dialogue during the group ideation processes. The topic promoted a different focus, one that participants had not experienced before. Bushe (2013) suggests that more attention be paid to the potency that a generative image, as the affirmative topic, can have (p. 8). For one of the groups in this study (Group 2), the word “practicum” was initially a barrier that implicitly challenged the relevance of the focal topic for them. This will be explored further in the Section 5.9.

5.5.1. Generative capacity

Group session participants’ responses to a series of statements and open-ended questions included in the GCS were important data sources for this research. A question always to be addressed in survey construction is whether or not the survey items validly reflect the constructs that they assess. In Table 2.2 (see Chapter 2), I have shown the derivation of the 17 statements that comprise the GCS from relevant literature on the nature of generative dialogue and interactions.

Gergen (2009) has described generative processes as those that stimulate the expansion and flow of meaning (p. 47). Gergen’s description highlights the concept that when an interaction is generative, changes occur in thoughts and feelings and that potential for action unfolds as a result. Bushe (2013) described generative capacity as the ability of people, individually and collectively, to reconsider that which is taken for granted and to open up to new possibilities (p. 4). Generative capacity addresses that which drives a person or group to act on thoughts and feelings. I would propose that when head (thoughts) and heart (feelings) are touched and changed, space is created for new understandings and the capacity for action is enhanced. Scharmer (2009) asserted a dialogue that moves toward collective creativity is a social field that needs a container, that is the conditions that allow people to shift their attention toward a collective whole. Social fields are characterized by high degrees of trust, respect, and creative engagement among participants (Scharmer, 2009, p. 294). Social fields are founded on relationships. Higher level conversations like dialogue and collective creativity require higher quality containers and holding spaces. Transforming the quality

of conversation in a system means altering the quality of relationships and thoughts, and subsequently the quality of future results or actions (Scharmer, 2009). A relational space is opened when participants listen and attune to each other, thereby increasing generative capacity.

A generative image (i.e., seeing something in a new way) is a component of generative capacity (Bushe, 2013). For some of the groups involved in this study, the dialogue that occurred during the group ideation processes created the possibility for the participants to engage, connect, and learn with images of a desired future being generated. Generative capacity connected to generative imagery is reflected in the results in Figures 4.4 and 4.5 (see Chapter 4) and in the following (Group 3) participants' comments on the open-ended section of the GCS "The use of metaphor as a powerful organizer of thinking."

- "I liked that we changed chairs when we told our story, seemed to privilege our words."
- "Great process."
- "Each story drew out different pieces."
- "I could hear every individual voice."

Bushe (2013) further defined generativity as

> the creation of new images, metaphors, physical representations, and so on that have two qualities: they change how people think so that new options for decisions and/or actions become available to them, and they are compelling images that people want to act on. (p. 1)

Thoughts and feelings are the fuel for generative capacity in the form of future-oriented thinking and action, as shown in the following examples of comments from Group 5 in the study:

- "The process will inform the department's program review and discussions about workload."
- "As we embark on a program review this is likely to have incredible influence over how we define ourselves."

Paranjpey (2013) described generative capacity as being configured by five constructs that involve cognition or the capacity of individuals to challenge the guiding

assumptions and question them and the psychosocial functions that relate the person with the social world. (p. 19). She defined the constructs of generative capacity as curiosity, hope, self-efficacy, group efficacy or group potency, and positive affect (Paranjpey, 2013). Curiosity is described as driving people to look around, discover, and question taken for granted assumptions, and is concerned with the cognitive ability of people to think in new ways with consequent results in action. Paranjpey (2013) contended that hope and self-efficacy combine to promote action and stated that generativity entails a desire for engaging in purposeful activities that will be an extension to one's self, as well as to make a difference in the lives of others (Bradley, as cited in Paranjpey, 2013). The attribute of positive affect relates to generativity in that it requires an individual to have a belief in self in order to engage in action (Paranjpey, 2013, p. 21). As Luthans and Church (2002) noted, "Self-efficacy is a personal judgement or belief in how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations" (p. 60). Group potency is described as entailing the belief that a group has the resources and competencies to accomplish a task.

Table 5.4 groups the GCS statements in a broad contrast with the constructs of generative capacity as proposed by Paranjpey (2013). It should be noted that the GCS, as developed for this research, was not designed to reflect any single model of generative conversations. As shown by Table 3.2 in Chapter 3, the GCS statements are an amalgam of ideas from many authors about the elements that can nurture generative capacity. It is interesting to note that certain elements are recurrent in both Paranjpey's (2013) constructs and in the statements included in the GCS, since both reflect a range of ideas in the general literature on the topic of generativity in groups. Knoll and Horton (2011) noted that there is a tremendous diversity of idea generation techniques, many with distinctive brand names and modifications in procedure and supporting materials, and they cite, for example, VanGundy's (2005) review of 101 idea generation techniques.

Table 5.4. A comparison of the elements proposed as components of generative capacity by Paranjpey (2013) and statements describing aspects of generative conversations as included in the generative conversations survey developed for this research

Generative Capacity (Paranjpey, 2013)	Generative Conversations Survey
Hope	15. As a result of participation in the group process, I feel a sense of hopefulness.
Curiosity	13. I heard new ideas when I participated in the group process.
	1. I heard new information when I participated in the group process.
	3. I was surprised by what I heard when I participated in the group process.
	16. I saw old things in new ways as a result of participation in the group process.
Self-Efficacy	4. As a result of participation in the group process, I have developed an Action Plan.
	6. I was fully engaged in the group process.
	7. I feel motivated to act as a result of the group process.
	17. Participation in the group process compels me to act upon the points raised.
	14. My thoughts were expanded when I participated
Group Potency	2. I learned from a colleague when I participated in the group process.
	10. As a result of participation in the group process, I think there will be some change in what we do.
Positive Affect	5. I experienced the group process as creative.
	8. I felt emotionally engaged during participation in the group process.
	9. I was able to suspend self-interest during participation in the group process.
	11. During participation in the group process, I felt a sense of connectedness to my colleagues.
	12. During participation in the group process, I felt energized.

5.5.2. Generative dialogue

An important element of the psychosocial environment of group-based generative conversations is dialogue. Dialogue is a creative, open-ended activity of two

or more people thinking together (Paranjpey, 2013). Gergen, Gergen, and Barrett (2004) state the following about dialogue: (a) dialogue originates in the public sphere; (b) dialogue is a form of coordinated action; (c) dialogue efficacy is bodily and contextually embedded; (d) dialogue efficacy is historically and culturally situated; and (e) dialogue may serve many different purposes, both positive and negative. Gergen et al. also proposed that dialogue is generative when it is (a) affirmative (i.e., it values the opinions of others) and (b) repetitive, which means it is discussed again and again in the group. Each discussion helps in learning and reflection and brings out productive differences, thus enabling the participants to reach a new level of shared meaning and a vision for the future. Effective dialogue can facilitate the social construction of knowledge (Perkins, 1992) and also inspire creativity.

5.5.3. Generative questions

If dialogue is important to generative conversations, generative questions can be the spark that initiatives (or necessitates) generative dialogue. Generative questions can help change the ways people look at the world and escape unquestioning or unrecognized assumptions. Bushe (2007) proposed that generative questions have four qualities: they are surprising, they touch people's emotions, they build relationships, and they invite looking at reality differently. Research on brainstorming (Gregersen, 2018), for example, emphasizes the importance of good questions as much or more than ideas to address the questions.

The design of the study allowed groups to come together to think about context-driven, creative alternatives to best practices in regard to student practicum experiences. Good questions (or provocative issues) can stimulate generative ways of thinking that may move towards outcomes. The issue of an exceptional practicum, served as the basis for dialogue during the group ideation processes. The way the topic was framed promoted a different focus, one that participants had not experienced before. Bushe (2013) suggested that more attention be paid to the potency that a generative image, as the affirmative topic, can have (p. 8). For one of the groups in this study (Group 2) the word "practicum" was initially a barrier that implicitly challenged the relevance of the focal topic for them. This will be explored further in Section 5.9, which discusses the limitations of this study.

A process to empower generative change should elicit new images and ideas that provide people with new eyes to see old things, resulting in new options for decisions and actions that they find appealing (Bushe & Marshak, 2015, p. 45). It is worth noting that the GCS statements that produced the most positive Likert responses were those that referred to “hearing new information,” “hearing new ideas,” and “having thoughts expanded.” Then it would seem that being asked to look at reality differently can refocus people on a topic in ways that are more generative (Bushe & Marshak, 2015, 2016). Lang (2014) similarly suggested that innovators ask more and better questions. In industries in which fast-paced change is the norm, innovation has become the holy grail (Lang, 2014). Lang advocated for asking the right questions, opening to new possibilities, promoting divergent thinking, and focusing on questions not answers.

5.5.4. Group size and organization

A common factor emerged from examining the experience of the three generative group conversations that appeared to lead to specific actions, that is, the opportunity to work in dyads. Both Groups 2 and 3 engaged with the adapted AI process in which each participant had the opportunity to be an interviewer and interviewee, a dyad within a small group of four. In Group 5, there were only two participants who worked as a dyad during a brainstorming process. The literature on the brainstorming process suggested there are ways to improve the process through specific group discussion procedures that include beginning dialog in dyads (Diehl & Stroebe, 1987, 1991).

In examining what processes and social or physical environmental conditions can aid generativity, and what elements are critical in the design of organized meetings and social interactions planned to foster generative dialogue, consideration of pairing or dyad work seems to be important. Recent research and proposals on the characteristics of agile organizations (Barton, Carey, & Charan, 2018) suggested that deploying people into tribes, squads, and chapters can resolve issues more quickly than many of the conventional department, work group, or project-based organizations. In this terminology the term squad refers to a cross-functional group of nine or fewer people charged with meeting a specific task. The term tribe refers to a collection of squads focused on the same overall issue. A chapter combines people who share common workplace or organizational disciplines and skills (Barton et al., 2018, p. 60). The point here is that

new ideas are emerging in the field of OD around how to group people around issues, opportunities, or problems. Educational organizations may largely still be very conservative in their structures—departments, faculties, centres.

5.5.5. Institutional context

In examining what processes and social or physical environmental conditions can aid generativity, and what elements are critical in the design of organized meetings and social interactions planned to foster generative dialogue, consideration of pairing or dyad work seems to be important. Throughout the tables presented in Appendix M I linked each survey item to factors that should be considered as means of enhancing generative conversations and outcomes. When conducting a research project in the field, there are often many variables that may influence the experiences of the participants and outcomes of the study. In the case of this project there are several such factors to consider. The institution in this study has a history of moving from a college to a university college and then to a new designation as a teaching intensive, regional university. Organizational change was very salient during the time the study was completed. Two of the faculty groups chosen for the study were in the process of institutional program reviews. As a result, they appeared to perceive the group ideation activity as an opportunity to contribute to the work of the ongoing review process and were motivated to explore the practicum topic. These two groups represented two of the three departments from which members subsequently took actions toward the practicum issue by bringing recommendations to the Faculty Council within the year of the study. At the very least the sessions described in this research may have contributed somewhat to the actions that were taken at the Council level.

Another factor to consider was the nature of the topic chosen for discussion during the group ideation processes. While the university as a whole is promoting innovation through scholarship on teaching and learning that includes the exploration of experiential and place-based learning, the faculty groups involved in this study were in very different stages with regard to the use of practica in their programs. The goals and norms related to high impact practices and experiential learning also varied across the disciplines represented in the study. This influenced the focusing task's relevance for some of the groups with some having strong familiarity with practica as integral parts of their programs (Groups 1 and 3) and others (Groups 2 and 4) not currently engaged in

practica as instructional strategies. This may have affected the levels of participant engagement with the group ideation process.

5.6. Seeing the generative conversations survey as a design tool

In addition to thoughtfully establishing an inquiry stance to promote generativity, Storch (2015) explored the way meaning influences actions suggesting that everything matters when it comes to considerations (plans for meetings and group dialogue) for scene-setting activities. Examples of these activities include considering what kind of conversations need to be pursued, where and when they will occur, how the room will be arranged, and how much time is needed (Storch, 2015). Time is often neglected as a factor in planning sessions, especially in organizations in which the timetable or schedule dominates (e.g., in schools) or when the time-is-money theme is stressed and there are always concerns about “time wasting.”

How one choreographs group dialogue may aid or hamper what one hopes to realize. Zandee (2013) suggested that relational engagement is pivotal for change. Relational engagement refers to establishing opportunities for shared inquiry, understanding and values exploration. Building on the work of these authors who have previously explored what needs attention when it comes to group process and generativity, I suggest that the GCS tool as developed for this research can be used as a way of thinking about process design.

In designing the survey tool for this study, each statement represented an attribute or condition that has been described in various research and writings as providing a foundation for a generative social environment, largely in group settings. Building on this concept, it is possible that the GCS tool can be utilized as a checklist of general design criteria for the organization of sessions intended to foster transmethodological group generativity. In other words, no matter what group ideation process is used, if the intention is to develop a social setting in which people are encouraged to ideate and generate, the statements that framed the GCS in this research can be restated as potentially useful considerations for the planning of a group session in which generative outcomes are desired or expected.

In a sense, the survey represents a descriptive theory about the planning and conduct of a generative group session. The tables in Appendix L highlight each statement from the GCS and link the statement to its potential implications for designing and facilitating a generative learning environment. Table 5.5 is a sample utilizing one GCS item from each category of thinking, feeling, and acting. A complete set of statements for each survey item is found in Appendix M.

Table 5.5. Generative Conversations survey statements linked to their potential applications in the planning and implementation of sessions intended to foster ideation and generativity

GCS Survey Item	Implications for learning environment and facilitation/Session Design Goals
THINKING 2) I **learned** from a colleague when I participated in the group process about the topic of the session.	Breaking into dyads or small groups may give more chance for people to be heard and to explain their ideas to a colleague or small group and may promote inquiry-based dialogue. Paying attention to the composition of pairs or small groups can increase the likelihood of participants learning from colleagues. An example of this approach can be found in the work of Ludema, Whitney, Mohr and Griffin, (2003, pp. 82–83 regarding putting together "improbable pairs" that is, bringing people together who may have differing perspectives in a way that voices get heard and colleagues learn from and about each other.
FEELING (3) I was **surprised** by what I heard when I participated in the group process about the topic of the session.	When people are exposed to new information, they are more likely to be surprised and see thoughts or ideas in ways they have not applied before. A useful approach may be to structure the group ideation process utilizing questions that haven't been discussed or thought about before (Bushe, 2013). It may be helpful to consider utilizing provocative propositions. Partnering participants in improbable pairs to increase the likelihood of hearing surprising stories and information may also be considered. Encouraging storytelling and reflection as a method of sharing among group participants can help them to structure questions that are personally meaningful and have emotional attachment.
ACTING (4) As a result of participation in this group process I have **developed an action plan** related to the topic.	To close the session have participants complete a brief reflection exercise where they consider the ideas generated and record one thing they personally intend to do immediately, in one week, in one month. Record and share commitments to action from as many participants as possible. Where it makes sense to do so, ensure participants know they have authority to move ideas into actions.

5.7. Relationship of current study to previous research

This study focused on generativity in faculty group processes in a university setting. In Chapter 2, an analysis of the literature revealed that the concept of generativity has its origins in social psychology and is a current topic in studies related to organization development. This study continues to extend the work of scholars who have explored inquiry and dialogue in the context of the nature of relationships with others as a foundation for generativity (Bright et al., 2010; Bushe, 2007,2013; Bushe & Marshak, 2015, 2016; Ludema, 2005; Paranjpey, 2013). The findings of this thesis research confirm generativity as an important concept to dialogic OD. Dialogic approaches work by fostering generativity to develop new possibilities (Bushe & Marshak, 2015, 2016). The development of the original GCS instrument was built upon previous research and theory. Although the statistical analysis of the GCS did not predict which groups would implement ideas, it is my hope that the survey results will add to the body of knowledge about specific mediating factors and conditions that may contribute to generativity in group processes and that the survey itself, applied to other studies, may prove to be a useful tool for gathering participant perceptions and understandings of generative processes.

5.8. Recommendations for educational leadership

Institutions of higher education are currently under considerable pressure to become more responsive, relevant, efficient, and effective (Birnbaum, 2000, p. 3). As a result, many have responded to these pressures by adopting methods and processes from the realm of ideas and theories of the organization development in the context of business systems. This thesis explored generativity in university faculty group processes. A key outcome of the research was the development of a survey tool that can be used transmethodologically to set help the stage for generative group work and assess the outcomes of group work. Appendix M provides a way of thinking about the design of faculty group processes to enhance generativity. I am not proposing that the identified attributes will cause generative responses, but rather that they may have implications for thinking about the design of group sessions and meetings that have enhanced chances to yield generative outcomes. The attributes and design elements

listed in Appendix M have potential applicability across meeting types and processes (i.e., they are transmethodological).

The survey tool and the linked session design elements could be applied in the development of faculty groups and to enhancement of the work they do together. Perhaps as a faculty member steps into leadership and assumes the role of chair or department head, this could be a useful tool to orient them to organizing faculty meetings and program planning and review. I suggest that the survey could also be used in the development of student project teams and in university committees at large, with particular emphasis on the 10 points listed in Section 5.3. The 17 survey items and their correlated design factors are interrelated and none stand alone. In group work, the whole may be more than the sum of its parts, but the parts are also significant and depending on particular contexts and mediating factors, some may be critical.

5.9. Limitations

There are some characteristics of the design of this research project that impacted the results and interpretation of the outcomes. There were also events and circumstances that are a natural part of conducting a study in an environment in which conditions are changing day to day, and these influenced the degree to which interpretations can be made.

The number of participants in this research project was small. Therefore, the generalizability of the outcomes is limited. Some of the departments were very small (two faculty) so it made the opportunity to compare groups challenging as the group interaction between two members versus 10 is quite different.

Also related to the small sample size was the fact that, due to internal challenges, one of the groups invited to participate in the study was unable to provide the time to do so, thus resulting in only one force field analysis (Lewin, 1947) ideation process being completed. In addition, there was a considerable drop off in responses to the two follow-up surveys. It was, therefore, problematic to evaluate the degree to which perceptions of generativity persisted among all original participants with so few responding after time passed. It is also difficult to know why the follow-up responses were so limited. An alternative to using interdepartmental faculty mail might have yielded

better returns of the follow-up surveys. The fact that the study took place in a busy academic environment in which faculty simply did not have the time to make it a priority to respond may also have been a factor in the low return of the follow-up surveys. Gaps of 3 and 6 months between the actual working sessions and the follow-up surveys may simply have been too long unless efforts were made in the interval to remind participants about the need for their follow-up inputs.

Building on the concept of unknown variables, a clear limitation of the study relates to the nature of the university environment and the relationships within it that existed before groups were brought together to dialogue. It is impossible to know what variables impacted overall engagement and participation in the study. As a member of the faculty utilized in the study, I held relationships on some level with all participants. In some cases my relationship was that of a general affiliation, while in others I shared work in a department, and in two instances, I had been in a leadership role. It is a question as to whether some groups acted differently because of my previous relationships. Clearly, there are many potentially noisy variables when conducting a study in these conditions.

Another factor that may have affected the results of the study was the choice of topic to be used as a frame or initiator for the discussions, namely, “What makes an exceptional practicum experience?” Possible limitations of this study were the varying attitudes and levels of awareness within the study groups, with regards to the practicum as a teaching tool. These differences may have influenced the way the different groups approached the dialogue around the framing topic. A better comparison could have perhaps been drawn if all study groups were utilizing practica within their respective programs. If the topic of discussion was not meaningful to a group, I would not expect the same level of motivation or energy to be directed toward the task. The term practicum might not have been understood by some groups, even if they did place students in workplace settings but referred to the process as a co-op or internship rather than a practicum. The opening topic could have been revised to provide a clearer description of the meaning of student workplace experiences.

A methodological limitation became apparent when I provided the independent reviewers with the information from each group, in order for them to evaluate the quality of ideas utilizing the tool developed. It became clear that there was a potential design

error, when I omitted completing some preorganization of the groups' generated ideas into themes or categories. The reviewers were left to decide whether an idea could be a single word, a phrase, or a complete sentence, and this was a problem. With each independent reviewer establishing for themselves what constituted an individual idea, a great deal of subjectivity was introduced, which led to reviewers coming up with different ways of categorizing the information. It would have been more suitable to provide the reviewers with the ideas already categorized or with some examples of ideas in each category (i.e., practical, novel, etc.). Even so, with a panel of judges there will most likely always be some differences of opinion when what is being rated is a quality rather than a defined quantity.

The GCS was developed specifically for the research in this thesis. As noted elsewhere, the survey statements were grounded in existing research and scholarship concerning generativity (see Table 2.2 in Chapter 2). The survey provided some useful information as to participants' self-reported experience of generativity immediately following their sessions. In the design of the survey, only positive statements were used; that is, participants were asked to rate "I learned from a colleague when I participated in the group process about the topic of the session" on a Likert scale ranging from "Strong Agreement" to "Strong Disagreement," with another option for "Don't know/unsure." In survey design, it is sometimes useful to include reverse or opposite versions of essentially the same statement, mainly to see whether the respondents are actually reading and thinking about the items. This was not done in this case. Further, it is possible that in at least some cases the respondents, knowing the session was part of my thesis research and having some previous experience with me as a colleague or at least member of the same faculty, might have assumed that the survey questions would act as a rating on my facilitation rather than only on the quality of actual session experience and process. Of course, one path to reduce or eliminate this complication might have been to have employed a facilitator who was not known to the participants at all but it would have been important to make certain that the facilitator was well trained and faithful to the particular process protocol in each case. Since the three processes are different, I might have employed three facilitators, each well versed in the process for which they were responsible, and also coached in how to introduce the survey and deal with any questions. The challenge then might be to determine whether differences in survey responses resulted not from differences in format or process but in different

facilitator styles. Of course, a different approach would be to use the same process with different faculty groups or departments in which case the focus would be on assessing the GCS statements as indicators of generativity more than the different processes. A complexity in the design used here was in the number of variables involved, including factors such as group size.

As noted in my description of the session formats in Chapter 3, the participants were asked to complete the GCS and the group states measure immediately following the session and before leaving the session room. It is possible that people who were concerned about personal schedules and time demands might complete the surveys without a lot of deliberation.

Further applications of the GCS with larger samples of participants and in comparison with the different processes would allow treatment of the results to check statistically for reliability and validity. The item analysis revealed which statements were responded at the same levels by most of the respondents and, therefore, how many different variables the survey is actually measuring; in this case, perhaps two. In the future, I would need to increase the sample size for the number of respondents answering each question in an attempt to find out if different questions are actually measuring different things or simply different responses to the same core situation.

Group recruitment and selection could also be more tightly controlled. These are certainly things to be considered for further development of the survey. The decision to make the group sessions extensions to regular faculty meetings rather than special purpose meetings was made given the difficulty in getting departments to set up time to meet. Did it influence or limit capacity of how participants engaged with the process? It is worth considering since the concept of anticipatory mode and hope were conceived as contributing to generativity. If a special purpose meeting is called to address a unique topic, participants have the opportunity to begin to consider it ahead of the meeting. There could be the potential for meeting fatigue by adding this research process time on to the end of a regular meeting.

5.10. Suggestions for future research

This small preliminary study sought to discover and explore the effects of different group processes on participant perceptions of session generativity. In a way, the research became a validation exercise for the GCS tool that was developed for this study; although, as noted above, further research designed to validate and test the reliability of the survey itself is needed. The opportunity to expand the survey to develop its potential for use as a design and process assessment tool presents considerable possibilities. It would be interesting to extend this kind of project to other faculty groups to broaden and build further on the understanding of generativity as affected by different group processes and group states. The validity and reliability of the identified attributes of generativity as applied in the survey would need to be established. More sophisticated statistical procedures could be applied to measure the internal consistency of the survey items and the survey could also tested for its ability to differentiate between different processes and groups through analysis of variance. As noted in Chapter 4, an analysis of variance as applied to the results of this study revealed no significant differences among groups but the small size and group differences as well as other uncontrolled variables make the use of ANOVA questionable. There are also arguments among measurement professionals as to the validity of applying quantitative statistics to Likert response formats, with Carifio and Perla, (2007) claiming that Likert-item-based scales can be usefully studied by statistical tests such as the *F*-test. An exploration of these issues was beyond the design and intent of the study reported here. The area of group processes, and dialogue and conversations in particular, is the subject of active research and theorizing especially in the context of fostering innovation and adaptability in organizations. Pillay (2014), for example, has offered a provocative critique in an article entitled “Three Problems that Talking Can’t Solve” from the *Harvard Business review.* New software tools and a variety of online environments are also being studied more systematically for their power as catalysts to innovation, invention, and organizational change (Satell, 2017, pp. 16–17). It is to be expected that considerable future research on generativity and innovation could usefully be situated in educational institutions.

5.11. Researcher reflections

> Pay especially careful attention to the beginning. Our initial way of being and doing serves as a tuning fork for the whole process. (Averbuch, 2015, p. 243)

Reflecting on this work, I wholeheartedly agree with the statement above. In Chapter 1, I stated that my sense is that relationships and dialogue influence the degree to which participants engage and act upon planned change. Further, I explained how it is within relationship that possibilities for change are explored and decided upon in the context of counselling. I queried whether the same importance could be extended to organization change. Having conducted a theoretical and practical exploration of generativity in this thesis research, I would say yes!

I wondered what processes might promote an environment in which generative conversations occur and what steps might facilitate patterns of dialogue that mobilize energy for action. Through exploring the relevant literature, I attempted to develop a survey that could explore those questions. After completing the faculty group ideation process facilitations, beginning to dive into the resultant data, and over the course of writing this dissertation, it turned out there was more to the GCS that I developed for the research than I first expected. What emerged from the experience of using the survey as a means of examining the perceptions of the session participants was a way to think about generativity no matter what process of group ideation was utilized. Possibilities for both setting the stage and assessing perceptions of group members for generativity were opened.

As I have been conducting this research I have had many people ask me, “What is generativity?” It is not a term that many are familiar with in an organizational context. When I wanted to provide a very simple and quick answer, I would reply, “Generativity is about action. A generative dialogue is one that compels you to act upon the interaction—something happens!” Almost always the response back to me would be, “That’s great! I like that concept. How do you make it happen?” I would now say, to make that happen, a leader needs to focus on how people think, feel, and act and that there are ways to mindfully pay attention to those states to enhance generativity. For leaders of others, and those who facilitate dialogues, I would now be able to offer guidance in the form of three important questions.

1. Have you considered how you will foster and support ideation and creative *thinking* around a topic?

2. Have you considered how you will set the stage for a session that feels energizing and promotes a *feeling* of engagement?

3. Have you considered how you will foster plans for and commitment to *actions*?

I endeavoured to provide suggestions for the "how to" in Appendix M. After conducting this research project, I suggest that the likelihood of a group ideation process being generative is greatly enhanced under the following conditions.

- The group is functioning optimally in a post-identity state (in which individuals have developed within the group to see their identity as a member of the group).

- The session leader has a dialogic mindset and utilizes relational strategies like pairing, storytelling, and role-playing.

- The topic or task is relevant and meaningful at individual, departmental, and organizational levels.

- Group size is attended to by utilizing dyads and smaller groups.

- Participants feel energized and engaged through knowing they can influence change, and have authority to act.

- Participants feel motivated, experience the process as creative, and have hope, as a result of anchoring the process in what is known.

As an educator, faculty colleague and leader in higher education my goal is to take the knowledge gained from this research process and dissertation, and to foster environments that enhance generativity. I would like to produce and share the set of recommendations about the design of group sessions and meetings and have others try them out. I have thought about naming the guidelines Slavik's assessment of generative engagement (SAGE). After getting some informal feedback about the use of the guide, further study about its use could extend scholarship in this area. I plan to share the SAGE guidelines with faculty who teach the Advanced Group Work course in the Child and Youth Care degree program. This could be a useful tool when students are preparing to co-facilitate a group session for their peers in class. Finally, I will share the guidelines I generated with the faculty in the Teaching and Learning Centre in the university. It could serve as an important tool for transdisciplinary curriculum design for

faculty who utilize group work to engage and provoke learners and educators as part of their teaching and learning process.

If the GCS tool is to be fully useful careful attention has to be paid to the actual language in the statements. I think Paranjpey's (2013) concepts, converted into statements, could be an addition to the GCS, especially since statements in the current survey have shown very little real difference in terms of which attribute of generativity they are assessing. There would also be merit in designing the survey with statements that were inserted to check on the attentiveness of the respondents or their level of general understanding. Reverse from positive to negative formats for some statements would possibly be a useful contribution to the survey design. Further, I think Bushe's (Bushe & Coetzer, 2007) Group State Inventory could be a useful addition, but it needs revision to make it easier for participants to understand and apply. The construct of Group State points to the need to pay attention to the state of social dynamics and culture within a group as part of the process of fostering generativity. A group with issues in its organizational culture and social dynamics is likely to be less dynamic and resilient in addressing problems and opportunities related to changes in its environment.

Epilogue

To bring closure to this work I have a felt sense that I need to add a section here that provides a context for what happened during the writing portion of this thesis. I suffered an injury which was momentous and chronic in nature but that would not be known or discovered until significantly later. As a result, a rather long period of time (2 years) passed before I was able to return in a fulsome way to completing the process of writing. I had to reconnect with the work and draw upon the support of others to engage again. The irony of examining generativity in groups was I suddenly found myself needing to examine that which allowed me to continue to be generative in my own work. What compelled me to act? What compelled me to persist? I needed to rest after this setback and choose courage over comfort and not tap out when it was hard (Brown, 2018). It took courage to be vulnerable. This research truly aligns with my values and beliefs about people and processes and how we need to respect and hear each other when coming together. Hope, meaning, and sentiment fostered a desire in me to push through and keep going. In many ways I was already enacting the concepts I had explored. Brené Brown (2018) believes courageous leaders see potential in people and processes, and they develop that potential. I reflect on the way I engage with students, faculty, and others in my work, and I consciously attune to them in the moment and deeply care about their experience of group process. I try to foster the environment and conditions so generative questions can be asked, generative feelings can emerge, and generative actions can be brought forth.

When I began this exploration I had not heard much about the concept of generativity or generative group process. Now, I see and hear the concept in a variety of meetings I am a part of. It seems in the intervening years that the understanding of what it is to be generative has grown and become something consciously desired in the context of group process.

If I knew then what I know and have experienced now, I would approach a few things differently. What started as a mixed-method approach became very dense and uncertain when reviewing the data and deciding what to focus on. In the end, a shift toward a more qualitative and experiential focus seemed right, and I would plan more directly for that if I were to redesign this research. I shifted from wanting to know what

process might produce the most generative results toward understanding what the experience was for participants and if the tool I designed really measured that experience effectively.

This process for me has be enriching and learning on many levels. The inquiry has the potential to keep being generated. It seems to me now, there are so very many ways a study like this could be shaped and designed, and I hope that my efforts to explore this concept prove to spark generative images for others. My current scholarship focus is on wellness and mindfulness-based practices in higher education, and I can see how generativity aligns with many of the foundations and principles of mindfulness. Paying attention in the moment has the potential to transform the way we perceive and experience the world. Through that process insight can emerge and shift us towards action that contributes to a sense of equanimity. In some ways I see generativity in group process similarly. In coming together around decision making, groups have the potential to gain insight and move toward a sense that they can maintain balance even in the face of challenges and chaos. I will continue to explore the mediating factors of generativity on both a personal and professional level.

As this year, 2020, draws towards a close, we are still in the midst of a global pandemic. Universities have coped with a flurry of changes and have had to shift quickly to respond to doing old things in new ways. In some ways, the conditions have required generativity. Change had to happen; we were compelled to change or we could not continue. That is another area of this research that could be very interesting for the future.

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Appendix A.

Initial Survey

An Exploration of Generativity in Faculty Group Processes in a University Setting

I am completing a survey of faculty who have participated in a dialogue about practicum experiences in their school/department.

Reflecting on the dialogue you participated in, please respond to the following questions:

1. I heard new information when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

2. I learned from a colleague when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

3. I was surprised by what I heard when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

4. As a result of participation in this group process I have developed an action plan related to the topic.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

5. I experienced the group process as creative.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

6. I was fully engaged in the group process.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

7. I feel motivated to act as a result of the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

8. I felt emotionally engaged during participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

9. I was able to suspend self -interest during participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

10. As a result of participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience I think there will be some change in what we do.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

11. During participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience I felt a sense of connectedness to my colleagues.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

12. During participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience I felt energized.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

13. I heard new ideas when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

14. My thoughts were expanded when I participated in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

15. As a result of participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience I feel a sense of hopefulness.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

16. I saw old things in new ways as a result of participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

17. Participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience compels me to act upon the points raised.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Recalling the dialogue you participated in, was there anything that stood out for you? If so, can you share why?

What do you think you will do, if anything, as a result of participating in this group process?

Appendix B.

Independent Reviewers Survey Tool

An Exploration of Generativity in Faculty Group Processes in a University Setting

I am completing a research project exploring the nature of generative conversations in a higher education context. Faculty participated in one of three group processes about the practicum experience in their school/department. The groups were asked to utilize one of three generative processes (brainstorming, Force Field Analysis, or a variation of an Appreciative Inquiry process) when considering "What makes an exceptional practicum experience?"

Thank you for agreeing to review the ideas generated by the groups as part of my research project. You are asked to review the work produced by each group and rate EACH ideas on three dimensions of generativity: (1) innovative (2) compelling,; and (3) practical.

Reflecting on **each of the ideas** you have reviewed, please utilize the following scale

1. This idea produced by the group is **novel** and has not been done before in the school/department or organization.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

2. This idea produced by this group is **compelling**; it evokes interest and is likely to compel people to implement it.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

3. This idea produced by this group is **practical** and can likely be implemented by the school/department or organization.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

4. Please rate each idea about how to improve student's practicum experiences on each of the three questions using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Please make sure to put a number in each of the cells, below

Ideas	This idea is **novel** and has not been done before in the school/department or organization (Rating on the scale)	This idea is **compelling;** it evokes interest and a desire to implement it (Rating on the Scale)	This idea is **practical** and can likely be implemented by the school/department or organization (Rating on the Scale)

Appendix C.

Letter of Information and Consent

Recruitment Letter for Study Participants

Re: Informed Consent for Faculty Participation in a Research Study at the University of the Fraser Valley (August 2013-March 2014)

Dear colleagues

My name is Christine Slavik**.** I am a faculty member in the Early Childhood Education/Child and Youth Care Department at the University of the Fraser Valley.

As a graduate student in Simon Fraser University's EdD (Doctor of Education), Educational Leadership – Post Secondary Cohort, I am seeking your agreement to participate in a research study.

A description of the research project follows:

Title: ***An Exploration of Generativity in Faculty Group Processes in a University Setting***

I am investigating what processes can lead to generative conversations in post-secondary organizations. Three different group planning processes are being facilitated with 6 different faculty groups. A survey tool has been developed for identifying generative statements. You are being asked to 1) participate in one of the group planning processes with faculty members from your department/school, and 2) complete a questionnaire about the experience immediately following the process. The total time is approximately 1 ½ hours. A brief follow-up survey will be sent to you at 3 month and 6 months after the planning process. Completion of the survey should take 10-15 minutes of additional time. Your participation will be very helpful in this research.

Risks to the Participant

This research study is considered to involve minimal risk. The probability and magnitude of possible harm incurred by your participation in this research will be no greater than those encountered by you in your everyday life at work. The project involves a comparison of the information produced from three different group processes. The confidentiality of all participants' identities will be assured and maintained throughout the project through the use of pseudonyms and secure storage. The identities of the participants, the faculty and the university, will not be revealed in any published research results.

Participation by faculty employed by the University of the Fraser Valley is totally voluntary. Refusal to participate, or withdraw from the study after agreeing to participate, will have no effect on any aspect of your terms of employment or career development with the university. The raw data will be collected and stored in a locked office of the principal investigator. The data will be transferred into electronic format and then stored

on an external hard drive which will be locked in a secure cabinet when not in use by the researcher. The electronic data will be deleted in 5 years - May 2018. No personal identifying data will be collected. This study is designed and conducted with the utmost concern for all participants and in a manner that protects them from any avoidable risks.

Benefits of the Study

It is the aim of the study to add to the current understanding of processes for generating potential actions for effective change. The results of the study may provide a useful and appropriate framework for change agendas in higher education, and aid in improving practice in this area. The research will attempt to identify specific steps and strategies that contribute to generativity, exploring and extending this construct.

Ethical Conduct of Research

The ethics of this study have been approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of the Fraser Valley and the Department of Research Ethics at Simon Fraser University.

Should you wish to obtain information about your rights as a participant in this research, the responsibilities of the researchers, or have questions or concerns, please contact the Principal Investigator, Christine Slavik, [email address], or my Senior Research Supervisor, Dr. Milt McClaren, Professor Emeritus, Faculty of Education at SFU, [email address].

Thank you for your consideration

Christine Slavik, CCLS, EdD Candidate

INFORMED CONSENT for FACULTY PARTICIPANTS

An Exploration of Generativity in Faculty Group Processes in a University Setting

August 2013-March 2014

Having been asked to participate in the research described above, I certify that I have read the Recruitment Letter for Study Participants describing the study and informed consent procedures. I understand the information provided about the study and the personal risks to me in taking part.

I understand that I may withdraw my participation from this research study at any time.

I understand that if I have any concerns or complaints with respect to participation as a research participant I may contact Dr. Dina Shafey, Associate Director, Office of Research Ethics at Simon Fraser University at [email address] or [telephone number].

You may also contact Adrienne Chan, Associate VP of Research & Graduate Studies at UFV, [telephone number] or [email address].

If I have questions or would like to discuss the project, I can call the principal investigator, Christine Slavik at [telephone number], or email [email address].

Or Dr. Milt McClaren, Professor Emeritus, Faculty of Education at SFU, [email address] or by phone [telephone number].

I may obtain copies of the results of this study upon its completion by contacting the principal investigator, Christine Slavik.

Participant's first and last name:_____
Print name

Title/Role:_____

Signature:_____ Date:_____
yyyy/mm/dd

Participant Contact Information:

Telephone:_____email:_____

(Please sign two copies of this consent and retain one for your records, and return the second copy to the Researcher, Christine Slavik).

Appendix D.

Initial Survey

Follow-up survey 3 months

<u>An Exploration of Generativity in Faculty Group Processes in a University Setting Follow-up Survey</u>

I am completing a survey of faculty who have participated in a (specific ideation process inserted here: generative inquiry activity ie. Brainstorming, Force Field, Appreciative Inquiry) about the practicum in their school/department.

Reflecting on the (Brainstorming/Force Field Analysis/Appreciative Inquiry) you participated in 3 months ago, please respond to the following statements:

1. Specific action plans emerged (either during or after) from the [*specific ideation process inserted here*] about what makes an exceptional practicum experience

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Please briefly describe:

_____

_____

1. The school/department has taken actions related to those plans in the last 3 months.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Please briefly describe what has been done:

_____

_____

2. I have personally taken action related to those plans in the last 3 months.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Please briefly describe what you have done:

_____

_____

3. Others in your my school/department have taken action related to those plans in the last 3 months.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Please briefly describe who has done what:

_____

_____

4. I have been involved in further conversations about practicums in the last 3 months.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Please briefly describe:

_____

_____

5. I feel compelled to act upon some of the points raised during the dialogue[insert specific activity type] 3 months ago.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Comments:_____

_____

Thank you for your time completing this survey.

Appendix E.

Follow-Up Survey 6 Months

An Exploration of Generativity in Faculty Group Processes in a University Setting Follow-up Survey

I am completing a survey of faculty who have participated in a (specific ideation process inserted here: generative inquiry activity ie. Brainstorming, Force Field, Appreciative Inquiry) about the practicum in their school/department.

Reflecting on the (Brainstorming/Force Field Analysis/Appreciative Inquiry) you participated in 6 months ago, please respond to the following statements:

1. Specific action plans emerged (either during or after) from the [*specific ideation process inserted here*] about what makes an exceptional practicum experience

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Please briefly describe:

_____

_____

2. The school/department has taken actions related to those plans in the last 6 months.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Please briefly describe what has been done:

_____

_____

3. I have personally taken action related to those plans in the last 6 months.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Please briefly describe what you have done:

_____

_____

4. Others in your my school/department have taken action related to those plans in the last 6 months.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Please briefly describe who has done what:

_____

_____

5. I have been involved in further conversations about practicums in the last 6 months.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Please briefly describe:

_____

_____

6. I feel compelled to act upon some of the points raised during the dialogue[insert specific activity type] 6 months ago.

1	2	3	4	5	9
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	don't know

Comments:_____

_____

Thank you for your time completing this survey.

Appendix F.

Participant Summary Document: Script/Protocol Force Field Analysis

Group 1

Topic = "What makes an exceptional practicum"

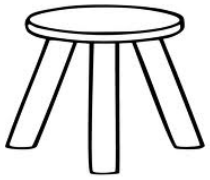
- Faculty providing a clear structure for practicum so students understand all that is expected of them and the extensiveness of their time and commitment-with student commitment to ask questions if anything is unclear to them
- Strong connections between the site supervisor and the faculty
- Open communication and an ability to work as a team to support the student
- Interview of students prior to accepting the placement, so students and the site choose the right placement that is a fit for each
- An orientation to the site and practicum by the site supervisor of the agency that allows the student to understand protocols, meet co-workers within and outside of their area
- Students feel a sense of connection to the agency they are placed in
- A willingness by students to shift their lives and schedules so that practicum becomes a learning priority
- Strong mentorship by a confident and experienced on site supervisor. Attributes include a willingness and ability to point out strengths and developing areas, and challenge students with immediacy when issues arise
- A seminar that provides safety for an open exchange of ideas, issues and vulnerabilities that students are experiencing
- The site itself (location, quality, philosophy)
- The quality of the modeling ✎
- High level of agreement between the students' concept of challenge and the site's ability to meet that ✎✎
- Same page
- Student gets what they wish for in a site
- Site's openness to having a student
- Culture of the site is cohesive, healthy ✎✎
- Healthy students
- Practicum agreement/contract ✎✎
- Suitability
- Site values the discipline ✎
- Student characteristics (rested, openness, ability to take criticism, humor, attitude) ✎✎

- Course foundations complete
- Student confidence
- Fit – relationships, history of site, student insight, nuanced understanding of these qualities and characteristics
- Experience of dissonance for the student
- Job descriptions from the site – aware of expectations from the site
- Staff on site are still excited
- Site organization supports student supervisors
- Resources adequate to provide support to students
- Time & space for student risk taking
- Risk and creativity are honored and nurtured (it's about taking risks)
- Supervisors who are trained, organized and effective
- Department has provided some supervisory training
- Supervisor openness
- Seminar really supports students to be prepared or have opportunity to reflect on organizational/political experiences
- Seminar lets them see multiple perspectives
- Part of an exceptional practicum is an exceptional seminar (trust, safety, stage set, confidentiality, student run)
- Evaluative framework relates to learning outcomes
- Credit/no credit= decreased anxiety about having to perform
- Praxis – reflecting on experience and learning
- An evaluation tool that gives them ideas
- Faculty being organic, dynamic, ongoing development of experiences
- Evaluation tooled for the site, people and practicum
- Student established learning goals – individualized goals
- Ongoing feedback
- Engaged supervisors who are interested and able to work with student
- Supervisor practices what is expected
- Site needs to "live" their philosophy
- Students have a "space"
- Site says "I would love to hire this student"
- Faculty visit the site
- Faculty are there, available and mediate with site/supervisor
- Faculty act as resources
- Watching/observing student in action on site

- Class size adjusted to meet the needs of students and faculty ✎✎✎✎
- Supervisor is present for, actually sees and works with student ✎✎
- Students engage in their own self-care & faculty encourage it strongly ✎
- Boundaries are <u>set</u> and followed by students (clients, families, supervisor, other parts of their life)
- Exceptional student = willingness, open, driven, takes responsibility for own learning ✎✎✎

Themes identified by the department

1. Structure of the course
2. Student is supported and cared for as a student
3. Clear expectations
4. Student characteristics
5. Site characteristics
6. Preparedness and skills development
7. Tri-factor congruence with resources { student
   { site
   { faculty



Top three identified as a priority/order of importance

Exceptional seminar ✎✎✎✎✎

Fit ✎✎✎✎

Exceptional student ✎✎✎

Group 2

Topic = "What makes an exceptional practicum"

- Attitude change, seeing new possibilities
- Students take responsibility for outcomes – "ownership"
- Connecting experience to personal passions

- Flexibility to change
- Providing mentorship
- Minimal bureaucracy
- Providing a clear definition of problem
- Including status reports
- Final presentation
- Connecting to student strength
- Clear definition of goals
- Students (if team) like and work well together
- Seamless transition from learning to work place applied skills – leads to jobs (or not)
- Validation of the knowledge & skill sets ie., Bus 338 Caseware
- Endorsement of critical thinking, synthesis, easy adaptation to work place
- Level of preparedness for workplace demands & expectations
- Challenging the person doing the practicum
- "Doing it" rather than talking about it
- Encourage mistakes & risk taking
- Few rules & guidelines
- Mutual respect (& fear)

Group 3

Topic = "What makes an exceptional practicum"

Below is the summarized information the two groups generated after paired

Interviews:

The Developmental Shift

ST trusts the TM┴┴┴TM trusts the ST

STs [4]Willing to let go[5] STs

Share control

TMs [4]Provide freedom[5] TMs

Before the Practicum┴┴┴During Practicum┴┴┴After the Practicum

Ownership & expectation of transformation

Figuring out/exploring

ST Identity ⊥⊥⊥⊥⊥⊥⊥⊥⊥⊥⊥ Preservation of Identity

Communication/Support from multiple sources

(Advisor, Co-ord, TMs, FMs, Library, cohort)

STs
- ⁴Open-ness ⊥⊥⊥
- ⁴Confidence in role as student ⊥⊥⊥ Confidence in role as teacher
- ⁴Willingness to experiment ⊥⊥⊥

TMs
- ⁴Confidence in role as mentor ⊥⊥⊥

FMs
- ⁴Open & willing to experiment ⊥⊥⊥ Reinvigorate, practice moves
- ⁴View mentoring as opportunity ⊥⊥⊥ forward to grow

- Creating space for growth
  - Safe but/and dissonant
  - Generous, courageous, curiosity
- Reciprocity – integrated, wholistic, relevant
- Learner/teacher attending to the values in the room
- Make "practice" worth learning
- Mentor is always "cleaning/refining" their role as reflector
- Deep questions. Deep curiosity, deep listening
- Humility on part of all (TM/FM/ST)
- Intensity of dosage in feedback
- Oscillation – acknowledging all hybrids (mentoring student teacher)
- Risks allowed!
- Commitment to critical & reflective practices
- Notion of care
- Role of reciprocity between institutions where student lives

Group 4

Topic = "What makes an exceptional practicum"

Relative strength was identified numerically from 1-5

1=weak 5=strong

Driving Forces (pros)	Restraining Forces (cons)
Really good communication Across the university – student, faculty Mentor (4,4)	No guarantee the site is utilizing "good" practice (5,5)
Really good field mentor interested you (5,5)	Institutional policies in working with that hamper practicum experience Eg. No field trips (3,3)
Integration of theory & practice, research (4,4)	If mentor is not involved in the Reflective process (5,5)
Opportunity for action research (3,3)	Reflective practice not taught adequately (5,3)
Mentor/mentee maintains a reflective Stance & critical distance (5,5)	Noviciates invested anxious Identity (5,5)
Background & understanding of Reflective practice models (4,3)	Structures for reflecting can promote "false" reflections description of experience only (3,4)
├Representativeness ├	
Access & responsibility for end User – scaffolded approach (4,4)	Students don't know what reflection is (5, 4)
Ability of faculty & mentor to provide scaffolding (5,4)	Inability (can't or unwilling to) provide scaffolding (4,5)
Safety – to take risks (5,5)	Involuntary participation of mentor (4,4)
Provision of space & time for true	When "job" is the goal (4,4)

reflection – contemplation & support
through specific processes for reflection(4,4)

Driving Forces (pros)	Restraining Forces (cons)
Possible employment ├	Possible employment
"motivating" when linked with positive mentoring, communication, structure and support student to have(2,2)	Increased anxiety & competition doing things "outside of learning" to please site (4,4)
Ability to challenge authority to Effect change (3,3)	Overly hierarchical environment (4,3)
Ability to be curious, ask questions (3,3)	
Assertiveness in culturally appropriate way (3,3)	Isomorphism (4,4)
Ethnographic approach Good facilitative skills of the mentor/mentee (4,3)	Lack of recognition of knowledge/ experience novice brings (5,4)
Ability to sustain questioning orientation (4,4)	Judging orientation (4,4)
Inquiry orientation of the Student (5,5)	Poor information (4,5,)
Open communication (3,5) Understanding of goals &	Poor communication (5,5)
Outcomes by everyone (2,4)	
Deep & sustained relationship with one mentor (3,3)	Superficial/multiple relationships with mentors (3,3)

Having diversity of experiences
(2,3)

Everyone in the experience treats
It as a learning experience (5,5)

These are the things you identified you could do to weaken or lessen the restraining forces:

- Highly selective of sites
- Highly selective of mentors
- Explicit process for mentors
- Teaching students about reflection & provide them with tools and practice
- Period of time to explore professional identity
- Role play
- Discussion of roles
- Link current identity with professional identity
- Ego play, humanize role, be yourself, be a good human being
- Identity development – progressive take time
- Explicit/systematic processes for communication
- Build in opportunity for sharing for everyone at the start
- Education for <u>all</u>
- Acknowledge learning experience for all

Group 5

Topic = "What makes an exceptional practicum"

Coding applied to brainstormed lists

External attributes – measurable outcomes, reportable

— tug -of-war —

tension

Internal attributes – to do more with learning, not easily observed

- Suitability – what constitutes excellence - differences
- Stakeholder groups & perspectives
    - Students
    - Employers
    - Faculty
    - Institutions

SE – student external
EE – employer external
FE – faculty external
IE – institutional external

SI – student internal
EI – employer internal
FI – faculty internal
II – institutional internal

- Exception needs to be considered from different contexts

140 hours over a longer duration

FE 4 week block

2 x 70 hour practicum

SE Convenient to attend practicum

Location

Driving

Safety

Wasn't scary

Faculty – move student out of comfort zone, followed by success & reflection

FI Encounters with difficult knowledge

Self…site…future

Student willingness

FE Knowing sites – time to do this is exceptional

Relationship building

"Knowing"

When student is "strong" (has come to library information work through an authentic & sophisticated understanding of work and service)

Ability to be reflective on practice "maturity" (emotional/intellectual)

Strong interpersonal skills

Students able to focus on "work" only (no papers etc. or academic

requirements)

IE Pass/fail

SI Uncomplicated for students

Reliance on employers to contribute meaningfully to an excellent learning experience

Sites understand the need for authentic assessment/evaluation

EE Supervisor/student fit

Knowing & understanding students

SI Self-discover (student) through dissonance

Students have opportunity to use skills gained in program

EI Site is exceptional – enthusiastic about course and program, process of practicum, willingness to "give" student opportunities to use skills beyond routine day-to-day work

Employment after practicum

Employer willing to adjust schedule to meet the students' needs

Excellence = exceptional

All perspectives need to be held and considered

Integrative, transformative

FI Can transcend learning outcomes

<u>We're assuming exceptional can be named</u>

II Students meet ILOs

IE Institutional perspective – full (seats), student success (evaluations are good) No "problem" student

Appendix G.

Script/Protocol Brainstorming

1. Introduce self and the process and topic for today's session.

Script

Thank you for taking the time today to participate in a conversation with your colleagues, in support of the research study ***An Exploration of Generativity in Faculty Group Processes in a University Setting.***

I will act as facilitator for the session. We will take about an hour and ½ to engage in the working part of the conversation or until you feel you have covered the topic adequately. Once finished, I will ask you to please take a few more minutes to complete a questionnaire about your experience of the group brainstorming process.

*The focus topic for this process is the student practicum experience, more specifically, "****what makes an exceptional practicum experience****?"*

Utilizing the specific process of ***brainstorming****, your group will have a conversation about the topic.*

All work produced by the group in a written format will be collected as part of the research data along with the completed questionnaires. Pens, Flip chart paper, markers and post-it notes have been provided. Names of participants are NOT required on any of the session materials and the identities of participants will be protected by the use of pseudonyms if necessary.

2. Start the brainstorming process

Script

Let's begin the brainstorming process now. I have written the focus topic on a flip chart sheet here. The idea is to generate as many ideas as possible about what makes an exceptional practicum experience. I have a handout here with the guidelines for brainstorming. My role will be to capture your ideas and scribe them and to promote the guidelines for brainstorming. Any questions before we begin?

Guidelines for conducting brainstorming are as follows:

- Get as many ideas out as possible….initially aiming for quantity versus quality
- Do not evaluate the ideas that members generate
- Include the wildest ideas possible
- Combine and build upon ideas or piggyback on ideas already generated

3. Facilitation of brainstorming

During this part of the session I will act as scribe and ensure everyone has a chance to get as many ideas out as they can. I will adhere to the guidelines and facilitate non-judging, and free flow contributions as necessary.

Once all ideas have been exhausted the list can be reviewed for key themes and ideas that the group may want to categorize and pursue further. I will invite the participants to engage in this next part of the brainstorming process.

Script

Having generated all these ideas let's now look at what themes there might be and see if there are some specific ideas that emerge as ones you would want to highlight as most important/significant. Let's begin with the themes … how could all these ideas be categorized?

Here I will use different coloured markers to identify any themes and categories identified by the participants.

Script

Now that you have identified these categories I am going to ask you to put them in priority order of importance/significance. In other words, in answering the question "what makes an exceptional practicum experience?" this idea contributes the most. I'll ask you to do this for the top 3 in each category. I have stickers here for each of you to place beside the top three ideas in each category.

Here I will allocate the appropriate number of stickers for each participant to complete the exercise. Once completed the results will be tallied. I will ask the participants to look over the results.

Script

Having had the opportunity to explore what makes an exceptional practicum, these are the main themes/categories generated, and these are the ideas that seem to contribute most to that (details will emerge from the exercise).

Perhaps these are things you are already doing in your school/department or perhaps these are things that you would want to develop further.

Having generated a list of ideas, the work for the research project is complete. It will be up to you, the school or department to reconnect and converge on any actions that may emerge as a result of this process.

Today I will be taking the work and information you generated and I will put it into a word-processing format so you can utilize in the future if you decide to do so.

And now I am going to ask you to complete a questionnaire about this activity.

Handout questionnaires.

Upon collecting the questionnaires I will remind participants that I will be following up on the possible outputs of the session after 3 and then 6 months

Appendix H.

Script/Protocol Adapted Appreciative Inquiry

1. Introduce self and the process and topic for today's session.

Script

Thank you for taking the time today to participate in a conversation with your colleagues, in support of the research study ***An Exploration of Generativity in Faculty Group Processes in a University Setting.***

I will act as facilitator for the session. We will take about an hour and ½ to engage in the working part of the conversation or until you feel you have covered the topic adequately. Once finished, I will ask you to please take a few more minutes to complete a questionnaire about your experience of the appreciative inquiry process

*The focus topic for this process is the student practicum experience, more specifically, "****what makes an exceptional practicum experience****?"*

Utilizing the specific process of ***Appreciative Inquiry****, your group will have a conversation about the topic.*

All work produced by the group in a written format will be collected as part of the research data along with the completed questionnaires. Pens, Flip chart paper, markers and post-it notes have been provided. Names of participants are NOT required on any of the session materials and the identities of participants will be protected by the use of pseudonyms if necessary.

2. Start the Inquiry process

Script

My role will be to facilitate the session. Guidelines for conducting the ***Inquiry*** *are as follows:*

- *Utilizing the structured story guide/appreciative interview provided, (guide follows these directions) work in groups of 4 to discuss the focus question. One person will be the interviewer, one will be the interviewee, and the other two members of the group are to observe and ask questions.*
- *Each person is focused on for 10 minutes.*
- *While you are listening to the story, assume that hidden in this story is tacit knowledge that will provide new insights into exceptional practicums. Your job is to ask questions and explore this person's concrete experience to uncover that knowledge. Don't be afraid to challenge their conclusions, to provide different interpretations of their experiences, but in a supportive way. See if you can dig down into specific concrete experiences to uncover new ideas and ways of thinking. Keep notes on any ideas you have to answer the overarching question*

- *Rotate roles so that everyone gets to be interviewer and interviewee.*
- *Share ideas for creating exceptional practicums while one person scribes, and as a group try to come up with more. Make as big of a list as you can.*
- *The groups of 4 will then form into a larger/combined group to discuss the stories and generate ideas about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.*
- *The purpose of the 4 member table groups is to generate as many new ideas as possible to answer the focus question. Everyone in the table group shares their story while the others are trying to capture and list in written format, as many ideas for how to answer the question as possible.*
- *The group then discusses what images and ideas the story provoked in them, related to the focus question, adding any new ideas until they feel they have exhausted all possibilities.*

I have a handout for you that gives you these guidelines to follow.

There are large sheets of paper and markers to capture the ideas that are generated about what makes an exceptional practicum. I will move between the groups to answer any questions you may have about the process.

Guidelines for Story Sharing

For the interviewer & story teller:

We have all experienced moments where we see or learn about something so filled with a sense of possibility that it served to create some kind of shift in us and others. At times it moves us with rare epiphanies and wonderful breakthroughs. Seeing the possibilities can have a significant impact.

Think about the most outstanding, the very best practicum experience you have been a part of – it might have involved something you highly value, something extraordinarily creative or courageous, or an experience that was innovative and surprising in your field. Perhaps this experience filled you with a sense of possibility, hope or new inspiration that it surprised and emotionally moved you.

Please share the story from your experience. Do not talk about practicum experiences in general – you must pick one concrete story. Even if you don't think any practicums have been truly extraordinary, there is one best one – talk about that.: when was the experience? Where? What happened? What shifts did you notice and can you describe them? What kinds of reverberations happened for you, your relationships, the student, the community? Why do you say this was the best one ever? What was it about you, the student, the situation, that made it the best?

* Adapted from the Opening AI Exploration at the World Appreciative Inquiry Conference, Ghent, Belgium 2012

What did you learn about providing an exceptional practicum experience from this?

What possibilities for new and enhanced practicum experiences can be gleaned from this story?

For the listeners:

Your purpose is to listen and generate as many ideas as you can about what makes an exceptional practicum experience.

As each story is told in the groups of 4, ideas are generated from the stories. When there are no more new ideas, the group moves on to the next story.

Continue to write down as many ideas as you can about the focus question/topic.

3. Facilitate the Inquiry process

As the participants get into groups of 4 I will provide each with the materials they need (handouts, flip chart paper, markers).

I will give them space to begin the inquiry process and observe /check in with groups as needed.

Once it seems the process is close to completed and all ideas have been generated I will invite the groups back together and ask them to put the information they generated up.

Script

Having had the opportunity to explore what makes an exceptional practicum through an inquiry process, these are the ideas that seem to contribute most to that (details will emerge from the exercise). In an Appreciative Inquiry this work you have done is a variation of the first step known as the discovery process. It highlights the strengths of the work you are doing and highlights best practices. As we see the ideas you have generated they represent relationships, alliances, competencies, resources, capabilities and assets. You have identified some of the positive core of your department/school as it relates to practicum. Subsequent steps would be to explore themes and categories and craft a dream of how you would like things to be, designing the social architecture to support that in the design step The final part of the 4D cycle is the destiny where specific goals and outcomes are acted upon.

Hearing these experiences and seeing the ideas generated by them, there are perhaps things that you would want to support, enhance or develop further.

Having generated a list of ideas, the work for the research project is complete. It will be up to you, the school or department to reconnect and converge on any actions that may emerge as a result of this process.

Today I will be taking the work and information you generated and I will put it into a word-processing format so you can utilize in the future if you decide to do so.

And now I am going to ask you to complete a questionnaire about this activity.

Handout questionnaires.

Upon collecting the questionnaires I will remind participants that I will be following up on the possible outputs of the session after 3 and then 6 months

Appendix I.

Script/Protocol Force Field Analysis

Session Overview

1. Introduce self and the process and topic for today's session.

Script

Thank you for taking the time today to participate in a conversation with your colleagues, in support of the research study ***An Exploration of Generativity in Faculty Group Processes in a University Setting.***

I will act as facilitator for the session. We will take about an hour and ½ to engage in the working part of the conversation or until you feel you have covered the topic adequately. Once finished, I will ask you to please take a few more minutes to complete a questionnaire about your experience of the group brainstorming process.

*The focus topic for this process is the student practicum experience, more specifically, "****what makes an exceptional practicum experience****?"*

Utilizing the specific process of ***Force Field Analysis****, your group will have a conversation about the topic.*

All work produced by the group in a written format will be collected as part of the research data along with the completed questionnaires. Pens, Flip chart paper, markers and post-it notes have been provided. Names of participants are NOT required on any of the session materials and the identities of participants will be protected by the use of pseudonyms if necessary.

Script

Let's begin the Force Field Analysis process now. I have written the focus topic on a flip chart sheet here and created a table. The idea is to list, discuss and evaluate the forces for and against a desire outcome. In this case the outcome is exceptional practicums. Once you think you have mapped out the forces that are currently supporting and getting in the way of exceptional practicum experiences, we'll turn to a discussion of how to reduce the forces against. I have a handout here with the guidelines for conducting a Force Field Analysis. My role will be to capture your ideas and scribe them and to promote the guidelines for Force Field Analysis. Any questions before we begin?

2. Start the Force Field Analysis process

Guidelines for conducting a Force Field Analysis are as follows:

- A Force Field Analysis is a method for listing, discussing, and evaluating the various forces for and against a proposed change.

- A Force Field Analysis helps you look at the big picture by analyzing all of the forces impacting the question and exploring the forces for and against (the pros and cons).
- Forces that help you achieve the change are called "driving forces." Forces that work against the change are called "restraining forces." Force field analysis is based on the theory that change is easier to promote by reducing forces against change and thereby supporting the driving forces that already exist. By knowing the forces, you can develop strategies to reduce the impact of the opposing forces
- Draw a force field diagram. Write the desired outcome at the top of a large sheet of paper. Divide the paper into two columns by drawing a line down the middle. Label the columns.

Question/proposed change:

What forces affect our ability to provide exceptional practicum experiences?

Driving forces (pros)	Restraining forces (cons)

- Generate a list of driving and restraining forces and record them on the chart in the appropriate column.
- Identify the relative strength of each of the forces giving it a numeric value between 1-5 (1=weak, 5=strong).
- Identify things you could do to weaken or lessen the restraining forces

3. Facilitation of the Force Field Analysis

During this part of the session I will act as scribe and ensure everyone has a chance to get as many ideas out as they can. I will adhere to the guidelines.

Once all ideas have been exhausted the list can be reviewed and then I will invite the participants to engage in this next part of the Force Field Analysis process.

Script

Having generated all these driving and restraining forces, the next step is to identify the relative strength of the various forces. This can help you understand which forces are maintaining the status quo and which can potentially affect the most change. As you look at each force identified I invite you to place a strength value on that now.

During this part of the session I will scribe the numeric values the group agrees that each force represents. Once the values have been assigned I will invite the participants to engage in the next part of the Force Field Analysis process.

Script

Having further explored the forces by examining the relative strength of each it is time to think about specific strategies or ways that you can weaken the restraining forces. I'll put up some more sheets to capture the strategies you are coming up with.

Facilitation continues as the group develops the ideas and strategies further

Once completed some final comments will summarize the work done

Script

In reviewing what has been done here, you have identified the forces that can drive or restrain an exceptional practicum experience, and you have generated ideas that could act upon the forces (details will emerge from the exercise).

Perhaps these are things you are already doing in your school/department or perhaps

Having generated a list of ideas, the work for the research project is complete. It will be up to you, the school or department to reconnect and converge on any actions that may emerge as a result of this process.

Today I will be taking the work and information you generated and I will put it into a word-processing format so you can utilize in the future if you decide to do so.

And now I am going to ask you to complete a questionnaire about this activity.

Handout questionnaires.

Upon collecting the questionnaires I will remind participants that I will be following up on the possible outputs of the session after 3 and then 6 months

Appendix J.

Post-Ideation Survey Responses for Each Survey Statement for All Group Ideation Process

Question 1 **New information**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2			2	5	3		10	4.1
	Group 3	1			4	1		6	3.7
Appreciative Inquiry Total		1		2	9	4		16	3.9
Brainstorming									
	Group 1	1	1		5			7	3.3
	Group 5		1		1			2	3.0
Brainstorming Total		1	2		6			9	3.2
Force Field Analysis Group 4						2		2	5.0

Question2 **Learned from colleague**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2			1	6	3		10	4.2
	Group 3	1			2	3		6	4.0
Appreciative Inquiry Total		1		1	8	6		16	4.1
Brainstorming									
	Group 1			1	4	2		7	4.1
	Group 5				1	1		2	4.5
Brainstorming Total				1	5	3		9	4.2
Force Field Analysis Group 4						2		2	5.0

Question 3 **Surprised**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2		5	2	2	1		10	2.9
	Group 3		3		3			6	3.0
Appreciative Inquiry Total			8	2	5	1		16	2.9
Brainstorming									
	Group 1		4	2		1		7	2.7
	Group 5		1		1			2	3.0
Brainstorming Total			5	2	1	1		9	2.8
Force Field Analysis Group 4 4					2			2	4.0

Question 4 **Developed action plan**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2	1	3	5	1			10	2.6
	Group 3		2	2	1		1	6	2.8
Appreciative Inquiry Total		1	5	7	2		1	16	2.7
Brainstorming									
	Group 1		2	3	1	1		7	3.1
	Group 5				2			2	4.0
Brainstorming Total			2	3	3	1		9	3.3
Force Field Analysis Group 4					1		1	2	4.0

Question 5 **Process as creative**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2			3	3	4		10	4.1
	Group 3			1	2	3		6	4.3
Appreciative Inquiry Total				4	5	7		16	4.2
Brainstorming									
	Group 1		1		5	1		7	3.9
	Group 5					2		2	5.0
Brainstorming Total			1		5	3		9	4.1
Force Field Analysis Group 4					1	1		2	4.5

Question 6 **Engaged**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2		1	1	4	4		10	4.1
	Group 3				2	4		6	4.7
Appreciative Inquiry Total			1	1	6	8		16	4.3
Brainstorming									
	Group 1				4	3		7	4.4
	Group 5					2		2	5.0
Brainstorming Total					4	5		9	4.6
Force Field Analysis Group 4						2		2	5.0

Question 7 **Motivated to act**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2		2	5		3		10	3.4
	Group 3			3	2	1		6	3.7
Appreciative Inquiry Total			2	8	2	4		16	3.5
Brainstorming									
	Group 1		1	1	5			7	3.6
	Group 5				1	1		2	4.5
Brainstorming Total			1	1	6	1		9	3.8
Force Field Analysis Group 4					1	1		2	4.5

Question 8 **Emotionally engaged**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2			3	5	2		10	3.9
	Group 3				1	5		6	4.8
Appreciative Inquiry Total				3	6	7		16	4.3
Brainstorming									
	Group 1		1		3	3		7	4.1
	Group 5					2		2	5.0
Brainstorming Total			1		3	5		9	4.3
Force Field Analysis Group 4						2		2	5.0

Question 9 **Suspend self interest**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2		1	3	4	2		10	3.7
	Group 3		2	2	2			6	3.0
Appreciative Inquiry Total			3	5	6	2		16	3.4
Brainstorming									
	Group 1		1		5	1		7	3.9
	Group 5					1	1	2	5.0
Brainstorming Total			1		5	2	1	9	4.0
Force Field Analysis Group 4			1		1			2	3.0

Question 10 **Anticipate change**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2		2	4	4			10	3.2
	Group 3			3	2		1	6	3.4
Appreciative Inquiry Total			2	7	6		1	16	3.3
Brainstorming									
	Group 1			2	3		2	7	3.6
	Group 5				2			2	4.0
Brainstorming Total				2	5		2	9	3.7
Force Field Analysis Group 4				1	1			2	3.5

Question 11 **Connectedness to colleagues**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2				8	2		10	4.2
	Group 3				2	4		6	4.7
Appreciative Inquiry Total					10	6		16	4.4
Brainstorming									
	Group 1			1	3	3		7	4.3
	Group 5					2		2	5.0
Brainstorming Total				1	3	5		9	4.4
Force Field Analysis Group 4						2		2	5.0

Question 12 **Energized**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2				9	1		10	4.1
	Group 3			1	1	4		6	4.5
Appreciative Inquiry Total				1	10	5		16	4.3
Brainstorming									
	Group 1			1	4	2		7	4.1
	Group 5					2		2	5.0
Brainstorming Total				1	4	4		9	4.3
Force Field Analysis Group 4					1	1		2	4.5

Question 13 **New ideas**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2			2	7	1		10	3.9
	Group 3			1	3	2		6	4.2
Appreciative Inquiry Total				3	10	3		16	4.0
Brainstorming									
	Group 1		2		4	1		7	3.6
	Group 5		1		1			2	3.0
Brainstorming Total			3		5	1		9	3.4
Force Field Analysis Group 4						2		2	5.0

Question 14 **Thoughts expanded**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2		2	2	5	1		10	3.5
	Group 3				4	2		6	4.3
Appreciative Inquiry Total			2	2	9	3		16	3.8
Brainstorming									
	Group 1		1	2	3	1		7	3.6
	Group 5				1	1		2	4.5
Brainstorming Total			1	2	4	2		9	3.8
Force Field Analysis Group 4						2		2	5.0

Question 15 **Hopefulness**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2		3	2	5			10	3.2
	Group 3				3	3		6	4.5
Appreciative Inquiry Total			3	2	8	3		16	3.7
Brainstorming									
	Group 1			3	3	1		7	3.7
	Group 5				1	1		2	4.5
Brainstorming Total				3	4	2		9	3.9
Force Field Analysis Group 4					2			2	4.0

Question 16 **Old things in new ways**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2		1	3	6			10	3.5
	Group 3			1	3	2		6	4.2
Appreciative Inquiry Total			1	4	9	2		16	3.8
Brainstorming									
	Group 1		2	3	1	1		7	3.1
	Group 5					2		2	5.0
Brainstorming Total			2	3	1	3		9	3.6
Force Field Analysis Group 4					1	1		2	4.5

Question 17 **Compelled to act**

Generative Method	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total	Average
Appreciative Inquiry									
	Group 2		4		6			10	3.2
	Group 3			3	3			6	3.5
Appreciative Inquiry Total			4	3	9			16	3.3
Brainstorming									
	Group 1		1	1	5			7	3.6
	Group 5				1	1		2	4.5
Brainstorming Total			1	1	6	1		9	3.8
Force Field Analysis Group 4						2		2	5.0

Appendix K.

Group States Measure Characteristics

Group 1

A mature group/familiar √	Cooperative	Open to share ideas
A strong culture	Knowledgeable	Safe to share ideas
Equal gender make up	Skilled	People listen to ideas
Look to support each other from all	Highly experienced	More participation
Diverse	Collegial √√	Accepting
Compassionate	Collaborative	Polite
Defensive	Respectful	Talkative
Open	Open	Hard working
Dominated (by 1 individual)	Creative √	

Group 2

Respect √√	Focussed	Interested in topic
Cooperation	Engaged √√	Collegial
Cohesiveness	Cooperative	Open
Participative √ √	Contributing	Creative
Comprehensive	Knowledgeable √	Questioning
Inclusive √	Fun	
Open listening √	Easy going	

Group 3

Respectful	Reflective √	Accept differences
Caring	Practical	OK to be unique in group
Attentive √√	Interested	Supportive
Invested	Astute	Trusting
Connected	Compassionate	Generous listeners
Open √	Collaborative √	Generous √
Individuality benefits the whole	Diversity √	Experienced
Flexible	Negotiated	

Group 4

Respectful	Collaborative
Enthusiastic about topic	Co-constructing
Engaged in process	Comprehensive
Thoughtful facilitator	Synergetic
Coalescing	Open to new/different/other ideas

Group 5

Respectful	Engaged	Analytical
Committed	Creative √	Collegial
Safe space for ideas	Productive	Co-operative

√ indicates a descriptive word was repeated in the same group

Appendix L.

Detailed Ratings from Each Independent Reviewer Across Group Ideation Processes and Dimensions of Generativity

Table L1. The Novel Measure

Measure: Novel	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Average
Appreciative Inquiry								
	Group 2	12	10	11	11	4	1	2.7
	Group 3	5	10	7	15	1	1	2.9
Appreciative Inquiry Total		17	20	18	26	5	2	2.8
Brainstorming								
	Group 1	7	20	24	15	2		2.8
	Group 5	8	6	6	7	2	1	2.6
Brainstorming Total		15	26	30	22	4	1	2.7
Force Field Analysis Total	Group 4	7	13	5	9	1	1	2.5

Table L2. The Compelling Measure

Measure: Compelling	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Average
Appreciative Inquiry								
	Group 2	2	8	12	12	15		3.6
	Group 3			6	15	17	1	4.3
Appreciative Inquiry Total		2	8	18	27	32	1	3.9
Brainstorming								
	Group 1		4	25	23	16		3.8
	Group 5	3		6	10	10	1	3.8
Brainstorming Total		3	4	31	33	26	1	3.8
Force Field Analysis Total	Group 4		1	7	8	20		4.3

Table L3. The Practical Measure

Measure: Practical	Department	1	2	3	4	5	9	Average
Appreciative Inquiry								
	Group 2	1	9	7	16	14	1	3.7
	Group 3	2	5	8	12	11	1	3.7
Appreciative Inquiry Total		3	14	15	28	25	2	3.7
Brainstorming								
	Group 1		7	3	42	14		4.0
	Group 5	3	3	2	9	12	1	3.8
Brainstorming Total		3	10	5	51	26	1	3.9
Force Field Analysis Total	Group 4		11	3	13	8	1	3.5

Table N4. Reviewers 1 to 3 summary

Reviewer	Generative M.	1	2	3	4	5	9	Average
1								
	Appreciative Inquiry	10	6	4	15	5		3.0
	Brainstorming	10	15		6	3		2.3
	Force Field Analysis	6	8	2	6	1	1	2.5
1 Total		26	29	6	27	9	1	2.6
2								
	Appreciative Inquiry			7	9			3.6
	Brainstorming			27	15	1		3.4
	Force Field Analysis			2	2			3.5
2 Total				36	26	1		3.4
3								
	Appreciative Inquiry	7	14	7	2		2	2.1
	Brainstorming	5	11	3	1		1	2.0
	Force Field Analysis	1	5	1	1			2.3
3 Total		13	30	11	4		3	2.1

Table L5. Groups by reviewer

Reviewer	Generative M.	1	2	3	4	5	9	Total
1								
	Group 4	6	8	2	6	1	1	2.5
	Group 2	6	3	3	5	4		2.9
	Group 1	6	12		5	1		2.3
	Group 5	4	3		1	2		2.4
	Group 3	4	3	1	10	1		3.1
1 Total		26	29	6	27	9	1	2.6
2								
	Group 4			2	2			3.5
	Group 2			6	5			3.5
	Group 1			22	10	1		3.4
	Group 5			5	5			3.5
	Group 3			1	4			3.8
2 Total				36	26	1		3.4
3								
	Group 4	1	5	1	1			2.3
	Group 2	6	7	2	1		1	1.9
	Group 1	1	8	2				2.1
	Group 5	4	3	1	1		1	1.9
	Group 3	1	7	5	1		1	2.4
3 Total		13	30	11	4		3	2.1

Appendix M.

Post Ideation Survey Statements Linked to Their Potential Applications in the Planning and Implementation of Sessions Intended to Foster Ideation and Generativity

Post Ideation Survey Item	Implications for learning environment and facilitation/Session Design Goals
*(1) I heard **new information** when I participated in the group process about the topic of the session.*	*In order for people to hear new information the session should establish and sustain a climate that encourages and enables active listening. This means paying attention to how conversations are structured, and teaching active listening skills as needed. New information or data about the focal issue can also provoke or stimulate engagement and help participants see the relevance of the meeting.* *If there is important data/information about the focal issue, then it should be distributed prior to the meeting. The facilitator should be prepared to "frame" the situation, including the new data, in in a concise, clear presentation format that frames the information in a way participants have not likely considered before.*
*(2) I **learned** from a colleague when I participated in the group process about the topic of the session.*	*Breaking into dyads or small groups may give more chance for people to be heard and to explain their ideas to a colleague or small group and may promote inquiry-based dialogue.* *Paying attention to the composition of pairs or small groups can increase the likelihood of participants learning from colleagues. An example of this approach can be found in the work of Ludema, Whitney, Mohr and Griffin, (2003, pp. 82–83 regarding putting together "improbable pairs" that is, bringing people together who may have differing perspectives in a way that voices get heard and colleagues learn from and about each other.*

*(3) I was **surprised** by what I heard when I participated in the group process about the topic of the session.*	*When people are exposed to new information, they are more likely to be surprised and see thoughts or ideas in ways they have not applied before.* *A useful approach may be to structure the group ideation process utilizing questions that haven't been discussed or thought about before (Bushe, 2013). It may be helpful to consider utilizing provocative propositions.* *Partnering participants in improbable pairs to increase the likelihood of hearing surprising stories and information may also be considered.* *Encouraging storytelling and reflection as a method of sharing among group participants can help them to structure questions that are personally meaningful and have emotional attachment.*
*(4) As a result of participation in this group process I have **developed an action plan** related to the topic.*	*To close the session have participants complete a brief reflection exercise where they consider the ideas generated and record one thing they personally intend to do immediately, in one week, in one month. Record and share commitments to action from as many participants as possible.* *Where it makes sense to the organization, ensure participants know they have the authority to move their ideas into actions.*
*(5) I experienced the group process as **creative**.*	*Frame the session around questions and images that can spark feelings and motivations.* *In order to promote a climate that supports creative or lateral thinking set up guidelines as to openness to ideas, positivity, and exploration and acceptance of diverse perspectives.* *Utilize experiential activities that allow participants a forum to express ideas differently: art, media, performance.* *Engage in an opportunity mapping exercise participants create the future. Eg: you wake up after a long sleep (5 years) and you look around and everything is as you hoped. Describe what you see?*

	Enlist the use of graphic facilitation in order the support different modes of expression and the *use of a range of metaphors and images.*
(6) *I was **fully engaged** in the group process.*	*In order for people to engage they need to intend to be part of the process and to have the opportunity to engage personally. Open the session with a brief mindfulness-based activity that attunes participants to the present moment.* *Invite discussion of the personal relevance of the discussion topic for individuals, the group and the organization. Consider a potent generative image to begin the dialogue.* *Focus on what people think. Utilize dyads and small group activities that have every individual tell their story or share their experience.* *Ensure an open, safe environment where differing perspectives can emerge.* *Consider the organizational status of the group and build in specific group development activities as needed.*
*(7) I feel **motivated to act as a result** of the group process about the focal topic or issue.*	*In order to feel motivated to act participants need to believe their actions are accepted and can be supported. Motivation can be linked to having a sense of locus of control, and that one can actually influence results. Acknowledge new ideas as they emerge and are accepted. Encourage the development of many potential opportunities to transform rather than aiming to find just one solution.* *Feeling heard, understood and valued can contribute to a sense of motivation. Providing opportunities for participants to share their experiences promotes both engagement and motivation.* *Observe when participants feel motivated and support innovation where possible.* *Ensure authority to act upon ideas and innovations is defined and communicated to participants.*

*(8) I felt **emotionally engaged** during participation in the group process about the focal question.*	*For people to emotionally engage they need to feel relationally safe, and to have opportunities to share and make meaning of the group process.* *Consider the group state and stage of development. Build in opportunities to have participants spend time getting to know each other in dyads and smaller groups. Review active listening skills and ensure an understanding of group dynamics.* *Establish climate goals for group behavior and discuss them with the participants to get their inputs and any concerns.* *Observe and guide relational and task related behaviours of the group.*
(9) *I was able to **suspend self -interest** during participation in the group process about the focal question.*	*In order to suspend self-interest one needs to be able to focus on another or a larger picture.* *The more supportive, accepting and caring the social environment, the freer a person is to experiment with new behaviours, attitudes, and action (Johnson & Johnson, 2013, p. 52).* *Establish a common, shared understanding of the topic for discussion.* *Encourage active listening and reflection beginning in dyads. Structure a series of questions to invite one person at a time to share their story. The role of the listener is to capture the essence of the other's story and reflect on what they heard and learned, as well as making notes about values and beliefs they hear. Ensure every participant has a chance to be the one sharing and one being listened to. This might be done in small groups or pairs and people could be asked to introduce another member to the group.*
*(10) As a result of participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience **I think there will be some change** in what we do.*	*Close the meeting by having the participants write a short, 1 paragraph **personal** statement concerning their views about how to obtain or follow up action of the focal issue. Share those short **personal** Action Statements before adjournment or use a follow up online forum.* *Ensure that decisions are being recorded and specific action plans shared with timelines and person(s) accountable noted. Distribute to the*

	participants following up on the meeting within a reasonable time.
*(11) During participation in the group process about the focal topic, I felt **a sense of connectedness** to my colleagues.*	*Connectedness can be about joining together to find a way forward, it can also be about learning and understanding another's point of view.* *Provide opportunities for participants to work together on tasks and experiential activities to find mutual goals. Cooperative experiences promote more positive, committed, and caring relationships (Johnson & Johnson, 2013, p. 403).*
*(12) During participation in the group process about what makes an exceptional practicum experience I felt **energized.***	*To be energized is to feel alive and experience a sense of enthusiasm. This can be physical in a kinetic sense, emotional as a drive state, and cognitive as believing something is going somewhere. Provide opportunities to be physically active and engaged in experiential learning together.* *Check with the participants concerning how they view the personal relevance of the topic. Help participants understand the boundaries and parameters of influence at the start. Empower participants with authority to act where possible. Recognize contributions and celebrate individual and group accomplishments frequently.* *Provide opportunities to be physically active and engaged in experiential learning together.*
*(13) I heard **new ideas** when I participated in the group process about the focal topic.*	*Focus on new knowing, rather than new knowledge (Whitney, Cooperrider, Trosten-Bloom and Kaplin, 2005). Utilize structured inquiry to explore what participants know, with each other.* *Breaking into pairs or small groups may give more chance for people to be heard and to explain their ideas to a colleague or small group.* *Structure dialogue around specific questions that focus on areas/topics not considered before.* *Clearly signal shifts from focus on data/information → idea generation.*

	Ask participants to reflect on what they heard and learned.
*(14) My **thoughts were expanded** when I participated in the group process about the focal topic.*	*If a graphic facilitator is available then they might be able to create a cartoon illustrating some of the "expansions".* *Engage the group in an opportunity mapping exercise that build upon the initial group ideation process.* *Participants might be given a handout frame with two columns—where I started----where I am now (in my thinking).*
*(15) As a result of participation in the group process about the focus of the session I feel a sense of **hopefulness**.*	*Encouragement and optimism are synonyms of hope. Hope can be experienced by an individual and as an organizational collective.* *Provide an opportunity for individuals to describe their hopes and aspirations as you begin the discussion. Start in dyads and then working out into small groups, participants can begin to form a collective concept of hope.* *Once a guiding image has been created by the group have them build out the social architecture (physical, relational) that would support the image. This can be in the form of a concept map or graphic illustration.*
*(16) I **saw old things in new ways** as a result of participation in the group process about the focal topic.*	*In order to see old things in new ways the group members should share their understandings of the current state of things. A starting point for understanding is the opportunity for each group member to share their experiences and perspectives.* *An instrument like the Group States measure could be useful here.* *Encourage the use of "why" questions. Engage a stance of inquiry, asking questions and critically evaluating practices in light of the diverse experiences among participants.* *Invite curiosity through structured interviews in dyads that explore and probe members' previous experiences with the topic of discussion.* *Focus on questions not answers. Question what seems obvious and unquestionable. Offer some examples of this sort of question. Think divergently, not trying to come up with*

	one right solution. Seek context driven creative possibilities as an alternative to best practice. You might also invite people to explore their concepts of "best practice".
(17) Participation in the group process about ***compels me to act*** *upon the points raised.*	*At the close of the group process have participants declare what service they personally will contribute. Have participants complete a brief reflection exercise where they consider the ideas generated and record one thing they intend to do immediately, in one week, in one month.* *Before closing the session have participants anticipate what resources and supports are likely to be needed and are available, and where possible, communicate that people can move their new and innovative ideas forward as it makes sense to the group and the organization.* *Ensure participants know they have authority to move ideas into actions. Record commitments to action from as many participants as possible. You could even formalize this by having people sign "contracts" which could be sealed with Wax or other sort of marker.*