

## Bethel University Student Learning Committee

## Qualitative Self-Study: Preliminary Results

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*Participants*

Participants were 21 faculty and staff from Bethel University who responded to an email invitation to participate and were interviewed in groups of 3. Seven interviews were completed. Each participant was provided questions in advance over email and asked to prepare for the interview by identifying a student or students for the purposes of sharing a narrative account of student transformation. In total, 25 students were identified during interviews and their transformation described. Demographic information about these students that interview participants were able to identify is outlined in Table 1 below.

*Table 1*

Gender	Female	19	76%
	Male	6	24%
	Unidentified	0	0%
Age	18-22	13	52%
	23-39	3	12%
	40 and over	4	16%
	Unidentified	5	20%
Race	Caucasian	15	60%
	African American	5	20%
	Hmong	1	4%
	Unidentified	4	16%
Academic Program	Undergraduate (CAS)	13	52%
	CAPS	5	20%
	Graduate School/Seminary	2	8%
	Doctoral	1	4%
	Frogtown	1	4%
	Unidentified	3	12%
Socioeconomic Status (SES)	Low SES	3	12%
	Average SES	4	16%
	High SES	1	4%
	Unidentified	17	68%

Academic Performance	High (A's & B's)	9	36%
	Average (B's & C's)	2	8%
	Low (C & Below)	3	12%
	Unidentified	11	44%

### *Instruments*

The interview was semi-structured and was made up of open-ended questions. It was developed and conducted by Chris Frank, MA, a former full time staff member and graduate of Bethel University and also conducted by Jane McCampbell, MA, a graduate of Bethel Seminary. For consistency across interviews, the interviewers met and set parameters around how they would work to follow the “roadmap” or general structure for the interviews but would also appropriately allow room for flexibility and modification of the interview based on the participants’ leading.

The group interview was divided into two parts. Questions for the first half of the interview were open-ended in nature and interviewers focused primarily on eliciting a full and descriptive account of student transformation at Bethel University from the perspective of participants. These questions were developed for the purpose of exploring and understanding the phenomenon of student transformation, not necessarily to prove any hypothesis, and were used accordingly by interviewers. Questions for the second half of the interview focused primarily on the relationship, if any, between the aforementioned stories of transformation and the Core Values of Bethel University. Individual meetings and group discussions with members of the Bethel University Student Learning Committee informed all of the interview questions. For specific questions, see appendix A.

### *Data Collection*

At the outset of the interview, interviewers discussed the format of the interview, explained the purpose of the study, answered any questions the participant had, and talked about issues related to confidentiality and treatment of data. Interviews were audio-taped and later transcribed by Anna Kaihoi.

### *Treatment of Data*

A phenomenological approach was taken for the data analysis, meaning that great care and effort was taken to allow the data to speak for itself and to obtain a rich and accurate understanding of how participants made sense of their experiences of student transformation. Coding and development of themes was conducted by Jill Frank, M.A., with additional guidance and feedback offered by Chris Frank. Creswell's (1998) understanding of phenomenological qualitative research heavily influenced the procedure created for analysis of the data, and certain methods or techniques were borrowed from interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) (Chapman & Smith, 2002). As transcripts were read, re-read, and coded, researchers approached the data with a highly empathic and curious or "discovery-oriented" approach. Being aware of the intersubjectivity between researchers and participants in the process of data collection and analysis, Jill Frank and Chris Frank also discussed with one another their own location in the data, the location of both interviewers in influencing the data collection, and expectations or assumptions they might have that would influence the interpretation of data or development of themes.

After interviews were transcribed, Jill Frank read each interview at least twice from beginning to end to get an initial sense of the overall flow and context of meanings

that were conveyed throughout each interview. During these first readings she wrote notes and preliminary thoughts, ideas, themes, or personal reflections in the margins of each transcript. After these initial readings, she carefully went through every transcript and labeled every “meaning unit” by marking each point where there was a shift of meaning. Each meaning unit was labeled in the transcript and represented on a separate document by a first person statement that directly paraphrased or reflected the textual description. To ensure the accuracy of each meaning unit, each first person statement that was created was then reviewed against the original account, in context, from which the meaning unit was extracted. The final step in this first phase of analysis was to eliminate redundant statements, which resulted in a complete list of non-redundant statements for each interview that accounted for every meaning unit in the interview.

The next phase of analysis involved the use of imaginative variation to uncover and develop themes within interviews that could accurately capture the essential meanings expressed in the list of non-redundant statements created in phase one of the analysis. The goal in this stage was to produce themes that might express the psychological or constructed meanings of participants’ lived experience of student transformation. In a similar fashion to phase one of the data analysis, as themes and theme clusters were developed they were checked for accuracy against the original transcripts by making sure the original descriptions provided by participants were not diluted or misrepresented. These themes were then organized and consolidated into theme clusters that seemed to capture the essence of the overall experience of participants. While creating theme clusters it was important to search for anything in the original data that had been lost in some way in the consolidation of themes to theme

clusters. Researchers also made sure that themes did not assert ideas or descriptions that were not included in the original data. To also ensure reliability the researchers discussed and reflected on initial expectations or assumptions carried into the project.

Once the analysis of each transcription had been completed in the manner described above, comprehensive themes were inductively created by once again using imaginative variation to connect themes across interviews in an effort to capture the essential features of the descriptive accounts. It was assumed that repetition of themes across interviews indicated reliability, while coherence, credibility, and dependability of theme descriptions across interviews indicated validity. Comprehensive themes were checked against the original transcripts and the subjective experience or assumptions of researchers was bracketed using the same methods described above.

Finally, all themes were organized into a structure that seems to most accurately and concisely convey the meanings constructed and rich narratives provided by Bethel staff and faculty from their experiences of student transformation. In the results section of this report, themes are first described and then illustrated with excerpts from transcriptions of group interviews.

No software was used for the qualitative analysis. Coding of the meaning units, themes, theme clusters, final comprehensive themes, and the organization of the structure were carried out with the use of traditional paper and pencil methods and limited use of Microsoft Word. Pseudonyms are utilized and identifying information omitted throughout the analysis and interpretation and to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. Statements or questions made by the interviewer are marked with (\*). Quotations cut off at the beginning or end of statements extracted from transcripts for the

purpose of relevance are marked by (...). Words added by the author in order to make statements from the transcripts more understandable are noted with [ ].

### *Results*

During the first stage of the analysis, 490 meaning units were coded, ranging from 57 – 82 non-redundant meaning units ( $M = 70$ ,  $SD = 9.47$ ) in each case. Theme clusters created from these meaning units ranged from 21 – 34 ( $M = 26$ ,  $SD = 4.23$ ) in individual cases. The extent of conformity across all interviews of the final comprehensive themes that were identified is included in parenthesis behind each comprehensive theme title. Researchers identified 8 themes that were universal or present in all interviews, 6 themes that were present in 6 of 7 interviews, 5 themes that were present in 5 of 7 interviews, 3 themes that were present in 4 of 7 interviews, 2 themes that were present in 3 of 7 interviews, and 1 theme that was present in 2 of 7 interviews. In the presentation of themes below, the comprehensive themes are organized into a structure consisting of four categories that seemed to best encapsulate the fundamental nature or essence of all interviews, and then within each category ordered from most to least conforming. The four categories are as follows:

1. Essential components of the transformation process
  - a. Involving support
  - b. Involving challenge
2. Qualities of students who undergo transformation
3. How Bethel faculty and staff uniquely guide and direct student transformation
4. General reflections on the transformation process

*Themes*

Category 1(a): Essential components of the transformation process (involving support).

*1. Faculty and staff relationships are a vital part of student transformation (7 of 7 interviews).*

All participants communicated the important role that relationships play in the transformation of students. One participant who seemed to be a strong advocate of building relationships with his students shared how important he feels it is to spend time with students outside of class whenever possible. He stated,

It's just somehow in your class you've got to have a personal connection there that goes beyond just talking up front. Once you do that, then the ones that want to flock to you do.

Several other ideas emerged under this theme that exemplified ways in which Bethel staff and faculty were impacting students in this manner. One such idea was the importance of relationships in *caring* for students. One participant shared about a student who was dealing with a significant eating disorder. She shared about the transformation she witnessed in this student.

At the beginning she was just really challenging God and really thinking, you know, I'm learning this in my Bible class, but I'm not sure I agree with that. By the end of the semester, and I think it was a combination of her Bible classes and professors who cared about her, she had a huge transformation in where she was with God and how she felt she was God's child.

This participant also shared about a commonly reported observation of faculty providing additional time outside of class, as well as intentionally mentoring and listening to students. She stated,

I do a lot of one-on-one time with students and I think she needed it at that moment. She needed people to feel like they were interested in her asking questions. That is probably what I would say. I think that's what we have to

offer and what we have that's different and we can't do with every student but we can do that with some.

The idea that Bethel has something unique to offer that other institutions do not was introduced by five of the participants, who all resonated with this idea that students at other universities would not receive the kind of attention and intentional mentoring that many Bethel students are blessed to receive. One participant stated how this is something he believes Bethel does well.

Another thing Bethel does well...is that Bethel has a culture of encouraging instructor-student relationships where part of the subculture, at least for us instructors, is that we are expected to, you know, welcome students into our office even if it's not our office hours or something, talk with them or listen to them. So that's, not all schools have that, so personal relationships, I think are huge...I think the instructor-student relationship, [and] sometimes staff-student relationships are very forming.

Another idea that emerged within this theme was the repeated mention of faculty and staff providing opportunities for students they were in relationship with that helped to promote transformation. Participants reported going above and beyond their expected duties to find internships for these students, as well as submit student writing to conferences, and provide students with opportunities to write grants together. One participant discussed the role one of the professors in his department played in facilitating one young man's growth.

One of my colleagues...really began to mentor this young man because of his very, very strong math abilities...[He] had him do research with him for his I believe his junior year and then in the summer we planned on nominating him for the Nobel Chemical Award...[This faculty member] hooked him up with a friend of his down at Virginia Tech and this young man spent the summer down there doing research-came back, just did very, very fine work. He's now at Virginia Tech at graduate school on a full scholarship doing whatever he does.

Another participant discussed how his department had taken a student under their wing by providing her with opportunities, including helping her raise a large portion of financial support to go on a transformative missions trip.

Yet another idea that emerged was that in the context of staff and faculty relationships with students they have opportunities to offer encouragement and affirmation to students as well as promote confidence by believing in their students. One of the participants shared about a student he developed a positive relationship with that has extended far beyond her years at Bethel.

We talked and we always had conversations about how I thought that she was competent and she had the world ahead of her.

Another participant shared how impressed she is with the support of professors she has witnessed during her time at Bethel.

You know this is my first job in higher education, but I look at the support of professors as just incredible...to hear about the care that goes into advising and especially...as we're preparing them to become teachers and walking them through in those moments when they're scared to be in charge of 25 little ones and just the encouragement from these professors is astounding to me.

A final idea related to the importance of student relationships with staff and faculty was the notion that relationships facilitate student trust, which provides students with a safe place where they can risk being vulnerable. One participant shared about a young woman who lost a position of leadership due to some unacceptable behavior who was mandated to meet with the participant as part of the follow-up for the situation. The student, who was very angry and guarded at first, continued to meet with the participant long after the obligatory meetings were finished. The participant discussed the key ingredients to their relationship was the trust she had gained in the student as well as the participant's belief that the student felt cared for by her.

We were able to develop a relationship where there was a lot of trust. I would challenge her, I said hard things to her that I would think often, there is a chance that she won't come back and she didn't have an obligation to anymore and she kept coming back. There was a level of trust that had been established...and I think she felt cared for in it because there was nothing in it for me at that point.

*2. Role of faculty and staff to create a transformational space (7 of 7 interviews).*

A theme that emerged throughout the interviews was that faculty and staff should do their best to provide a healthy environment for student growth while also understanding that it is ultimately up to the student whether she or he decides to utilize it in their lives. In order for transformation to occur, the student needs to have an attitude of receptivity. A few participants commented on this theme.

The attitude of change and transformation-we can dump in all we want to, but I think what was indicative in each one of these stories is each one of these individuals was willing to say, wow, you know, I receive that-I'll move with that-leave that and go with that.

I think that what Bethel can do is just for some students, is provide a place, a healthy greenhouse or environment where people can blossom and grow and bloom. [Participant's name], you said earlier that, you know, we instructors can help some students but not everyone.

I see both happening. I see trying to get students to really seek what is true in situations where we learn or create what is going to work for them, and then I see students who want to play the game of going through the motions and not learning or just doing what they have to because it is the requirement, but not really engaging.

I guess I might say that in many cases the transformations that we see aren't really intentional from what we are doing, but they are kind of coincidental from the environment that Bethel provides. For example, get back to my example, why did that student come back to Bethel to finish his degree? Well at least even though he had kind of a bad experience his first year or year and a half at Bethel, at least I think he still kind of thought we were Christ followers and Salt and Light and he wanted to come back and try to finish up.

Another part of this theme was the idea of a transformational space being a *safe place* for students to question, to process, and even to fail. The following examples illustrate the importance participants placed in providing students with a safe place.

I hope we also provide a safe place where they can move away-I'm thinking of your student-where she was allowed to move away for awhile...I mean, I really hope we continue to be a place where that could happen.

I think that's just such an important part of how we're able to achieve any kind of level of transformation-personal, spiritual, educational, identity, is for students to be able to find a- not every place will be safe and not the whole institution will be safe and whatever-but for people to find a place where they can do that.

I can remember one student...she was so vulnerable in her papers-not to me personally-never addressed anything personally, so everything we have ever done is either through papers when she was in my classroom or through email...She had been a young woman, who, before she came here, I think had been passed around by her father to all of his friends, you know, and all the sudden she got to Bethel...and she's being told, you're Christ's daughter-you're valued, you have personal worth...It's so interesting because I can see her in the hallway and we won't have a conversation...we will never address it, you know, verbally...I think that it has provided her a safety net and not to say that doesn't happen somewhere else, but I think that it's intentional here and it takes a while, but student, learners, start recognizing that and they know who they can trust too. It's not every employee here, I mean, they're not going to be vulnerable or receive from every employee, but they're trusting us.

A final ingredient in this theme was that staff and faculty facilitate transformation when they themselves are transparent and share themselves with students. This seemed to provide students with a safe place to share their own stories with staff and faculty.

I realized the more transparent I am in class the more that they feel that they know me too...It's just somehow in your class you've got to have a personal connection there that goes beyond just talking up front. Once you do that, then the ones that want to flock to you do.

I think that transparency is a huge thing for us as faculty. I think it's a powerful tool because, like I said, the more they feel like they know us, the more they'll come and tell their stories to us. You want them to come and tell their story.

*3. Supportive familial and peer relationships facilitate student growth (6 of 7 interviews).*

In addition to being supported by staff and faculty members, supportive relationships with others seemed to be another important key to facilitating student growth. Supportive family members, as well as friendships and relationships with peers both inside and outside of the classroom, were described as helping students grow.

One participant shared about the support of a young woman's family as she decided to become a missionary following her time at Bethel.

She...came from a pretty solid family background; you can see these on her blog. Here's my brother-he's supporting me; here's my parents-they're very supportive. She didn't have that kind of, I came from a drug family or something weird. She just slowly plodded along trusting god to do this work in her life and it came to fruition.

Another participant shared a story about a young woman who had had a transformative overseas experience, and was having difficulty with reentry into Bethel's culture, and generally feeling misunderstood. When asked what Bethel was doing or others to help her along the way, the participant remarked,

Outside our department...probably some friends that understood where she was at that helped her get over the hump and blossom on her own.

Another participant shared about the blossoming of a theatre student, and the role friends played in that.

I think too her friends and people in the department...were okay with saying, you know, you need to, you know-cause sometimes a class would be like, I don't like that you do this. A perfect example is that she wanted to do for her practicum all these kind of dark things, and the department was like, no, she does dark things just fine-she needs to find some other stuff to do. And she came back with that and rather than being all defensive about it was like, okay, I can see that, and she came back and found some other things which actually stretch her more as a performer.

One participant described the transformation she witnessed in a student who had some very destructive patterns of sexual behavior, and the positive difference a healthy relationship made in her life.

For a long time, she didn't feel like it was an issue. She had some very destructive patterns. So, she's found herself in this crazy healthy relationship and had a lot of really personal, spiritual, and relational transformation. She started dating someone, which made me terrified, and he was astonishing... They have this really healthy relationship and she was like, but I don't understand-we don't ever do anything physically and he still calls and this is all new and whatever. She's married now and happy.

Two other participants shared about the influence significant others had on students to encourage them on their educational journey. One of these students, who was involved in the CAPS program, came to Bethel with the intention of becoming more well educated so that he could be a better communicator in his job as an assistant pastor.

After about a year and a half of going to school with us here at Bethel, his wife after church, after he had preached one Sunday said to him, you know [name of student], you have really improved your ability to communicate.

The other example is of a female student who was in the Associate Program at Bethel.

My first real awareness of her was when her fiancé applied for the program, and when we say what made you want to come to Bethel, he said because of [student's name]'s life and how I have seen it change positively since she went to Bethel.

#### *4. Community is an important factor in fostering student growth (5 of 7 interviews).*

This theme has to do with the important role community plays in providing an environment for student growth. One way this seems to happen at Bethel in the CAPS and graduate school programs is through the use of the cohort model. For one student with a speech disability entering her MBA program, the cohort had a profound impact upon the student's confidence and identity.

When she entered the MBA program and entered a cohort of people she didn't know, she was naturally a pretty bubbly person, but at the same carried with her this sort of cloud or disability. Interestingly, the cohort members accepted her in a way that was never an issue, or it never came to light. It was almost like once she got to Bethel and got into that cohort, that speech like went away-it almost didn't exist just because of the way she was being treated...Her confidence level went from being a person, who again came in with sort of this cloud because of feeling or seemingly feeling like her speech was something she would never overcome, and through the two years here and with the cohort model that just seemed to go away. It just disappeared.

Another participant shared about the importance of the cohort in supporting one of her students.

I really think that Bethel's cohort model is huge in this because they do become like a little family, and they have each other to count on, and this student became one of the students who would, when somebody would be down and out and was like, I don't know if I can do this...he would say...God has given us this ability and we can do this. So, I think the cohort model is huge.

Another way students seemed to experience community is through support from other peers and staff members, as well as investing and becoming part of campus groups. For example, one student who was a transfer to Bethel, found community by becoming involved with the Multicultural Student Fellowship, and even has become involved as a leader in that group.

One participant shared about the important role community support had upon a student whose father had just died.

To watch her peers in Block 2 come around her-and it wasn't just the people in her particular section-it was also the other section, because they had known her from years before-to watch them pull together. And everyone went to the funeral. Several professors went to the funeral, and just to watch the outpouring of support and prayer and closeness that was between these students was incredible.

Another participant shared about the importance of community, and how it has the ability to either make or break a student's experience at Bethel.

Community is incredibly important, especially in the way the adult programs are laid out. You enter with that cohort and you travel that journey, you know, with them, and that can be wonderful if it's a community that gels... So I get concerned, you know, always my prayer is as we're putting cohorts together... let this be one where there isn't a voice or a couple of voices that sabotage... For adults it becomes that cohort setting, for the CAS students it can be the dorms, it can be the classes, it can be the group that they find or don't find, you know, here.

For another student, it was the athletic community that made a huge impact upon the student's growth.

At the beginning of his experience he was a driven, disciplined, motivated, work ethic kind of kid, but wasn't realizing the joy of what it could mean to give his gifts away for free and just be surrounded by a community that cared about him... So it became a lot more important for him to feel the joy of a personal relationship with Christ and that being involved in discipleship group of football players could have influence on the people around him.

The participant commented about how it really was the community of Bethel as a whole that had the profound impact upon this student.

I can't really say that, what those pieces were coming from-Residence Life or Campus Ministries, or professors or whoever, but it sort of was the full body of Bethel.

Another participant shared how they provide student mentoring other students in their program as a way of promoting community.

So, some of the inherent barriers that they come in with, we try to be proactive in trying to help students feel like they're part of a group, or feel like they're connected in a way.

Finally, participants seemed to stress the importance of the Bethel community working together in the transformation of students. One participant shared how he feels the departments at Bethel do a great job of interacting.

I think the way we can partner with Student Life-I feel like almost every year I feel like there's somebody that my colleagues or I are referring-haven't seen this person for a week, just letting you know, maybe you can keep an eye on them, check with their advisor to make sure they're not falling through the cracks... I think Bethel does really very well and ...from where I sit I don't have to do

anything alone. We've got departments, we've got other services, and it's like us together. We can focus on student support.

Category 1(b). Essential components of the transformation process (involving challenge).

*5. Leadership opportunities are a vital part of student transformation (7 of 7 interviews).*

It seemed important to participants that Bethel provides many opportunities for students to become leaders throughout their time at Bethel. Whether the leadership is voluntary, such as applying for student government or a position in student life, or a promotion, such as leadership in a job or as an athlete, or part of an academic challenge, such as leading part of a class discussion, the effects upon students are often transformational. This universal theme was examined by several of the participants who recalled the transformational quality leadership had upon students.

I think of a student who got really involved in student government and how that seemed to help her grow. This student is someone, who, over the last couple of years...used to really be kind of not taking ownership, not a good problem solver and things like that, and now I think she's better at that because she's had some of the experiences with like student government and, you know...different leadership roles.

I would say for the most part the student leaders that I work with, it's almost just part of the nature of the work that they're doing that they develop these Core Values in their lives, I think...I think that through the nature of the work that they're doing as a student leader these are some of the skills that they walk away having gained. Some of it is through some of the programming and experiences, but a lot of it is through just the nature of their work as a student leader and overseeing other student leaders.

I can just remember her sitting in the meetings with parish nurses...kind of tentative, kind of quiet, but as time went along then she...did a really outstanding job. By the end she was much more confident and then she actually identified that one of the lacks of this group was any computer savvy and technology. So she actually did a class for them, and that was her idea. So it was really fun to see that beginning kind of, I'm not so sure, grow into a lot of competence and becoming a leader.

*6. Students grow when they take appropriate risks or are given appropriate challenges (6 of 7 interviews).*

Their seemed to be an acknowledgement among participants that transformation is not always an easy process for students. Often it includes taking appropriate risks or being willing to take on a new responsibility. Participants discussed the growth they witnessed when students were willing to step up and take on challenges they were given.

I think I've seen some growth in students, and perhaps in some of these areas, especially when they are given responsibility. Since my job is to be an instructor, that usually happens in the classroom. Like I'll say lead a class or lead this part of class. Then I can think of a couple students that I've seen mature or a light bulb goes on when that happens.

Part of the adventurous part for him was what kind of influence could I have on others around me and so where can I take some risks here and maybe make it a leap of faith for me when it's not so comfortable?

So this particular student took the risk to go and present herself, and she was challenged by our career counselor who said that this would be really good for you; you might find an internship... So I think her crucible moment was when she decided, yep, I'm going to go-it was kind of back and forth-but I'm going to go to this job fair and see what's out there even though it's a rotten job market I might find something if I take that risk.

*7. Experiences outside of Bethel are a vital part of student transformation (5 of 7 interviews).*

Many participants shared that in several of the students' transformation stories, a key part of the transformation included experiences outside of Bethel. Although the majority of these examples included trips overseas to do missions work, there were also examples of students who were transformed through a variety of other involvements. One participant shared how her student's involvement in her church youth group was formative in her faith journey.

It wasn't just Bethel, I think it was, she was involved in her church youth group as a leader and that had an impact in what was going on and I think that was probably as big of instigation as anything.

Another participant described how a student's time in the navy after he dropped out of Bethel was transformative in his personal journey.

He spent six years in the Navy including a lot of time on an aircraft carrier where he was an electrician. After six years he came back to my office at Bethel and I didn't recognize him and he wanted to be a readmit student. He knew he wanted to major in BTS (Biblical and Theological Studies). He's been buying books and reading them on the aircraft carrier, and he'd been sharing books with other sailors. Then he was focused; he knew what he wanted, unlike many of our freshman and sophomore students. Now he sort of had himself figured out a little more. Then I can remember a couple times in the classroom where he was presenting to students and you know, he was very animated and just a different person than I had known seven years before.

Finally, one of the participants described how formative a trip overseas had been for one of her students.

She went overseas to Africa...I'm not even sure of the place, but that was a very transformational experience. I never really had conversations with her about it but I remember an email that kind of came back to a group of people and it was a very illuminating growing experience, and I can't even put the specifics on it, but to her it really meant a great deal.

*8. Environmental stressors can lead to transformation (5 of 7 interviews).*

Participants reported that environmental stressors, here defined as uninvited and unwanted experiences or circumstances that occur outside of the classroom, can end up having a positive influence upon a student's maturity, and ultimately lead to positive transformation. Participants also commented on ways that environmental stressors sometimes had negative transformation; however, it seemed that even these setbacks often lead to positive change in the end.

One participant shared about the serious family stressors a particular young woman had during the time she was a student. The student's father was in a serious

accident and eventually died while she was at Bethel. Her mother, who had previously divorced her father, wasn't in the picture anymore, and the student felt a strong burden to take care of her younger sister, who still lived at home. She decided she needed to drop out of school, until two weeks later, a faculty member intervened, and collaborated with the student about how she could finish her degree. The participant shared about the transformation that occurred in this student, despite the multiple roles she was playing.

She was a student, she remained a twenty-two year old, and then still took care of her sister...What was so interesting for me as I think about the before and after...was this transformation...with the burn, the accident, the death, dropping out of school, coming back to school ...but what I saw in that was this maturity that she was probably forced into...there was just a whole new level of commitment and purpose and, okay, I'm going to be a teacher in eight months...this is what I'm going to do...and that was remarkable to see that.

There were other examples of students transforming positively despite environmental stressors. One participant witnessed a transformation in a student who was dealing with a serious eating disorder as well as an alcoholic mother. Another shared about the transformation he saw in a student whose home life was very challenging. Other students overcame family deaths, terrible job markets, physical challenges and emotional struggles, and yet seemed to be transformed as people in spite of them.

One participant shared about a teacher who encountered a number of life trials following a word she heard from God that she would one day have her own school. This woman, who lived in New Orleans, recalled the devastation of her city after the levees broke in 2005 following Hurricane Katrina. The majority of the schools were closed, and the student lost her job. She moved to Minnesota to nanny for her sister, and at the same time was working full-time as a doctoral student at Bethel. Despite these setbacks, in

addition to undergoing chemotherapy for a year and a half during her doctoral work, the student persevered. The participant shared,

I think she was just laying herself out for the Lord saying I'm not sure where we're going...Through this time of ups and downs and all that kind of stuff, living here, living there, and all that kind of stuff...this (Bethel's program) has been an invitation of what could she have done with her own, taking her faith and showing leadership and now in reflections from two principals and superintendents by the way in New Orleans, I've had communications with, they're all very impressed with her. She's going to be a World Changer.

Category 2: Qualities of students who undergo transformation.

*9. Students develop the ability to think critically (7 of 7 interviews).*

This theme expressed the common observation that part of student transformation occurs through the classes students take. Participants expressed the desire staff and faculty members have for students to develop the ability to seek truth as opposed to simply being handed answers. Students who have been transformed develop the ability to problem solve and think for themselves, challenging old ideas while wrestling with and holding new ones. One faculty member described her belief in the importance of leaving students with unanswered questions.

We're not here to answer your question... We want you to leave with questions as well. You know, what's the next step, where am I supposed to be? I think the woman that I was talking about...she came in with a faith and part of protestant denomination but left with now recognizing why she has been so restless there, why she doesn't feel fulfilled there, and a lot of that came out of what we offered her.

Another faculty member provided an account of how he witnessed a student's transformation following a project that was assigned causing his students to think critically.

There was an assignment to write out your Christian worldview including shalom as a substitute for health...In my new way of presenting this to [student name] and her class was that shalom was what we're all being nurses for, to try to get

people to the highest level the way God meant things to be...The whole class tried to explain their own view of health and illness and their Christian worldview of nursing and [student name] wrote one of the best...descriptions of shalom and how that fits in. That was the first time that I ever saw her really shine as a scholar and as a student and as having a complete understanding of what she was all about in nursing.”

*10. Students who are transformed show initiative and take responsibility for their development (7 of 7 interviews).*

Important behaviors that were observed in this theme included students seeking out the help of professors when needed, as well as utilizing campus resources such as Career Services, Counseling Services, and Disability Services. Reflecting upon one particular student’s growth, it was observed how the young woman showed initiative at her internship by seeing a need that existed and filling it without being asked. Some students who demonstrated this theme came to Bethel as natural learners, with a motivation and desire to learn. One participant shared,

The transformation wouldn’t happen if there wasn’t a willingness of the individual to receive-so that attitude of receipt of learning is huge.

Another participant shared about a student she worked with in Disability Services who had some moderate to severe mental health issues. As she watched the transformation within this student, she became aware of the responsibility the student began to take for her own growth.

So what I’ve seen in her is like an increased self-awareness, an increased acceptance of her disability...She was able to own her feelings and take some self-responsibility I guess I would say.

Other participants described the initiative they witnessed in students who went above and beyond normal behavior to facilitate their own growth. One participant shared about a group of theater students who decided to meet over the summer to continue their personal

growth and maturity. Another shared about a group of guys who were instrumental in initiating an accountability group. He said, they decided to meet...not because they were told to or expected to but because they wanted to.

*11. Students who have been transformed demonstrate an increased complexity in their faith (7 of 7 interviews).*

One of the qualities that came through in every interview was the change in faith that occurred in several of the transformed students' lives. For many this involved a period of questioning or challenging of ideas before being able to embrace them. Some participants were able to see the transformation through to the recovery of students' faith, while others were still waiting to see where their students ended up.

Before I think she was really trying to figure out-she knew she needed to be with God and desired to be with God, but I think she was trying to figure out who she was as God's child and really challenging God's role in her world.

In a large part I think there's often a part of pushing away from before turning around and so I think that is a part of what is, I mean, even in my situation, it was a solid year of listening to everything that pushed back before some things started changing her mind to consider holding on to.

I would say my gal actually was questioning some of those Core Values especially when she decided to go overseas...She had mentioned something about just wanting to, you know...reaffirm the faith or things like that, but I think she was, you know, not knowing where she was. She came back with a renewed whatever, but I think there were some definite questions as to, you know, what is all this, what is my part in this, do I believe all this, you know, where can it take me.

Other participants reported a deepening of faith that occurred in their students' lives.

His faith became personal in a way that was far different than when he came here. He came here as a good moral kid and respected and had sort of a reputation for being a great guy, but connected with the Lord in a way that his personal faith just blossomed.

Her view of her faith is her own, it's not just, she even said in her paper, I kind of came in and I had, this is what my church believes and now it's like I've integrated that-I've made the beliefs that I have, you know, an eternal thing.

I think, at least, we want to be the kind of Christ followers who have our eyes open and aren't just saying we've got to fit in these little cookie cutter modes as Christians. But let's see all the evidence... whatever department, teachers will give evidence that sort of is against the party line or against the maybe current evangelical view of today and I think often that is a positive thing that helps students deepen in their faith.

*12. Transformed students develop a better understanding of their identity (7 of 7 interviews).*

Students who were transformed during their time at Bethel all seemed to share in common the experience of developing a stronger sense of identity. One participant shared about students she had as freshmen, who were trying to identify who they really were-the person they were on Saturday night, or the person they became on Sunday morning.

That is an area that I see a lot of growth with freshmen. I think in high school they felt like they were two separate people, and at Bethel they are trying to become one, and that is extremely hard.

One participant spoke about the commitment one student devoted to self-exploration as she was doing some real growing in her faith and questioning of some of the inconsistencies she was experiencing in her church.

So, that's the tension she's dealing with...at this point in time, but still willing to work forward and love that she's come through that self-discovery process of being in school, being in the program, learning about herself, realizing bigger-the paradigm-it didn't even just shift-I mean, it did shift, but it was more.

Later on she summarized,

To see that light bulb go on...know who you are really and then do something with who you are kind of thing. Yeah, did she acquire some new knowledge and some tools-yes, but I'm guessing that if you were to talk to her sitting here, those would not be as important to her as her own personal journey of self-discovery.

Another participant recalled how one student developed an evolving sense of identity following some challenging life experiences.

Her identity; I saw a huge difference. I knew her as a student and then she became a parent really, and the caretaker and the caregiver, and was then able to then step back and say, okay, but I am still a student, so what does that look like?

Participants also noticed how students who had a sense of identity had a willingness to stand up for themselves and their beliefs. One particular student, following a process of self-exploration and evaluation of some of her spiritual beliefs was finally willing to take a stand despite the strain it put on her extended family.

She was willing to step outside of the boundaries of what everybody else thinks because like, when she chose to change churches, it really upset their whole family. But it was done in agreement with her husband and with her boys-but with her extended family-that was huge.

Another participant reported a similar change he saw in a student.

She's quick to stand her ground and hold up her own, and she wouldn't do that before-you know...tell her what to do and she did it.

Another participant shared a story about a minority student who was willing to speak up in class and share how her experience had been different than what was being discussed.

She was in a class that I taught called The English Language, and one of the things that we really talk about is linguistic diversity, and kind of what to do with students who come to school with languages that aren't English and that kind of thing. She was one of two students of color in that class, and so my white kids were kind of going on and on about what they should do and...all of the sudden she just said, well, you know, in my experience this is what happened to me, this is what happened to people I know; this was helpful. I mean, she just kind of spoke up and said, you know, whatever, this doesn't really match up with my experience and here's what I'd like to say about that.

### *13. Transformed students persevere despite challenges (6 of 7 interviews).*

Transformed students were reported to have endured a wide range of difficult life circumstances. Some examples include the death of parents, physical struggles like

cancer, being displaced and losing jobs in hurricane Katrina, as well as juggling the many demands of being a parent, spouse, employee and student at the same time. Participants observed that these students exhibited great perseverance in the midst of these challenges.

One participant shared about the perseverance of a middle-aged man who wanted to further his education in order to be a better communicator.

To see a man, later on in life, really first of all have the courage to start from square one, kind of go back, and then successfully complete what you need, which is 60 credits, 60 freshman sophomore credits and then be able to translate that into an opportunity to go on to Master's level work...It takes doggedness and determination to complete a degree when you're working a full-time job and you're pasturing and you're a husband and you're a father.

Another participant presented the story of a divorced, single parent of a young girl, who was working on her Associate Degree through one of Bethel's programs.

She would send me thank you notes all the time from her gratitude to have had a chance to do education while she was working full time and trying to be a mom as a single parent...I would say probably academically she struggled a little bit more, but she hung in there. I think she may have had to take one or two classes over again but she did it. She completed her A.A. courses and went on for her degree.

Another participant described the challenges a young student had to overcome, and yet remained perseverant in her desire to complete her education and do something "bigger in the world."

One of the students that came to us, she was a transfer...Her family was Hmong and they had been in a refugee camp for quite a while. She came to this country when she was six and came to Bethel as a transfer saying, I want to be an English teacher-that's what I want to do...Transportation has been an issue at times, having a car, being able to work that out. She also has had to go back to her family occasionally and help out with things. Her mom was needing to do some medical stuff, and because she doesn't speak English very well she missed some school because of that...Well, since then, she has just, I mean...she has added a minor in Reconciliation Studies, is very interested not just in going back to her high school and being an English teacher, not that there's anything wrong with that, but that she all of the sudden is seeing the bigger influence that she could have on the world or the ways in which she has this unique story to tell and she

can contribute not just to her, you know, community physically, but to kind of the academic community.

*14. Transformed students gain a greater understanding of what they can contribute to the world (6 of 7 interviews).*

A common theme that surfaced was the idea that students leave Bethel with a bigger picture of what they can do in the world. Several participants acknowledged that they saw it as part of their job to help students realize opportunities and to help open students' eyes to what they have to offer.

She came in with this idea that she wanted to go back to her high school and be an English teacher and now her sense is, well, the world is a much bigger place; I can probably do something bigger in the world if I choose to do that or if God calls me to do that and so her ideas about what she can do or what God might ask her to do are much bigger than her original goal.

During his time here we've encouraged him to think big, to, don't just think about, we've tried to encourage him to think maybe major university research professor kind of thing, maybe beyond that...to encourage him not to limit himself...Sometimes it's our job to help students think about what's possible for them, to open their eyes to what doors they can go through.

Another participant observed how many students are deciding to go overseas following graduation. She stated,

Just this sense of unlimited opportunity is really fun to see and I think that ties into the World Changers, the idea that, you know, our students really are in different places physically doing things that maybe they wouldn't have envisioned before they started here.

Another participant commented,

All these stories are kind of talking about helping students where they are and getting them to where they can realize what they have to offer the world or what they have to offer to Bethel or to the field or wherever.

*15. Students who are transformed develop a greater sense of self-efficacy (5 of 7 interviews).*

One of the traits many of the students exhibited prior to their transformation was a lack of confidence and little belief in what they could accomplish. Several participants were able to witness a significant increase in students' confidence and a growing belief in their abilities throughout the transformation process. One participant shared about the emerging self-efficacy of undergraduate students she works with.

There's a lot of specific students where with some undergrads, academically, what's exciting is where they have said, "Wow, I can do this," in writing, for example. "I can do this better, I see a difference in what I'm doing and I can see that I'm faster in what I'm doing."

Another participant shared about the transformation he witnessed of an undergraduate student.

This person entered without much confidence or self-identity...and without terribly high academic credentials compared to some of our students, but turned out to be an absolute whiz in labs and experimental perseverance and one of the best I've ever known. So eventually [he] gained the confidence and the transformation was in our unusual undergraduate project labs that we run where he found that he could do things that other people couldn't do and he was totally amazed by himself.

When asked about a particular student's sense of self before and after, one participant commented,

Confidence, you know, in the sense of, ah-ha, I know who I am or I at least know what I know and at least I know what kind of questions I want to ask, where I want to go next and the confidence to make some of those really tough decisions, to say now I understand this.

Another participant shared about an older student in his forties, who entered his program very unsure of himself. As she witnessed his transformation process, she shared about an opportunity he was chosen for to speak at the President's inauguration.

He's persistent now and he's convinced he's going to make it...When he was chosen for that he called me up and he was just like on top of the world and it was like, wow, I just feel like I've really achieved something...[name of participant] I'm going to make it here at Bethel!

Finally, another participant described the positive transformation of a doctoral student who had some work to accomplish in the area of leadership.

I think that she gained through all of these crises and experiences, the confidence and the skills to be able to engage in a leadership area that she wouldn't have been drawn to historically.

*16. Transformed students desire to facilitate transformation in others (5 of 7 interviews).*

When students exhibited transformation in their own lives, there seemed to often be a sense of “paying it forward,” or a growing desire to influence and transform others.

She started putting into practice, you know some of what she was learning, you know, in the classes, and now does not hide behind for a minute. She still because of her skill sets can do the books and, you know, the balancing acts, but is not in front leading the charge with their employees and trying to grow them, transform them, let them figure out who they are as individuals as well.

I would say the Salt and Light piece was definitely a Core Value that was built in, because initially it was more about me, and then, because of the influence of Bethel decidedly, decided change was all about the influence he could have on others...Because of what he felt like he had gained himself...I guess he felt like he had an obligation to have influence where he could.

Within this theme, there was also a sense of the reciprocal nature of transformation. Participants acknowledged that students who had been transformed had also caused transformation in participants' own lives. One participant described her experience of teaching for Bethel at the Frogtown location, and her own process of learning from teaching in a different culture from what she was used to.

Another participant acknowledged how influential being immersed in Bethel's culture during his time there had been on him. He realized the formation he experienced in his own life as well.

The transformation happens to staff and faculty too. That's what's kind of cool about this process. It's not just the students that we're transforming with these Core Values. I think about that I came in as a faculty at twenty-seven and now I'm fifty-three. I know what kind of transformation and influence this culture's had on me and how my life has changed because of it.

Another participant acknowledged the influence the student missionary nurse he shared about had had on him personally.

I've got a picture of her looking at a sore leg that you can pass around...and I actually now support her as a supporter, so I believe in her one hundred percent.

\*Researcher: Sounds like it's transformed you a little bit too.

Participant: Yeah, I think so. That there's hope...I think a lot of our students come in thinking...I want to be a nurse and I'm going to get a job and make some money...I mean she had to raise her own support.

*17. Students develop a sense of God's direction for their future (4 of 7).*

Participants noted that students coming into Bethel often feel a lack of direction about career choice or even what their gifts are and how those gifts might be used in a particular discipline or field. Students who have been transformed develop that sense of direction through a variety of ways, including, but not limited to, utilizing campus resources such as the Career Services department, through time spent with advisors or faculty members, and through God's calling toward a specific field. Many participants in the study discussed the importance of preparing students for life after Bethel as an important part of their work. One participant stated,

We are very intentional about that process and really helping them to understand calling and how does that play out as they seek to be Christ Followers in the world.

Another participant described one particular student's process of being directed from nursing into full-time mission work. Through a number of experiences both in and

outside Bethel, this student developed a sense of God calling her to use her skills in nursing at an orphanage for homeless elders in South America. The participant stated,

I think that what hits me in that beauty and the sweetness of a person coming for an education but really finding their calling in life and in doing that, there is no satisfaction or fulfillment greater than being and doing what God has called you to do.

Another participant described a student who was enrolled in the CAPS program at Bethel to pursue a degree in business and ended up completing a Bachelor of Arts in Christian Ministries. She explained how God really “put his mark on her” during her time at Bethel.

*18. Transformed students carry out the value of being a World Changer through big and small actions and attitudes (3 of 7 interviews).*

Several interview participants noted that students could be “World Changers” in big or little ways, and that the little ways can sometimes be overlooked. Additionally, these participants seemed to hold that students would only be able to bring about larger changes in the world by understanding small or ordinary behaviors to be important and conducting themselves accordingly.

Sometimes we look for those big things and sometimes, to me, World Changers can be little things...like, students will say, this is a busy time, so I need prayer because I’ve got all this to get done and I’ve got to study for these tests and my comment is usually, well, I hope you do well on those, but the test you’re taking is the fruits of the spirit. I mean, do you snap at the guy at the gas station? Are you snotty to your roommate? Those are the things that are important and those are the ways, to me, that’s how you change the world really.

[If] they learn the importance of being a World Changer by kind of seeing the influence they have in something as small as Student Senate here, they can see kind of the impact long range that they could have on their peers and on the larger world as well.

One participant also provided an account of the positive impact one student was able to make in the lives of others when she simply focused on making small changes in her own life.

She's developed this culture of her being where people come and ask those questions of her...so she's changing her own little world in ways that we can't imagine because of just her model of coming alongside and loving people...I realize that in many ways she's changing that little place that she has been called to, and I guess that is a World Changer.

*19. Transformed students carry out the value of being "Salt and Light" by displaying excellence in their work (2 of 7 interviews).*

Participants discussed how Bethel has a good reputation in the business world because students from Bethel do excellent work as well as display excellent character.

For example, one participant stated,

We see this all the time. Companies, once they get someone from Bethel in the door...because of being Salt and Light we do hear such positive things and they do make a difference...We see that just from the fact that they [company name] didn't say, okay-great internship-we don't want anything to do with you; they said we want you as a full time employee because we've seen the kind of person you are. I think the ethical character we see in our students; once it's seen out in the world of work it's significant and companies really do take note of that.

Another participant discussed the importance of conveying this value to students and making an explicit connection between being "Salt and Light" and doing excellent work.

Our department really pushes the idea that the best way to be salt and light is to be excellent in what you do.

Part of the discussion in this theme involved the idea that Bethel, as well as transformed students, can be "Salt and Light" without being overbearing or pushing it on others. One participant shared about his student,

She really is salt and light without thrusting it on anybody. People come to the light and they experience her salt.

Another participant expounded on this idea, as she works with many adult students who are either very nominal in their Christianity, or are openly of a different faith.

I'm very clear on we are a Christian, Christ-centered, Bible-based place. In fact I've worked with several Muslim recently, and I say, this is who we are; we accept you where you are, but are you comfortable with that, because Jesus will be talked about ...I try to assure them that we accept them right where they are at, but we do not apologize for our stance.

We aren't there to prosthelytize. We are there just simply to be ourselves.

Category 3: How Bethel faculty and staff uniquely guide and direct student transformation.

*20. Bethel is intentional about transforming students holistically (4 of 7 interviews).*

This theme emerged from participants' remarks that Bethel students are supplied with more than an academic education. Faculty and staff seem to be in agreement about the intentionality at Bethel of building character into their students while simultaneously providing them with life skills that will help them throughout the rest of their lives. They described the high value of transforming students as a whole person. Participants shared the following perspectives pertaining to holistic student learning.

It's like don't go to class and then don't apply what you learn, you know. It's things that you can take out whether you're a major or not; it's the ability to empathize with somebody, the ability to collaborate with somebody, the ability to listen to somebody else who has a different opinion than yours.

It feels to me like the Character Builders piece would be a Core Value at most places, but it's how we define character building that somehow makes it more concerned with personal and spiritual formation therefore committed to develop whole and holy persons.

One of the aspects of holistic learning or development that seemed important to participants is that students gain the ability to integrate faith into their learning and careers. One participant shared an example of how this played out for a Bethel Senior.

I think for her not only to understand a sense of if this would be a good job for me, but how does my faith get acted out in a work place, and hopefully tapping into some of that call...in her world...Like she said, she just felt confident in her interview and especially in relationship to her personality; it's more a sense of who I am in the workplace and an integration, hopefully, of the whole person and not just I'm going to get a job, but this is who I am-this is my faith and this is how I live it out.

*21. The emergence of Reconciliation as a Core Value (7 of 7 interviews).*

The Core Value, "Reconciliation," was explicitly mentioned in every interview, though it was discussed and described in a variety of ways. In fact, what holds this theme together is primarily that it was mentioned, not necessarily that all participants held universal thoughts or opinions about reconciliation. This theme is therefore the only Core Value that is differentiated and presented as a distinctive theme, where other Core Values have been integrated throughout the other comprehensive themes.

Many participants pointed out that when reconciliation is mentioned it is often assumed that is in reference to ethnic or racial differences, but that transformed students are also becoming reconciled to themselves as well as others outside the aim towards cultural or racial reconciliation. One participant stated it this way.

I think the idea of reconciliation, and I know that's the, we always think of it in terms of ethnicity, but that idea that in some ways we broker that for students and kind of help them reconcile who they are with who they could be or who God is asking them to be-that that idea of reconciliation is something that we could look at and think about a lot.

Several participants shared their belief that Bethel as an institution has grown in the area of addressing racial reconciliation; however, there were mixed ideas about how students have responded as well as what should be addressed going forward.

I know for example that some [students] react to multicultural efforts at Bethel in a very negative way...because they feel out of place. When they enter Bethel for the first time they're treated as a minority, and they always thoughts things were just fine up until that point, and they're brought in here in August, and now I

guess I'm going to be different at Bethel, and here I'm going to realize I'm different. And it's almost a total 180-degree reaction to that... This [other] young lady had the strengths to grow on it, and the reconciliation part for her really flowed.

We have a big focus on inter-cultural-wanting students to feel comfortable with who they are from a racial standpoint, and she really did not want to-she doesn't want to buy into-she kind of bucked they system with that too. She didn't want to...be the token black person in [her] classes

It's important to me that they have role models that are female faculty members that are people of color, that we have a diverse staff, that they can look around and see that the body of Christ is broader than the white male-dominated group of people.

Another participant shared about a student who had a change of heart regarding reconciliation while she was at Bethel.

I had a student come in...she was like, do I have to take all of those diversity classes, and I said yes, if you want a license to teach you need to take the classes. Well, I don't see what I can learn from that because I'm not planning to go-I don't want to teach where there is anybody different from me, and I just don't want to do it... You know, she came around and...by the time she finished she was volunteering at a junior high in urban Minneapolis, you know, after school tutoring, and so sometimes that happens, sometimes it doesn't.

Finally, one participant shared how a young transformed student was an example of a "Reconciler" out in the world.

I think she really fits under Reconciler because she's trying to for all races and cultures see a community that reflects the body of Christ, and just showing the people of Tijuana plus the core of people who support her back here what it's like to really be the hands and feet of Christ.

Reconcilers comes with knowing who you are, you know, who each person is and whether or not they're willing to appreciate then the distinctive, but also look for the similarities. So many tend to capitalize on the differences, and so one thing we're pretty intentional in our program in saying is look for those similarities too.

## *22. Faculty and staff model Core Values for students (3 of 7 interviews).*

Participants commented on the importance of students witnessing the Core Values acted out by staff and faculty. They acknowledged that it was more important to see staff

and faculty modeling behaviors of the Core Values than to merely teach students about them. For example, one participant listed four nursing professors who have been missionaries. The student he shared about decided to go into full-time mission work. He stated,

We've got all these people that are telling them their experiences as a missionary and working as a nurse from all these different places, so it's not hard to become effected if you're receptive.

Other participants shared their ideas about the importance of modeling the Core Values.

I think some of the things that I see as how we model these Core Values...of Bethel is really important...that we're not going to be perfect, but I think our students are going to use us as part of their input for how they view the life of-how we fit the Core Values or how we measure the Core Values.

I believe that life is ministry. So I don't care what job they want-I want them to go out in the business world and do life as ministry...If they just will love them, people flock to them...I think that's just modeling what I'm trying to get them to do for others too.

*23. The Core Values drive Bethel's programs and coursework (4 of 7 interviews).*

When participants' attention was directed to the Core Values in interviews, they commonly cited how engrained the Core Values are in coursework and in Bethel's programs as a whole. Participants had varying ideas about the intentionality of the Core Values, as well as ideas about how they are to be put into action. The following are a few examples of the theme showing how participants see them as a driving force at Bethel.

When I look at these values, I realize that, intentionally or not, they are drivers of our program.

These Core Values speak to all of our staff, all of our faculty, and how our courses are set up. The students may not be Christ Followers, the students may not be Truth Seekers at this time, but they will be exposed to a series of classes and activities, and this is all done up front.

All the student organizations on campus that I work with are built on the principles of the Core Values of the institution. That's in their job description;

it's in the kind of functionality of how they run and how they do their programming. I think that they do some very intentional programming such as the Quest Forums and the workshops that help develop these in students.

I just see that the courses as they're built in there help them develop. I talk about transformational education as opposed to informational education, and that we want them to develop body, mind, and spirit, and we want them to be people of integrity-more than when they came into the program. That's the package of education that you're getting in our program.

Category 4: General reflections on the transformation process.

*24. Student transformation is a process (7 of 7 interviews).*

A primary theme that emerged from each of the interviews was the idea that transformation is a process. It was noted that transformation is rarely an overnight experience, but is a journey for each student. Participants mentioned how transformation happens at different times for different students-in fact, sometimes not until after graduation-but students are being transformed in the process.

One participant describes the long journey she went on with a student and the slow transformation she witnessed.

We met every week for the rest of that year and we met at least monthly for the next year and a half-so it was a long process. But I watched this ebb and flow of this pattern of she was very angry and like, how dare you think that my life is your business-so, very intrusive-to, I don't understand, it's very confusing to me why you, why other people are concerned about these behaviors-help me understand why people are concerned about these behaviors-to I wonder if there is something to these concerns-to I wonder what implications this has on my faith-to, kind of through this whole pattern and I kind of journeyed through that long process. And I had a lot of hopes for her, but in the end, come graduation day, she surpassed the things I had hoped for her.

Other participants commented on this theme.

It's kind of been this slow process and it's, you know, she's really come a long way. I'm really proud of her.  
But it really is a journey, you know, the leadership, the competence building...and I only see snippets of this.

This person was a full time Bethel student, and I think they came to Bethel as a pretty strong Christian student in their undergraduate. They had a mind for missions all along, and I think we helped her along the way. I'm not sure the transformation was a day and night type thing, you know, it wasn't like-bam-God came down and zapped them and they became a missionary.

*25. Student transformation is rewarding for staff and faculty (6 of 7 interviews).*

In almost every interview, participants noted the positive impact it has upon them when they are able to witness transformation in students. Student transformation is rewarding, as well as giving purpose to the work they do.

What we have all seen in students is really to see them become more of who God created them to be, and that is so exciting because it's not man's idea-it's them blossoming, and that's exciting.

There's a little secret that Bethel has for faculty. That's the satisfying part of the job. You know, we can teach all we want and pontificate or whatever we want, but the satisfying part is when you get to see change in people's lives, and so that transformation is the part that keeps all of us coming back.

Over the years it was just fun to see him grow and develop.

I think the fact that we have the privilege in having some role in helping shape some of that developmental process or at least asking questions through part of that is a real privilege.

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## Appendix A: Interview Questions

### *Narrative of Student Experience*

1. Please identify a Bethel student that from your experience seemed to exhibit a remarkable positive transformation during their college experience.
  - a. List any important demographic descriptors:
  - b. List any ongoing or one-time stressors
2. Describe the student before and then after their transformation
  - a. Character qualities?
  - b. Behaviors?
  - c. Social interactions?
  - d. Study habits?
  - e. Faith?
  - f. Identity?
3. From your perspective, please identify and discuss a few specific and significant transformational, or crucible, moments in this student's experience (what happened between the "before" and "after"?).
  - a. What is it about these moments that make them stick out as significant to you?
  - b. What did the student do and/or what happened in the student's personal life to motivate her or his change during these times?
  - c. How were others involved in the student's life to help facilitate positive change?
4. In what way or ways did Bethel University, in general, contribute to or facilitate this process?
  - a. For example, the attitudes or culture on campus
  - b. Campus or adult studies programming like CAS or CAPS/GAS chapel, student activities, film forums, etc.
5. In what way or ways did a member or members of the Bethel community (staff, faculty, student) contribute to or facilitate this process?

### *Core values* (Please refer to Bethel's Core Values listed below)

6. From what you have described so far, how do you see the changes that occurred in the student relating or not relating to our core values and how we implement them?
  - a. In what ways?
  - b. Do you understand this relationship to be intentional, coincidental, or otherwise, and why?
  - c. Did a particular person or department behave in a way consistent or inconsistent with the core values that motivated change?
  - d. Was there an event in the student's experience consistent with or inconsistent with the core values that motivated change?
  - e. Was there a specific activity or student program consistent with or inconsistent with the core values that motivated change?

7. In general, did the student move towards or away from any of our core values in their transformation process?
  - a. Which direction was the change, and why?
8. More specifically, did the student move significantly towards or away from any one of our core values in their transformation process?
  - a. Which core values, and why?
9. Based on the transformative experience of the student you have identified, how does Bethel implement the core values to influence students' change?
10. Discuss what, if anything, you or your department did with Bethel's core values to move the student towards her or his positive transformation.
  - a. Regular departmental practice related to the core values?
  - b. Specific curriculum?

### Core Values

- We are Christ-followers  
orthodox, conversionist, and evangelical; rooted in the authority of Scripture.
- We are character-builders  
concerned with personal and spiritual formation and therefore committed to the development of whole and holy persons.
- We are truth-seekers  
recognizing that all truth has its source in God as revealed in creation and Scripture, and personified in Christ.
- We are learners  
committed to academic excellence within a community characterized by teaching, scholarship, and service.
- We are reconcilers  
honoring the worth and dignity of people from all races and purposely seeking to create a community that reflects the diversity of the Body of Christ.
- We are salt and light  
relating to the world and society in culturally relevant ways while being informed by our pietistic denominational heritage and characterized by an irenic spirit.
- We are world-changers  
driven to prepare graduates who will shape and change the world through exemplary leadership in the church and throughout society.