ABSTRACT

Deborah E. Lucas, CHILDREN OF WAR: PREPARING MILITARY DEPENDENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION BY PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE, FOCUSED SUPPORT TO IMPROVE EDUCATION OUTCOMES (Under the direction of Dr. Heidi Puckett). Department of Educational Leadership, May 2022.

Since 2001, over two million children have experienced having one or both of their parents deployed (Tunac de Pedro et al., 2018). There is significant research that shows that "military children experience tremendous psychological strain as a result of stressful military related life events" (Tunac de Pedro et al., 2011, p. 567). The research that currently exists focuses on childhood experience and intervention at the K-12 level. The research on best practices for supporting military children presented herein could form the foundation of how colleges and universities can provide similar support to military dependents in higher education.

This study focused on supporting the children of military service members in higher education by developing students' self-advocacy and providing academic support and mentoring for these students while they were concurrently enrolled in high school and college. The intent of the interventions discussed in this study was to provide those students with the tools they need to successfully navigate veteran-focused resources on college campuses and to self-advocate for the resources they need to be successful. The findings presented in this study provide the foundation for recommendations for further research and intervention. The analysis and conclusions are limited due to the framework of the intervention which was exacerbated by COVID-19.

While this study may not have been conducted across a broad institutional manner, the findings demonstrate that implementing a course curriculum and providing focused interventions show that student success is related to focused intervention and a student's feelings of validation. This study further shows that students who are military dependents have a clear sense of that identity and what it means to themselves and to their community. I have argued throughout this

study that there needs to be focused attention on military dependents in higher education. Even with the end of America's longest war, there is still a generation of young people whose lives are marked by their parent's sacrifice and service. The very least that we can do is to make every effort to validate these student's experiences and to support them as they pursue their academic goals.

CHILDREN OF WAR: PREPARING MILITARY DEPENDENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION BY PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE, FOCUSED SUPPORT TO IMPROVE EDUCATION OUTCOMES

A Dissertation

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Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

by

Deborah E. Lucas

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CHILDREN OF WAR: PREPARING MILITARY DEPENDENTS

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION BY PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE, FOCUSED SUPPORT

TO IMPROVE EDUCATION OUTCOMES

by

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DEDICATION

You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem and smarter than you think.
—A.A. Milne

This work is dedicated to my students - past, present, and future. You have each made me a better teacher and a better person. Teaching you is the most important work that I could have done. There is nothing that compares to watching you learn, grow, and reach your goals.

Be a decent human - Debbie

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

For nearly two decades, this country has been involved in global conflict and the military has been at a heightened state of readiness and security. Military members have deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan regularly since the days immediately following the attack on September 11, 2001. It reasonably follows that their spouses, partners, and children who remained at home have experienced heightened anxiety, disrupted family dynamics as well as trauma and loss. Since 2001, over two million children have experienced having one or both of their parents deployed (Tunac de Pedro et al., 2018). There is significant research that shows that "military children experience tremendous psychological strain as a result of stressful military related life events" (Tunac de Pedro et al., 2011, p. 567). The research that currently exists focuses on childhood experience and intervention at the K-12 level. Focusing on providing support in K-12 education is important, but these students also need support in higher education. They, like my daughter, are young adults who are just now entering higher education in great numbers. Because of the stress and trauma of having military parents, these students experience stressors that affect their academic progress, after they graduate from high school and enter college (Brendel et al, 2014). This may be due, at least in part, to foundational gaps in academic skills due to frequent relocation, increased likelihood of depression and anxiety, and a lack of a sense of belonging.

Background of Focus of Practice

The Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as the GI Bill, was the original veteran's education benefit, which was intended to provide veterans with comprehensive resources including educational assistance (Dortch, 2012). Over the course of the following seven decades, millions of veterans have used these education benefits. The National Veteran Education Success Tracker (NVEST) report examined the overall success rate for student

veterans, defined as the completion of a degree or certificate or continued enrollment in a higher education program. This analysis, represented in Table 1, is derived from the NVEST study (Cate et al., 2017). The higher success rate for veterans in higher education may be due, at least in part, to the focused support and intervention offered at many institutions.

Efforts to support veterans on campus and implement best practices for comprehensive academic, disability, and social support for veteran students have been the focus of institutions of higher education for at least the last four decades. Critical support strategies for military students include providing students with a single point of contact for identifying resources and support on campus, creating veteran-specific workshops, and providing faculty and staff training (DiRamio et al., 2008, pp. 83-85). Even when institutions provide this support, military dependents infrequently access them, even when they are struggling. Despite the research and focus on supporting veteran students, there is little intensive support, institutional research, or focus on supporting the dependents of veterans in higher education. There is sufficient reason to believe that these students require, at a minimum, the same level of support and focus that their military sponsors receive on campus. Research involving military dependents in K-12 settings indicates that these students have higher levels of behavioral concerns, fundamental gaps in academic skills, and higher rates of depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideations than their peers (Brendel et al., 2014; Tunac de Pedro et al., 2018). Additional research indicates that these students are unwilling to seek academic support especially in their first year of college (Railsback, 2019).

Review of prior research reveals a lack of focus on these students. There is no systematic method of identifying these students, and research that purports to study the differences between different categories of veterans and military-affiliated students fails to distinguish dependents from other cohorts of students using Veterans Administration (VA) education benefits (Molina &

Table 1

Comparison of Veteran Success Rates to Overall Student Success Rates

Factor	Overall Student	Veteran Student
Completion Rate	66%	71.6%
GPA	3.11	3.35

Morse, 2017). Instead, the definition of military-affiliated students only includes veterans, active duty, and reserve military students. Dependents are casually mentioned as a group of military-affiliated students, but data regarding their academic success, persistence, and retention is not disaggregated from the overall data on veteran students. It could be argued that institutional support is available to military dependents because of their connection to service members and their use of VA education benefits. However, because these students are not discreetly identified and their needs are not recognized, there is no method to evaluate whether these students consider that the resources designated as veteran support resources are available for them to use. Because these services are billed as veteran services and dependents are not veterans, there is no recognition that they have access to these services.

The importance of providing support to veterans on campus is a primary point of focus at the institution where this study takes place. The East Carolina Community College, a pseudonym, is a community college located in the coastal region of North Carolina near two large military installations. The college serves a rural county in North Carolina, which has one of the largest populations of active duty, veteran, and military-affiliated students in North Carolina. According to the National Center for Education Statistics for the 2018-2019 academic year, Veterans comprise 35% of the student population at the college (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2020). Overall, veteran students at the institution exceed the retention, completion, and persistence goals of the college as reported in the North Carolina Community College System database.

The college provides direct support to veteran students through its Veterans Service Office, which processes all Veterans Administration (VA) education benefits requests and certifies enrollment data for veteran students receiving benefits. The college offers college-

transfer courses aboard both local military bases and provides academic counseling services at these locations. The college added a Veteran Student Success Coach in August 2018 whose role was to provide direct support to veterans. Future plans to create a Veteran's Center in conjunction with a Learning Commons will further enhance the college's support of veteran students. All of these services are veteran-focused and are available for all military connected students. However, there is no focused, intentional intervention or support for military dependents at the college.

East Carolina Community College is currently exploring the expansion of its offerings of college courses in an on-campus delivery model to high school students within each of the high schools across the county. This program is part of the college's ongoing dual enrollment program that provides high school students with the opportunity to enroll in college courses while still enrolled in their high school. This expansion presents the opportunity to reach military-affiliated dependents prior to their full matriculation in colleges across the state. Furthermore, it provides a unique opportunity to deliver support and intervention to these students in an effort to assure that they possess the tools they need to be able to identify and utilize the full range of resources offered by colleges.

Context of the Study

The ability to transfer GI Bill benefits to dependents was approved as an amendment to existing GI Bill regulations in 2008 and implemented in 2010 (VA education benefits, 2020). This policy, from the outset, was extremely popular and afforded military members with the opportunity to provide for their dependents' education, representing 20% of the users of the GI Bill (Sander, 2013). Nationally, the VA has not tracked the success of students using transferred education benefits, and colleges are not required to report that data. Even without a reporting

requirement, the VA office does report the students whose GPA falls below a 2.0 for consecutive semesters. The VA requires that certifying officials at schools follow the college's policies with regard to unsatisfactory academic progress (VA education benefits, 2020). When students do not meet the requirements for satisfactory academic progress, they are placed on either suspension or probation until their grades meet the threshold for satisfactory academic progress, which is generally a 2.0 GPA or better. Close examination of the student records for those students who are not making satisfactory academic progress reveals that over half of the students at East Carolina Community College who are on VA suspension or probation are military dependents using VA education benefits. These students require support in higher education; but, not only are they not identified as a specific cohort of students, there are also no specific support systems for these students. These students have already experienced significant barriers, trauma, and interruptions of their primary education because of their parent's military service, and many may require intentional support in higher education (Brendel et al., 2014; Railsback, 2019).

A common misconception regarding the poor academic performance of dependents using VA education benefits is that these students are squandering their benefits because they did not "earn" the benefit. This assumption fails to account for the increased behavioral and mental health disorders and other behaviors which result in increased sadness, hopelessness, depression, suicidal ideation, hopelessness, and academic problems that are a direct result of their connection to military members (Brendel et al., 2014). These are the same students that research at the K-12 level has shown to have significantly higher rates of anxiety, depression, foundational skills gaps due to frequent relocation, and greater need of support services than their peers (Pexton et al., 2018). Unfortunately, there is no research examining how these students' performance in higher

education has been affected by their experiences. Because these students are now entering higher education in significant numbers, research related to their needs should be a priority.

Colleges and universities are ill-equipped at large to address the high numbers of students entering college with significant mental health needs (Auerbach et al., 2016). Furthermore, there has been no identification or intervention focused specifically on military dependents whose lived experiences directly affect their academic performance (De Pedro et al., 2014). Significant research in the K-12 system supports the assertion that military children suffer higher anxiety, depression, and behavioral concerns, which result in negative academic outcomes (Brendel et al., 2014; Paley et al., 2013; Stites, 2016). Specifically, in the public school district in the county in which the college is located, counselors, teachers, and administrative personnel are focused on and aware of the specific needs of military-affiliated students. Research on institutional support for veterans demonstrates best practices that work to improve success rates for veterans and active duty members, which could be expanded to include military dependents (Ackerman et al., 2009; Callahan & Jarrat, 2014; Cox, 2019; Dillard & Yu, 2016, 2018; Goldrick-Rab, 2010). The college's expansion of course delivery in the local high schools offers the context and construct necessary to deliver focused, intentional intervention with military dependents currently enrolled in both college and high school with the intent of providing them with the tools they need to be successful in higher education.

Statement of Focus of Practice

This study focused on supporting the children of military service members in higher education by developing students' self-advocacy and providing academic support and mentoring for these students while they were concurrently enrolled in high school and college. Data and student work samples were analyzed to identify trends in academic performance and persistence.

Interviews and narratives were used to understand the impact of parents' military service on the student's identity development and to understand the students' sense of their positionality within the larger military community. I developed curricular content within the writing classroom, consistent with core course competencies, that encouraged students to explore their identities as members of the larger military community. The intent was to provide those students with the tools they need to successfully navigate veteran-focused resources on college campuses and to self-advocate for the resources they need to be successful.

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to examine ways military dependents develop a sense of identity and belonging in higher education and to provide intentional, focused curriculum-based instruction designed to improve persistence, academic success, and utilization of institutional resources. I posited that the experiences of military children directly affect their mental and emotional well-being, which affects the child's academic performance. Specifically, the children of military veterans and active duty service members have never experienced a world in which they were consciously aware of this nation not being engaged in international conflict. These students have experienced trauma as a result of their parents' service, which is exhibited in higher rates of anxiety and depression (De Pedro et al., 2014; Pexton et al., 2018). Furthermore, these students experience "marginality… which sets them permanently apart from [the] culture in which they find themselves" (Patton et al., 2016). Colleges and universities are ill-equipped at large to address the high numbers of students entering college with significant mental health needs, which is causing a significant mental health crisis (Auerbach et al., 2016). This crisis further harms military dependents whose needs are both ignored and unidentified. There had previously been no identification or intervention focused specifically on military

dependents whose lived experiences as members of the subculture of the military directly affect their academic performance and sense of personal identity.

Focus of Practice Guiding Questions

There has been significant focus on military veteran students in higher education. Questions pertaining to what factors affect veteran student success have been the focus of significant research. These same questions were asked pertaining to the children of military members in higher education.

This study was guided by the following questions:

- Guiding Question 1 (GQ1) - How can military dependents be identified in higher education as a method of ascertaining whether or not they struggle academically?
- Guiding Question 2 (GQ2) - How do students' experiences and identities as military dependents shape their perceptions of their academic endeavors?
- Guiding Question 3 (GQ3) - How does focused attention on student identities as military dependents and recognition of their academic needs affect student perceptions and academic performance?

Because there is no specific research focused on military dependents in higher education, the research related to helping veteran students was informative and instructive when implementing support structures for military dependents in higher education. Additionally, understanding what has worked for military children in K-12 can inform higher education practices. There is a distinct gap between what is known regarding how to best support military-connected learners in K-12 and those same learners in higher education. Leveraging the best practices for supporting military children in K-12 settings and the best practices for supporting

military veterans in higher education provided the foundation for a system of support that maximizes success in college for military dependents.

Overview of Inquiry

To answer these Focus of Practice guiding questions, I used a mixed-methods design conducted across three distinct phases. In Phase I of this study, I reviewed student academic records of military dependents using VA education benefits as related to their academic success. This academic success is defined as passing, with a grade of C or better, college-level courses while maintaining a GPA of 2.0 or better. These metrics were selected because the C grade is the minimum required grade to ensure the course will transfer to a senior institution in North Carolina (North Carolina Community College System, 2020). The minimum GPA was selected because the VA requires a GPA of 2.0 or better to remain eligible for education benefits (VA education benefits, 2020). The analysis of this data helped determine whether military dependents in higher education struggle academically at a rate that exceeds their peers who have no military affiliation as well as other students who use VA education benefits. The examination of student records using the college's student data management system, demonstrated the issues associated with identifying these students as military dependents.

Phase II included the development of curriculum-based instruction delivered in an entry-level English course focused on creating narratives and analysis around the central question of a student's identity as military-affiliated students. This structure was designed to facilitate discussion of military identities and experiences of high school students enrolled in college-level courses and drew from student development theories. The intended outcome was that students would be well-equipped to avail themselves of the resources and support structures available at the colleges and universities they attend after high school graduation. Phase III included

interviews with students near the end of their first semester of full-time college attendance following high school graduation. The purpose of these interviews was to ascertain the extent to which students utilized available resources and conceptualized their experience.

Theoretical Framework

Two primary theories undergird this research: Erikson's identity development theory and Chickering's student development theory. Identity theory applies to military dependents in that, in many cases, the student's identity as a member of the larger military community develops over time and in response to perceived support among peers, educators, and family. Specifically, college students are on the cusp of what Erikson (1980) identifies as identity diffusion in which adolescents begin to develop their core sense of self separately from familial and cultural identities (Miranda et al (2017). Identity theory was further explored in the context of military dependents as "third culture kids" (TCK) in that Pollock and Van Reken (2009) ascertained that while TCKs are highly adaptable, a trait necessary in the college setting, these students also experience marginalization in academic settings. While the concept of TCKs is not new, it is an area of research that is recently expanding especially with regard to military dependents in higher education. Application of student development theory in conjunction with identity development theory is critical to providing focused support for students because the establishment of identity is central to student development. Resolution of student identity concerns allows students to more fully develop their sense of identity and belonging (Patton et al., 2016). Because this research involved curriculum development and delivery, consideration of pedagogical theory is also important. Application of Chickering's theory of student identity development in the context of writing is explored using the model presented by Miranda et al. (2017).

Definition of Key Terms

The following list of terms is intended to provide a deeper understanding of the specific terms related to military dependents in higher education.

At-risk Students - identified as those students who have difficulty navigating campus life due to immaturity, fearfulness, academic under preparedness, self-centeredness or introversion, a lack of self-initiative, the absence of clear goals, self-doubt, and failure to ask the right questions as a result of institutional barriers, cultural barriers, and class barriers (Wirth & Padilla, 2008).

Chapter 35 Benefits - VA education benefits available to the child or spouse of a service member who died in the line of duty after September 10, 2001, or is missing in action, or was held as a prisoner of war, or who has a permanent and total disability that is service-connected (VA education benefits, 2020).

Dual Enrollment - defined as the process of moving students more seamlessly from high school to college by allowing high school students to earn college credit while still in high school (Goldbrick-Rab, 2010)

GI Bill - a succession of veterans' benefit laws that allow veterans to access education and training, home and small business loans, unemployment insurance, and other benefits (Serow, 2004).

Military-affiliated - used for purposes of clarification to refer to any student who has served in the Armed Forces of the United States and any student who is currently serving in the Armed Forces of the United States and is utilizing education benefits earned as a result of that service (Molina & Morse, 2017).

Military-connected - used as a unique identifier for students who may be using Veterans Administration provided financial support for education who did not serve in the military but is

entitled to that benefit as a result of their relationship to a veteran or service member. This definition is inclusive of dependents of military members who may or may not be entitled to such benefits but who are connected to the larger military community (Molina & Morse, 2017).

Non-traditional Students - often older than their peers, may have work commitments outside of school, may support families, may be less involved in campus activities and feel less a part of the university community and are at higher risk for not completing college (Olsen et al., 2014).

Post 9/11 GI Bill - provides a comprehensive educational benefits package to veterans and allows for the transfer of unused educational benefits from the veteran or active duty service member to his or her dependents (VanBergeijk et al., 2012).

Student Success - defined as a student's ability to reap the benefits of the postsecondary experience and a combination of institutional and student actions that facilitate the realization of that outcome (Kinzie & Kuh, 2017).

Third Culture Kid (TCK) - is defined as a person who has spent a significant portion of his or her developmental yeas outside of the parent's culture. The TCK frequently builds relationships to all of the cultures they experience while not having full ownership of any. (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009)

Traditional Students - generally classified as freshmen, full-time first-time degree-seeking students (Mullin, 2012).

Transfer of Entitlement - the transfer of unused Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits to a spouse or dependent child pursuant to eligibility of the military member and the dependent (VA education benefits, 2020).

Veterans - individuals who have served in the military and are eligible for veterans' education benefits and other veterans' benefits as a result of their service (Callahan & Jarrat, 2014).

Assumptions

The most significant assumption related to this study was that it is important to understand the needs of military dependents in higher education. Because of this assumption, it was further assumed that institutions would be interested in improving educational outcomes for military dependents. Specifically, for study participants, it was assumed that they would be forthright about their experiences and needs in higher education. It was further assumed that the curriculum developed to support this research recognized the students' interests and enabled them to develop a deeper understanding of their identities in relation to their experiences as military dependents through writing.

Scope

This study was specific to military dependent children in higher education. The study was conducted at East Carolina Community College, a pseudonym, which primarily serves a military community. This study was conducted as part of the second semester core writing class with a cohort of students registered for both high school and college classes. Therefore, it was expected that the results and recommendations of the study may not be applicable at every college or university but could be generalized to a larger population. Colleges and universities that do not serve a significant number of veterans or military dependents may not see the need to implement changes or to identify specific cohorts of students. This study specifically focused on military children in higher education and their experiences.

Limitations

The limitations of this study included the presumption that military dependents would be forthright in expressing the challenges they have faced in higher education. Potential biases also present possible limitations. I recognize the potential bias related to a strong personal affiliation with the subjects and with the potential impacts of the efficacy and effectiveness of this study. All efforts were made to identify the possible biases and determine ways to reduce the impact to the participants and on the study overall. An additional, significant limitation is the limited face-to-face interaction with students due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions on in-person learning. Due to the global pandemic and concerns over viral transmission among students and faculty, the participants in this study did not meet face to face during the study. All interventions were initiated and conducted asynchronously.

Further limitations included the student participants in this study. The students were not traditional first-year college students. These students were enrolled in high school and not necessarily representative of military dependents in higher education at the time this study was conducted. Students who enroll in both high school and college classes simultaneously may not experience academic difficulties related to transitioning to higher education or lack of academic preparation for rigorous college course work. In the Fall 2020 semester, I taught this cohort of students a first semester college composition course. At the end of that semester all of the students who completed the course, 95% of those who originally enrolled in the course, completed the course with a grade of C or better. This cohort of students may not necessarily be the targeted audience for intervention. However, affording these students with the opportunity to explore and develop their identities through writing may impact their academic performance when they do enroll full time in college.

Significance of the Study

Nearly four million school children have a parent who has served in the military, and over two million of those children have a parent or parents who have served in combat (Ohye et al., 2016; Tunac De Pedro et al., 2018). Because of deployments, frequent relocation, and the possibility of parental injury or death, military children have been the focus of ongoing research and support efforts in light of the nearly two decades long war in Afghanistan in which the US has been involved. The research on best practices for supporting military children presented herein could form the foundation of how colleges and universities can provide similar support to military dependents in higher education. The young adults who were not yet in kindergarten when the attacks of 9/11 occurred are now entering higher education. Their needs have not simply vanished with the awarding of a high school diploma, and these young adults are now trying to cope with an entirely new educational environment without the support that they have previously experienced. Military dependents are present in higher education, but they are not often identified, nor are there programs designed to support this cohort of students. While the nation largely honors the sacrifice of military members, veterans, and their families in general terms, it is shameful that the promise of a "free" college education for their children does not warrant additional institutional focus and support to ensure that promise is fulfilled.

Filling a Gap in the Literature

While there is significant research regarding the support and interventions available to veterans and active duty service members in higher education, these interventions are not focused on dependents. Research on institutional support for veterans demonstrates best practices that work to improve success rates for veterans and active duty members. Furthermore, significant research in the K-12 system supports the assertion that military children suffer more

anxiety, depression, and behavioral concerns which result in negative academic outcomes (De Pedro et al., 2014; Pexton et al., 2018; Tunac De Pedro et al., 2018). Although research discussed above and presented in subsequent chapters is available, there is no research focused on supporting military dependents in higher education. This study provides the foundation of such research in the hope that further research will add to the conversation. It is further hoped that this research will provide a bridge between the effective interventions currently in place in K-12 education and the necessary interventions required in higher education.

Addressing Issues of Social Justice and Equity

Veterans, military members, their spouses and children have been the focus of support, research, and interest, especially in light of America's engagement in its longest war which recently came to a calamitous conclusion. The length of the conflict puts the status, the health, and the resilience of military families in stark focus (Kritikos et al., 2019; Mustillo et al., 2016; Paley et al., 2013). Schools are increasingly being called upon to do more than teach the fundamentals of reading, writing and math. Evidence-informed education practices support the importance of helping students develop appropriate social-emotional skills which can improve academic outcomes (Balfanz, 2019). Military children whose lives are often disrupted by the constraints of their parent's military service require additional support. Providing institutional focus and support of this at-risk population of students will serve multiple purposes. First, institutions will be able to demonstrate that their "military friendly" designation is inclusive of all military-connected and military-affiliated students which will bolster their credibility in this area. Second, this country was involved in armed conflict for over two decades and continues to conduct global operations in support of geopolitical objectives. The generation of children who have been directly and indirectly affected by the most recent conflict have been harmed by the

residual effects of this conflict on the home front (Scott et al., 2014; Sullivan et al., 2019; Tunac De Pedro et al., 2011). With the increased focus on supporting veterans on college campuses, it is equally important to understand how their battle has become their children's burden. Failure to recognize the significant impacts and harms wrought upon this generation is a disservice to their parent's sacrifice and is disrespectful of this nation.

Advances in Practice

The potential for institutional change as a result of this study was limited. However, the impact of the interventions could have significant positive impacts for students. The reason the institutional change was limited was that the institution itself does not see a need to specifically identify and support military dependents as a separate cohort. Discussions with representatives from other community colleges and universities across the state indicate that this lack of focus is persistent across the state. This stance is at odds with my observations and goals related to this project. However, the larger implications for this study could be significant. If colleges and universities that enroll significant numbers of military dependents focused more directly on engaging these students and providing thorough, intentional support, there is little doubt that outcomes for these students, academically and personally, could improve. Additionally, this study addresses the gap between the support military dependents receive in K-12 education and their college experience. This study lays the groundwork for additional intervention and study of military dependents in higher education settings.

Inquiry Partners

The primary stakeholders related to this research was students. Parents, school administrators, college administration, and college student services staff were also stakeholders. Because enabling students to be successful in higher education was the primary focus of this

research, student experiences as military dependents informed the approaches to curriculum development. Since the students were initially enrolled in high school and college courses, parents were considered stakeholders because they have a vested interest in guiding their student's choices concerning higher education institution selection and enrollment in dual enrollment courses. Because of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), I did not discuss student's academic progress with their parents. FERPA is the federal law that protects student privacy and prevents the disclosure of academic records, including grades, to any entity without the student's permission. School administrators were considered stakeholders in that their decision to offer on-campus delivery of college instruction address issues of equity of access to college classes for underserved and underrepresented students.

This focus on access and equity is of particular importance for military-affiliated students in that changing family dynamics with regard to finances and transportation, as well as childcare for younger siblings, makes attending college courses at the college campus a significant challenge. Collaboration with faculty regarding both content and delivery of this instruction was also important. The division chair for English was a partner in this inquiry in their role of ensuring curriculum content was consistent with the objectives of the course. Faculty members within the English division were also partners in this inquiry both as mentors and as partners in the discussion of what content to include. Partnership with East Carolina County Schools' Director of College and Career Readiness regarding incorporation of technology and navigating the limitations of student access to specific computer-based platforms was critical. Partnership with East Carolina County School's technology experts and Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) professionals helped meet the needs of these students. East Carolina Community

College's Career and College Promise Liaison was essential in recruiting and retaining these high school students.

Summary

Continued involvement in global conflict affects military families in many ways. Their spouses, partners, and children remain at home and experience heightened anxiety, disrupted family dynamics, trauma, and loss. Significant research demonstrates that "military children experience tremendous psychological strain as a result of stressful military related life events" (Tunac de Pedro et al., 2011, p. 567). The stress and trauma of having military parents directly impacts their academic achievement (Scott et al., 2014; Sullivan et al., 2019; Tunac De Pedro et al., 2011). Colleges and universities are ill-equipped at large to address the high numbers of students entering college with significant mental health needs (Auerbach et al., 2016). However, there has been no identification or intervention focused specifically on military dependents whose trauma is a causal factor in their mental health concerns which directly affect their academic performance. The research that currently exists does not focus on military dependents in higher education. The importance of this research cannot be understated because there is a generation of young people who have experienced more stress than prior generations. This study sought to find ways to support these students as they transition to higher education. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the literature available related to VA education benefits, support of military students, support of military dependents in K-12 settings, and best practices for student success.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study focused on supporting the children of military service members in higher education by helping students develop self-advocacy, providing intentional academic support, and mentoring these students while they are concurrently enrolled in high school and college.

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to examine ways military dependents develop a sense of identity and belonging in higher education and to provide intentional, focused curriculum-based instruction designed to improve persistence, academic success, and utilization of institutional resources. These young adults, born just before or in the decades following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, are now entering higher education and are struggling academically and are not persisting at a rate consistent with their peers. These students have experienced trauma as a result of their parent's service, which is exhibited in higher rates of anxiety and depression.

The literature presented in this chapter begins with a discussion of the relevant student development theories and a discussion of the research regarding Third Culture Kids which lay the theoretical foundation of the study that follows. Background information regarding Veterans Education Benefits is provided because this information is useful in understanding the broad historical implementation of education benefits for military-affiliated and military-connected students. The sections focused on veteran success and student success in higher education provide information regarding the strategies and interventions necessary for all college students to be successful. The section focused on veteran student success is included to demonstrate that there is a significant body of research available to support the need for focused interventions for students in higher education especially veterans and military-connected students. The research supporting the need for focused interventions and institutional support of veterans in higher

education shifts to a focus on military dependents in the K-12 setting. The purpose of including this information is to highlight the distinct disconnect between available research on veterans in higher education and the available research in the K-12 setting that demonstrates that military dependents require high levels of institutional support and interventions. The research on risk and resilience in military dependents, the factors that affect academic success, and K-12 support for military dependents in primary and secondary education reveal that there is significant focus on supporting military dependents in the K-12 setting. No such research or programs exist to support those same students once they matriculate to higher education settings.

Theoretical Framework

Two primary theories undergird this research: Erikson's identity development theory and Chickering's student development theory. Identity theory applies to military dependents in that, in many cases, the student's identity as a member of the larger military community develops over time and in response to perceived support among peers, educators, and family. Specifically, college students are on the cusp of what Erikson (1980) identifies as identity diffusion in which adolescents begin to develop their core sense of self separately from familial and cultural identities (Merolla et al., 2012). Identity theory is further explored in the context of military dependents as "third culture kids" (TCK) in that Pollock and Van Reken (2009) ascertained that while TCKs are highly adaptable, a trait necessary in the college setting, these students also experience marginalization in academic settings. While the concept of TCKs is not new, it is an area of research that is recently expanding especially with regard to military dependents in higher education. Application of student development theory in conjunction with identity development theory is critical to providing focused support for students because the establishment of identity is central to student development. Resolution of student identity concerns allows students to

more fully develop their sense of identity and belonging (Patton et al., 2016). Because this research involves curriculum development and delivery, consideration of pedagogical theory is also important. Application of Chickering's theory of student identity development in the context of writing is explored using the model presented by Miranda et al (2017).

Knowing what to do and how to do it with regard to helping students in higher education is important. Understanding the research that guides how practitioners engage with students can guide effective practices and can engender institutional change. However, action must be guided by research that is grounded in accepted theoretical frameworks. It is well understood that military children require support in K-12 education. Primary and secondary schools work diligently to help these children by addressing the ways in which their parent's service cause concerns that affect the classroom. Furthermore, there is significant research that demonstrates the veterans returning from service require support in higher education (O'Connor et al., 2018; Rumann & Hamrick, 2010).

The methods and practices that institutions undertake to support veterans have proven to be effective in ensuring that veterans are successful in higher education. Yet, there is a cohort of students using VA education benefits who struggle in higher education. It seems sensible to use what is known about supporting military children in primary and secondary education, as well as what is known about helping veterans in higher education, to help this group of struggling students. It is vitally important that institutions work to support all military-connected students whether or not they use VA education benefits. Understanding the theories that undergird how these students can best be supported is critical as more and more of these students enter higher education.

Student Development Theory

Chickering's student development theory has been used to identify ways to assist commuter students, improve academic advising, implement experiential learning, understand adult learning, and understand work-based learning (Garfield & David, 1986). Student development is integrally connected to experiences and environments in education. It is critical for institutions of higher education to implement student services programs that support students while recognizing their individual strengths and differences (Garfield & David, 1986). Student development theory is grounded in three areas: psychosocial-identity formation, cognitive-developmental meaning-making structures, and personal preferences (Strange, 2004). Application of Chickering's student development theory to providing focused support for military-connected and military-affiliated students is critical. Recognizing that these students require focused intervention does not negate the strengths and experiences these students bring to college campuses.

Identity Theory

Erickson's identity theory is grounded in the understanding that society shapes the individual which then shapes social behaviors (Merolla et al., 2012). Role identity is an important consideration in how students develop social identities and integrate more fully into student roles (Merolla et al., 2012). This theory postulates that all individuals have multiple identities that they must navigate in different social settings (Merolla et al., 2012). Students undergo multiple identity transitions especially in late adolescence and early adulthood. As it relates to the current study, it is important to recognize that one of the primary reasons military dependents do not avail themselves of resources and support services identified as being for veterans is that they do not identify as veterans. This identification is correct, but fails to

encompass the larger military affiliation of these students. In recognizing student identity as a factor in use and personal growth, young military dependents entering higher education have spent their formative years cocooned in a support network that recognizes and values the sacrifices of military members and their families. Upon entering higher education, these support structures fall away and military dependents are left without the security of that identity as well as reticence to avail themselves of the resources that are available. Baxter Magolda (2001) expands on the theory of identity development to more fully assess the ways in which students developed from adolescence to adulthood. The longitudinal studies presented in Baxter Magolda's (2001) work provided a framework for understanding adult transitions and served as part of the framework for Lewis et al.'s (2005) longitudinal study of identity development during college. This study asserted that students experience a broad range of psychological changes that affect their identity development.

Third Culture Kids

Military dependents are a significant part of larger cohort of students referred to as third culture kids (TCK). While there is not a large body of research specifically related to military dependents as TCKs in higher education, Pollock and Van Reken (2009) explain that the challenges faced by these students is related to a sense of cultural homelessness that directly affects personal identity and leads to a sense of marginalization especially among similarly aged peers without shared experiences. This sense of cultural homelessness leads TCKs to experience difficulty with building relationships and seeking help (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). While TCKs are typically identified as those who have spent at least a portion of their developmental years outside of their home countries, it can be argued that in some ways all military dependents are TCKs. This similarity is highlighted by a highly structured organizational identity or

affiliation with military culture and structure and frequent relocation which can present a challenge for students who require additional help but are reluctant to seek assistance (Railsback, 2019). In the context of this study, understanding that military dependents have likely yet to fully develop their sense of self, it is important to acknowledge this identity as part of who these students are and who they are becoming.

Pedological Foundation

In order to develop curriculum content that seeks to support these students and help them develop a sense of identity within the context of their positionality within the larger military community it is important to use a pedological approach to the writing curriculum that supports student identity development. Feedback is essential to establishing identity and boundaries (Leggette et al., 2015). Encouragement throughout the writing processes and processing emotional and relational writing prompts are also essential in student identity development (Garrett & Moltzen, 2011; Primeau et al., 2013). This model can serve to improve learning outcomes because it shifts writing instruction away from teaching individual skills, abilities, and attributes of the writer and focuses more on teaching the holistic development of the writer (Miranda et al., 2017). The goal with this approach is to apply Chickering's and Erickson's theories of student identity development through a holistic approach to writing that focuses first on the individual student and their emerging identity as part of the military community.

Understanding how theory informs practice is important in identifying how to approach implementation of institutional change. Understanding that all students undergo multiple transitions which affect how they identify as individuals can lead to greater understanding of how to provide support to students. Understanding how students can be supported through these

transitions is critical. Developing students throughout these transitions will hopefully enhance their personal and academic success.

History of Veterans Education Benefits: WWII to Present

The college where this study took place is located near two major military bases. This co-location provides the basis for a student body primarily composed of veterans and military-affiliated students. Nearly 50% of the student population at the institution are veterans, active duty, or military-affiliated students. This connection between the college and the community it serves is vital to the economic growth and stability of the entire county. The students using VA education benefits represent a significant number of students whose educational opportunities are the result of nearly 75 years of veteran-focused benefits. Understanding the history of VA education benefits provides a foundation to understand the value and utilization of those benefits by all veteran students, as well as their eligible dependents.

No other government entitlement has had greater influence on the lives of service members than the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, which is colloquially known as the GI Bill (Bound & Turner, 2002; Serow, 2004). This comprehensive bill fundamentally changed the landscape of American society (Jolly, 2013). Although signed while troops were still fighting in World War II, the bill is securely grounded in the advocacy of the American Legion, which was founded shortly after World War I (Jolly, 2013; McMillan, 1994). The Legion's advocacy for returning veterans with respect to services and entitlements led directly to the establishment of the entity that later became the Veterans Administration. The severe economic crisis of the Great Depression led to significant protests by veterans demanding the bonuses they had been assured of as a result of their service. The advent of World War II was crucial in restoring jobs and assuaging the crippling economic situation.

Montgomery GI Bill

The Montgomery GI Bill is named for Gillespie V. "Sonny" Montgomery, a WWII veteran and congressional representative from Missouri. The revision of the GI Bill during the Cold War was both necessary and difficult; however, the results of the revised bill were immediate and positive (McMurray, 2007). One of the major outcomes of the revision was the professionalism of the volunteer force. The bill required all military recruits to have attained a high school diploma resulting in nearly 100% compliance within five years. An additional outcome of the Montgomery GI Bill is the proliferation of higher education offerings aboard military installations (McMurray, 2007). The Montgomery GI Bill provided increased tuition allowance, living expenses, and stipends for other school-related expenses. Eligibility for the Montgomery GI Bill required that participants elect to pay $100 a month for their first 12 months of service, serve three or more years on active duty, and not have already been commissioned through a military academy (Barr, 2015).

Post 9/11 GI Bill

In the Post 9/11 Era, returning veterans use their education benefits primarily at for-profit and community colleges across the country (Sewall, 2010). The Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 brought about the largest expansion of veterans benefits since WWII (Barr, 2015). The bill's passage resulted in an increase in veterans using the benefit especially at four-year institutions. The bill eliminated the requirement for service members to buy-in to the benefit in their initial enlistment through payroll deductions of $100 monthly for their first year of enlistment, and eligibility is generally determined by the amount of time served (Barr, 2015). Additional benefits of the revised GI Bill include the veteran's ability to transfer the GI Bill to

eligible dependents (VanBergeijk et al., 2012). This most recent change in VA education benefits has had a significant effect on higher education.

Since the end of WWII, veteran's education benefits have provided thousands of returning service members the opportunity to attend college. The impact of this legislation cannot be understated. According to former President Bill Clinton, the GI Bill provided veterans a chance to get an education, improve their socioeconomic status, and impact the economy in ways that had previously not been possible (as cited in Skocpol, 1997). While it is important to recognize the tremendous impact of this legislation, it is equally important to acknowledge the social structures that simultaneously contributed to limiting the opportunities for Black veterans. Similarly, it is important to acknowledge the limited research available that focuses on women veterans in all aspects. The lack of focus on Black and female veterans in education is beyond the scope of this study, but does provide opportunity for expanded focus on the intersectionality of systems designed primarily to support White, male veterans in higher education. Looking forward, it is important to understand and analyze the impact of recent GI Bill changes that allow dependents to utilize this benefit. While studies laud the scholarly achievement of veterans in higher education, the diversity of students using VA education benefits demands closer analysis in order to support specific cohorts of students utilizing one of the nation's most significant social welfare benefits.

Supporting Student Success in Higher Education

East Carolina Community College's Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success focuses on ways to increase retention, persistence, and completion rates. The intended outcome is that focused intervention, institutional support, robust student services and improved programs will result in improved student completion rates, GPAs, overall retention and

persistence to graduation. To that end, East Carolina Community College initiated a Student Success Team whose focus is to use research-based methods to improve student outcomes. The focus of this section of the literature review is to examine the institutional factors, student services resources, programs, student motivators, and success coach interventions that can provide support to all students. An understanding of what works for all students can be leveraged to identify the methods that work best for veteran students and for their dependents.

Focus on Student Success

Understanding the factors that can be used to evaluate student success is imperative because of the increased attention paid to college completion rates in recent years. Increased access and college attendance, specifically in community colleges, has not led to increases in graduation or completion rates (Bettinger & Baker, 2014; Goldrick-Rab, 2010; Mullin, 2012). Because of low completion rates, research over the past two decades has focused on identifying the factors that impact student success in colleges and universities. Open access in community colleges has not had a direct impact on student success in terms of completion (Goldrick-Rab, 2010). This claim is countered by Mullin (2012) who argues that the significant growth in the awarding of associate's degrees in the past 40 years is directly related to enrollment in community colleges. While the common-sense assumption might be that open access in community colleges provide greater access to higher education for first-generation or socioeconomically disadvantaged students, the greatest beneficiaries are middle-class students (Godrick-Rab, 2010). Nearly half of the students enrolled in higher education are enrolled at community colleges, and by virtue of open-enrollment, low cost, and connection to local work force initiatives, community colleges are becoming more and more diverse (Fong et al., 2017).

Measuring the impact of open enrollment practices at community colleges on student success is largely based on how that success is defined. The term student success "broadly refers to students reaping the promised benefits of the postsecondary experience and a combination of institution and student actions to realize the desired outcomes" (Kinzie & Kuh, 2017, p. 19). Defining student success in this way could be helpful, but there are additional metrics that can also be measured. Goldbrick-Rab (2010), Kinzie (2014), and Kinzie and Kuh (2017) offer additional factors that can be used to measure success, including completion rates, persistence, and number of degrees awarded. Similarly, Wirth and Padilla (2008) define student success as progress toward graduation or actually graduating college.

One factor, student expectation of college degree completion, is persistent among all high school students. Open admissions policies allow students significant flexibility in the pursuit of this objective, but also make measuring student success challenging. The majority of students enrolling in community colleges indicated that their educational goal is to receive a bachelor's degree (Goldrick-Rab, 2010). The motivating factors behind the pursuit of a college degree are evenly split between a desire to acquire job skills and personal interest. Regardless of intent, society's focus on "college-going rather than college completion" influences student expectations and outcomes (Goldrick-Rab, 2010, p. 444).

Defining student success while in college, as measured by GPA, persistence, or completion, provides specific metrics that can be analyzed to inform processes and procedures that can influence institutions. Another metric that can be used to measure student success is to measure the returns on investment by measuring student's capital input into society (Mullin, 2012). Higher education impacts on workforce development, especially as applied to community

colleges, can be measured by licensure rates, industry certifications, and job placement rates (Mullin, 2012).

Accountability

Given the political and social environment that demands accountability of colleges and universities combined with the fact that federal funding is often directly related to enrollment, institutions have significant motivation to find ways to help students succeed and to use student success rates as a recruiting tool. Federal and state programs have been designed to improve student success rates at college, including Achieving the Dream and Complete College America (Bettinger & Baker, 2014; Kinzie, 2014; Kinzie & Kuh, 2017; Wirth & Padilla, 2008). In 2009, President Barack Obama promoted the American Graduation Initiative (AGI) designed to improve college completion (Mullin, 2012). Colleges and universities across the country have focused on completion rates and strategies to improve retention for much longer than the President's directive (Bettinger & Baker, 2014; Kinzie & Kuh, 2017; Mullin, 2012). Each of these programs is focused on closing achievement gaps and improving outcomes for students.

Application and Implementation

Despite the broadly available research related to student success, Kinzie and Kuh (2017) contend that institutions do not fully implement policies and practices that yield positive impacts for students. There are many areas wherein community colleges can impact student success, including increasing access to financial aid, clear articulation agreements between community colleges and senior institutions, developing learning communities, implementing comprehensive student skills courses, and increasing student involvement on campus (Goldrick-Rab, 2010; Hatch & Bohlig, 2014; Kinzie & Kuh, 2017). Because so many students who enter community college intend to transfer to a four-year, bachelor's degree granting institution, it is imperative

for community colleges to have clear articulation agreements and pathways for students to follow. Yet, there is a gap between the research that clearly shows policies, processes, and programs that successfully support students in community colleges and implementation of those same practices. There are many factors that affect student success before they enter college and arrive on campus.

Factors that Affect Student Success

There are many variables that affect student success, including institutional factors, personal motivation, and personal factors, such as social, economic and academic barriers (Goldrick-Rab, 2010). Significant barriers to student success, especially in community colleges, include "insufficient time to study, competing employment demands, countervailing family and domestic demands, the lack of child care, car problems, limited funds, and vague career plans" (Wirth & Padilla, 2008). Nwaokoro (2010) focuses on improving student access to and understanding of technology by arguing that technology resources are the most used student resource on college campuses. Involvement in student activities on college campuses is critical to student success, but academic activities such as studying and doing homework, studying with peers, and completing assignments have a much higher impact on student success (Wolf-Wendel et al., 2009). Although the student's engagement in academic activities is critical to success, Wolf-Wendel et al. (2009) warn that weighting the student's role and responsibility over the institution's role in fostering involvement, engagement, and integration is detrimental to building a culture of student success.

Remediation

The significant amount of remediation required by many community college students places an additional burden on institutions and on faculty. Over 60% of college students require

at least one remedial course (Bettinger & Baker, 2014; Goldrick-Rab, 2010). Meeting the demand for remediation in fundamental reading, math, and writing requires institutions to provide significant resources for students in order to facilitate success. A lack of academic preparation for rigorous college coursework directly affects degree attainment. This factor is most prevalent among socioeconomically disadvantaged students, predominantly minorities (Goldrick-Rab, 2010; Laskey & Hetzel, 2011; Mullin, 2012). Lack of college and career readiness also affects these students' choice of post high school education. Economically disadvantaged students are more likely to pursue vocational rather than academic credentials which are more readily available at community colleges (Fong et al., 2017; Goldrick-Rab, 2010). Access to credit-bearing, transferrable college credit is important for degree completion. Students who enter community college through a developmental or remedial pipeline are less likely to complete a degree or credential (Allen & Lester, 2012; Goldrick-Rab, 2010; Hatch, 2017). One way to reduce this problem is to accelerate the remedial process (Hatch & Bohlig, 2014) and to provide supplemental instruction while students take for-credit courses (Crisp & Taggart, 2013; Hatch, 2017).

Financial Aid

One of the most significant factors that affects all college students is the availability of financial aid. Because community college students are significantly more likely than traditional college students to be working while attending college, their eligibility for financial aid is most at risk. These students are more likely to attend college part-time, which makes them ineligible for most financial aid (Goldrick-Rab, 2010). Understanding the intricacies of financial aid eligibility is an important factor in the pursuit of higher education. First-generation and socioeconomically disadvantaged students are less likely to receive accurate advice and information about financial

aid than their more socioeconomically advantaged peers (Goldrick-Rab, 2010). Comprehensive support programs, especially access to financial aid and scholarships, are critical to ensuring student success.

Advising and Student Services

Timely, proper advising is a critical factor in ensuring students take the right courses in sequence to ensure completion (Bettinger & Baker, 2014; Nwaokoro, 2010). Early alert systems that identify students who are at risk of failing should be leveraged by advisors to identify and assist students (Nwaokoro, 2010). Student services professionals and advisors need to be highly attuned to the barriers that students face on campuses (Wirth & Padilla, 2008). Understanding the actions and attitudes of students who are successful can help advisors counsel other students. Removing institutional barriers, such as access to financial aid and advising services, is critical to ensuring students can successfully navigate the bureaucracy of college (Wirth & Padilla, 2008). Encouraging students to take advantage of advising and other programs offered by student services is especially important due to the importance of student understanding of available support systems (Hatch, 2017).

Faculty

The importance of faculty and instructional methodology to student success cannot be understated. Teaching approaches, including relating content to transferrable work-place skills, are crucial to student success, yet most community colleges do not have the resources to invest in innovative teaching and mentoring practices (Goldrick-Rab, 2010). Certain faculty practices, including high expectations, prompt feedback, and student-faculty interaction, are directly linked to improved student outcomes (Akbarov & Hadžimehmedagić, 2015; Kinzie & Kuh, 2017).

Community colleges rely heavily on adjunct faculty to deliver instruction, a fact that has been blamed for low student success rates, yet this claim is not accurate (Allen & Lester, 2012; Rogers & Rogers, 2015). Rogers and Rogers (2015) argue that instead of blaming adjunct faculty for low student success rates in specific classes, institutions should invest broadly in professional development for all faculty. Faculty members in higher education are largely experts in their field of study, but they are not necessarily experts in teaching. This is not to say that these faculty members are not good teachers; many of them do not have formal training in the pedagogy and practice of education delivery. Faculty also play a significant role in student perceptions of college. Students who visit instructors' offices may be more engaged in academic endeavors; but, if they feel like that interaction was negative, they will be less likely to be successful academically (Wolf-Wendel et al., 2009). Building relationships with faculty is critical in improving overall satisfaction and retention (Akbarov & Hadžimehmedagić, 2015; Allen & Lester, 2012).

Students

Despite institutional and cultural factors that affect student success, the burden of actually succeeding in college falls largely upon the student. Fundamentally, the institution's focus on academics and support opportunities does little good if students do not take advantage of the resources available. Access to technology, tutoring, and internship opportunities are available to students who must actively use these resources to improve their academic success and achieve personal growth (Laskey & Hetzel, 2011; Nwaokoro, 2010). One of the single most important factors that predicts academic success is class attendance (Dollinger et al., 2008). Not attending class and not completing assignments are the most significant factors in students not being successful in college. Another significant factor that affects student success is the student's sense

of belonging on campus. Engaged students tend to participate in student programming designed to foster success (Hatch, 2017). Akbarov and Hadžimehmedagić (2015) identify six personal factors that affect student success: academic self-efficacy, organization and attention to study, stress and time pressure, involvement with college activity, emotional satisfaction, and class communication (p. 8). These factors have a significant effect on student outcomes and are often the focus of student success courses in colleges. However, identifying individual student factors can place too much of the blame of not being successful on the student instead of holding institutions equally responsible for providing a structure that supports students (Laskey & Hetzel, 2011). Student behaviors are an important component of student success, but colleges that place the burden of success squarely on students without providing focused interventions and support will not achieve measurable gains in retention, graduation, or persistence.

While a broad approach to increasing student success is vital, it remains important to address all of the concerns and obstacles students face including mental health, subsistence, financial stresses, sexual violence, racism, and other circumstances (Kinzie & Kuh, 2017). These factors dramatically affect persistence, completion, and attainment of credentials. Students face many obstacles as they enter higher education, including a lack of academic preparedness and a lack of awareness of the resources available to students, including mental health resources, financial aid, job placement, and academic support services. It is incumbent upon the institution to provide the environment that will foster success for students. Among the many factors that contribute to student success, one of the most significant findings is that students who feel connected to the college, to their instructors, and to one another stay in school and complete their studies at a significantly higher rate than those students who leave feeling as if they were not a part of the college community (Wolf-Wendel et al., 2009). Faculty play a significant role, not

just in delivering instruction, but in ensuring that students realize the connection between what they are learning in the classroom and how that will impact their future goals and employment opportunities (Crisp & Taggart, 2013).

Research-Based Interventions that Support Veteran Students in Higher Education

East Carolina Community College serves active duty, veteran, and military-connected students at a rate higher than many of the other colleges and universities in the state. Although there is a significant amount of research over the course of nearly two decades regarding serving these students, the institution lags well behind in providing support and programs for veterans and military-connected students. The institution's ongoing partnership with the local military bases works to provide educational opportunities to active duty military personnel. By providing daytime and evening courses that align with the active duty student's schedule, the institution meets a significant demand in providing off-duty education for Marines and Sailors. The institution's veteran's office also processes and audits VA education claims for students in accordance with VA regulations. With several hundred claims to process each semester, this office ensures that students are paid on time, schedule adjustments are addressed, and appeals are facilitated for students. If these functions were enough to address the needs of veteran students, the institution would be a model of institutional support for veterans and military-connected students and would be right to laud its status as a "military friendly institution."

Decades of research demonstrate that veteran students require additional support and programs beyond course delivery and benefit processing (Ackerman et al, 2009; Callahan & Jarrat, 2014; Dillard & Yu, 2018). As an institution that serves a significant number of military-connected students, it is inconsistent with the available research that no designated space for veterans yet exists on campus. Although there are plans to create this space, it will be several

more years before that happens. Because of the significant population of veterans and research that shows that success coaches can positively impact students, the institution designated a student success coach to work with veteran students. The program is in its fourth year, but the veteran success coach has only been in place for two years. With nearly half of its population affiliated with the military, it is impossible for one individual to handle all of the demands of all of the military-affiliated and military-connected students on campus.

Understanding the Military Learner

Defining student veterans goes beyond simply identifying their status as having served in the military or their use of VA education benefits (Callahan & Jarrat, 2014). Vacchi (2012) asserts that "the significant differences in socialization and culture between academia and the military demand a more inclusive approach" (p. 17). Military learners bring several strengths to the classroom, including leadership, teamwork, diversity, timeliness, and adaptability, but asking for help even when needed is not among their strengths (Callahan & Jarrat, 2014; Cox, 2019). "The most difficult task for any veteran to overcome may be learning that it is alright to need help and even more important to seek help when needed" (Vacchi, 2012, p. 18). Military learners also face the same challenges as other non-traditional students including family commitments, work, and financial obligations (Ahern et al., 2015; Callahan & Jarret, 2014; Williston & Roemer, 2017). Understanding that the student veteran's experience is significantly different from their peers is critical in developing programs and support structures for veteran students (McBain et al., 2012; Williams-Klotz & Gansemer-Topf, 2017). Military dependents in higher education have similar attributes as veterans especially with regard to adaptability, diversity, and leadership ability.

Academic Skills

Because they are accustomed to structure and rigid adherence to rules, veteran students struggle to adapt to inconsistent policies (Cox, 2019). Veterans often feel underprepared for the rigorous academics in college. Student veterans often have generally stronger study habits and engagement in academic activities outside of the classroom than their peers. However, when Grade Point Average (GPA) is used as the metric to measure academic success, veteran students often do not achieve academic success (Williams-Klotz & Gansemer-Topf, 2017). Because there is often a significant gap in time since the student last participated in formal education, veteran students feel inadequate and unprepared for the rigor of college academics.

There is often a foundational skills gap that affects veteran students in higher education. Whether the gap can be attributed to poor secondary or primary school preparation or the length of time since the veteran has been in formal schools is unclear. Callahan and Jarrat (2014) contend that veteran students are better prepared for rigorous college course work; however, the significant number of veteran students enrolled in remedial education at the institution belies this contention. Callahan and Jarrat (2014) are correct in asserting that veterans possess a unique ability to face and overcome challenges in academics. The academic skills that Callahan and Jarrat (2014) identify in their argument, such as the ability to set and reach a goal, achieving balance, and accountability, are not uniquely academic skills, and service members have honed those skills through their military training and experience. Similarly, military dependents often have gaps in foundational skills but do demonstrate maturity, resilience, and work-ethic more often than their peers.

Institutional Programs

One of the most significant risk factors for veterans entering higher education is their lack of ability to successfully navigate the bureaucracy of the institution (Vacchi, 2012; Williams-Klotz & Gansemer-Topf, 2017). Many of these students do not know who to ask for help navigating this bureaucracy, and when they do know who to ask, they do not know what to ask (Callahan & Jarrat, 2014). Programs designed to benefit students can sometimes seem trivial for veteran students. Orientation sessions designed for traditional students are not helpful for veterans who would be better served by veteran-specific orientation programs, especially those that focus on veteran-specific resources (Osborne, 2014).

The transferability of credit earned at traditional institutions and for military training presents a significant barrier for veterans entering higher education (Osborne, 2014; Vacchi, 2012). The Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) works to assist veterans and institutions of higher education in defining military occupational skills and coursework in an effort to clarify what should be evaluated as college credit (Ahern et al., 2015; Vacchi, 2012; Williams-Klotz & Gansemer-Topf, 2017). However, there is no consistent method of applying military credit as college credit to reduce the amount of time veterans need to spend completing their education or credential.

There are several areas in which institutions can address the barriers to higher education experienced by veteran students including timely VA benefit processing, focused financial aid support, health care, academic advising, and faculty awareness (Callahan & Jarrat, 2014; Elliott, 2015; Osborne, 2014; Vacchi, 2012). Certifying Officials need to process VA benefits quickly and accurately to ensure timely payment of stipends and tuition. Early enrollment for veterans may help with the processing timelines and delayed processing for non-payment, while VA

education benefits may help alleviate some of the burden on veteran students (Cox, 2019; Vacchi, 2012). The ability to leverage resources in support of veteran students can have campus-wide implications for all students and especially for military-connected students (Williams-Klotz & Gansemer-Topf, 2017).

A significant resource that provides support for veteran students is on-campus veteran centers. These centers are often the primary resource used by veterans on campus because they enable veterans to connect with other veterans (Lokken et al., 2009). The student veteran center or lounge provides veterans with a place to study, socialize and access veteran-specific resources (Ackerman et al., 2009; Ahern et al., 2015; Osborne, 2014). Creating a single location for veterans to access resources and support is integral to providing comprehensive service (Ahern et al., 2015). Ensuring that this resource is available for all military-connected and military-affiliated students could be critical to ensuring success.

Academic Programs

Successful completion of a degree involves planning which begins with advising. When working with military-connected students, advisors should understand the student's needs (Cox, 2019; Vacchi, 2012). Staff who are more familiar with the needs of military-connected students play an important role in helping those students (Williams-Klotz & Gansemer-Topf, 2017). Veteran-specific orientation programs, facilitated by student services personnel, can also factor into a successful transition for veterans (Williams-Klotz & Gansemer-Topf, 2017).

Veterans entering higher education must transition from a very rigid culture in the military to one that is much more lax in higher education with regard to roles, rules, and responsibilities. Removing institutional barriers related to enrollment, financial aid, and resources is important in presenting a veteran-friendly atmosphere on campus. Veterans, faculty,

and peers could benefit from learning more about each other. Institutions that provide events and facilities in which these relationships can be fostered realize positive results for veteran students and for the larger campus community. Partnering with agencies and community organizations can also positively impact veteran student success. In many ways, the institutional supports intended for veterans can be applied to fostering an environment that also supports military dependents. Without significant research on military dependents in higher education, the best practices and research conducted regarding veteran student success could provide a model for facilitating programs that support their dependents.

Faculty Awareness of Veteran Needs in Higher Education

Elliott (2015) asserts that "academic culture can be characterized as liberal, relative to the military, given that most university professors identify themselves as liberal" (p. 107). These cultural and political differences can lead to discomfort especially when veterans are singled out as representative of the entire military or as spokespersons for explaining conflicts (Elliott, 2015; Osborne, 2014; Williams-Klotz & Gansemer-Topf, 2017). Because less than 1% of Americans have served in the military, there is a significant gap in the understanding of military culture which often leads to misunderstandings (Osborne, 2014). Providing events and activities that help non-veterans understand the military experience could help to reduce the military-civilian gap on college campuses (Elliott, 2015; Osborne, 2014). Military experience, especially traumatic combat experiences, have a direct influence on student veterans, and colleges that provide awareness of this factor can help students adjust more seamlessly (Mangan & Wright, 2009).

The Culture Gap

Veteran students enter higher education having experienced much more than their civilian peers. Veteran students have often had more responsibility and decision-making autonomy than their peers and, in many cases, their instructors (Vacchi, 2012). Military culture and civilian culture are markedly different from each other, which can affect the student veteran's ability to transition to the less structured environment of higher education (Dillard & Yu, 2016; Jones, 2016; Vacchi, 2012).

Institutional efforts to facilitate veteran's transitions are extremely challenging because of perceptions that higher education is anti-military (Gonzalez & Elliott, 2016; Osborne, 2014). In some cases, military students refrain from self-identifying as such because of this perception and the fear that they will be treated negatively by faculty and peers (Gibbs et al., 2019; Osborne, 2014). Veterans are often viewed "in terms of negative stereotypes, harmful myths, and over-generalizations perpetuated by the media" especially among faculty who largely identify as liberal or left-leaning (Taylor et al., 2016, p. 50). Gonzalez and Elliott (2016) indicate that this perception is held by veteran students, and that they believe these stereotypes hinder them in the classroom. Faculty can help assuage this perception by being informed about the military and military-connected students' experiences in order to help support veteran students in transition and ensure that they are successful in academic settings (Gibbs et al., 2019). The importance of the transition to higher education as part of the personal growth process for veterans cannot be underestimated. There is a significant cultural benefit to higher education that should be recognized as a crucial factor in helping veterans successfully reintegrate in civilian society (Jones, 2016).

Faculty Interactions

Much of the available research described below is from the perspective of veterans and advocates for veterans in higher education. This research does not capture perceptions of faculty members with regard to their interactions with military-connected and veteran students in their classrooms. Despite an institution's best efforts to promote a military-friendly atmosphere, many veterans and their dependents feel that they are viewed negatively, especially by faculty. Many faculty members have no military experience and their perceptions of the military experience are informed by this lack of direct experience. Faculty have a significant impact on both the experiences and the perceptions of student veterans and their experience in higher education. In working with veteran students, faculty need to be cognizant of overgeneralizing military experiences by not assuming that all veterans have had similar experiences or that any one veteran can speak authoritatively on topics such as war, violence, or military ethics (Vacchi, 2012). It is extremely important to understand that the point of view and experiences of each veteran student is different (Dillard & Yu, 2016; Fernandez et al., 2019; Gibbs et al., 2019).

Faculty also need to be cognizant of their role in engaging veteran students and in helping them become part of the campus community (Gonzalez & Elliott, 2016). Focusing on an individual veteran student as a representative of the military or the military experience can make veteran students extremely uncomfortable (Fernandez et al., 2019; Gibbs et al., 2019; Vacchi, 2012). Conversely, facilitating classroom interactions wherein veterans feel as if their experience and identities are valid enhances veteran student success (Jones, 2016). Understanding that veterans often experience physical, emotional, and mental challenges is critical in creating a classroom environment conducive to creating success for veterans (Fernandez et al., 2019; Gonzalez & Elliott, 2016). Facilitating a classroom environment that is inclusive of the

experiences of all students will not only help veterans transition to higher education, it will also help all students learn and grow in the classroom.

Faculty Education

Educators serve an increasingly diverse student body often comprised of equally diverse veteran students. To best serve veteran students, comprehensive information and training about best practices for working with veteran students is necessary (Gibbs et al., 2019). Faculty are encouraged to "refrain from expressing [their] personal opinions about military service or recent wars or conflicts in [their] classes or advising appointment" (Gibbs et al., 2019, p. 350). This cautionary note is echoed by Vacchi (2012) and Fernandez et al. (2019) as a way of facilitating a military-friendly atmosphere on campus.

Providing faculty with opportunities focused on training and educating them to recognize the needs of student veterans can be especially impactful (Dillard & Yu, 2016). "Beyond simply reaffirming a university's mission to support student veterans, educating faculty and staff about military life and culture could compliment a campus's broader commitment to diversity and social understanding" (Dillard & Yu, 2016, p. 183). Providing this training during faculty training days would involve little direct input from college administration other than the support required to do so (Dillard & Yu, 2016). Dillard and Yu (2016, 2018) contend that faculty training led by subject matter experts, preferably veterans who are also faculty, yields the most positive response.

Risk and Resilience in Military Dependents: Factors that Affect Academic Success

The research presented thus far focuses on supporting veteran transitions and increasing their success in higher education. This research is substantial and provides significant recommendations for improving the veteran experience in higher education. Conversely, even

when mentioned in passing in the literature, there is little focus on supporting military dependents, especially military children, in higher education. Military dependents are present in higher education, but they are not often identified, nor are there programs designed to support this cohort of students (Brendel et al., 2014). These students are present in higher education in large numbers, and they are struggling in the same ways they struggled in primary and secondary education. The research presented in this section focuses on the challenges these students face as they grow up as part of the larger military community specifically in primary and secondary schools. This research and the supporting best practices can and should inform the ways colleges and universities support military dependents in higher education.

Identifying these Students

It is important to understand that there is no systematic approach to identifying military dependents in higher education. Secondary school records do not follow these students to higher education, and the special education accommodations that these students relied on prior to entering higher education are often not identified. Without self-identification, the only consistent way to identify military dependents in higher education is by tracking their use of VA education benefits. Other than reporting GPA as a measure of eligibility, the VA does not require reporting of dependent usage of VA education benefits including Transfer of Eligibility and Chapter 35 benefits separate from the overall reporting and verification of a student's enrollment status (VA education benefits, 2020). Students using VA education benefits can be identified through careful examination of student records, but there are many more military-affiliated students, especially at the community college level. This lack of identification as an at-risk cohort of students means that these students do not have the support they may have been accustomed to in primary and secondary schools. Given the fact that these students are entering higher education

in significant numbers, it is important for colleges and universities to consider referring to the best-practices of supporting military-affiliated students that exists from a K-12 perspective.

Military Families in Focus

Veterans, military members, their spouses and children have been the focus of support, research and interest, especially in light of America's continuing engagement in its longest war. The length of the conflict puts the status, health, and resilience of military families in stark focus (Kritikos et al., 2019; Mustillo et al., 2016; Paley et al., 2013). Military families are generally well-adjusted, but are subject to additional stress and trauma as a result of the extended war (Cozza et al., 2005; Kritikos et al, 2019). As the wars in the Middle East continue with no end in sight, there is continued interest in the ongoing effects of trauma, multiple deployments, and combat-related trauma on military families (Cozza et al., 2005; Sullivan et al., 2019). Even when parents are not deployed, military commitments and the inherent dangers of training and related stressors cause significant stress for military families (Sullivan et al., 2019).

The principle focus on military families is related to the effects of parental deployment, injury to parents as a result of war, and the death of a parent as a result of combat (Cozza et al., 2005; Department of Defense, 2010). Parental deployment is positively linked to increased depression and behavioral concerns with the cumulative amount of deployed time having more significant negative impacts on children (Mustillo et al., 2016; Sullivan et al., 2019). When compared to their non-military affiliated peers, military children are more likely to experience anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation (Gorman et al., 2010; Sullivan et al., 2019). The way families react to deployment and to each other can add additional stress and increase anxiety among children and between spouses (Paley et al., 2013; Ruff & Keim, 2014). Family dynamics, such as divorce, remarriage, and infidelity, cause increased anxiety which is especially impactful

for military children already facing deployments and uncertainty (Mustillo et al., 2016; Paley et al., 2013).

Relocation

Military families generally move every three to five years and often do not have family nearby to provide support (Ruff & Keim, 2014; Stites, 2016; Sullivan et al., 2019). This lack of extended family support can exacerbate behavioral and mental health concerns in military families (Paley et al., 2013). Frequent moves over the course of a military parent's career means that children must frequently adapt to new social situations and to new schools (Ruff & Keim, 2014; Sullivan et al., 2019). Even without deployments as a factor, increased social anxiety, especially in middle and high school, as a result of the need to make new friends and learn new social norms in school can cause increased depression and anxiety. Limited eligibility for extracurricular activities and athletics can also impact students' opportunities in higher education (Ruff & Keim, 2014).

Military children change schools between six and nine times from kindergarten through high school. Significant stressors affect military children when they transition to new schools including the transfer of school records, especially when Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are involved. Differences in pacing and curricula also negatively affect military children when they move from school to school. Moving to different schools, especially in the middle of an academic year, can cause foundational skills gaps that continue through high school and in to higher education (Ruff & Keim, 2014).

Parental Deployment and Injury

Parental deployment has been positively linked to increased anxiety and depression (Cozza et al., 2005; Department of Defense, 2010; Stites, 2016; Sullivan et al., 2019).

Deployments follow a pattern of psychological stressors that can affect children's behavior, sleep, and mood, which is evident even in the youngest children (Stites, 2016; Sullivan et al., 2019). Parental stress is also a factor in how well children adapt to deployment cycles (Department of Defense, 2010; Sullivan et al., 2019). These fragile family dynamics are further exacerbated when military members experience PTSD as a result of deployment, especially if they do not seek treatment (Holmes et al., 2013; Kritikos et al., 2019).

Parental injury in combat also increases anxiety and disrupts the family structure, especially when lengthy recovery periods are necessary (Cozza et al., 2005; Holmes et al., 2013). Since the military response to the terrorist attacks on 9/11 began, over 16,000 service members have died while on active duty resulting in over 12,000 children facing the loss of a parent (Sullivan et al., 2019). These children have significant mental health outcomes as a result, including anxiety, PTSD, and depression (Gorman et al., 2010; Sullivan et al., 2019). Parental death increases the risk for persistent complex bereavement disorder, PTSD, and depression (Cozza et al., 2017; Holmes et al., 2013). The increased risk for significant mental health outcomes as a result of a parent's deployment, injury or death can negatively impact the child's education, social adaptability, and continuing family stability.

School

Military dependents often accompany their parents to global duty stations. The services available to these children vary by location and the impact on special education and mental health services can be disruptive for the development of these children (Sullivan et al., 2019). School-based support for these children is extremely important, and the focus on supporting military children in schools is increasing. In communities near large military installations, the public-school system is well-acquainted with the needs of military children in K-12 schools, but

this focus is not unilaterally the case in all areas, especially those not located near military installations. The Kansas State University (KSU) College of Education recognized that other schools not located near military bases were not nearly as familiar with the needs of military children and deliberately partnered with the military to train teachers to identify the specific needs of these students (Risberg et al., 2014). Ruff and Keim (2014) and Stites (2016) support the need to provide staff training among teachers and counselors for military children. The KSU College of Education identified four areas of focus for teacher preparation when considering military children: understanding of the culture of the military, tailoring teacher training to incorporate concepts related to military students, collaboration across the campus to involve multiple academic disciplines, and developing models to ensure sustainability of the program (Risberg et al., 2014, p. 44).

Encouraging teachers to understand military culture is important in helping them provide an inclusive environment for students. Providing teachers with an understanding of the complex deployment cycle and how it affects families helps teachers recognize when students are exhibiting increased negative behaviors as a result of increased anxiety (Risberg et al., 2014; Ruff & Keim, 2014). The East Carolina Public School District recognizes the Month of the Military Child and partners with local military installations throughout the school year to provide support for military dependents in public schools. The Department of Defense Education Activity supports recognition of the Month of the Military Child as a way of "establishing an educational system that progressively builds the college and career readiness" for military dependents (Department of Defense Education Activity [DoDEA], n.d.). Their partnership includes a school liaison program designed to provide support for military students and to provide resources for educators.

Military children experience increased depression, anxiety, and behavioral concerns directly related to their parent's military service. These concerns are significantly affected by repeated deployments, parental injury, and parental death as a result of their military service. Academic performance is among the many impacts of these behavioral and mental health concerns. Military children's education is affected both by increased mental health concerns and frequent relocation and enrollment in different school systems. The differences among schools and curricula cause these children to experience significant skills gaps that affect their academic performance. In addition to the academic changes, military children must also renegotiate social standing as a result of changing schools. While military children are generally well-adapted and resilient to change, it is important for school systems and educators to understand the dynamics of military families and the effects on education outcomes for military children.

K12 Support for Military Dependents in Primary and Secondary Education

Primary and secondary schools, especially those located close to military bases, are well-equipped to address the needs of military dependent children in schools. Because of deployments, frequent relocation, and the possibility of parental injury or death, military children have been the focus of ongoing research and support efforts in light of the nearly two decades long war in which the US has been involved (De Pedro et al., 2014; Pexton et al., 2018). The research on best practices for supporting military children presented herein could form the foundation of how colleges and universities can provide similar support to military dependents in higher education. The young adults who were not yet in kindergarten when the attacks of 9/11 occurred are now entering higher education. Their needs have not simply vanished with the awarding of a high school diploma, and these young adults are now trying to cope with an entirely new educational environment without the support that they have previously experienced.

Learning Impacts

Schools are increasingly called upon to do more than teach the fundamentals of reading, writing and math. Evidence-informed education practices support the importance of helping students develop appropriate social-emotional skills, which can improve academic outcomes (Balfanz, 2019). Military children whose lives are often disrupted by the constraints of their parent's military service require additional support. For families who experience the stressful cycle of deployment, return, and continued training, school settings often provide a safe environment. Military children are affected by their parent's combat deployment, which can impact the child's psychological well-being and directly impact their classroom focus and performance (Pexton et al., 2018).

Ensuring that these students feel safe in schools is an important component of ensuring that children can learn. Military children are often subject to real or perceived threats that impact the way they learn and their integration in the learning environment (Balfanz, 2019). Schools are aware that stress, scarcity, trauma, self-doubt, and the day-to-day struggles of belonging in a military family directly impact a student's sense of security in the home and in the classroom (Balfanz, 2019; Tunac De Pedro et al., 2018). "Emotional well-being promotes health, brain development, and optimal learning, while chronic and excessive stress and loneliness are toxic to brain development" (Balfanz, 2019, p. 2). An integrated approach to providing emotional, educational, and social support for these students is extremely important.

School Climate and Mental Health

School climate is an important factor in the mental health of military children in schools. Nearly four million school children have a parent who has served in the military, and over two million of those children have a parent or parents who have served in combat (Ohye et al., 2016;

Tunac De Pedro et al., 2018). Gorman et al. (2010) conducted a study that found that behavioral and mental health referrals increased by 18% among children whose parents were deployed. Clearly, parent's deployment status affects students in the learning environment. Students whose mental health needs are not addressed are not adequately equipped to learn (Pexton et al., 2018). Behavioral outbursts can inhibit learning by interrupting scheduled learning to address behaviors. Therefore, it is important that schools understand the mental health impacts of parental deployment and injury in identifying how best to support military children in the learning environment.

The military and surrounding communities often provide community-based support for families of deployed service members, but schools play an integral part in providing comprehensive support. Supporting and caring school cultures can help provide positive social and emotional support for military children (Astor et al., 2013; Tunac De Pedro et al., 2018). Such an environment can help reduce school violence, increase academic achievement, increase motivation, and increase resilience among children of deployed service members (Tunac De Pedro et al., 2018). In schools, one of the most important factors for children experiencing additional stress related to their parent's deployment is the relationships they build with teachers and school staff (Astor et al., 2013; Ohye et al., 2016; Tunac De Pedro et al., 2018). Because children experience greater stress and anxiety during a parent's deployment, these relationships can be critical to promoting mental wellness. A caring environment in school, which includes trained, supportive staff, can help to minimize academic concerns and at-risk behaviors (Astor et al., 2013).

Building Communities

Building positive communities in large civilian public schools can be challenging. The majority of military children attend civilian public schools and are not the focus of discrete research and programming (Astor et al., 2013; Scott et al., 2014). School environments can help to promote "positive social, emotional, and psychological development among military children and adolescents experiencing a variety of military life stressors" (Astor et al., 2013, p. 235). Community environments are also critical in supporting military children. The community support near military installations is consistent, but within civilian communities removed from military bases, the support is not always evident. The Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission is designed to address the need for training and implementation of school-wide support for military children (Astor et al., 2013; Scott et al., 2014). Improvements, such as addressing the extracurricular participation requirements for military students and flexible attendance policies, could provide some relief for these students.

An important consideration in supporting military dependents is the negative effects of lack of support for military families on retention and recruitment of military personnel. Although this should not be the primary concern for schools, it is important to consider how military families identify the best communities to support their needs when they consider transfers and career decisions. One of the most important factors for military families is the quality of education available for their children (Scott et al., 2014). Differences in academic standards and athletic eligibility vary by state and can have significant impacts for military dependents (Scott et al., 2014).

Academics and Enrollment

Collaboration between the Department of Defense and civilian schools in identifying and prioritizing the needs of military children includes grants and training (Scott et al., 2014). Specifically, there are four areas where military children require support in education: enrollment, placement and attendance, eligibility, and graduation. Enrollment support includes improving the transfer of student education and immunization records, as well as allowing flexibility in enrollment age for kindergarten. Placement and attendance support include identifying appropriate special education or gifted services that may be required and placement in appropriate courses. Course placement, especially for honors and Advanced Placement (AP) coursework is important for students who intend to pursue higher education upon graduation. Eligibility support includes flexibility in enrollment dates as well as eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities including athletics. Graduation support includes waiving courses required in one state where similar coursework has been completed as well as acceptance of state-specific end of grade or end of course assessments (Scott et al., 2014).

Public schools have become increasingly aware of the fact that military children require additional support in schools. The stressors associated with being part of a military family have significant academic, social, and behavioral impacts on school-aged children. While academic support for at-risk students is an important part of supporting all children in schools, it is the relational and emotional support that impacts military children the most. Raising awareness and building communities of support for military children help ensure that stressful transitions and deployment cycles do not negatively impact learning. Standardized school curricula and standards are most helpful to military children because they transition between school districts regularly.

Summary

The literature reviewed reveals a significant disconnect between what is needed for students, especially military-affiliated and military-connected students, to be successful in higher education and the demonstrated needs of military dependents. The literature presented in this chapter provides the background information regarding Veterans Education Benefits. This information is useful in understanding the broad historical implementation of education benefits for veterans and military-connected students. It is clear that focused interventions facilitate the success of veteran students. These supports and resources are not unique to the needs of all students, but do require specific attention to the lived experiences of veterans and an understanding of the education benefits and policies governing those benefits. It is vitally important for faculty to be aware of the specific needs of veteran students and by default, the needs of military-connected dependents whose lived experiences often involve trauma and upheaval as a result of their parent's service. Research clearly shows the need for intervention for military dependents in K-12, and it is evident that those same students require focused and intentional support upon entering higher education. The research clearly demonstrates the need for intervention, and in the case of higher education, continued focused intervention and support. No such research or programs exist to support those same students once they matriculate to higher education settings. Chapter 3 describes the methods used in this study to more fully comprehend ways in which military dependents can be supported in higher education.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS OF INQUIRY

This study focused on supporting the children of military service members in higher education by developing students' self-advocacy, providing academic support, and mentoring for these students while they are concurrently enrolled in high school and college. Data and student work samples were used to analyze trends in academic performance and persistence. An initial survey of all students was intended to be used to ascertain students' level of connectedness to the larger military community and to understand their perceptions of their identities within that community. Following implementation of the curriculum discussed in this chapter, semi-structured interviews were conducted to understand how students view themselves as members of the campus community in the context of being military-affiliated students.

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to examine ways military dependents develop a sense of identity and belonging in higher education and to provide intentional, focused curriculum-based instruction designed to improve persistence, academic success, and utilization of institutional resources. Specifically, the children of military veterans and active duty service members have never experienced a world in which they were consciously aware of this nation not being engaged in international conflict. These young adults are now entering higher education and are struggling academically and are not persisting at a rate consistent with their peers. Providing students with the tools they need to navigate campus resources and understand their positionality within the military community may help them be more successful in the college setting.

Focus of Practice Guiding Questions

Although there is a lack of focus and support for military dependents in higher education, there has been significant focus on military veteran students in higher education. Questions

pertaining to what factors affect veteran student success have been the focus of significant research. These same questions were also asked pertaining to the children of military members in higher education.

This study was guided by the following questions:

- Guiding Question 1 (GQ1) - How can military dependents be identified in higher education as a method of ascertaining whether or not they struggle academically?
- Guiding Question 2 (GQ2) - How do students' experiences and identities as military dependents shape their perceptions of their academic endeavors?
- Guiding Question 3 (GQ3) - How does focused attention on student identities as military dependents and recognition of their academic needs affect student perceptions and academic performance?

The existing research on how to ensure veteran students are successful in higher education was leveraged to develop programs and interventions that address the needs of military dependents in higher education. Additionally, understanding what has worked for military children in K-12 informed higher education practices related to the conduct of this study. Bridging the gap between the supports these students depend upon in the K-12 setting and the lack of support in higher education is essential to ensure that these students are successful.

Inquiry Design and Rationale

This mixed methods study focused on supporting the children of military service members who were dual enrolled in high school and college classes in higher education. The mixed method model for this study allowed for the integration of both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a more complete understanding of the research topic. For this study, the explanatory sequential mixed methods approach was used. The study was conducted in a

series of phases designed to align with and address the guiding questions. Creswell and Creswell (2018) describe this method as the researcher using quantitative research to gather information and data then analyzing the results which are then explained using qualitative data. The initial quantitative phase of this study applied this approach in that an examination of data contained in the college's student information database regarding the continuing eligibility for VA education benefits was used to determine whether military dependents were struggling in higher education at a rate higher than their peers. The second phase of this study applied a qualitative approach to address that problem by implementing a structured, intentional curriculum that used identity development theory and trauma informed education practices to help students build a sense of identity as a member of the larger military community. This phase primarily employed a narrative methodology whereby students explored their identities as military dependents through writing of their experiences. For this approach, student responses were framed within their personal experiences, cultural understanding, and historical contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In the third phase of this study, semi-structured interviews using both open-ended and close-ended questions were used to explain the pertinence of the initial guiding questions and to determine the efficacy of the second phase.

Context of the Study

East Carolina Community College is a public, two-year associate degree and certificate awarding institution located in a rural southeastern county in North Carolina. Data available from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) indicates that the enrollment at the college is nearly 6,000 students. The college enrolls a predominately white student population (62%). The majority of students are under the age of 24 and are enrolled in on-campus classes (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2020). In the national database, there is no reported

information on veteran students in general and no available information concerning military dependents specifically.

East Carolina Community College, in partnership with East Carolina County Public Schools - a pseudonym - began offering college courses to high school students at high school campuses during the 2019-2020 academic year. Initially, the plan was to only offer courses that did not duplicate courses available within the high school curriculum. For that reason, English was not initially offered as an option for students. Based on the success of the pilot offerings in the 2018-2019 academic year, county administrators requested additional course offerings at high school campuses, including English. I was asked to be the first full-time English instructor to provide these classes. The plan for the 2020-2021 academic year was to offer first-year English courses at five of the seven high schools in the county. Due to COVID-19, these courses were offered on-line for all students.

The county is home to nearly 200,000 people and its incorporated area includes one of the largest military bases in the country, which is home to a large Marine Corps division and associated support and logistics commands. Also located within the county is a large Marine Corps air station that is the home of a Marine Aircraft Wing and associated support and logistics squadrons. This large military presence has a direct impact on this study. The larger community is directly impacted by the large military presence within the county's borders. The 2017-2018 IPSAC Update for 2017-2018 for East Carolina County Public Schools indicates that 38% of elementary, 33% of middle school, and 30% of high school students enrolled in the schools are federally connected (Institute for Transportation Research and Education, 2018). Federally connected students are defined as students whose parents are military stationed aboard the military installation but living off base or civilians who work at the base. The report

acknowledges that the percentage of students identified as federally connected students does not reflect all students who are military affiliated (Institute for Transportation Research and Education, 2018). The percentage of students in the school district who are in some way connected to the military is higher than other communities of similar size. In this study, military-affiliated students are considered to be students whose adult caregiver(s) served in the military, retired from the military, or are currently serving in the military. This distinction is important because simply identifying students whose adult caregiver is currently serving fails to account for the children of former service members who have left active duty or who have retired and chosen to remain in the area of their last duty station. It is common for students' military-connected adult caregiver to retire having completed 20 years of service at some point while the student is in high school.

Ethical Considerations

As the classroom instructor, the choice of content and focus did not need approval. However, the basic content structure was discussed with and approved by the appropriate division chair. Access to students is inherent in classroom instruction. Institutional Review Board approval was requested and approved. The initial data collection and analysis was within the researcher's scope of work and included institutionally reported data. The analysis of student data included individually identifiable information that was removed and in no way reported to enable the identification of individual students. An additional ethical concern as the instructor concerns student grading. As both researcher and instructor, I was extremely cognizant of my responsibility to remain unbiased towards students regardless of participation in surveys and interviews and to not allow my role as researcher influence student interactions, grades, or satisfactory course progress. I completed the modules provided by the Collaborative Institutional

Training Initiative (CITI Program) required by East Carolina University for treatment of subjects in research in Spring 2020.

In Phase I of this study, the data analyzed was accessed through the institution's data management system. While student records do contain personally identifiable information, the information retrieved for purposes of analysis did not include personally identifiable information. Student names and discreet student identification numbers were excluded from the information collected. Instead, the student's military affiliation as determined by their use of VA education benefits and their overall and semester GPAs were collected and compared to a larger sample of students using VA education benefits.

The initial design of this study involved the conduct of a survey during Phase II. Two factors affected the implementation of this aspect of Phase II. First, IRB approval was not granted until mid-way through the semester so the survey was not conducted. An additional factor affecting the delivery of this survey was that informed consent could not be obtained because of the requirement to conduct virtual classes during the semester. Delivery of an online survey was not requested as part of the initial IRB approval process for the survey. In Phase III of this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants who volunteered to be interviewed. At this point in the study, no minor students were asked to participate.

Review of the requirements for conducting this study indicate that this study was exempt from IRB approval because the research was conducted in an established educational setting and involved normal educational practices that would not adversely impact students' opportunity to learn required education content. However, because participants were interviewed, IRB approval was required (see Appendices A and B) and all participants were asked to acknowledge their consent to participate (see Appendix C). All of the interactions with students, surveys, and

interviews were recorded in such a way that disclosure of the students' responses outside of the context of this research could not be used to individually identify any specific student and were not likely to cause a risk of liability or cause damage to the students' educational advancement or reputation.

Inquiry Procedures

In Phase I of this study, I reviewed the data regarding military dependents using VA education benefits attending the institution as related to their academic success. The objective of this review of available institutional data was to answer Guiding Question 1. For this purpose, academic success is defined as passing, with a grade of C or better, college level courses while maintaining a GPA of 2.0 or better. These metrics were selected because the C grade is the minimum required grade to ensure the course will transfer to a senior institution in North Carolina (North Carolina Community College System, 2020). The minimum GPA was selected because the VA requires a GPA of 2.0 or better to remain eligible for education benefits (VA education benefits, 2020). The analysis of this data will help determine whether that military dependents in higher education struggle academically at a rate that exceeds their peers.

Phase II included implementation of curriculum-based instruction delivered in an entry level English course focused on creating narratives and analysis around the central question of students' identity as military-affiliated students. This structure was designed to facilitate discussion of military identities and experiences of high school students enrolled in college-level courses and drew from student development theories. An additional curriculum grounded in the college student success course may be developed in conjunction with the writing course with the same cohort of students. In this course, students would be introduced to the fundamental factors and behaviors that affect college student success. Focused attention would be paid to discussions

of resources available for military-affiliated students including support structures. The intended outcome is that students will be well-equipped to avail themselves of the resources and support structures available at colleges and universities when they attend upon graduation from high school. Phase III included semi-structured interviews with students during their first semester of full-time college attendance following high school graduation. These interviews were conducted asynchronously via Qualtrics in order to facilitate student participation upon approval from IRB as an addendum to the original study plan (see Appendix B). In Phase III, I analyzed the impact of the interventions discussed in Phase II. Figure 1 illustrates the correlation between each phase of the study and the expected methods used to answer the guiding questions.

Phase I

For purposes of this study, there was a need to establish as fact that military dependents were actually struggling at East Carolina Community College. This need arose, at least in part, because the Veterans Administration does not require colleges to report on specific cohorts of beneficiaries, including military dependents. The VA does not require reporting of this demographic of students, although the usage of VA education benefits is tracked and reported. Because this data is not tracked at the federal, state, or institutional level, it is necessary to establish, at least in part, that there is a need to track these students and then to identify interventions that will help those students be successful in higher education. The overall data on all types of benefit usage is reported and is available through open source documentation. However, this available data cannot be used to identify this cohort of students in a meaningful way.

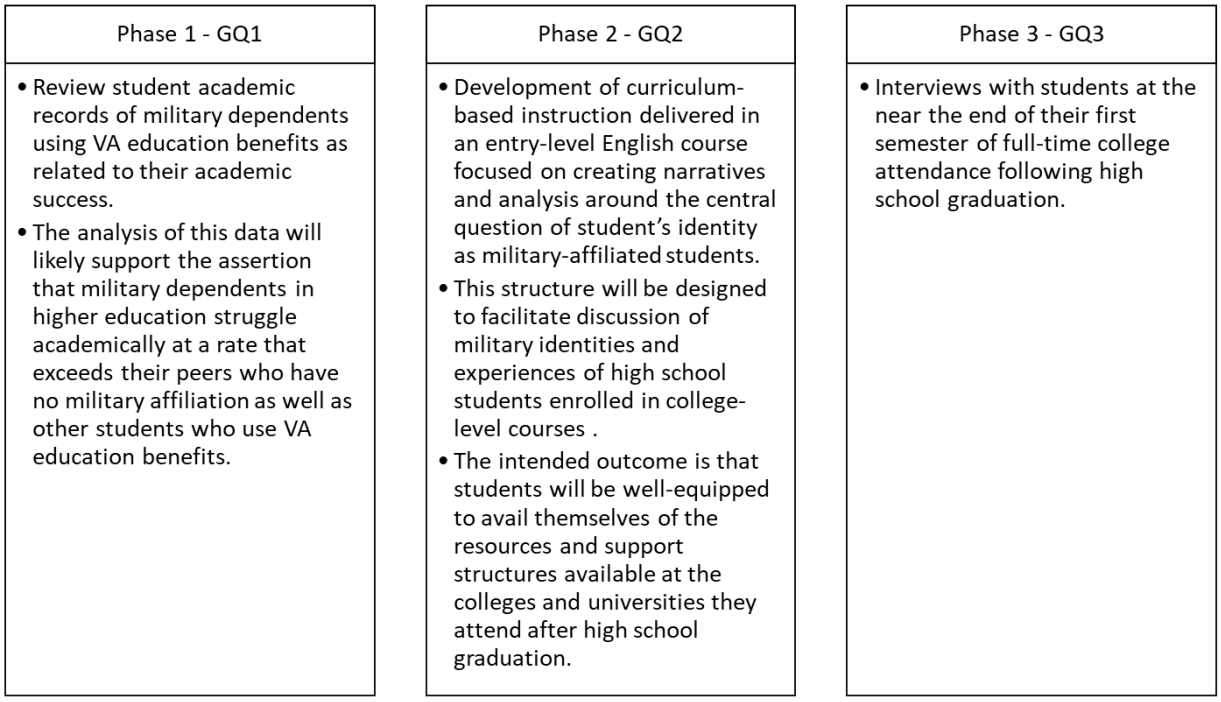


Figure 1. Study phases and guiding question correlation.

Institutions do not have complete data on military dependents enrolled in higher education, nor do those institutions report that information to the Veterans Administration. At the community college level, the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) dashboards do not have any data related to veterans or military dependents. So, even if the data is collected, it is not leveraged or reported. The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) does have data on veteran students; however, this data is limited to the expenditure of all types of Veteran Education funds (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.gov). The type of benefit is not identified (i.e., Transfer of Eligibility or Chapter 35) and there is no useful data that can be analyzed from that reporting mechanism.

As of 2018, nearly two million school-aged children have a parent who has served in the military, and over two million of those students have a parent or parents who have served in combat (Ohye et al., 2016; Tunac De Pedro et al., 2018). There is no estimate of how many young adults who are military dependents have already entered or completed higher education. It is clear, however, that military dependents will continue to enter higher education in significant numbers. In order to grasp how many students could require support in higher education, it is essential to identify those students in a consistent manner.

Research Design

Phase I was used to determine if military dependents are struggling academically by reviewing the data reported to the Veterans Administration (VA) pertaining to the suspension of education benefits and probationary status of beneficiaries. Phase I of this study provided the quantitative data necessary to ascertain the degree to which military dependents struggle in higher education. The criterion for probationary status is having a GPA below 2.0. The criterion for suspension of benefits is having a GPA below 2.0 for two consecutive semesters. The

Veterans Office reports the status of beneficiaries at the end of each academic term. This report was used to identify students who use transferred Transfer of Eligibility of benefits and Chapter 35 benefits. Each of these categories of benefit can be assigned to the dependents of military members. To ensure that the cohort does not include spouses who are dependents, the student record was examined to determine, among other factors, recent high school graduation, institution and high school attended, and residency status. These additional factors were used to identify that the student is the child of a military member rather than a dependent spouse. This data was compared to the overall data concerning VA education beneficiaries to determine the extent to which military dependents struggle to maintain eligibility for VA education benefits.

Probation and Suspension Analysis

The data presented in Table 2 demonstrates that among VA education beneficiaries, military dependents comprise a significant percentage of the overall number of students using VA benefits whose benefits are in danger of being suspended. The VA requires students to maintain an overall GPA of 2.0 or better in order to maintain eligibility for benefits. Following the second semester of college enrollment, students whose GPA is below 2.0 are placed on probation. Students then must increase their GPA to the 2.0 threshold or better in the following semester. If the student's GPA remains below 2.0 for a second consecutive semester, the VA suspends the student's eligibility for VA education benefits.

Faculty Referral Analysis

The second data set that was examined was faculty referrals. The faculty referrals process was initiated in the Spring 2019 semester, so there are three semesters of data, not including the Spring 2020 semester. Current trends in faculty referrals during the global pandemic with all instruction being delivered asynchronously do not align with the number and frequency of

Table 2

Analysis of Probationary/Suspension of VA Benefits Status

Semester	Status	Number of Students	Average GPA of all students on probation/suspension	Percent of military dependents	Average GPA of Military Dependents
Summer 2019	Probation	15	1.44	47%	.756
Summer 2019	Suspended	20	1.469	65%	1.426
Fall 2019	Probation	27	1.139	41%	1.245
Fall 2019	Suspended	24	1.393	48%	1.426

faculty referrals when compared to previous semesters. For previous semesters, this data was examined to determine the number of military dependents who have been referred by faculty.

Military dependents were identified as such by determining the VA education benefit they are using. In Fall 2019, the report of faculty referrals was analyzed to identify military dependents and whether they persisted into the Spring 2020 semester. Each of these students are contacted upon receiving a referral and encouraged to engage with the Student Success Team as an intervention. These students' academic progress had been tracked throughout the Spring 2020 semester, and students have been encouraged to participate in academic skills seminars, coaching, and mentoring. With the disruption caused by the ongoing global pandemic, the number and frequency of faculty referrals is significantly lower when compared to previous semesters.

In Spring 2019, the Student Success Team initiated a faculty referral process using E-Trieve which is part of the Colleague system. The Colleague system is a database used by the institution for student data including grades, demographics, program of study, financial aid eligibility, and progress toward program completion. An analysis of the number of referred students who are military dependents also supports the assertion that military dependents struggle academically in higher education. The data in Tables 3 and 4 shows that military dependents are struggling academically, and that instructors across the curriculum readily identify students who are struggling even without necessarily knowing that these students are military dependents. These findings are significant because the referrals represent real-time indications that military dependents are struggling academically.

Table 3

Military Dependents as a Percentage of Faculty Referrals

Semester	Referrals	# using VA education benefits	Military dependents	Military dependents as a percentage of all VA beneficiaries	Military dependents as a percentage of overall referrals
Fall 2019	221	88	49	55%	22%
Spring 2019	198	68	47	63%	23%

Table 4

Fall 2019 GPA Analysis of Students Referred by Faculty

Student Status	GPA	Differential
Non-Military Referred Student	3.489	+.859
All Military-Affiliated Students	2.28	+.35
Military Dependents	2.14	-.049

Data Analysis

The analysis of data indicates that military dependents struggle academically at East Carolina Community College. This cannot be an anomaly. Military dependents struggle academically in that they have lower average GPAs than their peers. Within the demographic of students using VA education benefits, military dependents comprise the majority of students whose benefits are either in a probationary or suspended status. The significance of these findings is that the data shows, in real-time, that military dependents struggle academically at a higher rate than their peers. This is further indicated by the disproportionate number of military dependents who are referred by faculty members concerned about their academic progress while enrolled in their course. This analysis shows that more study is necessary to identify strategies to support these students. A chi-square analysis of the numbers of referrals compared to GPA for non-military students and military dependents shows a chi-square value of 4.2712 with a p-value of .036552 which is significant (see Table 4). Military dependents are more likely to struggle academically than their non-military affiliated peers. Further chi-square analysis of referrals and GPA for veterans compared to military dependents shows a chi-square value of 3.8794 with a p-value of .048882 which is also significant (see Table 3). Among the cohort of students referred during the Fall 2019 semester, military dependents were statistically more likely to struggle academically than other discreet cohorts.

While there is significant research that supports and interventions available to veterans and active duty service members in higher education, these interventions are not focused on dependents. Research on institutional support for veterans demonstrates best practices that work to improve success rates for veterans and active duty members. Furthermore, significant research in the K-12 system shows that military children suffer higher anxiety, depression, and behavioral

concerns which result in negative academic outcomes. The research presented in Chapter 2 supports both of these assertions, but there is no research focused on supporting military dependents in higher education. This study provides the foundation of such research in the hope that further research adds to the conversation.

Summary of Phase I

Phase I analysis demonstrated that military dependents struggle academically. While it cannot necessarily be extrapolated that every military dependent in every institution struggles, it can be argued that based on the results of the analysis at East Carolina Community College and conversations I have had with VA representatives from other community colleges and agencies across the state, the problem is persistent across the board. If there is support for the assertion that these students struggle academically upon matriculation into higher education, it stands to reason that these students require additional support and focus. While I am not in the position to effect institutional change and programs, there remains an opportunity to provide meaningful interventions and support for military dependents. Early intervention, as indicated in the literature review, is a primary avenue for affecting positive changes for students. In this case, intervention prior to full matriculation in higher education may provide students with the tools and skills they need to be successful in college.

Phase II

In Phase II, beginning in the Spring 2021 semester, I implemented a writing curriculum focused on expressions of patriotism and the military in an English course comprised of students who are dual enrolled in both high school and East Carolina Community College. Through this curriculum content, students will explore their changing identities through writing, while meeting the core objectives of the course. The rationale for implementing the curriculum content

in the spring semester is important. The cohort of students from the fall to spring semesters should be consistent. During the Fall 2020 semester, I, as the instructor, will develop relationships with students and familiarize students with the basics of college level writing. During the Spring 2021 semester, relying on the relationships that have been developed, I will introduce the content discussed above. Through the course of weekly reading responses related to the theme of the course, I provided content that enabled students to explore their experiences as military dependents in the context of literature. The student responses were collected and analyzed in an effort to more readily understand the student's sense of identity within the context of being a military dependent. Student responses were also analyzed to gain additional insight into the student's development of their identities as military dependents.

The assignments for this curriculum were based on readings focused on patriotism and the military. In accordance with the required course objectives, there are three primary modules for the second semester writing course. Appendix E provides a syllabus for this course. These modules were structured to include weekly reading responses, weekly discussions, and a major writing assignment. The first module focused on writing in the humanities. For purposes of this study, the first module included historical works viewed through the lens of literature with a focus on American identity. Appendix E provides details regarding the writing in the humanities content and assignments as well as rationale for selection of texts. Each of the readings in this module focused on the development of American identity and allowed the students to explore their own identities in the context of what it means to be an American. The major writing assignment for this module was a literary analysis of one of the assigned readings. The prompt for this assignment was to analyze how American literature examines American ideals of patriotism, belonging, and national pride.

The second module for this course focused on writing in the social sciences with a primary emphasis on rhetoric. This module included weekly readings and responses to selected texts. The major assignment for this module was a rhetorical analysis of a political, military, or national speech or essay. Appendix E provides details regarding the writing in the social sciences module content, readings, and assignments as well as rationale for selection of texts. The major writing assignment for this module was a rhetorical analysis of one of the assigned readings or related text of the student's choice. The prompt for this assignment was to analyze the use of rhetoric as it relates to citizenship, protest, belonging, or another related topic.

The third module for this course focused on research in the sciences. For this module, students chose a research topic related to the theme of the course and researched that topic. Potential research topics included the military industrial complex, selective service, the military-civilian gap, patriotism, nationalism, or any other topic related to the theme of the class. This module included weekly reading responses to selected texts. Appendix E provides details regarding the writing in the sciences module content, readings, and assignments as well as rationale for selection of texts. The major writing assignment for this module was a research-based essay on a topic of the student's choice.

For each module, weekly writing assignments were drawn from shorter works included in "Of Thee I Speak," which is a collection of patriotic quotes, essays, and speeches. Weekly writing prompts encouraged students to explore their perceptions of patriotism, American culture, and military engagement. Students were encouraged to write for approximately 30 minutes in response to the quote. These writings were part of the weekly discussions during the course.

Inquiry Approach/Intervention

The intervention proposed in Phase II was designed to help students understand their identities as part of the military community. It is recognized that not all of the students were military dependents; however, the thematic approach to teaching writing engaged all students. The reason this approach was selected is because the evidence gathered in Phase I indicates that military dependents struggle academically in higher education. Because the study was conducted in the course of my normal duties, there was no conflict with the implementation of the course design. The considered approach to incorporating a themed approach to writing in which students explored the topic of patriotism and the military allowed them to come to a greater understanding of their identities as members of the larger military community.

Phase II incorporated qualitative methodologies. Consistent with the goals of qualitative research, it is necessary in this case to understand the complexities of student identities in the context of their military affiliation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Empowering these students to tell their stories facilitated deeper understanding of their experiences and minimize the power dynamic that is existent between instructor and student.

Summary of Phase II

Phase II of this study was implemented as a semester long writing course with the theme of patriotism and the military. This course allowed students to explore their identities as members of the military community and provided them with the tools they need to be successful in a college writing class and by extension in college level courses. Analysis of student works helped me understand how these students perceive their academic endeavors in regard to their experience as military dependents. Students who graduated from high school at the end of the

Spring 2021 semester and enrolled as a full-time student in an institution of higher education in the following fall were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews in Phase III.

Phase III

Phase III included interviews with students who completed Phase II. These interviews were conducted asynchronously based on the student's preference and availability.

The interviews focused on further identifying students' needs as they transitioned to full time college students. One interview was conducted in the Fall 2021 semester near the end of the students' first semester of full-time college enrollment. The student was asked how their identity as a military dependent affected their academic success and use of veteran focused support systems in college.

Students selected for this phase were students who completed Phase II, graduated from high school, and entered college as a full-time student in the following fall semester. Students were invited to participate via email. Students were invited to participate in the interviews during their first semester of full-time college enrollment. The student interview protocol (see Appendix F) was used to facilitate the interview and was conducted asynchronously using a Qualtrics survey as approved in an amended request to the IRB in the Fall 2021 semester. Upon agreeing to participate in Phase III interviews, students acknowledged their consent to participate as the initial question in the survey (see Appendix C). Participants were unable to proceed to the remaining interview/survey questions without acknowledging consent to participate. Student's personally identifiable information was maintained separately from their responses. Questions 1 through 28 were demographic questions which will be analyzed for similarities among participants in order to more fully understand similarities and differences among participants. The open-ended interview questions were recorded and analyzed to determine consistent themes.

The student narratives related to their college experience and identity as a military-affiliated student were examined and analyzed to understand student experiences on campus. Phase III focused on answering Guiding Question 3, how does focused attention on student identities as military dependents and recognition of their academic needs affect student perceptions and academic performance, whereby students will be asked how they perceive that the information they learned in Phase II has impacted their college experience.

Analysis of Approach

The initial phases of this study included exhaustive review of the literature pertaining to student success and veteran student success in higher education. This review revealed that there is a gap between what is known to support military-connected students and actual practice. Phase I of this study demonstrated that this gap in support is highly correlated to the academic progress of military dependents in higher education. Using this information, I developed a strategy to intervene early with this particular cohort of students in order to provide guided study of identity and opportunities to explore their military identities prior to matriculation as a full-time college student. The use of student writing samples to evaluate the ways in which military dependents identify with their military experience serves as a launching point for understanding how colleges and universities can provide additional, structured support for these students.

Bridging the gap between high school and college as a method of preparing students for college success is critical in providing students with the awareness of resources available to them upon full time matriculation. Providing students with the opportunity to explore their identity as a member of the larger military community allows them to advocate for themselves when it comes to utilizing benefits and resources labeled as being for veterans. Colleges and universities adequately market military friendliness and veteran resources, but military dependents are

hesitant to avail themselves of these resources, such as tutoring, veteran study spaces, veteran services personnel and advisors, for many reasons. Student responses to open-ended questions will focus on student perceptions and be reported as a way to make sense of those experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Summary of Phase III

During Phase III, students who graduated from high school and entered college as full-time students were contacted and asked to participate in semi-structured interviews. This interview was analyzed and the student narratives were developed to demonstrate how students are navigating their college experience. Specifically, I used Phase III to provide concrete answers to the guiding questions. The intent of Phase II is to provide students with the tools they need to become stronger self-advocates and to help them develop their sense of identity as members of the military community and as college students. Phase III attempted to ascertain how a subset of these students navigates their college experience while recognizing and reconciling their identity as military-affiliated students with their identities as members of the campus community. The interview focused on identifying how students access campus resources and whether they identify with veteran organizations on campus. Additionally, students were asked about the degree to which they use VA education benefits, their perceptions of their preparedness for college, and their utilization of campus resources specifically those identified as being for veterans. Answers to these questions will guide the suggestions for future research.

Inquiry Design Rigor

Data collected in the initial phase of this study utilized the Appointment Plus system purchased by the college, as well as the Colleague system used for maintaining student data. In Phase I, students were identified as military dependents in three ways:

- Students utilizing transferred VA GI Bill benefits – Chapter 33 Transfer of Eligibility
- Students identified in the system as being military dependents for residence purposes
- Students who self-identified as military dependents or whose high school transcripts indicated that they had graduated from a Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) high school

Upon identification, student GPAs and eligibility for VA education benefits were entered in to a spreadsheet. This data in this spreadsheet was cross-checked for accuracy using the Colleague System to verify the validity of the student data. Data type validation was conducted on the GPA column to verify that there were no null values and a range and constraint check was used to verify that all GPA values were within the 0.0 to 4.0 range. The veteran column of the spreadsheet values were "Y" and "N". This column was validated using a data-type check to verify that no other values were entered. This list of students was compared to a list of students who had an appointment with the Student Success Team. Student GPAs and eligibility were compared to the same metrics of the broader student population who had also met with the Student Success Team. The same verification process was used with the data in this spreadsheet. Having verified the accuracy of the entered data, GPA columns were averaged using the functions within the spreadsheet. This analysis supports the theory that military dependents struggle academically in higher education. This trend holds over the course of three semesters worth of data reviewed in similar fashion. This data forms the foundation of the study in an effort to find ways to improve the academic outcomes for military dependents. What I had anecdotally observed proved to be consistent with the data.

Limitations and Assumptions

The most significant assumption related to this study is that it is important to understand the needs of military dependents in higher education. Because of this assumption, it was further assumed that institutions would be interested in improving educational outcomes for military dependents. Specifically, for study participants, it was assumed that they would be forthright about their experiences and needs in higher education.

This study was specific to military dependent children in higher education. The study was conducted at a North Carolina Community College, which primarily serves a military community. Therefore, it was expected that the results and recommendations of the study may not be applicable at every college or university. Colleges and universities that do not serve a significant number of veterans or military dependents may not see the need to implement changes or to identify specific cohorts of students. This study specifically focused on military children in higher education and their experiences.

The limitations of this study included the presumption that military dependents would be forthright in expressing the challenges they have faced in higher education. Potential biases also present possible limitations. I recognized the potential bias related to a strong personal affiliation with the subjects and with the potential impacts of the efficacy and effectiveness of this study. All efforts were made to identify the possible biases and determine ways to lessen the impact of the participants and on the study overall.

Role of the Scholarly Practitioner

An important factor in understanding a researcher's perspectives and positions in regard to the research they have undertaken is to recognize how their experiences, biases, and understanding affect their perspectives. These aspects of a researcher's perspectives affect the

manner in which they approach their analysis of the data they have collected and how they interpret the importance of that data. This considered the needs and experiences of military dependents in higher education. Significant research demonstrates the need for support for young military dependents in K-12 education, but there is little examination of the needs these same students have upon matriculation in higher education (Department of Defense, 2010). The extant literature focuses primarily on supporting the veteran student as they transition from military service to academia. As a veteran and as an educator, I have experienced these transitions. I completed my undergraduate degree while serving on active duty and completed my graduate work while serving as a reservist. As an undergraduate, I was active in the veteran's association and worked to support other veteran and active duty students in their pursuit of higher education. As a student success coach, I worked closely with veteran's service officers and student service personnel to support veteran students in the community college setting. As an instructor, I understand that every student has unique needs and experience that affect them on an elemental level before they even step foot inside the classroom. For many of my students, those experiences are associated with their parents' military service.

Veteran students, at my institution and at many institutions across the country, experience support and focused intervention. These students are the focus of research and accountability measures driven by congressional and institutional demands for a return on the investment of funds and institutional resources (Cate et al., 2017). This support and focus works for veterans (Ackerman et al., 2009). Veterans achieve higher grades and complete degrees at a higher rate than their peers. However, there is a cohort of students using veteran education benefits that has not been as successful. These students are the dependents of military veterans using veteran

education benefits that have either been transferred from a parent or are benefits awarded because of a parent's disability or death due to the parent's military service.

As an educator, I have taught these young adults in both high school and college. My own children are also affected. Both my spouse and I deployed multiple times during their young childhood. Both of my children experienced relocation, skills gaps in foundational knowledge due to relocation, and increased anxiety which has affected their academic performance. One of my children recently graduated from a University of North Carolina system school. She moved from a community focused on providing support to military children in local schools to a college community that is not geographically located near any major military installations in the state. Her experience is not unique, and there are over six million military children whose parent has deployed in support of the ongoing conflicts across the globe. I have seen how being part of a military family affects students both as a parent and as an educator. As a veteran, an educator, and as a parent, my experiences provide both credibility and passion to this research because of my intimate understanding of how institutions can work to provide support to military dependents in higher education. My experience as a veteran in higher education, my experience as a teacher, and the passion I have for young adults like my daughter who have experienced significant challenges as a result of their parent's service strengthens my position as a researcher in this study.

Summary

Having established the need to further support military dependents in higher education in the initial phase of this study, the subsequent phases will endeavor to identify how that support can be best implemented in the classroom. This inquiry will involve the implementation of a second semester writing curriculum focused on the military and patriotic identities as a tool for

understanding military dependents in higher education. The final phase of this study will involve reaching back to student participants upon matriculation as full-time college students to understand how their identities as members of the military community impact their college experience. Chapter 4 explores the results of this study in an effort to understand how the interventions impacted the student experience in college.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The findings presented in this chapter provide the foundation for the recommendations shared in Chapter 5. The analysis and conclusions are limited due to the framework of the intervention which was exacerbated by COVID-19. Despite the limited findings, analysis of the collected data reflects that the argument can and should be made that providing support to military dependents in higher education is worthwhile and important. This endeavor may look different in the future, especially in light of the recent changes to the United States' presence in Afghanistan and the changing mission for U.S. forces globally. The fundamental challenges of being a military child are not likely to change because it is not possible to predict what missions and deployments military forces will engage in moving forward. Military members will continue to change duty stations regularly and deploy abroad either with their families or without them. The military lifestyle will continue to affect children and influence their educational experience in primary and secondary school and in higher education. Even though military members will no longer deploy to Afghanistan, there are still millions of children who are affected by their parents' service. Therefore, the obligation to address the challenges faced by these students and subsequent generations of military dependents remains.

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to examine ways military dependents develop a sense of identity and belonging in higher education and to provide intentional, focused curriculum-based instruction designed to improve persistence, academic success, and utilization of institutional resources. The experiences of military children directly affect their mental and emotional well-being, which in turn affects their academic performance. Specifically, the children of military veterans and active duty service members have never experienced a world in which they were consciously aware of this nation not being engaged in international conflict.

Military dependents experience trauma as a result of their parents' service, which is exhibited in higher rates of anxiety and depression (De Pedro et al., 2014; Pexton et al., 2018). Furthermore, these students experience "marginality… which sets them permanently apart from [the] culture in which they find themselves" (Patton et al., 2016, p. 269). Colleges and universities are ill-equipped at large to address the high numbers of students entering college with significant mental health needs, which is causing a significant mental health crisis (Auerbach et al., 2016). This crisis further harms military dependents whose needs are both ignored and unidentified. There has been no identification or intervention focused specifically on military dependents whose lived experiences as members of the subculture of the military directly affect their academic performance and sense of personal identity.

Two primary theories undergird this research: Erikson's identity development theory and Chickering's student development theory as applied using the model presented in Merolla et al. (2012). Identity theory applies to military dependents in that, in many cases, the student's identity as a member of the larger military community develops over time and in response to perceived support among peers, educators, and family. Specifically, college students are on the cusp of what Erikson (1980) identifies as identity diffusion in which adolescents begin to develop their core sense of self separately from familial and cultural identities (Merolla et al., 2012). Identity theory is further explored in the context of military dependents as "third culture kids" (TCK) in that Pollock and Van Reken (2009) ascertained that while TCKs are highly adaptable, a trait necessary in the college setting, these students also experience marginalization in academic settings.

While the concept of TCKs is not new, it is an area of research that is recently expanding especially with regard to military dependents in higher education. Application of student

development theory in conjunction with identity development theory is critical to providing focused support for students because the establishment of identity is central to student development. Resolution of student identity concerns allows students to more fully develop their sense of identity and belonging (Patton et al., 2016). Because this research involves curriculum development and delivery, consideration of pedagogical theory is also important.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the study in regard to the guiding questions. The following questions guided the study in attempting to fulfill the purpose:

- Guiding Question 1 (GQ1) – How can military dependents be identified in higher education as a method of ascertaining whether or not they struggle academically?
- Guiding Question 2 (GQ2) - How do students' experiences and identities as military dependents shape their perceptions of their academic endeavors?
- Guiding Question 3 (GQ3) - How does focused attention on student identities as military dependents and recognition of their academic needs affect student perceptions and academic performance?

To answer these Focus of Practice guiding questions, I used a mixed-methods design conducted in three distinct phases. In Phase I of this study, I reviewed student academic records of military dependents using VA education benefits as related to their academic success. This academic success is defined as passing, with a grade of C or better, college-level courses while maintaining a GPA of 2.0 or better. These metrics were selected because the C grade is the minimum required grade to ensure the course will transfer to a senior institution in North Carolina. The minimum GPA was selected because the VA requires a GPA of 2.0 or better to remain eligible for education benefits. The analysis of this data supports the assertion that

military dependents in higher education struggle academically at a rate that exceeds their peers who have no military affiliation as well as other students who use VA education benefits.

Phase II included the development of curriculum-based instruction delivered in an entry-level English course focused on creating narratives and analysis around the central question of a student's identity as military-affiliated students. This structure helped facilitate discussions of military identities and experiences of high school students enrolled in college-level courses and drew from student development theories. The intended outcome would be that students were well-equipped to utilize the resources and support structures available at the colleges and universities they attend after high school graduation. Phase III included an interview with a student near the end of their first semester of full-time college attendance following high school graduation.

Chapter 4 includes an analysis of student responses to structured prompts submitted during Phase II. This analysis included a description of the data collection process and emerging themes based on student responses. Analysis of the academic success of students who participated in Phase II and a discussion of the interventions used to ensure students were successful is also included.

COVID-19

The global pandemic began in the United States in January 2020 and in March 2020, it became apparent that every aspect of life would be influenced. Businesses, schools, colleges, churches, and stores closed across the nation in an effort to slow the spread of one of the deadliest viruses the world has ever faced. While responses to the pandemic varied across the nation, schools in North Carolina closed for in-person instruction beginning in March 2020. Students and teachers began the arduous process of navigating online instruction and attempting

to provide meaningful interactions and effective instruction during a very challenging time. In the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, schools in the East Carolina Public School District determined that they would implement a hybrid, cohort model for instruction. This model allowed students to attend in-person instruction with an assigned cohort two days per week. Students in cohort A attended school in-person on Monday and Tuesday while students in cohort B attended in-person instruction on Thursday and Friday. Wednesdays were designated as a remote instruction day. East Carolina Community College, the institution where this study was conducted, determined that all classes would be delivered online throughout the Fall 2020 semester.

Because student schedules were so varied and students in different sections attended different schools, coordination of scheduled synchronous, remote classes was very challenging. Initially, I thought it would be easy to hold synchronous online classes on Wednesday because all of the students would be home and presumably available. I originally scheduled synchronous class meetings to correspond to the times the class would normally meet on the college campus (i.e., 8:00 a.m. to 8:50 a.m.). However, it quickly became apparent that not all students could attend a virtual class meeting at the time scheduled for their section. So, I scheduled virtual class meetings to begin at 8:00 a.m. and continue on an hourly basis until 2:00 p.m. I ensured that students had access to the link to participate in any session that was convenient to them. One of the complicating issues was that their high school teachers also scheduled virtual class meetings on Wednesdays and required attendance in those sessions.

Despite the scheduling conflicts, approximately 70% of enrolled students participated in virtual class meetings on a weekly basis. This process and requirement to participate in weekly virtual class meetings continued in the Spring 2021 semester because East Carolina Public

Schools continued their cohort model during the second semester of the academic year until after Spring Break. After Spring Break, the school district decided that all students would return to in-person instruction five days a week. The college did not return to fully in-person instruction during the Spring semester. This change had a significant impact on student participation in virtual class meetings, continued enrollment, and overall student success.

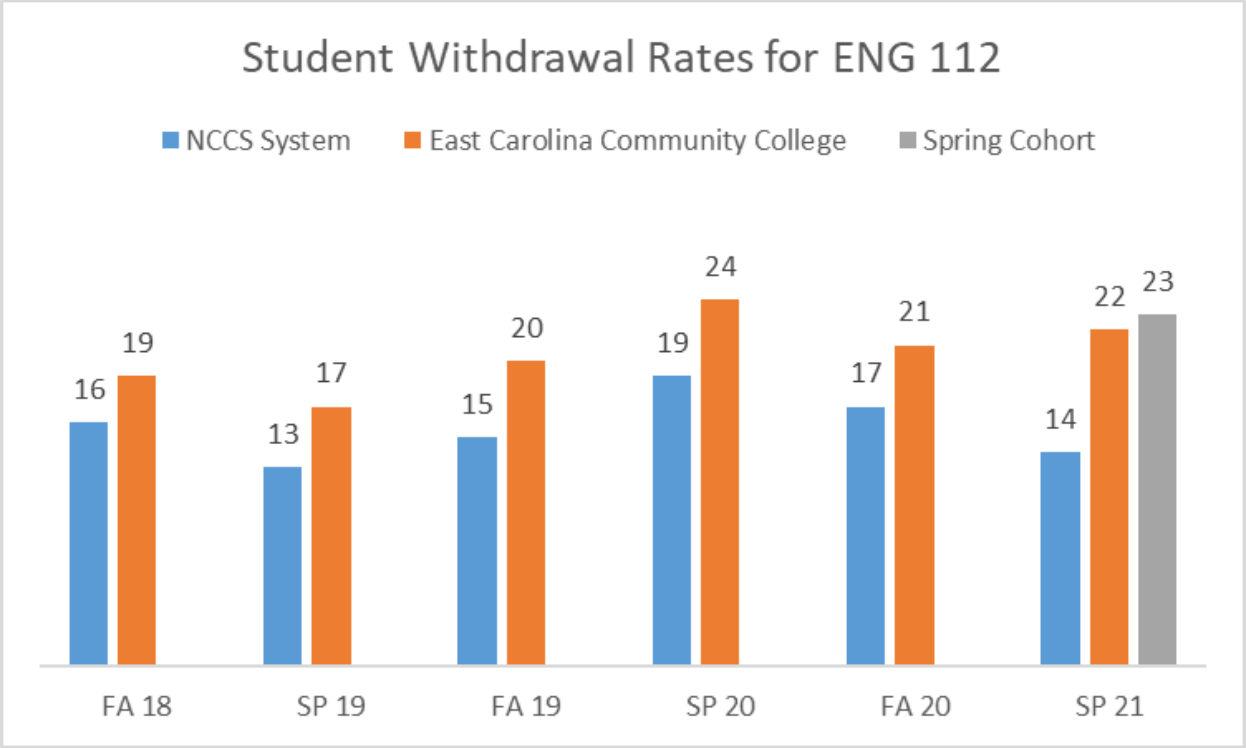
Because the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing, the long-term effects on education have not been fully studied. While the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights asserts that the pandemic has negatively affected academic growth and deepened the impact of disparities in access and opportunity facing many students, particularly students of color and socioeconomically disadvantaged students, there remain unanswered questions related to impact of the pandemic on student learning (Office for Civil Rights, 2021). According to recently published guidance by the Office of Civil Rights, "nearly all students have experienced some challenges to their mental health and well-being during the pandemic and many have lost access to school-based services and supports, with early research showing disparities based on race, ethnicity, LGBTQ+ identity, and other factors" (Office for Civil Rights, 2021). Even though the long-term impacts of the pandemic may be the subject of inquiry for years, the student participants in this study were most frequently impacted by lack of access to reliable internet and experienced significant additional stressors that negatively impacted their mental health including depression, stress, and increased anxiety.

The immediate impact of the pandemic on this study was the online delivery of instruction and the limited participation. Because Phase II of this study occurred in the Spring 2021 semester, I had ample time to plan for online delivery. However, I had not taught completely online prior to the pandemic. This means that I was learning and implementing new

ideas and strategies in the online learning environment while also implementing Phase II of this study. Even in the online environment, I was able to develop and nurture a classroom environment conducive to open, frank discussions among students. However, student reflections related to developing identity were limited to student responses to prompts. The interactions and discussion in the online environment were somewhat limited, but students were able to express themselves in a safe, supportive environment. Despite this congenial atmosphere, the fact that students did not meet me or each other limited their comfort level in participating in Phase III of this study. I was not able to interact with any of the participants in a face-to-face setting during the study, which likely impacted their investment in further participation in the study once the class itself was completed. The lack of face-to-face interaction meant that I had to rely on email and phone to reach out to potential participants for Phase III. Continuing COVID precautions limited my ability to conduct both face-to-face and asynchronous interviews during Phase III.

Description of Participants

The participants in Phase II of the study were enrolled in a college English class for which I was the instructor, while simultaneously enrolled in high school (dual-enrollment), for which I was the instructor during the Spring 2021 semester. All 104 of the enrolled students participated in Phase II of the study. Of the students who completed ENG 112 in the Spring 2021 semester, 96% earned a C or better. The withdrawal rate for the course was 23%; however, that withdrawal rate was impacted by the fact that students returned to five-day per week instruction in their high schools. Even with the changes in student schedules, the withdrawal rate was not significantly higher than historical trends in system and institution withdrawal rates as shown in Figure 2. This distinction is important because of the lower withdrawal rate of CCP students in the previous semester as well as in classes that I have previously taught over the course of five



Note. Withdrawal rate is the percentage of students who withdraw from a course.

Figure 2. Student withdrawal rates for ENG 112.

academic years at the college level. The percentage of students who withdrew from ENG 112 in the Spring 2021 semester was consistent with overall institutional trends. This shift in course modality at the high schools impacted the ability of students to meet all of their course responsibilities. A majority (62%) of the withdrawals from ENG 112 occurred after the high school schedule changed. If the high school schedule had remained the same as at the beginning of the semester, the withdrawal rate would have been more consistent with historical withdrawal rates. Students who participated in Phase II of this study were enrolled in the second in a series of required English courses. The persistence rate of students matriculating from the Fall 2020 to the Spring 2021 semester within the cohort of dual-enrolled students was 80%. Figure 3 provides demographic information of the participants in Phase II. When this study was initially designed, the assumption was that the majority of the students would be high school students who would be graduating from high school at the end of the spring 2021 semester. This was not an accurate assumption. A majority of the participants in Phase II of the study were high school juniors in the semester that this study took place, making them ineligible to participate in Phase III of the study. Overall, a majority of the enrolled students were military dependents. This percentage (66%) is consistent with the enrollment of military dependents in the East Carolina Public School District.

A majority of the students enrolled during Phase II of this study indicated that their post-high school plans included attending a 4-year university. The most significant limiting factor in eligibility to participate in Phase III of this study was that only 22 of the students graduated from high school prior to the beginning of Phase III. Of the students eligible to participate in Phase III of the study, those who were not military dependents or were enrolled at East Carolina Community College in Fall 2021 were excluded from Phase III. Table 5 provides details

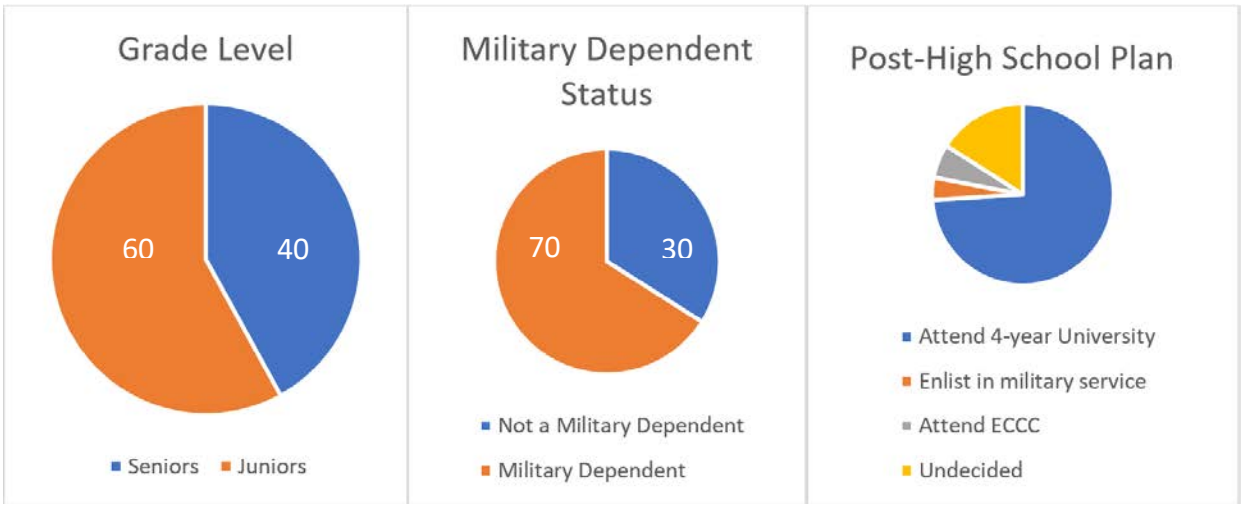


Figure 3. English 112 student demographics.

regarding students who completed Phase II and their eligibility for participation in Phase III. Only 10 students out of those who participated in Phase II of this study were eligible to participate in Phase III due to having met the following criterion: graduated from high school in ECCC. This limited eligibility to participate in Phase III of the study resulted in only one student participating in the survey and interview in Phase III of the study.

Data Collection

Phase I Data Collection

Data collected in the initial phase of this study utilized the Appointment Plus system purchased by the college, as well as the Colleague system used for maintaining student data. In Phase I, students were identified as military dependents in three ways:

- Students utilizing transferred VA GI Bill benefits – Chapter 33 Transfer of Eligibility.
- Students identified in the system as being military dependents for residency purposes.
- Students who self-identified as military dependents or whose high school transcripts indicated that they had graduated from a Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) high school.

Upon identification, student GPAs and eligibility for VA education benefits were entered into a spreadsheet (see Appendix G). The data in this spreadsheet were cross-checked for accuracy using the Colleague System to verify the validity of the student data. Data type validation was conducted on the GPA column to verify that there were no null values, and a range and constraint check was used to verify that all GPA values were within the 0.0 to 4.0 range. The Veteran column of the spreadsheet values were “Y” and “N” (see Appendix G). This column was validated using a data-type check to verify that no other values were entered. This

Table 5

English 112 Eligibility to Participate in Phase III

Eligibility Factor	Number of Students	Percentage
Graduated Spring 21	22	44%
Enrolled at ECCC in Fall 21	3	14%
Not a Military Dependent	4	18%
Not 18 years old	5	22%
Students eligible to participate in Phase III	10	45%

list of students identified as military dependents was compared to a list of students who had an appointment with the Student Success Team, which is the team of student services personnel designated to assist students in navigating the academic, personal, and administrative barriers they face in higher education. Student GPAs and eligibility were compared to the same metrics of the broader population of students who had also met with the Student Success Team (see Appendix G). The same verification process was used with the data in this spreadsheet. Having verified the accuracy of the entered data, GPA columns were averaged using the functions within the spreadsheet. This analysis supports the assertion that military dependents struggle academically in higher education compared to their non-military connected peers as discussed in Chapter 3. This data forms the foundation of the study in an effort to find ways to improve the academic outcomes for military dependents.

Phase II Data Collection

The survey discussed in Chapter 3 and identified in Appendix D was not utilized in the beginning of the Spring 2021 semester because the study was still pending IRB approval. Because that survey was not utilized in the beginning of the semester, it was not deployed at the end of the semester because there was no comparative data available. During the Spring 2021 semester, the course was structured to include alternating responses to assigned readings and journal responses on the same topic. The journal responses were semi-structured responses to assigned readings, class discussions, and supplementary readings and videos reviewed during class. Students were required to submit a one-page response to the topics and prompts. Because the reading responses were connected to specific, assigned readings, these responses were not included in the data collection. The journal responses allowed students the opportunity to reflect on their personal responses to all of the information and discussion related to a specific topic and

were included in the data collection because those responses are more indicative of the student's contemplation of the topics as they relate to their own identities.

Student responses were downloaded and saved for later analysis of common themes and connections regarding the ways in which students identify themselves in the context of larger social, cultural, and personal concepts. The downloaded files comprised a total of 219 pages of single-spaced text with eight separate documents corresponding to each week. All student responses for the journal prompts were included in the collection process. The files were uploaded to Quirkos organized by week. Quirkos is a program that allows researchers to visualize codes within non-standardized responses, such as interviews, individual written responses, and other text (Learn Quirkos, 2021). Once the documents were uploaded, I searched for common themes and connections among those themes and concepts using the search function to locate individual words related to student identity and the ways in which students conceptualize their understanding of self. Table 6 provides a list of the journal topics and prompts. These search terms formed the basis of the connections among topics and ideas students expressed regarding their understanding of self.

Phase III Data Collection

The collection of data in Phase III involved two approaches. First, the 10 students who were identified as eligible to participate in Phase III were invited via email to participate in a survey and interview. The 10 students who were identified as eligible to participate were those students who had graduated in Spring 2021 from high school, were identified as being military dependents, were over the age of 18, and were attending a 4-year university (see Table 5). These emails were sent early in the Fall 2021 semester with limited responses.

Table 6

Journal Topics and Prompts

Topic	Prompt
Identity – National Identity	Journal Prompt: Consider the readings and our class discussion. What is your personal understanding of national identity? In what ways have your identity changed through your experiences?
National Service – Compulsory Service	If national service were compulsory what option would you most like to explore? Why? What programs would need to be started or expanded to make this possible?
Civil Liberties – Individual Rights	Choose one of the following scenarios regarding student rights to respond to 1. First Amendment rights are not absolute. The paper's student editors decided to run several stories on Valentine's Day about sex education. School administration directed the students not to publish this information. Although the students consulted attorneys from a legal defense center, the issue was resolved without going to court. 2. The Fourth Amendment and Student Drug Tests - Extracurricular activities such as sports, marching bands, choirs, and quiz bowls, have long been a basic part of high school. But the question of whether schools can require drug tests for students in non-sports programs remained unsettled until 2002.
Patriotism	To you, what defines patriotism? Based on our discussions, the readings, and the videos, have your perspectives regarding patriotism expanded or changed? How? Why?
Immigration	Immigration can be a complicated subject. Arguments regarding national security and limiting immigration – both legal and illegal – have been at the forefront of American discourse for the past several years. What have you learned about immigration? Are this country's policies fair? What should be changed?
Racism, Populism and Supremacy	Thinking about the connections between racism, populism, and white supremacy is challenging and at times uncomfortable. Please reflect on our discussions and the readings and videos.

Table 6 (continued)

Topic	Prompt
Community and Privilege	In our discussions, we have focused on privilege in the education setting. What social, cultural, and personal factors affect how we view our own privileges? What can we as individuals do to recognize our own privileges and use that power and position to address inequities in broader contexts. Is this something we should be doing?
The Cost of Ongoing War	This quote from the article titled "The True Cost of War" provides a more nuanced approach to patriotism and loss especially when it comes to understanding the long-lasting effects of war: "This Memorial Day we remember all who have died in war and understand that no one wins in war. Many of us have been personally touched by war. But we must also extend that mourning. We must remember the civilian victims, and their families, who are all equally human beings. Honoring and remembering some deaths while ignoring others not only perpetuates war, but also ignores the moral injuries of war, which some now recognize as a significant cause of veteran suicide." Please respond.

I contacted the students identified as eligible to participate in Phase III weekly for three weeks. During that period, 3 of the 10 students contacted agreed to participate in interviews. However, after multiple attempts to schedule synchronous interviews with no success, I sent the students the interview questions via email. This process did not elicit any responses, and those students who agreed to be interviewed stopped responding to email. At this point, I determined that the best possible way to collect data comparable to interview responses would be to modify the interview to a survey utilizing the same questions. Upon receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board, I deployed the interview via Qualtrics with limited success. Qualtrics is a browser-based survey software licensed by ECU that offers many advanced, but user-friendly features including survey design and development (Qualtrics Support, 2021). Qualtrics use was approved by the IRB (see Appendix B) with the expectation that data from the survey is anonymous and is stored on a password-protected server hosted through the ECU enterprise service management system. Student responses to the survey and interview were collected using Qualtrics. The interview questions and survey were sent to the three students who had agreed to be interviewed. Only one student responded and completed both the demographic questions and the open-ended interview questions (see Appendix F). Student grades and GPAs for those who completed Phase III were retrieved from the Learning Management System (LMS). This data collection occurred during the Fall 2021 semester.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data collected throughout this study occurred over the course of several academic semesters. The initial phase of data analysis involved an in-depth analysis of student GPA, retention, and military dependent status. This analysis involved data reviewed in the Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 semesters. The Phase II data was collected in the Spring 2021

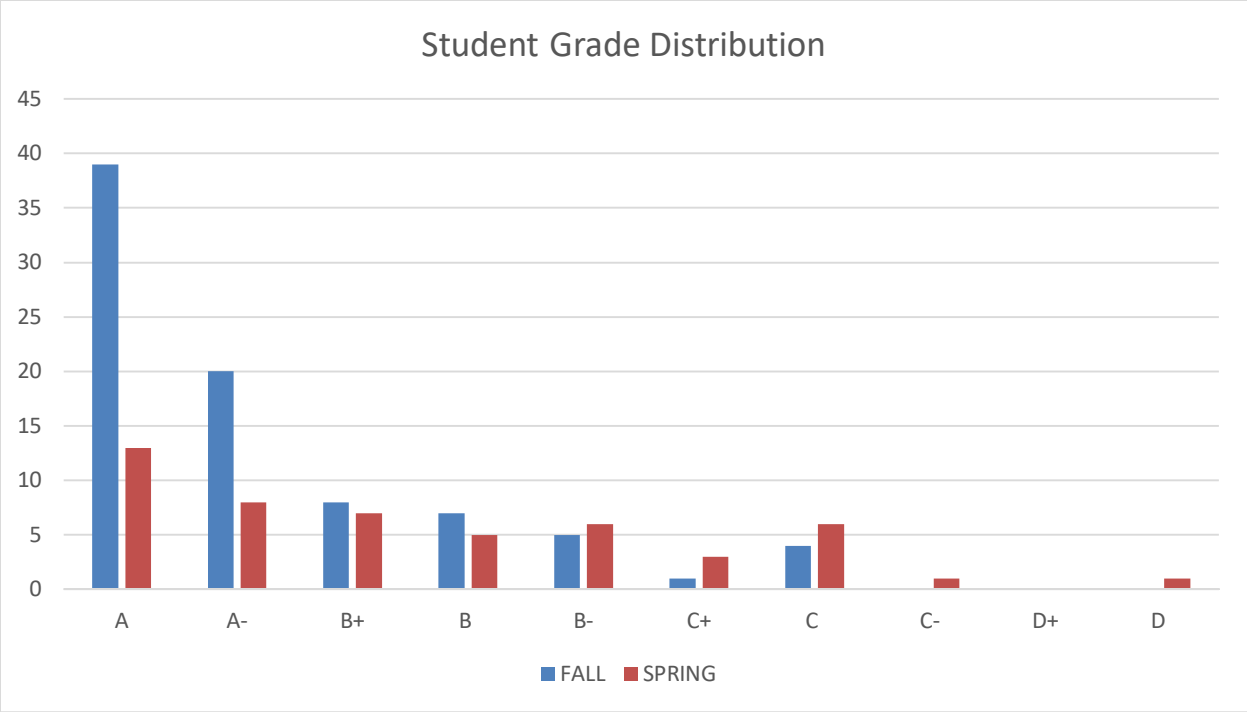
semester and analyzed using data analysis software to determine common themes. The analysis of Phase III data was limited due to lack of participation in Phase III of this study. However, the data can be used to provide insight into student experiences in higher education, and in conjunction with analysis of Phase II data, is used to determine that student identities and recognition of their status as military dependents does impact their academic engagement and performance.

Phase I Data Analysis

The discussion of data analysis related to Phase I of the study is discussed in detail in Chapter 3 and illustrated in Tables 2, 3, and 4. This analysis clearly demonstrates that military dependents struggle academically. While it cannot necessarily be extrapolated that every military dependent in every institution struggles, it can be argued that based on the results of the analysis at East Carolina Community College and conversations I have had with VA representatives from other community colleges and agencies across the state, the problem is persistent across institutions of higher education. If there is support for the assertion that these students struggle academically upon matriculation into higher education, it stands to reason that these students require additional support and focus.

Phase II Data Analysis

The analysis of data in Phase II of this study consisted of both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data focused on student grades and success rates in ENG 112. The qualitative data consisted of student responses to journal prompts which were analyzed to determine key concepts.



Note. The vertical axis denotes the number of students who earned each grade listed on the horizontal axis.

Figure 4. Student grade distribution.

Quantitative Data Analysis

To analyze the overall academic success, I utilized course completion data reported to the institution. Student grade distribution is indicative of overall student success in the course as depicted in Figure 4. This depiction shows that, overall, students earned a transferrable grade in ENG 112 during the Spring 2021 semester as well as during the Fall 2020 semester. The reason both semesters are shown in the graph is because these students were part of a cohort of dual-enrolled students and all students enrolled in ENG 112 in Spring 2021 had successfully completed ENG 111 in the Fall 2020 semester. The students who participated in Phase II had been previously enrolled in ENG 111, so the comparative data related to student grades is useful in determining the effectiveness of focused interventions.

The final course average for ENG 112 in the Spring 2021 semester was 86.74%. Student success rates for Spring 2021 were comparable to student success rates in the Fall 2020 semester. In Fall 2020, 100% of students who finished the course earned a grade of C or better. In Spring 2021, 96% of students completing the course earned a C or better. No students failed either course. Figure 5 provides a comparison of student success (defined as a final grade of C or better) in ENG 112 in the North Carolina Community College System overall, East Carolina Community College, and within the Spring 2021 cohort. The graphic representation of this comparison of percent of students who successfully completed ENG 112 across five semesters clearly shows that interventions and focused attention on student needs can and does have a direct impact on student success. A student success rate over 90% compared to institutional and system-wide success rates at or near 70% demonstrates that focused interventions effectively provide students with the opportunity to be successful.

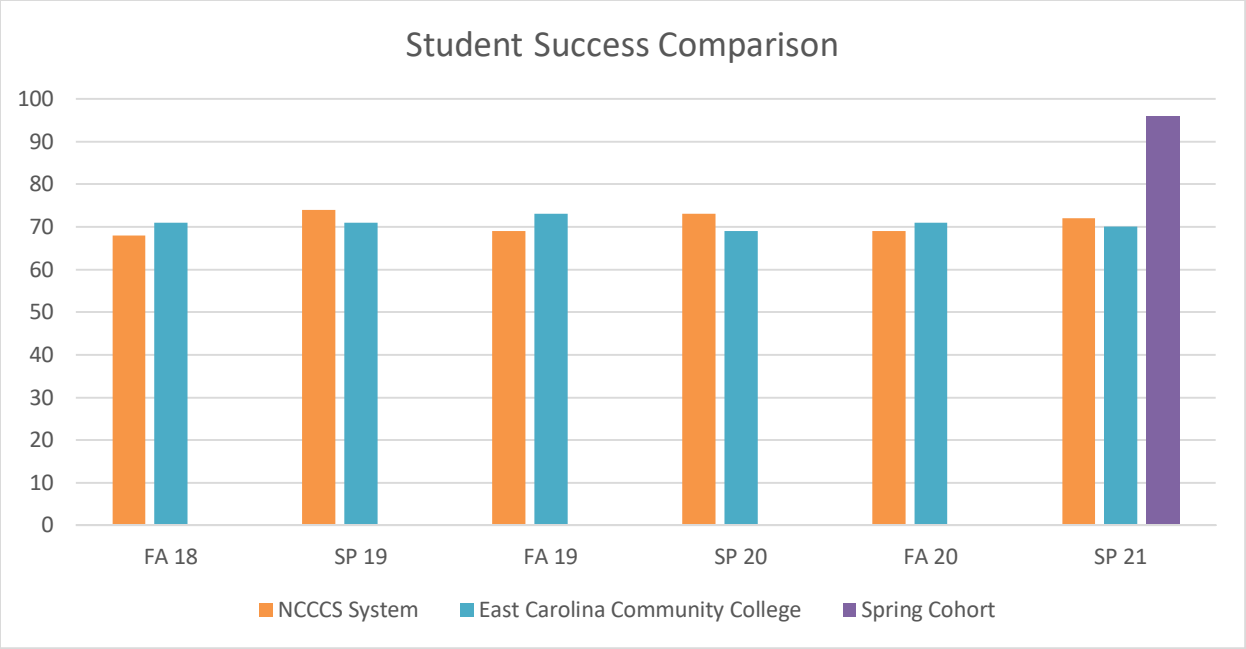


Figure 5. Comparison of student success percentages.

These interventions included regular referrals to the Career and College Promise (CCP) Liaison as well as regular grade check-ins reported to the liaison, high school counselors, and both college and high school administrators. These institutional guardrails are designed to provide standard intervention points for struggling students. An additional intervention that I implemented, which proved largely successful, was to develop an individualized plan to allow students to complete and submit assignments that they had not turned in on time. This collaborative plan allowed students to assess their academic, personal, and community responsibilities and develop a realistic plan to meet all of those requirements while also maintaining their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Additionally, I required any student whose grade was lower than a C to check in with me weekly. This requirement allowed me to provide consistent, positive reinforcement and motivation for struggling students.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The student responses submitted during the Spring 2020 semester were retrieved from the learning management system and input into Quirkos. The responses were coded using search terms related to student self-identity and the support systems they identified as relevant to themselves. These terms are consistent with Schlossberg's Transition Model wherein the self is defined by personal and demographic characteristics including socioeconomic status, gender, age, health, and ethnicity and culture as well as psychological factors including commitment, values, and spirituality (Patton et al., 2016). The support systems include family, friends, and institutional support (Patton et al., 2016). Table 7 provides a list of key search terms and concepts. These prompts were developed as part of the course and while they were not specifically designed to elicit a definite response related to the student's identity, student responses indicated both a personal sense of identity as well as connections to the topics.

Overall, students connected to the topics of discussion and assigned readings and expressed their identities in a manner consistent with their emerging identities as college students and as young adults.

I used a thematic approach to coding the results of the search for key terms. This approach to coding was modified from the Tesch (1990) approach discussed by Creswell and Creswell (2018). During the Spring 2021 semester, I read, responded to, and provided feedback on all of the student responses. First, I organized the student responses by assignment. I removed the student name from the text when the responses were downloaded from the learning management system. I then uploaded the student responses to Quirkos and began to search for key terms related to student identity and how the students perceived themselves in the context of academic conversations. Table 7 provides a list of key search terms used to identity codes.

The search terms were used to ascertain how students identify themselves and to determine how the students related their identities to their status as military dependents. The search terms were categorized by topic and used to identify codes. Using Tesch's (1990) approach, I categorized the codes as Expected Codes – defined as codes that could be expected as the way students identify themselves; Unexpected Codes – defined as the ways in which students identified themselves that were unexpected; and Codes of Interest – defined as the ways in which students identified themselves that have particular significance to this study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Table 8 provides a description of the codes and the related themes.

The frequency of the search terms in relation to the related terms is identified in Table 7. Using Quirkos to identity patterns between the frequency of the search term in the student responses, the results were grouped by frequency of use and identified as related terms to the search terms. Once the patterns were sorted by relevance to each other, individual codes were

Table 7

Key Search Terms and Concepts

Search Term (Frequency)	Related Terms (Frequency)
Identity (23)	Change (48) Student (8) Athlete (6) Work (3) Diversity (3)
Values (17)	Location (40) Feeling Connected (25) Relationships (2)
Religion (33)	Christian (11) Belief(s) (27) God (9)
Race (37)	African American (7) Hispanic (17) Ethnicity (4) White (15) Prejudice
Immigration (20)	Citizenship (13)
Gender (11)	Bisexual (2) Straight (1) Male (5) Female (15) Gay (3)
Privilege (29)	Wealth (13) Poverty (2)
American (46)	Patriotism (33) Loyalty (4) Politics (7)
Military (51)	War (5) Freedom (12) Sacrifice (4) Deploy (Deployment) (8) PTSD-Trauma (22)

Table 7 (continued)

Search Term (Frequency)	Related Terms (Frequency)
Culture (69)	Family (90) Language Heritage (2) Tradition (30) Education (14)

Table 8

Qualitative Data Codes and Themes

Code	Theme
Expected Codes	
Identity American Military Family Gender Race	Theme 1: Students most often identify themselves in the context of their family, race, gender, and national identity. Theme 2: Students often identify themselves as part of a military family which relates to their understanding of their positionality in American culture.
Unexpected Codes	
Religion Immigration Values Culture	Theme 3: Religion and immigration status comprise a significant aspect of student identity. Theme 4: The connection between culture, language, and education form a deep sense of identity among students.
Codes of Interest	
PTSD/Trauma Patriotism Deployment Change	Theme 5: Students, whether or not they identify as military dependents, are aware of the impact of PTSD, trauma, and deployments on their lives. Theme 6: Student's identity as part of a military family and community form an essential part of how they view themselves and their experiences

identified based on the frequency and connectivity of the ideas identified most commonly by students. These patterns and connections were used to determine the codes based on Tesch's (1990) approach. Appendix H provides the Quirkos summaries of these connections. These connections were used to develop themes that were commonly expressed within each of the codes.

Analysis of Expected Codes and Related Themes. The students who participated in Phase II of this study were high school aged students who were dual-enrolled in high school and college. Because of the students' age and relative lack of experience, it was expected that many of these students would identify themselves in ways that were both most obvious and most comfortable. The expected codes were identity, American, military, family, gender, and race. I determined that there were two themes that could be identified based on these codes. The first theme was that students most often identify themselves in the context of their family, race, gender, and national identity. The second theme was that students often identify themselves as part of a military family which relates to their understanding of their positionality in American culture. These two themes were widely expressed by students who identified themselves primarily as American of a certain race and gender.

Description of Theme 1. Theme 1 is that students most often identify themselves in the context of their family, race, gender, and national identity. This way of identifying one's self is a "relational identity" that includes a connection between the self and their roles (such as student and athlete) established in relationship with and to others (Patton et al., 2016, p. 72). Examples of student identification based on their race, gender, familial relationships, and national identity comprise the most obvious and frequent ways in which students identify themselves. One student stated, "I am American and that can mean many things. To me, this means a country I was born

in and grew up feeling prideful in." This student's identity is shaped by their identity as an American which is an example of the student's relational identity between themselves and their national identity. Another student stated, "My identity has been majorly shaped by my family," indicating that the relationship between the student and their family is central to the creation of their individual identity.

Another student stated, "my current identity consists of being a young, black woman and I often choose not to label myself as an American due to the various events that have yet to be recognized and taught in the classroom without bias." This student's identity is shaped by their race, gender, and age which they perceive to be in conflict with their identity as an American. Another student identified as "a nerdy, Asian-American who lives in the middle-class of the USA." This student's identity is related to their intellect, their racial identity, their socioeconomic status, and their nationality. Each of these students has formed their identity based on either their race, gender, national origin, or their family relationships which is consistent with established theory related to student identity development (Patton et al., 2016, p. 72).

Description of Theme 2. Theme 2 is that students often identify themselves as part of a military family which relates to their understanding of their positionality in American culture. This way of identifying one's self is a "relational identity" that includes a connection between the self and their connection to the military (Patton et al., 2016, p. 72). Often, a student's awareness of their parent's military connection forms an essential part of how they identify themselves in connection with their patriotism and feelings toward responsibility, respect, and relationships. One student stated that "one factor that shaped my identity was my father's career in the Marine Corps. Growing up, I spent time on military bases and was introduced to

procedures and ways to show respect for the flag and country." This student's awareness of their father's military service affected not only how they perceived their own identity, but also how they perceived their role and responsibility as a citizen.

Another student explained that as a military dependent, they "have always prioritized other's well-being and the overall peace of others over myself. Not only did a military environment teach me to look out for others, but also to respect the community over any selfishness." This student's sense of responsibility and relationship were honed by having spent their formative years as part of a military family living in a military community. This student's identity development is consistent with the relational identity concept because it shows the student's recognition of their connection to the military as critical to their sense of self.

A third student identified themselves as being a part of a military family and how that family connection formed the foundation of how they viewed themselves and members of their family who served. "My stepdad, grandfather, and grandmother all served this country for eighteen plus years. As I grew up I had always looked up to them and saw them as heroes." The fact that this student identifies those family members as "heroes" is consistent with societal views on the perception of the sacrifices military members make as heroic and essential.

Recognition of one's identity as connected to the military is an essential part of some students' identity formation. This relational identity develops through the course of the student's formative years and influences their relationships with other students and with the larger community of which they are a part. The fact that students readily identify with that community may reveal that even without having served, students recognize the impact that their parents' service has on their lives and thus their world view.

Analysis of Unexpected Codes and Related Themes. While students readily identified themselves in ways that could be expected by discussing their race, gender, age, and nationality, there were several ways in which students identified themselves that were somewhat surprising. The unexpected codes were religion, immigration, values, and culture. I determined that there were two themes, numbered themes three and four respectively, that could be identified based on these codes. The third theme was that religion and immigration status comprise a significant aspect of student identity. The fourth theme was that the connection between culture, language, and education form a deep sense of identity among students.

Description of Theme 3. Theme 3 is that religion and immigration status comprise a significant aspect of student identity. The two codes used to determine this theme are religion and immigration. This "individual or personal identity" is described as self-definition at the individual level of goals, values, beliefs, and other individually held self-evaluations and expected future selves (Patton et al., 2016, p. 72). One of the ways in which students explained their identity was their association with their closely held religious beliefs. As I reviewed the student responses and developed codes, I was moderately surprised by how many students identified religion as a significant factor in their personal identity. When prompted to explain their identity, one student simply stated, "I am a Christian." For this student, their religious beliefs form the central core of their identity. Another student stated that their identity included being "Baptist, straight, daughter, [and] English speaking." Leading with their religious affiliation indicates that the student places their religious identity at the core of their identity. Another student described their developing religious identity by explaining that "growing up, I simply identified as my parent's daughter, my brother's sister, and a good friend to my classmates…I was able to grow my relationship with Christ and was able to see myself … as a

child of God." The close association between personal identity and religious identity among young people is surprising in light of recent research that shows that religious affiliation and practice is declining across the United States, particularly among young people (Religious Landscape Study, 2022).

Many students identify with their own or their family's immigration story or experience. It may not be surprising in the current political and social climate that awareness of immigration is high, but what is surprising is that many students firmly associate with their own or their family's immigration story and define their own identities within this framework. For example, one student who was born in Colombia and lived there until they were nearly two years old revealed that "when my mother and I moved to the United States, she was hopeful that I would be a reminder of her [identity]… in a land of unfamiliarity." The student connects their immigration experience to a sense of hope and yearning that are familiar refrains in the litany of immigration stories. Their sense of identity is entwined with their family's journey to the United States and their hope for a different future.

Another student expressed similar hopes and aspirations in their family's immigration experience. "My birth dad is an immigrant from Mexico ... I know his intentions were good when he came from Mexico… he came to America for better opportunities and to take care of his family." Another example of this desire for a better future for immigrants' families is explained by another student who writes, "my grandma came over here legally when things were easier, but my grandpa did not. He illegally came over here, and actually a few years ago was almost deported back to Mexico." The importance of security and opportunity for the next generation is part of the reason for immigration. However, in this country the issue has become so divisive that there is an emerging trend, especially on the political right, to associate national

identity as having been born in the United States, practicing Christianity, speaking English, and adopting the customs and traditions of the country (Silver et al., 2021).

Description of Theme 4. Theme 4 is that the connections between culture, language, and traditions form a deep sense of identity among students. The codes used to determine this theme were culture, language, and tradition. This connection is often related to students' sense of being American and sharing values, beliefs, and experiences with the larger community. Often, the retention of cultural heritage is important to students' identity. This level of identity development is part of the student's "collective identity," which is defined as an individual's definition of self in relation to their relationships to others in society (Patton et al., 2016). One student explained that "the way I define [myself] is based on my ethnicity as well as the place and culture I grew up in." This student's identity is connected to their relationships and experience in the place they live.

More general statements about the effect of culture on identity development are related to language and traditions. One student, considering what it means to be an American, stated that they identify as American because they were "born in America and my first language is English." Another expressed that one's identity is "represented by distinct traditions, culture, and language." These students correlate their identity as Americans to the traditions they participate in and the language they speak. This sentiment is summarized by one student's assertion that "identity is a big part of where they come from. With it comes culture, tradition, language, family and more." The connections students make between language, culture, and the traditions they share with their peers, their community, and their family form an essential part of how they view themselves and the world around them.

Students connect their sense of self to not only their individual identity but also to their positionality within their communities and family. These connections may not be completely surprising, but in the context of identifying one's self as being part of a larger military community or a military family, the prevalence of identification of religious beliefs, immigration status, language, and traditions as an important part of their identity was unexpected. Particularly, the assertion that religion, predominantly Christianity, forms an essential part of these students' identity is surprising especially in light of the overall decline in religious practice and affinity in this country. Although students readily identified other religions including Judaism and Islam as part of a recognition of overall belief systems, none identified themselves as such. The issue of immigration as a topic of political discourse and discord has recently dominated national conversations. For students to express deep connections to their own or their family's immigration story was both surprising and evocative of hope. The deep connections students expressed to their cultural identities, family traditions, and use of language were also surprising in that this expression reveals a deeper thread of connection to community and self.

Analysis of Codes of Interest and Related Themes. The text, *Student Development in College: Theory, Research, and Practice*, explores many ways in which students develop and explore their identities while they are in college (Patton et al., 2016). Interestingly, military affiliation and veteran status are not explored in this text as part of the discussion of college student identity development. As college students, military dependents experience the changes and challenges associated with growth, maturity, and challenge that other college students experience. The student veteran's experience is significantly different from their peers and it is important to develop programs and support structures for veteran students especially as they transition from military service to civilian life (McBain et al., 2012; Williams-Klotz &

Gansemer-Topf, 2017). Similarly, military dependents have vastly different perspectives and experiences than their similarly aged peers. Of particular focus in this study were the ways in which military dependents' lived experiences as members of a military family affect their identity as such. The codes of interest in this study were PTSD/Trauma, patriotism, change, and deployment. These codes were used to develop two themes, numbered theme 5 and theme 6 which pertain directly to students' identity as part of a military family and military community. Theme 5 is students, whether or not they identify as military dependents, are aware of the impact of PTSD, trauma, and deployments on their lives. Theme 6 is student's identity as part of a military family and community form an essential part of how they view themselves and their experiences.

Description of Theme 5. Theme 5 is that **s**tudents, whether or not they identify as military dependents, are aware of the impact of PTSD, trauma, and deployments on their lives. While this awareness may not be surprising, it is interesting that students readily identify the sacrifice and trauma associated with deployments, parental injury and risk, and military service. It is also interesting that they connect these experiences to their own identities and perspectives. One student explained that they have no desire to join the military "because of the lifestyle that is required for those who serve. They must move all the time and miss out on family moments when on deployment." For them, the fact that there have "been many birthdays and special moments [their] dad had to miss out on because he was deployed" is reason enough not to want to become a member of the military.

Another student related the impact of their father's service by revealing that their father "will never truly be the same again after over twenty years of service… He has been shot twice, broken his ankle and never got the proper care…[he] watched his friends die, and so much

more." This student's realization that their father made significant sacrifices is important, but becomes more poignant when the student revealed that "when he was first honorably discharged from the [M]arines into retirement, he had such severe PTSD and refused to seek help because it was looked down upon in the military." Another student explains the impact of their parent's service in terms of the effects of military service on physical and mental health. They said, "my father is a [M]arine veteran, and he has physical and emotional challenges to the point I cannot do certain things around him because it can trigger a response and I have to be careful." These students have witnessed and experienced their parent's trauma and have lived with the results of that trauma as they have grown up.

For some students, their parent's absence as a result of deployment presents extremely emotional responses. One student explained that "living in a military town you begin to understand the impact that war has on your community and families living in it." They explain that one "way that I can describe it is when people are deployed it's like holding your breath until you see them again waiting to gain relief when seeing them safe." This description is an apt metaphor for the six-month or more time between when a military member leaves home in the service of their country and when they return home. So often media portrays heartfelt military reunions that show enthusiastic hugs and smiles, but does not reveal the time before that moment filled with anxiety and concern. One student eloquently said that "several times … I had to say goodbye to [my father] as he set off to defend freedom for my family, I never knew if those goodbyes or those hugs would be the last interaction, I had with him."

Description of Theme 6. Theme 6 is a student's identity as part of a military family and community form an essential part of how they view themselves and their experiences. The community in which these students live, work, and play is largely influenced by the three major

military bases located in the area. It is common for students, as well as their peers, to experience parental deployment and the feelings of fear and uncertainty associated with the possibility that their parent may suffer harm. Beyond the potential for harm, there is also a great sense of awareness of the impact of the military on the community at large. One student explained that they were "patriotic because of all my family that have served, as well as all my friends and peers family members that have served." Another student explained that "living in a military town showed me what people really do give up for our country. A lot of my friends have not had their parents on important nights like senior night because of the military." Growing up in a military town affects people who are in the military as well as those who are not. Regardless of connection to the military, students know that the military affects the entire community. One student summarized this impact by saying, "growing up in a military town I have seen it all, families getting torn apart, abusive veterans, abused veterans and homeless veterans."

Students express their connection to their military family and to the larger military community that shapes who they are and their perceptions of their community. In the context of this study, it was expected that students would identify with being part of the military community and part of military families. This expectation is based on the proximity to large military bases in the area. These students openly discuss the impact of their parents' military service on their families and on the larger community.

Phase III Data Analysis

The analysis conducted in Phase III of this study included both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data was limited by a lack of student participation. The qualitative data was similarly limited, but does provide support for the analysis of the Phase II data.

Quantitative Data Analysis

In Phase III, only one participant responded to the interview. In the interview, the question regarding the participant's sense of belonging to the military community was rated as somewhat important to their sense of self.

The participant was an 18-year-old female whose parent is retired from the military. Their parent deployed at least once when they were 0-5 years old, at least once when they were 5-10 years old, and at least once when they were 10-15 years old. The participant attended two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school and moved three times prior to age 18. The participant is not eligible for VA education benefits and does not receive scholarships based on their parent's military service. The participant is currently in their first year at a four-year public university and is majoring in special education.

While this data cannot be used to determine any patterns or relationships between the participant's military affiliation and their academic progress in higher education to date, their experiences are consistent with the experiences of military dependents more broadly. Multiple moves and parental deployments are common experiences of military children. With only one respondent to the survey, the data does not provide enough information to determine common experiences or to evaluate patterns.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The interview consisted of 10 open-ended questions related to the student's perceptions of their experiences in higher education as it relates to being a military dependent. It is clear from the participant's responses that being a military dependent impacted their emotional connection to their military parent because of their parent's PTSD and the trauma associated with that. The interviewee stated that "being a military dependent has impacted my life in that I don't have a

very great relationship with my dad. I've seen firsthand the possible [PTSD] and emotional trauma that comes with it." Because of their parents' divorce when they were younger, the participant does not feel a significant connection to the military community and does not have any sense of connection to the military community on their campus. The student does openly identify as a military connected student on campus but indicates that the connection is via their fiancé who is in the Navy rather than their parent. The participant reports that the connection they feel to the military is not related to campus activities but rather to their access to military facilities such as the commissary and exchange. One of the interesting aspects of the interviewee's response was their reaction to people in the military. They said "being a military dependent has also changed my first impression views on others. When I see the traditional 'military haircut' I assume they're military and not necessarily the best of people especially younger military persons." This negative first impression of military members, or perceived military members, is an interesting reaction, likely a result of negative associations the interviewee has with their father.

Results

The data and analysis discussed in this chapter leads to a discussion of how that information can be used to answer the questions that guided this study throughout. The analysis of these guiding questions may not provide a definitive solution to the best methods and strategies for helping military dependents in higher education achieve success; rather it may serve as a foundation, in light of other research and studies focused on this particular cohort of students, for future study and analysis. Primarily, this analysis serves to focus attention on the previously unaddressed needs of these students.

Analysis of Guiding Question 1 (GQ1)

Guiding Question 1 asks how military dependents can be identified in higher education as a method of ascertaining whether or not they struggle academically. The results of Phase I were used to determine if military dependents were identified as a specific cohort of students and if they struggle academically to answer Guiding Question 1. I reviewed the data reported to the Veterans Administration (VA) pertaining to the suspension of education benefits and probationary status of beneficiaries. The Veterans Office reports the status of all beneficiaries at the end of each academic term but does not specifically identify that the beneficiary is a military dependent. This report was used to identify students who use transferred Chapter 33 Transfer of Eligibility benefits and Chapter 35 benefits. Each of these categories of benefits can be assigned to the dependents of military members. The student record was examined to ensure that the cohort did not include spouses who are dependents. This data is not tracked at the federal, state, or institutional level. Institutions do not have complete data on military dependents enrolled in higher education.

Phase I of this study demonstrated that this gap in support and identification of these students is highly correlated to the academic progress of military dependents in higher education. The analysis of data indicates that military dependents are struggling academically at East Carolina Community College. Military dependents are struggling academically in that they have lower average GPAs than their peers. Within the demographic of students using VA education benefits, military dependents comprise the majority of students whose benefits are either in a probationary or suspended status. The significance of these findings is that the data shows, in real-time, that military dependents struggle academically at a higher rate than their non-military affiliated peers. This is further indicated by the disproportionate number of military dependents

who are referred by faculty members concerned about their academic progress while enrolled in their course. Military dependents are more likely to struggle academically than their non-military affiliated peers. There are ways to identify military dependents, but the process is not straightforward.

The process I used in Phase I of this study presents several challenges and may not be the best approach. A single individual reviewing multiple databases and cross-referencing students to determine their identity as military dependents and their academic standing overall and their eligibility for VA education benefits is time consuming and not inclusive of every military dependent enrolled at the institution. The specific focus of the analysis of data in this study was military dependents whose eligibility for VA education benefits was already in jeopardy. This provided information on a particular subset of military dependents in higher education but did not address the needs of all military dependents.

A common misconception regarding the poor academic performance of dependents using VA education benefits is that these students are squandering their benefits because they did not "earn" the benefit. This assumption does not address the increased behavioral and mental health disorders which result in increased sadness, hopelessness, depression, suicidal ideation, and academic problems that are a direct result of their connection to military members (Brendel et al., 2014). These are the same students that research at the K-12 level has shown to have significantly higher rates of anxiety, depression, foundational skills gaps due to frequent relocation, and greater need of support services than their peers (Pexton et al., 2018). This analysis shows that more study is necessary to identify methods to identify and strategies to support these students. Not only is more research needed to arrive at a particular conclusion and

plan of action, but more research should be prioritized because these students clearly require additional support.

Analysis of Guiding Question 2 (GQ2)

Guiding Question 2 asks how students' experiences and identities as military dependents shape their perceptions of their academic endeavors. Student identity development is integrally connected to students' lived experiences. Student development theory is grounded in three areas: psychosocial-identity formation, cognitive-developmental meaning-making structures, and personal preferences (Strange, 2004). Role identity is an important consideration in how students develop social identities and integrate more fully into student roles (Merolla et al., 2012). Students undergo multiple identity transitions especially in late adolescence and early adulthood. As it relates to this study, it is important to recognize that one of the primary reasons military dependents do not avail themselves of resources and support services identified as being for veterans is that they do not identify as veterans. This identification is correct, but fails to encompass the larger military affiliation of these students. In recognizing student identity as a factor in personal growth, young military dependents entering higher education have spent their formative years cocooned in a support network that recognizes and values the sacrifices of military members and their families.

Upon entering higher education, these support structures fall away and military dependents are left without the security of that identity as well as reticence to avail themselves of the resources that are available. Military dependents are a significant part of a larger cohort of students referred to as third culture kids (TCK). While there is not a large body of research specifically related to military dependents as TCKs in higher education, Pollock and Van Reken (2009) explain that the challenges faced by these students is related to a sense of cultural

homelessness that directly affects personal identity and leads to a sense of marginalization especially among similarly aged peers without shared experiences. This similarity is highlighted by a highly structured organizational identity or affiliation with military culture and structure and frequent relocation which can present a challenge for students who require additional help but are reluctant to seek assistance (Railsback, 2019). For military dependents, understanding that these young adults have yet to fully develop their sense of self, it is important to acknowledge this identity as part of who these students are and who they are becoming.

The analysis of student responses to focused questions as part of the coursework developed during Phase II shows that students approach their identities from many perspectives. This finding is consistent with developing and changing student identities discussed by Parks in Patton et al. (2016). Focused attention that encourages dialogue, critical thought, holistic thought, and a contemplative mind is crucial in helping students navigate their understanding of themselves and their positionality within communities and their perception of themselves (Patton et al., 2016). Students readily identify their connection to the military and openly discuss how their experiences as military dependents affect their lives.

One student described the psychological damage that war and deployment cause military members, their families, and their communities as “anxiety of whether [the military member] would return or not.” This anxiety and fear are common among students whose parent has deployed in defense of this country. Another student recognized that war and deployment include the risk of death and trauma and the impact that risk has on “dependents and wives of military members [who] must also deal with” the possibility of “death or disability” when their loved one returns. One student recounted the toll of war and deployment on their family as a result of their father’s mental health struggles once he returned from deployment. “He felt like he had nothing

to live for anymore." This severe depression led to a broken family and the student's realization that even though they "fully support the military and have even thought about enlisting" the experiences of their family simply "breaks [their] heart to have a good father that had to go through so much."

While students did not conclude that their status as military dependents impacted their academic achievement, they did discuss how their identity as military dependents impacted their lives. The disruption to their sense of security and their families remains a significant factor in their lives. This disruption produces higher levels of anxiety and behavioral concerns in academic settings (Brendel et al., 2014). So, even if students do not consciously connect their experiences as military dependents to their academic performance, there is evidence that supports this connection (Brendel et al., 2014; Paley et al., 2013; Stites, 2016).

Analysis of Guiding Question 3 (GQ3)

Guiding Question 3 asks how does focused attention on student identities as military dependents and recognition of their academic needs affect student perceptions and academic performance? The 2020-2021 academic year was undeniably challenging in light of the ongoing pandemic, the changing modalities of instructional delivery, changes to students' schedules, and the complications of building relationships in an asynchronous learning environment. Overall, the students were academically successful in the course.

In large part, these students were successful because of the pedagogical approach used within the framework of this study and the interventions I implemented to identify students who needed additional support. It could be argued that the course material and discussion of topics of interest related to the military and student's identity as part of the military community had little impact on the students' overall success in the class. However, an important consideration is that

"students who [are] validated [develop] confidence in their ability to learn, [experience] enhanced feelings of self-worth, and [believe] they [have] something to offer the academic community" (Patton et al., 2016, p. 41). This validation and recognition of the unique challenges faced by military dependents likely served to improve student success for all enrolled students especially those who have experienced the sacrifice of having their parents serve in the military.

The pedological approach I used was designed to help students develop a sense of identity within the context of their positionality within the larger military community that supported student identity development. Part of this approach involved detailed feedback which is essential to establishing identity and boundaries (Leggette et al., 2015). The development of relational writing prompts in conjunction with encouragement throughout the writing processes was also essential in helping students further explore their emerging identity (Garrett & Moltzen, 2011; Primeau et al., 2013). I approached this writing curriculum as a way to improve learning outcomes by shifting writing instruction away from teaching individual skills, abilities, and attributes to an approach more focused on teaching holistically (Miranda et al., 2017).

Because of the pandemic, the classes were delivered online. Students were struggling to adapt to online classes and balance the demands of work, school, family, and their personal lives. This resulted in several students failing to submit assignments. I regularly submit grade reports to the college for CCP students, and when I realized at the six-week mark of the semester that many students were failing the class, I implemented a process by which students whose grade was below a C would check in with me weekly via video to update their progress and develop a plan to stay on track for the semester. This remediation plan continued through the end of the semester and proved to be a significant factor in ensuring that an overwhelming majority of students achieved success in the class.

One of the successful practices I initiated in the early part of the semester was to openly discuss this study and its purpose. In response, many students readily identified themselves as military dependents and expressed interest in the study. While this interest did not translate into participation in the interview, it was important for students to recognize that they are important and that their struggles personally and academically are valid. Often the student response when I discussed this study was "Oh! That's me." Even during discussion with my current classes, many students readily identify as military dependents and often reveal their own struggles because of their parent's military service.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the mixed methods study as a result of implementing a course curriculum and providing focused interventions to ensure student success. The participants were high school students who were dual enrolled in high school and college classes during the Spring 2021 semester. Phase I of this study affirmed that military dependents struggle academically in higher education. Data was collected through the use of weekly journal responses as part of the curriculum during Phase II. A student interview conducted in Phase III of the study affirmed the impact of being a military dependent in higher education. Although a single interview cannot be definitive, the responses indicating that students' military connection forms a significant part of how they identify themselves. Furthermore, ongoing implementation of interventions designed to impact student success resulted in definite impacts on student success.

After the conclusion of the data collection, I used Quirkos to determine themes and subthemes in regard to the research questions. I identified six themes in order to answer guiding question 2. The themes identified in regard to question 2 based on the research collected include

family, race, gender, and national identity, culture, language, immigration, and education. Further analysis indicated that students identify themselves in connection to their parent's military service as well as connections to the military community. Students, whether or not they identify as military dependents, are aware of the impact of PTSD, trauma, and deployments on their lives and the lives of those in their community. Student's identity as part of a military family and community form an essential part of how they view themselves and their experiences. Chapter 5 interprets and discusses the findings. It discusses the practical implications of the study. Chapter 5 also presents the limitations of the study and my recommendations for future research as well as a discussion of the continuing impact of this study on my role as a practitioner in higher education.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study concludes with a final analysis of findings in the context of relevant literature and theoretical frameworks. The limitations of the study discussed herein provide fertile ground for further research and suggestions for additional focus on military dependents pursuing higher education. The discussion of the findings of this study lend credibility to the recommendations for further study.

Summary of the Findings

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to examine the ways in which military dependents develop a sense of identity and belonging in higher education and to provide intentional, curriculum-based instruction designed to improve persistence, academic success, and utilization of institutional resources. This study was comprised of three phases: a review of student performance data and identification of military dependents, implementation of a course focused on writing, and interviews and analysis of student success. The initial phase was an examination of the rates at which students identified as military dependents, specifically the children of military members, experienced academic difficulties in higher education. This initial phase was conducted by reviewing academic records of those students whose Veterans Education Benefits were either in a probationary status or were suspended.

The process of this review, described in Chapter 3, demonstrated that military dependents struggle academically at a higher rate than their peers and veterans. The next phase of this study involved the implementation of curriculum-based instruction delivered over the course of a 16-week semester. The students enrolled during this semester were part of a cohort of dual-enrolled students. The student responses throughout this semester were analyzed to determine the ways in which students identify themselves as military dependents and as part of the larger military

community. When this study was initially designed, the assumption was that the majority of the students would be high school students who would be graduating from high school at the end of the spring 2021 semester, but a majority of the participants in Phase II of the study were high school juniors, making them ineligible to participate in Phase III of the study. The final phase of this study involved semi-structured interviews with students who completed Phase II of the study. Because of limited participation in the interview phase of the study, only one student provided an electronic response to the interview. While this singular interview is not sufficient to determine broad-based conclusions, this interview seemed to demonstrate that students understand their positionality within the military community but do not generally identify the academic impacts of this affiliation and do not utilize veteran-associated services on college campuses. In order to conclusively determine whether or not this is the case, further research is needed to determine more broadly.

The analysis of the data collected throughout this study occurred over the course of several academic semesters. The initial phase of data analysis involved an in-depth analysis of student GPA, retention, and military dependent status. The analysis of Phase III data was limited due to lack of participation in Phase III of this study but was used to provide insight into student experiences in higher education, and in conjunction with analysis of Phase II data, was used to determine that student identities and recognition of their status as military dependents does impact their academic engagement and performance.

The analysis of Phase I of the study demonstrates that military dependents struggle academically. Because these students struggle academically upon matriculation into higher education, it stands to reason that these students require additional support and focus. That additional support and focus was implemented during Phase II of the study. A student success

rate over 90% for the students who participated in Phase II of the study demonstrates that focused interventions work to provide students with the opportunity to be successful. These interventions included regular referrals to the Career and College Promise (CCP) Liaison, regular grade check-ins reported to the liaison, high school counselors, and both college and high school administrators. These institutional guardrails are designed to provide standard intervention points for struggling students. Additional interventions that I implemented allowed students to assess their academic, personal, and community responsibilities and develop a realistic plan to meet all of those requirements while also maintaining their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

In addition to the quantitative data related to grades and student success, the student responses submitted during the Spring 2020 semester were analyzed to determine the ways in which students connected to the topics of discussion and assigned readings and expressed their identities in a manner consistent with their emerging identities as college students. I used a thematic approach to coding the results of the search for key terms. This approach to coding was modified from the Tesch's (1990) approach discussed by Creswell and Creswell (2018). Once student responses were coded, I developed six themes that emerged in relation to how students define their identities. These themes were categorized as expected themes, unexpected themes, and themes of interest.

The first theme was students most often identify themselves in the context of their family, race, gender, and national identity. Analysis, supported by quotes from students, showed that students formed their identity based on either their race, gender, national origin, or their family relationships which is consistent with established theory related to student identity development (Patton et al., 2016, p. 72). The second theme was students often identify themselves as part of a

military family which relates to their understanding of their positionality in American culture. Often, a student's awareness of their parent's military connection forms an essential part of how they identify themselves in connection with their patriotism and feelings toward responsibility, respect, and relationships. This relational identity develops through the course of the student's formative years and influences their relationships with other students and with the larger community of which they are a part. The third theme was religion and immigration status comprise a significant aspect of student identity. One of the ways in which students explained their identity was their association with their closely held religious beliefs. In an era where religious affiliation is declining rapidly, many students identified religion as a significant factor in their personal identity. The fourth theme was the connection between culture, language, and education form a deep sense of identity among students. The connections students make between language, culture, and the traditions they share with others form an essential part of how they view themselves and the world around them.

During this study, I focused primarily on the ways in which military dependents' experiences as members of a military family informed their perceptions of themselves and their community. Theme 5 is students, whether or not they identify as military dependents, are aware of the impact of PTSD, trauma, and deployments on their lives. Students readily identify the sacrifice and trauma associated with deployments, parental injury and risk, and military service and connect these experiences to their own identities and perspectives. Theme 6 is student's identity as part of a military family and community form an essential part of how they view themselves and their experiences. For many students, their parent's service provides a great sense of awareness of the impact of the military on the community at large. Students express

their connection to their military family and to the larger military community that shapes who they are and their perceptions of their community.

The limited participation in Phase III was not sufficient to determine any patterns or relationships between the participant's military affiliation and their academic progress in higher education to date; however, their experiences are consistent with the experiences of military dependents more broadly and are similar to the responses by participants in Phase II. The participant's response shows that being a military dependent impacted their emotional connection to their military parent because of their parent's PTSD and the associated trauma.

The analysis discussed in Chapter 4 leads to a discussion of how that information can be used to answer the questions that guided this study. The findings may not provide a definitive solution to the best methods and strategies for helping military dependents in higher education achieve success, but can serve as a foundation for future study and analysis.

Interpretation of the Findings

The specific focus of the analysis of data in Phase I of this study was military dependents whose eligibility for VA education benefits was already in jeopardy. This provided information on a particular subset of military dependents in higher education but did not address the needs of all military dependents.

Phase I of this study demonstrates that this gap in support and identification of these students is highly correlated to the academic progress of military dependents in higher education. The significance of this finding is that the data shows that military dependents struggle academically at a higher rate than their non-military affiliated peers. The analysis of student responses during Phase II shows that students approach their identities from many perspectives. This finding is consistent with developing and changing student identities discussed in Patton et

al. (2016). Students readily identify their connection to the military and openly discuss how their experiences as military dependents affect their lives. Students did not readily identify how their status as military dependents impacted their academic achievement, but they did discuss how their identity as military dependents impacts their world view. The findings from Phase II of this study demonstrate that students were successful because of the pedagogical approach used within the framework of this study and the interventions implemented during Phase II.

While the course theme may have had little impact on the students' overall success in the class, an important consideration is that "students who [are] validated [develop] confidence in their ability to learn, [experience] enhanced feelings of self-worth, and [believe] they [have] something to offer the academic community" (Patton et al., 2016, p. 41). This validation and recognition of the unique challenges faced by military dependents likely served to improve student success for all students. The findings of the mixed methods study as a result of implementing a course curriculum and providing focused interventions show that student success is related to focused intervention and a student's feelings of validation.

Theoretical Framework

Erikson's identity development theory and Chickering's student development theory formed the basis of the theoretical framework for this study. Identity theory applies to military dependents in that students' identity as a member of the larger military community develops over time. College students are on the cusp of what Erikson (1980) identifies as identity diffusion in which adolescents begin to develop their core sense of self separately from familial and cultural identities (Merolla et al., 2012). Identity theory is further explored in the context of military dependents as "third culture kids" (TCK) in that Pollock and Van Reken (2009) ascertained that while TCKs are highly adaptable, a trait necessary in the college setting, these students also

experience marginalization in academic settings. Application of student development theory in conjunction with identity development theory is critical to providing focused support for students because the establishment of identity is central to student development.

Chickering's student development theory has been used to identify ways to assist commuter students, improve academic advising, implement experiential learning, understand adult learning, and understand work-based learning (Garfield & David, 1986). Application of Chickering's student development theory to providing focused support for military-connected and military-affiliated students is critical.

Erickson's identity theory is grounded in the understanding that society shapes the individual which then shapes social behaviors (Merolla et al., 2012). Role identity is an important consideration in how students develop social identities and integrate more fully into student roles (Merolla et al., 2012). As it relates to the current study, it is important to recognize that one of the primary reasons military dependents do not avail themselves of resources and support services identified as being for veterans is that they do not identify as veterans. This identification is correct, but fails to encompass the larger military affiliation of these students. In recognizing student identity as a factor in use and personal growth, young military dependents entering higher education have spent their formative years cocooned in a support network that recognizes and values the sacrifices of military members and their families.

Military dependents are a significant part of a larger cohort of students referred to as third culture kids (TCK). The challenges faced by these students is related to a sense of cultural homelessness that affects personal identity and leads to a lack of connection to peers. The highly structured organizational identity or affiliation with military culture can present a challenge for students who require additional help but are reluctant to seek assistance (Railsback, 2019). This

lack of connection can affect how students perceive their roles in academic and social settings as they explore their burgeoning sense of self identity.

It is important to incorporate a pedological approach that supports student identity development by allowing students to express, through their writing, how they perceive themselves and their connections to others. Feedback and encouraging the expression of self is essential to helping students process and understand the changes they experience as they encounter new experiences (Garrett & Moltzen, 2011; Primeau et al., 2013). Remaining focused on the holistic development of the self and of the writer improves learning outcomes while strengthening the student's writing ability (Miranda et al., 2017). The goal with this study was to apply Chickering's and Erickson's theories of student identity development through a holistic approach to writing that focused first on the individual student and their emerging identity as part of the military community.

Limitations of the Study

Although I was able to collect appropriate data to analyze and provide responses to the research questions, there were significant limitations in the study. One of the limitations of this study was that students would recognize and express the challenges they faced as military dependents in an academic setting. An additional, significant limitation was the limited face-to-face interaction with students due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions on in-person learning. Because of these restrictions, the participants in this study did not meet face to face which hampered the development of strong interpersonal relationships.

Further limitations were directly related to the student participants in this study. The students were simultaneously enrolled in high school and not necessarily representative of military dependents in higher education. During the second phase of this study, all of the

students who completed the course completed the course with a grade of C or better. This cohort of students may not necessarily have been representative of all military dependents in higher education, but the information gathered and the success of these students overall suggests that further study in a more conventional setting is warranted.

An additional limitation during the conduct of this study was the lack of institutional support or interest in identifying ways to help military dependents at the institutional level. The scope of this study was limited significantly to what I was allowed to do within my classroom. Because of this limitation, broad institutional conclusions cannot be drawn, nor was it possible to introduce interventions and best practices for all of the military dependents enrolled at the institution. The institution's reticence to participate in research-based action studies and to support those whose inquiry and research may improve outcomes for students is systemic at the institution. This limitation constricted the scope and impact of the study in significant ways. However, the impact of this study on the student participants cannot be dismissed out of hand. Every day, teachers impact students in ways that may not be apparent initially. While I was not able to implement broad institutional change or compel the institution to change the way they support or identify military dependents at the institution, I continue to advocate for these students in a consistent manner that directly impacts individual students every day by demonstrating that their presence on campus and in our classes is important and that their success as individuals and as students is the primary focus. So, while a single instructor may not be able to enact institutional change, they can implement thoughtful, compassionate interventions and focus on student's needs, growth, and academic achievement that will impact *that* student.

Recommendation for Further Implementation

The potential for institutional change as a result of this study was limited. However, the impact of the interventions could have significant positive impacts for students. If colleges and universities that enroll significant numbers of military dependents focused more directly on engaging these students and providing thorough, intentional support, there is little doubt that outcomes for these students, academically and personally, could improve. An important way that colleges and universities could address this issue is to identify these students as a distinct cohort. This could be accomplished by including a separate category of self-identification within the existent identification of veteran status. Further, VA service offices could track and report beneficiaries of Chapter 33 TOE and Chapter 35 benefits as a separate category of beneficiaries. This tracking and reporting would be more consistent if the Veterans Administration required such reporting. An investigation by the VA and Congress similar to the INVEST report cited in this study regarding the success and persistence rates of military dependents would help identify these students as needing focused attention. Furthermore, the Veterans Administration in collaboration with the Department of Education should require identification of military dependents, reporting these students' success and usage of education benefits and financial aid as a condition of eligibility for funding.

At institutions where a significant number of veterans and military dependents are enrolled, student services and student support personnel including success coaches should be aware of the distinct challenges faced by military dependents in higher education. Early warning systems, faculty professional development, and veterans programs should be examined in light of existent K-12 research on best practices regarding military children in schools. These best practices could be adapted to best serve military dependents once they enroll in college.

Additionally, programs designed to assist veterans as they transition to higher education, such as Green Zone training, could be revised to include a focus on military dependents in higher education. The Green Zone training is professional development offered at colleges and universities across the country "to support student veterans by designating locations recognized as a safe space" (Green Zone Training, n.d.). As part of this initiative, faculty and staff who are familiar with the needs of student veterans are identified by a Green Zone emblem in their work space. This professional development provides "supportive services necessary to ensure that veteran students are successful in their academic pursuits, adjust to the campus environment, and eventually transition to civilian employment" (Green Zone Training, n.d.). Other institutional supports that already exist could be made more inclusive for military dependents. Activities advertised for veterans could include specific language that identifies all eligible participants including military dependents. Freshman seminar classes could be offered in a cohort model specifically for military dependents.

Focusing on military dependents in higher education could help these students persist to graduation. Any of the suggested changes could be implemented and monitored to measure the impact on student success. Because military dependents have not been discretely identified nor has there been any research on this cohort of students, the potential for studying their experiences and success in higher education is boundless.

Social Justice, Diversity, Access, and Equity Implications

Veterans, military members, their spouses and children have been the focus of support, research, and interest in higher education for decades. The length of the most recent conflict puts the status, the health, and the resilience of military families in stark focus, and its conclusion ensures that many of these individuals will continue to require institutional support (Kritikos et

al., 2019; Mustillo et al., 2016; Paley et al., 2013). These needs mean that institutions will need to do more than simply teach core requirements.

Providing institutional focus and support of this at-risk population of students serves multiple purposes. First, institutions will be able to demonstrate that their "military friendly" designation is inclusive of all military-connected and military-affiliated students, which will ensure that all of these students receive the institutional support they require to be successful. Second, the generation of children who have been directly and indirectly affected by the most recent conflict have been harmed by this conflict and will require support for the foreseeable future (Scott et al., 2014; Sullivan et al., 2019; Tunac De Pedro et al., 2011). Institutions of higher education would be well served in expanding their support for military dependents on their campuses.

All of the participants in Phase II of this study were dual-enrolled high school students. This cohort of students present an additional opportunity to achieve equity and improve access in higher education. While outside of the scope of this study, the recruitment, retention, and success of dual enrolled high school students as a cohort of students is critical in helping students realize that a college education is accessible at low or no cost. In recruiting these students, particular focus should be paid to identifying students who may not otherwise be able to attend college. Identifying students who would be first-generation students, require financial aid, and those who meet other sociodemographic factors associated with low college matriculation and encouraging them to participate in CCP programs may help address issues of access and equity in higher education.

Recommendations for Future Research

Researchers should continue to examine ways to support military dependents in higher education. The research and best practices on how to help military dependents in K-12 and veterans in higher education can serve as a road map for how institutions build programs that support military dependents. This study, especially the survey and interview instruments, could be used at institutions to help identify the needs and concerns of military dependents at their institutions. Using results from these tools, programs and initiatives designed specifically to support military students could be developed with the full weight of the institution's student services and support personnel. Recognition of military dependents and their needs could serve institutional goals of improving retention and persistence among students. This could be especially important in that many of these students have financial aid that is largely guaranteed.

Personal Leadership Development

An important factor in understanding a researcher's perspectives and positions in regard to the research they have undertaken is to recognize how their experiences, biases, and understanding affect their perspectives. As a veteran and as an educator, I have experienced these transitions. I completed my undergraduate and graduate degrees while serving on active duty and as a reservist. As an instructor, I understand that every student has unique needs and experiences that affect them on an elemental level before they even step foot inside the classroom. For many of my students, those experiences are associated with their parents' military service.

As an educator, I have taught military dependents in high school and college. My own children are also affected. Both my spouse and I deployed multiple times during their young childhood, and because of our service, both of my children experienced relocation, skills gaps in foundational knowledge due to relocation, and increased anxiety which has affected their

academic performance. One of my children recently graduated from a University of North Carolina system school. She moved from a community focused on providing support to military children in local schools to a college community that is not geographically located near any major military installations in the state. During her collegiate journey, she never utilized any resources advertised for veterans and was unaware of support services for military dependents.

Her experience is not unique; there are millions of military children whose parent has deployed in support of the ongoing conflicts across the globe. I have seen how being part of a military family affects students both as a parent and as an educator. As a veteran, an educator, and as a parent, my experiences provide both credibility and passion to this research because of my intimate understanding of how institutions can work better to provide support to military dependents in higher education. My experience as a veteran in higher education, my experience as a teacher, and the passion I have for young adults like my daughter who have experienced significant challenges as a result of their parent's service strengthen my position as a researcher in this study. Having conducted this study with students who are also enrolled in high school has reaffirmed my dedication to ensuring that students have all of the resources they need and that each student is afforded every possible opportunity to succeed.

Conclusions

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to examine the ways in which military dependents develop a sense of identity and belonging in higher education and to provide intentional, curriculum-based instruction designed to improve persistence, academic success, and utilization of institutional resources. While this study may not have been conducted across a broad institutional manner, the findings demonstrate that implementing a course curriculum and providing focused interventions show that student success is related to focused intervention and a

student's feelings of validation. This study further shows that students who are military dependents have a clear sense of that identity and what it means to themselves and to their community. I have argued throughout this study that there needs to be focused attention on military dependents in higher education. The lives of an entire generation of military dependents have been forever marked by their parents' sacrifice and service. America's withdrawal from Afghanistan marks the end of our longest war but does not undo this lasting harm. As long as the United States continues to involve themselves in global conflict, such as in the emerging threat in Eastern Europe for which troops are preparing to deploy as I conclude this study, military children will continue to be impacted by the fear, anxiety, and loss associated with their parents' service. The very least that we as a nation, and especially those of us who are educators, can do is to make every effort to validate these students' experiences and to support them as they pursue their academic goals.

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APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

Notification of Exempt Certification

From : Social/Behavioral IRB
Deborah Lucas
cc: Heidi Puckett
Date : 2/26/2021
UMCIRB 21-000062
PREPARING MILITARY DEPENDENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

I am pleased to inform you that your research submission has been certified as exempt on 2/26/2021. This study is eligible for Exempt Certification under category # 1 & 2a.

It is your responsibility to ensure that this research is conducted in the manner reported in your application and/or protocol, as well as being consistent with the ethical principles of the Belmont Report and your profession.

This research study does not require any additional interaction with the UMCIRB unless there are proposed changes to this study. Any change, prior to implementing that change, must be submitted to the UMCIRB for review and approval. The UMCIRB will determine if the change impacts the eligibility of the research for exempt status. If more substantive review is required, you will be notified within five business days.

Document	Description
Debbie Lucas Proposal(0.02)	Study Protocol or Grant Application
Informed Consent(O.01)	Consent Forms
Student Interview(0.03)	Interview/Focus Group Scripts/Questions
Student Survey(O.01)	Surveys and Questionnaires

For research studies where a waiver or alteration of HIPAA Authorization has been approved, the IRB states that each of the waiver criteria in 45 CFR 164.512(i)(1)(i)(A) and (2)(i) through (v) have been met. Additionally, the elements of PHI to be collected as described in items 1 and 2 of the Application for Waiver of Authorization have been determined to be the minimal necessary for the specified research.

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

APPENDIX B: APPROVED AMMENDMENT

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board
4N-64 Brody Medical Sciences Building· Mail Stop 682
600 Moye Boulevard · Greenville, NC 27834
Office **252-744-2914** · Fax **252-744-2284** · **rede.ecu.edu/umcirb/**

Amendment Approved

ID:	Amel_UMCIRB 21-000062
Title:	Amendment 1 for IRB Study #UMCIRB 21-000062 PREPARING MILITARY DEPENDENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
Description:	Your amendment has been approved. To navigate to the project workspace, click on the above ID.

APPENDIX C: CONSENT PARAGRAPH FOR EXEMPT STUDY

You are being invited to participate in a **research** study titled *"Preparing Military Dependents for Higher Education by Providing Comprehensive, Focused Support to Improve Education Outcomes"* being conducted by Deborah E. Lucas, a doctoral student at East Carolina University in the Department of Education. The goal is to survey 10 individuals in/at colleges and universities. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. It is hoped that this information will assist us to better understand how colleges and universities can better serve military dependents. Your responses will be kept confidential and no data will be released or used with your identification attached. Your participation in the research is **voluntary**. You may choose not to answer any or all questions, and you may stop at any time. We ***will not*** be able to pay you for the time you volunteer while being in this study. There is **no penalty for not taking part** in this research study. Please call *Deborah E. Lucas* at 757-620-6863 for any research related questions or the University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) at 252-744-2914 for questions about your rights as a research participant.

APPENDIX D: STUDENT SURVEY

INSTRUCTIONS: These items describe different aspects of identity. Please read each item carefully and consider how it applies to you. Fill in the blank next to each item by choosing a number from the scale below:

1 – Not important to my sense of who I am
2 – Slightly important to my sense of who I am
3 – Somewhat important to my sense of who I am
4 – Very important to my sense of who I am
5 – Extremely important to my sense of who I am

_____1. My personal values and moral standards

_____2. Being a part of a military family

_____3. My race or ethnic background

_____4. My personal goals and hopes for the future

_____5. My religion

_____6. Places where I live or where I was raised

_____7. My age, belonging to my age group or being part of my generation

_____8. My gender or gender identity

_____9. My social behavior, such as the way I act when I meet people

_____10. My feeling of being a unique person, being distinct from others

_____11. My relationships with the people I feel close to

_____12. My social class, the economic group I belong to

_____13. My feeling of belonging to the military community

_____14. Knowing that I continue to be essentially the same person inside even though life involves many external changes.

_____15. My self-knowledge, my ideas about what kind of person I really am

_____16. My feeling of pride in my country

_____17. Being proud to be a citizen

_____18. My occupational choice and career plans

_____19. My choice of college

_____20. My choice of what degree I plan to pursue

_____20. My role of being a student in college

APPENDIX E: COURSE DESIGN

From the Course Syllabus:

Course Description

This course, the second in a series of two, introduces research techniques, documentation styles, and writing strategies. Emphasis is placed on analyzing information and ideas and incorporating research findings into documented writing and research projects. Upon completion, students should be able to evaluate and synthesize information from primary and secondary sources using documentation appropriate to various disciplines. Students will present, individually, or collaboratively, work appropriate to the rhetorical situation. *This course has been approved for transfer under the CAA and ICAA as a general education course in English Composition. This is a Universal General Education Transfer Component (UGETC) course.*

Course Competencies and Objectives

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Read, locate, and evaluate information from various disciplines.
2. Apply research and use writing to achieve a variety of purposes in disciplinary contexts.
3. Demonstrate accurate and responsible documentation appropriate to various disciplines.

Course Texts

Bullock, Richard, Michal Brody, and Francine Weinberg. *The Little Seagull Handbook with Exercises*. 3rd ed., Norton, 2017. ISBN: 978-0-393-64639-9

Units of Study

- Module 1: Writing in the Humanities
- Module 2: Writing in the Social Sciences
- Module 3: Writing in the Sciences

Assignments

You will have three essays, weekly assignments, and a final presentation based on your research. All specific instructions for assignments, including how to submit them, will be provided at the time they are assigned and will be posted in Blackboard.
**Also, please note that all documents submitted electronically for grading or review must be compatible with Microsoft Word. Do not submit .pages, .wps, .rtf, .pdf, .odt, or .txt files. Assignments cannot be graded and may be considered late if they are submitted in any of these formats. Only format work as .doc or .docx. If you have a Mac computer, your version of Word may save as .pages, which is incompatible. Please be sure to save as .doc or .docx.

GRADING SYSTEM

Official grades are issued for each student at the end of each semester. Students enrolled in academic programs will be graded by the following letter grade system.

All essays are graded using the department's "Evaluation Scale for Writing" provided at the end of this syllabus. More specific expectations for each assignment are provided within the assignment instructions.

COURSE EVALUATION:

Assignments are weighted. Here are the individual category percentages:

Writing in the Humanities Essay	20%
Writing in the Social Sciences Essay	20%
Writing in the Sciences Essay	25%
Final Présentation	10%
Assignements	25%

Course Policies, etc.

Attendance:

- Attendance is crucial for your success in this course. In accordance with [the institution's] policy, students must not exceed the limit of absences equivalent to two weeks of classes, or 12.5% of the total contact hours.
- If this limit is exceeded prior to the official withdrawal date, students are disenrolled and receive a grade of "W."
- After this date, students receive a grade of "W" or "F," depending on class performance at the time of disenrollment.
- If students withdraw themselves, a grade of "W" is assigned. Please see your academic catalog for further information on this policy.
- In order to be officially enrolled, a student must attend the course no later than the census date. For online classes this means that you must complete the entry verification in Bb.
- This attendance policy applies to everyone. No matter the reason(s), should you exceed the allowed number of absences, you will be disenrolled.
- In extenuating circumstances, reinstatements may be granted if student/instructor communication has been in place regarding such circumstances leading to the disenrollment (which means email me immediately if you have issues that would hinder your success in this course).
- If reinstatement is granted, a reinstatement contract will be negotiated and strictly enforced.
- Reinstatements will only be considered if there is frequent and clear communication with the instructor prior to and upon notification of the disenrollment.
- You can check your attendance in the "My Attendance" tab. If you have any questions about the attendance policy, please ask.

Virtual Class Meetings:

We will use Blackboard Collaborate for our virtual class meetings. Dates and times for virtual class meetings will be announced as necessary via Bb announcements.

Email:
Use your [institutional] Outlook account, accessible through your [student] Portal, to email your instructor or your classmates.
Email is the fastest and easiest way to contact me. I will do my best to respond to all emails within twenty-four hours; however, this will not always be possible. Do not expect a same-day response for emails sent after my posted office hours; I will respond as soon as possible the next day. Please expect a slower response time on weekends and breaks. I do not always check my emails over the weekend, but I will respond to all emails as soon as possible the next working day.
*You will occasionally receive emails from "yourinstructor@blackboard.com" when I post announcements. While these are important emails to read, do not reply to these emails, as they will bounce back to you as undeliverable.
You should check your email and the Blackboard site *at least* once a day, even if no assignments are due that day.

Due Dates and Late Policy:

- All assignments are due on the date posted in Blackboard.
- If you know you have a conflict that will cause you to have to submit an assignment late, please let me know as soon as possible.
- Please communicate with me if you have fallen behind in your work so that we can develop a plan for you to catch up.
- While I do not deduct points for late assignments on a daily basis, the deadlines are important for you to maintain adequate progress in the course.
- Please understand that feedback and grading on late assignments, especially rough drafts of essays, will be at my discretion. In order to receive full credit and timely feedback, please submit assignments on time.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:
Plagiarism is using, as your own, the words or ideas of another, whether written or oral. When you use material from a source, you must quote or paraphrase accurately and properly cite the information. Failure to do so is considered plagiarism. Examples of plagiarism include word-for-word copying without correctly indicating that you are quoting, inaccurate quoting and paraphrasing, and incomplete or missing documentation. Purchasing a paper, copying someone else's work and submitting it as your own, and *even submitting a paper you wrote for another class* is also plagiarism. *All course work must be new and original work for this course*. Any misrepresentation of the source in your writing or speaking would constitute a form of plagiarism.
Please note: All faculty have access to *turnitin.com* and are otherwise experienced in detecting plagiarism. Trust me, we've seen it all. Whether intentional or unintentional, plagiarism is not acceptable and can result in the student's being assigned a grade of zero (0) for the assignment and/or failing the course, at the instructor's discretion; more severe infractions could result in further disciplinary action (see the Proscribed Conduct Policy in your college catalog). Just don't do it.

Reinstatement: Reinstatement is at the discretion of the instructor.

When requesting reinstatement consider your goals regarding this class. Please take the time to communicate these goals with me so that we can work together to help you achieve those goals.
Blackboard: All assignments must be submitted via Blackboard. Assignments will be posted in Blackboard within each module. Final drafts of assignments will not be accepted via any other platform (personal email, email, or hard copy). Feedback on formal writing assignments will be provided via Blackboard. Assignments must be saved and submitted as Microsoft Word documents (assignments submitted in other digital formats may require resubmission). Grades will be posted via Blackboard in a timely manner. Please pay attention to your grades and if you have questions please ensure you have reviewed any feedback. I am more than happy to talk with you about any grade or about your overall course progress during my office hours. Please do not attempt to utilize instructional time to discuss individual grades.

Classroom Courtesy (especially in the digital space):
Together we will work to make our classroom a safe, civil, and tolerant space. If we are all respectful of each other, this should not be a problem.
Please treat each other courteously and respect the learning environment. This is your opportunity. Please make the most of the time we spend together. In an effort to ensure that all members of this learning environment have the same opportunity to achieve success, please ensure that you refrain from using cell phones or other electronic devices unless you are using them specifically for academic purposes.

Communicable Disease Policy:
Any student who knows, or has a reasonable basis for believing, that he or she is infected with a communicable disease (e.g. pandemic influenza) or other serious public health threat has an obligation to report that information to Student Services. A serious public health threat is one that has been declared by the State Public Health Director or the Governor. In the event of a reported occurrence of a communicable disease on campus, the College will seek guidance and direction from the appropriate public health authorities.
It is recommended that students who come to campus whether it be for classes, to use the library, to meet with an instructor or other faculty or administrative member, or to meet with a Writer's Center tutor during an established public health threat maintain social distancing by staying at least six (6) feet away from other individuals whenever possible and wear a face mask.

COVID-19 Reporting:
Any student who feels they have symptoms of COVID-19, has been exposed, or plans to get tested should notify Student Services

Rationale for the theme of the course:

Using a themed approach to writing courses allows students to navigate the writing process without having to question why they are writing about a specific subject or on a specific topic. In this course, all of the reading and writing assignments will be related to the themes of patriotism, America, and national identity. Within that construct, students will encounter historical perspectives, rhetorical arguments, and scientific research centered on the theme of the course.

All written assignments will be connected to the theme of the class. This approach allows students to encounter each writing assignment from a common point and to explore and discuss their own identity development through exploration of challenging readings and topics of discussion.

The first unit of study, Writing in the Humanities, will include selections from early American literature that provide insight into what it means to be or become an American nation. The major writing assignment for this unit will require students to write a literary analysis of one of the works listed. Questions for the writing prompt students will include in their analysis include how narrative and literature defines a nation and its people.

Reading selections for this unit include:

- Jonathan Edwards – Personal Narrative; " A Divine and Supernatural Light"
- Benjamin Franklin – "The Way to Wealth" and selections from The Autobiography
- Hector St. John de Crevecoeur – Letters from an American Farmer
- Ralph Waldo Emerson – "The American Scholar
- Walt Whitman – "Facing Left from California's Shores" and "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd"
- Robert Penn Warren – "American Portrait: Old Style"
- Olaudah Equiano – "The Interesting Narrative"
- Ambrose Bierce – An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge
- Stephen Crane – War is Kind

The second unit of study, Writing in the Social Sciences, will introduce students to elements of rhetoric. In this unit, students will read seminal works of American rhetoric. The major writing assignment for this unit will be to write a rhetorical analysis of a current or historical work such as a major political speech or writing. The prompt for this assignment will instruct students to identify the rhetorical devices the author uses and to explain the efficacy of the author's use of rhetoric. The use of rhetoric will be tied to the author's response to the underlying issue of what it means to advocate for the fundamental principles espoused in the nation's founding documents.

Reading Selections for this unit include:

- Thomas Paine – Common Sense
- John Jay, Alexander Hamilton, James Monroe – The Federalist Papers (selected essays)
- Thomas Jefferson – Notes on the State of Virginia
- Abraham Lincoln – A House Divided
- Henry David Thoreau – Resistance to Civil Government
- Frederick Douglass – What to the Slave is the Fourth of July
- Thomas Jefferson – The Declaration of Independence
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr – I Have a Dream

The third unit of study, Writing in the Sciences, will introduce students to elements of research. In this unit, students will read works that explore various elements of American identity as well as responses to current attitudes and trends regarding patriotism and American nationalism. The

major writing assignment for this unit will be a research essay on a topic of the student's choice related to the theme of the course.

Reading Selections for this unit include:

- John O'Neil – "Kerry, 'Loose cannon' says ex-commander"
- B. G. Burkett and Glenna Whitley – "Stolen Valor"
- Palgrave McMillan – "Why do they hate us?"
- John Podhoretz – My Love Affair With America"
- Jeff Jacoby – "A Little Less Freedom of Speech
- Dinesh D'Souza – "What's So Great About America?

Course Development and Instructional Practices

Within the context of meeting the required course objectives and student competencies, this course was designed to enable students to explore, through formal and informal writing assignments, their identities within the context of the theme of the class. The writing classroom lends itself to individual expression and reflection that may not be as easy to facilitate in other curricular areas. The themes of this class could be explored in a similarly themed class and other disciplines within the humanities or within a freshman seminar class.

Weekly writing prompts, identified in Table 6, were developed to allow students to explore their identities in response to specific texts and prompts. These prompts do not necessarily need to be replicated or used in a similar course design. However, intentionally developed prompts can be used to facilitate discussion and reflection for students as they explore their emerging identities. There are certainly other tools that can be employed to engage students and offer them the opportunity to explore their emerging identities including focus groups, surveys, and class discussions. In this study, student writing was used because these responses could be used in conjunction with analytic software to identify common themes among the student responses.

Choosing texts which students can easily read and respond to is important for several reasons. In a themed class, connected readings help students increase their understanding of concepts and to experience different opinions related to controversial or new topics. Requiring students to engage with those texts and to respond to the text allowed them to reflect on their individual understanding and experiences as they related to the text. In response, students were able to respond to the prompt in a coherent and comprehensive manner.

The development of the prompts is important to eliciting well-constructed, thoughtful responses. After reading the assigned text and considering how the text corresponded to the theme of the class, I developed prompts using guided reading questions that often were associated with the text as well as my analysis of the author's purpose, tone, and argument. Development of the more formal, unit writing assignments was based both on the requirements and objectives of the class as well as the purpose of the assignment and assigned readings within each module. Each of the weekly readings corresponded to a journal prompt, and that reflection and textual engagement was used as building blocks for the more formal writing assignment.

APPENDIX F: STUDENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Demographics

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Relationship to the military
    a. Parent is active duty
    b. Parent is retired
    c. Step-parent is active duty
    d. Step-parent is retired
    e. Parent is National Guard/Reserve
    f. Step-Parent is National Guard/Reserve
    g. Guardian/Adoptive Parent is active duty
    h. Guardian/Adoptive Parent is retired
    i. Guardian/Adoptive Parent is National Guard/Reserve
4. Age when military sponsor deployed (indicate each age group)
    a. 0-5
    b. 5-10
    c. 10-15
    d. 15-20
    e. 20-25
5. Number of parental deployments prior to age 18
6. Number of primary schools attended
7. Number of middle schools attended

8. Number of high schools attended
9. IEP
    a. Yes
    b. No
10. Mental health treatment prior to age 18
    a. Yes
    b. No
11. Mental health treatment after age 18
    a. Yes
    b. No
12. Number of family moves related to the execution of military orders prior to age 18
13. Eligible for VA education benefits
    a. CH 31 TOE
    b. CH 35
14. Scholarships related to military sponsor's service
    a. Yes
    b. No
15. Plans to enter the military
    a. Yes
    b. No
16. Type of college/university
    a. 2-year
    b. 4-year private

c. 4-year public

17. Academic level

a. Freshman

b. Sophomore

c. Junior

d. Senior

18. Academic Major

19. Current GPA

20. Academic Warning during undergraduate work

a. Yes

b. No

21. Academic Probation during undergraduate work

a. Yes

b. No

22. Currently in Good Academic Standing

a. Yes

b. No

23. Residency waiver due to sponsor's status

a. Yes

b. No

24. Attended DoD school K-12

a. Yes

b. No

25. Graduated from DoD school
    a. Yes
    b. No
26. Lived overseas due to military sponsor's orders
    a. Yes
    b. No
27. Financial Aid
    a. Yes
    b. No
28. Suspension of Financial aid due to academics
    a. Yes
    b. No

Interview Questions

1. Could you describe your experiences growing up in a military family?
2. What impact do you feel being a military dependent has had on your life?
3. How do you feel that your experiences as a military dependent affected your education?
4. What level of connectivity do you feel toward the military community at large?
5. What level of connectivity do you feel toward the campus military community?
6. Have you used veteran's resources on campus? Why or why not?
7. What ways do you feel your campus could provide you with additional support?
8. Do you openly identify yourself as a military-affiliated student with your peers and instructors? Why or why not?

9. Do you feel that your peers or instructors do (or would) treat you differently if they knew you were part of the larger military community? Why or why not?
10. Are there specific occasions where you have felt included or excluded because of your military affiliation? In what ways?

APPENDIX G: SUPPORTING DATA FOR PHASE I ANALYSIS

VA Education Beneficiaries on Suspension/Probation FA 2019

Student Number	BENEFIT	Enrolled SP 20	GPA	fin aid	met w/sst
1	CH 30	N	0.22	N	N
2	CH 30	Y	1.80	N	N
3	CH 30	Y	1.89	N	N
4	CH 30	N	1.60	Y	N
5	CH 31	N	1.67	N	N
6	CH 31	Y	0.00	Y	N
7	CH 31	Y	1.69	Y	Y
8	CH 33	N	0.00	N	N
9	CH 33	N	0.00	N	N
10	CH 33	N	1.00	N	N
11	CH 33	N	1.86	N	N
12	CH 33	Y	1.50	N	N
13	CH 33	Y	1.81	N	N
14	CH 33	N	1.33	N	Y
15	CH 33	N	1.92	N	Y
16	CH 33	Y	1.33	N	Y
17	CH 33	Y	2.00	Y	N
23	CH 33	Y	2.76	Y	Y
25	CH 33 - TOE	Y	1.58	N	N
26	CH 33 - TOE	Y	1.74	N	N
27	CH 33 - TOE	Y	1.80	N	N
28	CH 33 - TOE	Y	1.83	N	N
29	CH 33 - TOE	Y	1.43	Y	N
30	CH 33 - TOE	Y	1.88	Y	Y
31	CH 35	N	0.00	N	N
32	CH 35	N	0.30	N	N
33	CH 35	N	0.93	N	N
34	CH 35	N	1.15	N	N
35	CH 35	Y	0.00	N	N
36	CH 35	Y	1.28	N	N
37	CH 35	Y	1.33	N	N
38	CH 35	Y	1.47	N	N
39	CH 35	N	1.77	N	Y
40	CH 35	Y	1.41	N	Y
41	CH 35	Y	0.94	Y	N
42	CH 35	Y	1.58	Y	N
43	CH 35	Y	1.86	Y	N
44	CH 35	Y	1.93	Y	N
45	CH 35	N	0.44	Y	Y
46	CH 35	Y	1.86	Y	Y

47	CH 35	Y	1.92	Y	Y
18	CH 35 S	N	0.00	N	N
19	CH 35 S	Y	1.81	N	N
20	CH 35 S	Y	1.68	N	Y
21	CH 35 S	Y	1.50	Y	N
22		Y	0.00	N	N

Average GPA of Non-MilDep = 1.35
Average GPA of MILDEP = 1.26
Overall Average GPA 1.30

VA Education Benefit Suspension/Probation - Summer 2019

Student Number	Chap	GPA	Academic standing at the end of FA19	MET with SST
1	30	1.89	Probation	N
2	30	2.15	Good	N
3	30	2.058	Good	Y
4	31	1.666	Probation	N
5	31	1.808	Probation	N
6	31	1.685	Probation	Y
7	33	0.00	Probation	N
8	33	1.761	Probation	N
9	33	0.646	N/A	N
10	33	1.333	N/A	N
11	33	1.871	Probation	N
12	33	1.951	Probation	N
13	33	1.957	N/A	Y
14	33	2.182	Good	Y
15	33	2.759	Good	Y
16	33	2.385	Good	Y
17	33	1.889	N/A	
18	35	0.00	Probation	N
19	35	1.59	N/A	N
20	35	1.24	Probation	N
21	35	0.00	N/A	N
22	35	1.09	Probation	N
23	35	0.78	Probation	N
24	35	0.00	Probation	N
25	35	1.86	Probation	N
26	35	1.28	Probation	N
27	35	1.93	Probation	N
28	35	1.97	Probation	N
29	35	1.16	Probation	Y
30	35	1.68	Probation	Y
31	35	0.60	Probation	Y
32	35	1.94	Probation	Y
33	35	0.62	N/A	
34	33 - TOE	0.22	Probation	N
35	33 - TOE	2.62	Good	N
36	33 - TOE	1.85	Probation	Y

MIL Dep GPA = 1.18

Non-Mil Dep GPA = 1.76

Overall Average GPA = 1.46

Student Success Coach Appointment/Retention

Student Number	Appointment Date	Retained FA18-SP19	Retained SP19-FA19	Graduated	VET/MD
1	2/14/2019	Y	N	Y	N
2	1/17/2019	Y	N	Y	N
3	11/16/2018	Y	Y	Y	N
4	4/8/2019	Y	Y	Y	N
5	11/1/2018	Y	Y	Y	N
6	10/10/2018	Y	Y	Y	N
7	10/11/2018	Y	Y	Y	N
8	4/12/2019	Y	Y	Y	N
9	10/18/2018	Y		Y	N
10	8/23/2018	Y		Y	N
11	10/24/2018	Y		Y	N
12	1/9/2019	Y		Y	N
13	8/21/2018	Y		Y	N
14	8/30/2018	Y		Y	N
15	5/2/2019	Y		Y	N
16	11/7/2018	Y		Y	N
17	10/16/2018	Y		Y	N
18	3/13/2019	Y		Y	N
19	6/12/2019	Y		Y	N
20	1/17/2019	Y		Y	N
21	8/31/2018	Y		Y	N
22	11/30/2018	Y		Y	N
23	7/22/2019	Y		Y	N
24	11/15/2018	Y		Y	N
25	12/13/2018	Y		Y	N
26	11/9/2018	N		Y	N
27	5/31/2019	Y		Y	N
28	10/22/2018	Y		Y	N
29	11/15/2018	N		Y	N
30	3/25/2019	N		Y	N
31	9/26/2018	Y		Y	N
32	9/5/2018	Y		Y	N
33	10/24/2018	Y		Y	N
34	12/12/2018	Y		Y	N
35	2/14/2019	Y		Y	N
36	10/15/2018	Y		Y	N
37	10/8/2018	N		Y	N

38	4/24/2019	Y		Y	N
39	11/5/2018	Y		Y	N
40	4/29/2019	Y		Y	N
41	8/30/2018	Y		Y	N
42	8/21/2018	N		Y	N
43	11/14/2018	Y		Y	N
44	12/6/2018	N		Y	N
45	11/8/2018	Y		Y	N
46	1/14/2019	Y		Y	N
47	8/15/2018	Y		Y	N
48	9/4/2018	Y		Y	N
49	4/25/2019	Y		Y	N
50	10/29/2018	Y		Y	N
51	3/27/2019	Y		Y	N
52	4/26/2019	Y		Y	N
53	3/7/2019	Y		Y	N
54	8/20/2018	Y		Y	N
55	11/8/2018	Y		Y	N
56	12/5/2018	Y		Y	N
57	8/22/2018	Y		Y	N
58	2/7/2019	Y		Y	N
59	12/3/2018	Y		Y	N
60	1/10/2019	Y		Y	N
61	5/1/2019	Y		Y	N
62	1/22/2019	Y		Y	N
63	10/19/2018	Y		Y	N
64	10/31/2018	Y		Y	N
65	4/25/2019	Y		Y	N
66	11/9/2018	Y		Y	N
67	10/3/2018	Y		Y	N
68	12/13/2018	Y		Y	N
69	1/28/2019	Y		Y	N
70	1/15/2019	Y		Y	N
71	6/10/2019	Y		Y	Y
72	1/31/2019	Y		Y	Y
73	9/28/2018		N	Y	Y
74	2/26/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
75	8/21/2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
76	10/30/2018	N	N	Y	Y
77	8/30/2018	Y	N	Y	Y
78	7/2/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
79	8/15/2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
80	8/6/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
81	11/29/2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
82	9/11/2018	Y	Y	Y	Y

83	2/7/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
84	5/1/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
85	9/10/2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
86	2/19/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
87	4/12/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
88	12/10/2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
89	9/27/2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
90	4/24/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
91	2/19/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
92	11/8/2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
93	5/13/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
94	6/17/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
95	8/21/2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
96	4/16/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
97	12/17/2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
98	1/8/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
99	1/10/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
100	8/27/2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
101	11/2/2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
102	7/17/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
103	10/4/2018	Y		Y	Y
104	2/15/2019	Y		Y	Y
105	10/15/2018	Y		Y	Y
106	12/10/2018	Y		Y	Y
107	4/8/2019	Y		Y	Y
108	11/15/2018	Y		Y	Y
109	9/10/2018	N		Y	Y
110	5/8/2019	Y		Y	Y
111	10/17/2018	Y		Y	Y
112	8/23/2018	Y		Y	Y
113	8/16/2018	Y		Y	Y
114	10/30/2018	Y		Y	Y
115	11/5/2018	Y		Y	Y
116	9/10/2018	Y		Y	Y
117	9/26/2018	N		Y	Y
118	8/15/2018	Y		Y	Y
119	8/22/2018	Y		Y	Y
120	3/4/2019	Y		Y	Y
121	4/25/2019	Y		Y	Y
122	8/22/2018	Y		Y	Y
123	4/30/2019	Y		Y	Y
124	8/28/2018	Y		Y	Y
125	8/15/2018	Y		Y	Y
126	4/8/2019	Y		Y	Y
127	4/10/2019	Y		Y	Y

128	12/7/2018	Y		Y	Y
129	12/18/2018	Y		Y	Y
130	7/15/2019	Y		Y	Y
131	2/4/2019	Y		Y	Y
132	12/6/2018	Y		Y	Y
133	11/26/2018	Y		Y	Y
134	10/25/2018	Y		Y	Y
135	5/2/2019	Y		Y	Y
136	11/7/2018	Y		Y	Y
137	10/4/2018	Y		Y	Y
138	5/1/2019				N
139	10/18/2018				N
140	11/29/2018				N
141	8/30/2018				N
142	8/8/2019				N
143	6/17/2019				N
144	7/11/2019				N
145	7/16/2019				N
146	3/12/2019		Y		N
147	6/4/2019				N
148	8/27/2018				N
149	7/2/2019				N
150	7/31/2019				N
151	3/27/2019				N
152	2/22/2019	Y	N		N
153	5/21/2019	N	Y		N
154	10/1/2018	N			N
155	8/21/2018				N
156	12/12/2018	N			N
157	8/6/2019				N
158	10/23/2018		N	N	N
159	7/30/2019				N
160	6/10/2019				N
161	6/12/2019				N
162	7/26/2019				N
163	10/8/2018			N	N
164	8/20/2018				N
165	5/29/2019				N
166	9/10/2018	Y	N	N	N
167	3/18/2019	N		N	N
168	9/11/2018	N		N	N
169	2/5/2019	Y	N		N
170	10/31/2018	Y	N	N	N
171	3/14/2019	Y	N	N	N
172	1/16/2019	Y	N	N	N

173	9/5/2018	Y	N	N	N
174	10/25/2018	Y	N	N	N
175	8/31/2018	Y	N	N	N
176	10/2/2018	Y	N	N	N
177	8/23/2018	Y	N	N	N
178	3/7/2019	Y	N	N	N
179	2/1/2019	Y	N	N	N
180	8/30/2018	Y	N	N	N
181	11/6/2018	Y	N	N	N
182	8/23/2018	Y	N		N
183	4/8/2019	Y	N	N	N
184	11/5/2018		N	N	N
185	6/14/2019	Y	N	N	N
186	8/28/2018	Y	N	N	N
187	1/9/2019	Y	N	N	N
188	11/8/2018	Y	N	N	N
189	11/19/2018	Y	N	N	N
190	3/26/2019	Y	N		N
191	12/17/2018	Y	N	N	N
192	11/26/2018	Y	N	N	N
193	11/5/2018	N	N	N	N
194	2/4/2019		N	N	N
195	5/9/2019		N		N
196	6/4/2019		N	N	N
197	11/16/2018	Y	N		N
198	8/15/2018	Y	N	N	N
199	11/1/2018	Y	N	N	N
200	2/8/2019	Y	N	N	N
201	11/6/2018	Y	N		N
202	2/25/2019	Y	N	N	N
203	11/8/2018	Y	N	N	N
204	8/16/2018	Y	N	N	N
205	8/28/2018	Y	N	N	N
206	8/24/2018	Y	N	N	N
207	8/22/2018	Y	N	N	N
208	11/29/2018	Y	N	N	N
209	8/31/2018	Y	N	N	N
210	8/31/2018	Y	N	N	N
211	3/26/2019	Y	N	N	N
212	9/7/2018	Y	N	N	N
213	10/10/2018	Y	N	N	N
214	2/28/2019	Y	N	N	N
215	10/15/2018	Y	N	N	N
216	11/7/2018	Y	N		N
217	10/24/2018	Y	N	N	N

218	11/20/2018	Y	N	N	N
219	9/27/2018	Y	N	N	N
220	2/21/2019	Y	N	N	N
221	8/29/2018	Y	N	N	N
222	10/29/2018	Y	N	N	N
223	12/11/2018	Y	N	N	N
224	9/7/2018	Y	N	N	N
225	10/16/2018	Y	N	N	N
226	2/13/2019	Y	N	N	N
227	2/6/2019	Y	N	N	N
228	7/29/2019	Y	N	N	N
229	3/1/2019	Y	Y		N
230	4/8/2019	Y	Y		N
231	4/4/2019		Y		N
232	10/22/2018	Y	Y		N
233	8/7/2019	Y	Y		N
234	4/29/2019		Y		N
235	9/11/2018	Y	Y		N
236	10/16/2018	Y	Y		N
237	11/16/2018	Y	Y		N
238	10/17/2018	Y	Y		N
239	8/30/2018	Y	Y		N
240	10/12/2018	Y	Y		N
241	4/11/2019		Y		N
242	11/1/2018	Y	Y		N
243	11/1/2018	Y	Y		N
244	9/4/2018	Y	Y		N
245	4/10/2019	Y	Y		N
246	3/11/2019	Y	Y		N
247	2/22/2019	Y	Y		N
248	3/20/2019	Y	Y		N
249	12/18/2018		Y		N
250	8/20/2018	Y	Y		N
251	12/18/2018	Y	Y		N
252	11/16/2018	Y	Y		N
253	8/23/2018	Y	Y		N
254	9/26/2018	Y	Y		N
255	3/19/2019	Y	Y		N
256	10/15/2018	Y	Y		N
257	10/8/2018	Y	Y		N
258	10/15/2018	Y	Y		N
259	4/29/2019		Y		N
260	8/23/2018	Y	Y		N
261	10/24/2018	Y	Y		N
262	11/29/2018	Y	Y		N

263	1/9/2019	Y	Y		N
264	4/9/2019	Y	Y		N
265	11/9/2018	Y	Y		N
266	7/12/2019	Y	Y		N
267	8/27/2018	Y	Y		N
268	8/22/2018	Y	Y		N
269	10/15/2018	Y	Y		N
270	8/29/2018	Y	Y		N
271	6/7/2019		Y		N
272	11/27/2018		Y		N
273	8/20/2018	Y	Y		N
274	10/19/2018	Y	Y		N
275	11/19/2018	Y	Y		N
276	11/16/2018	Y	Y		N
277	2/25/2019	Y	Y		N
278	11/16/2018	Y	Y		N
279	9/26/2018	Y	Y		N
280	11/19/2018	Y	Y		N
281	1/22/2019	Y	Y		N
282	1/10/2019	Y	Y		N
283	11/9/2018		Y		N
284	2/5/2019	Y	Y		N
285	10/15/2018	Y	Y		N
286	11/5/2018	Y	Y		N
287	10/26/2018	Y	Y		N
288	2/12/2019	Y	Y		N
289	11/14/2018	Y	Y		N
290	10/16/2018	Y	Y		N
291	2/4/2019	Y	Y		N
292	11/15/2018	Y	Y		N
293	12/6/2018		Y		N
294	3/14/2019	Y	Y		N
295	4/1/2019	Y	Y		N
296	10/29/2018	Y	Y		N
297	9/4/2018	Y	Y		N
298	6/7/2019	Y	Y		N
299	7/22/2019	Y	Y		N
300	6/13/2019	Y	Y		N
301	11/5/2018	Y	Y		N
302	10/19/2018	Y	Y		N
303	8/8/2019	Y	Y		N
304	4/1/2019	Y	Y		N
305	12/14/2018	Y	Y		N
306	1/28/2019	Y	Y		N
307	11/26/2018	Y	Y		N

308	9/7/2018	Y	Y		N
309	11/2/2018	Y	Y		N
310	10/8/2018	Y	Y		N
311	2/4/2019	Y	Y		N
312	8/15/2018	Y	Y		N
313	1/11/2019	Y	Y		N
314	3/27/2019	Y	Y		N
315	10/17/2018	Y	Y		N
316	2/11/2019	Y	Y		N
317	10/23/2018	Y	Y		N
318	10/29/2018	Y	Y		N
319	6/4/2019		Y		N
320	12/3/2018		Y		N
321	9/6/2018	Y	Y		N
322	5/8/2019	Y	Y		N
323	11/19/2018	Y	Y		N
324	7/24/2019	Y	Y		N
325	3/27/2019	Y	Y		N
326	10/29/2018	Y	Y		N
327	6/19/2019	Y	Y		N
328	10/24/2018	Y	Y		N
329	10/17/2018	Y	Y		N
330	10/1/2018	Y	Y		N
331	10/25/2018	Y	Y		N
332	8/21/2018	Y	Y		N
333	12/10/2018	Y	Y		N
334	11/20/2018	Y	Y		N
335	10/30/2018	Y	Y		N
336	8/16/2018	Y	Y		N
337	2/28/2019		Y		N
338	10/25/2018	Y	Y		N
339	12/5/2018	Y	Y		N
340	11/13/2018	Y	Y		N
341	3/29/2019		Y		N
342	11/20/2018	Y	Y		N
343	2/8/2019	Y	Y		N
344	6/20/2019	Y	Y		N
345	10/5/2018	Y	Y		N
346	7/17/2019		Y		N
347	12/17/2018	Y	Y		N
348	9/5/2018	Y	Y		N
349	10/19/2018		Y		N
350	11/13/2018	Y	Y		N
351	3/15/2019	Y	Y		N
352	10/18/2018	Y	Y		N

353	10/29/2018	Y	Y		N
354	3/15/2019	Y	Y		N
355	11/19/2018	Y	Y		N
356	1/18/2019	Y	Y		N
357	10/16/2018	Y	Y		N
358	1/8/2019		Y		N
359	3/8/2019		Y		N
360	10/24/2018	Y	Y		N
361	2/15/2019	Y	Y		N
362	7/17/2019	Y	Y		N
363	2/21/2019	Y	Y		N
364	5/28/2019	Y	Y		N
365	4/3/2019	Y	Y		N
366	11/14/2018	Y	Y		N
367	5/13/2019	Y	Y		N
368	12/17/2018	Y	Y		N
369	10/17/2018	Y	Y		N
370	11/20/2018	Y	Y		N
371	8/22/2018	Y	Y		N
372	2/22/2019	Y	Y		N
373	10/25/2018	Y	Y		N
374	1/24/2019	Y	Y		N
375	12/18/2018	Y	Y		N
376	4/15/2019	Y	Y		N
377	5/20/2019	Y	Y		N
378	10/25/2018	Y	Y		N
379	10/12/2018	Y	Y		N
380	3/5/2019		Y		N
381	10/3/2018	Y	Y		N
382	7/10/2019	Y	Y		N
383	12/3/2018	Y	Y		N
384	11/20/2018	Y	Y		N
385	10/17/2018		Y		N
386	10/11/2018	Y	Y		N
387	7/29/2019	Y	Y		N
388	11/27/2018		Y		N
389	10/22/2018	Y	Y		N
390	4/9/2019	Y	Y		N
391	10/23/2018	Y	Y		N
392	11/16/2018	Y	Y		N
393	3/7/2019		Y		N
394	8/22/2018	Y	Y		N
395	10/5/2018	Y	Y		N
396	9/7/2018	Y	Y		N
397	1/15/2019	Y	Y		N

398	8/21/2018	Y	Y		N
399	3/7/2019	Y	Y		N
400	11/9/2018	Y	Y		N
401	4/22/2019		Y		N
402	10/15/2018	Y	Y		N
403	9/6/2018	Y	Y		N
404	5/30/2019	Y	Y		N
405	10/29/2018	Y	Y		N
406	6/26/2019	Y	Y		N
407	6/7/2019		Y		N
408	5/24/2019		Y		N
409	7/23/2019	Y	Y		N
410	10/4/2018	Y	Y		N
411	9/11/2018	Y	Y		N
412	4/25/2019	Y	Y		N
413	7/25/2019	Y	Y		N
414	6/25/2019	Y	Y		N
415	11/26/2018	Y	Y		N
416	8/5/2019	Y	Y		N
417	1/28/2019	Y	Y		N
418	1/15/2019	Y	Y		N
419	10/23/2018	Y	Y		N
420	8/29/2018	Y	Y		N
421	10/16/2018	Y	Y		N
422	4/24/2019	Y	Y		N
423	12/10/2018	N		N	N
424	8/22/2018	N		N	N
425	8/23/2018	N		N	N
426	8/27/2018	N		N	N
427	9/5/2018	N		N	N
428	12/17/2018	N		N	N
429	8/27/2018	N		N	N
430	11/15/2018	N		N	N
431	11/13/2018	N		N	N
432	10/23/2018	N		N	N
433	11/1/2018	N		N	N
434	2/12/2019	Y		N	N
435	2/26/2019	Y		N	N
436	8/30/2018	N		N	N
437	9/5/2018	N		N	N
438	9/10/2018	N		N	N
439	9/11/2018	N		N	N
440	10/4/2018	N		N	N
441	12/6/2018	N		N	N
442	4/24/2019	Y		N	N

443	5/14/2019				N
444	8/23/2018	N		N	N
445	8/24/2018	N			N
446	12/18/2018	N		N	N
447	6/27/2019				Y
448	7/1/2019				Y
449	8/6/2019				Y
450	7/15/2019				Y
451	8/2/2019				Y
452	6/27/2019				Y
453	7/1/2019				Y
454	12/20/2018	N			Y
455	6/10/2019				Y
456	7/22/2019				Y
457	4/26/2019				Y
458	10/5/2018				Y
459	7/16/2019		N	N	Y
460	4/1/2019		N	N	Y
461	6/6/2019				Y
462	6/7/2019				Y
463	7/2/2019				Y
464	9/5/2018				Y
465	7/8/2019				Y
466	7/26/2019				Y
467	8/8/2019				Y
468	7/16/2019				Y
469	11/20/2018	N		N	Y
470	12/5/2018	Y	N	N	Y
471	12/4/2018	Y	N	N	Y
472	1/7/2019		N		Y
473	10/5/2018	Y			Y
474	3/4/2019	Y	N	N	Y
475	12/20/2018	Y	N	N	Y
476	11/9/2018	Y	N		Y
477	2/27/2019	Y	N	N	Y
478	10/12/2018	Y	N	N	Y
479	1/11/2019	Y	N	N	Y
480	10/30/2018	Y	N	N	Y
481	1/15/2019		N	N	Y
482	10/31/2018	Y	N	N	Y
483	7/19/2019	Y	N	N	Y
484	10/3/2018	Y	N		Y
485	9/26/2018	Y	N	N	Y
486	10/2/2018	Y	N	N	Y
487	10/18/2018	Y	N	N	Y

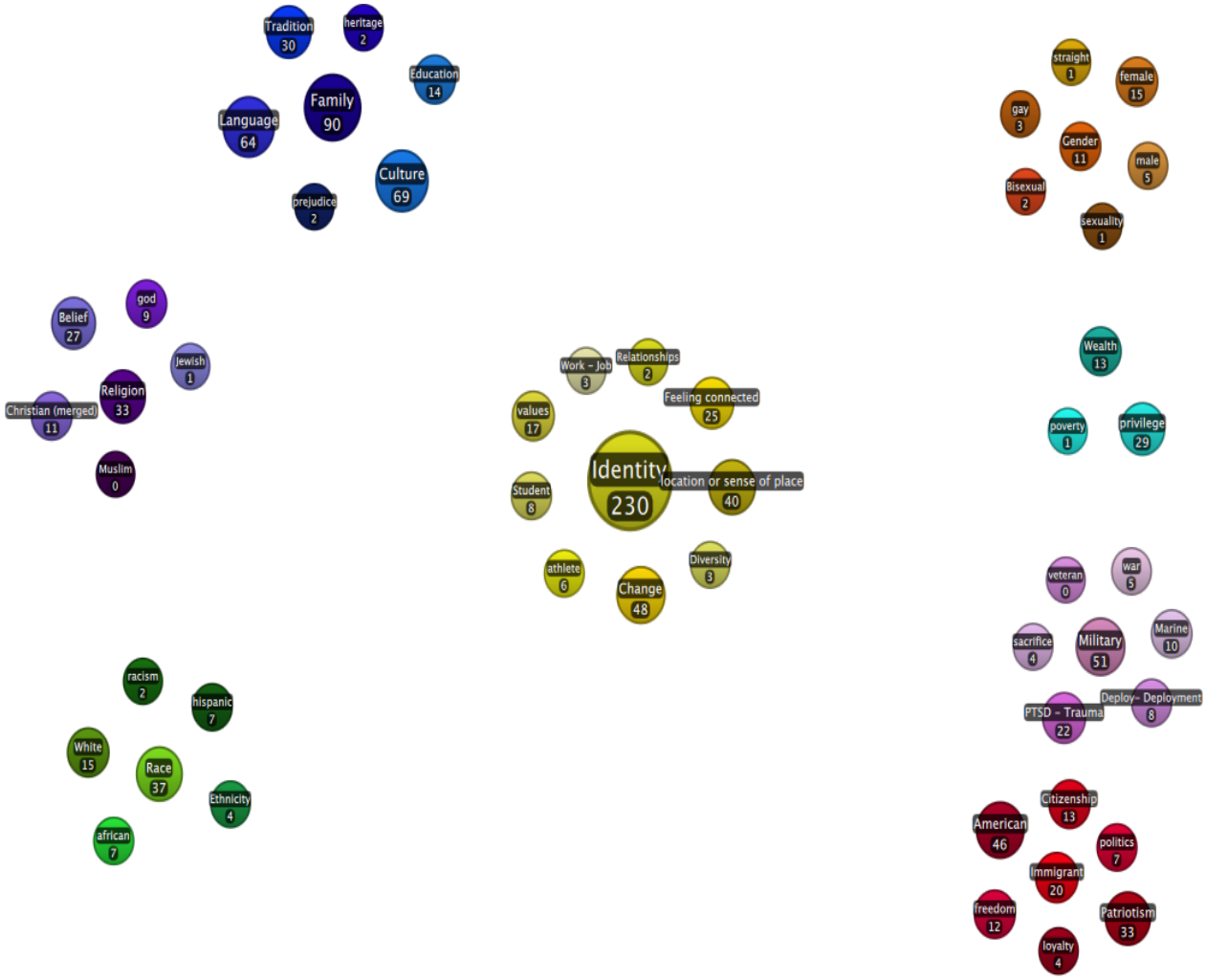
488	6/7/2019		N		Y
489	3/27/2019		N	N	Y
490	8/27/2018	Y	N	N	Y
491	3/25/2019	Y	N	N	Y
492	3/20/2019	Y	N	N	Y
493	1/31/2019	Y	N	N	Y
494	2/6/2019		N	N	Y
495	11/30/2018	N	N	N	Y
496	8/27/2018	Y	N	N	Y
497	10/26/2018	Y	N	N	Y
498	6/6/2019		N		Y
499	11/6/2018	Y	N	N	Y
500	2/19/2019		N	N	Y
501	8/27/2018	Y	N	N	Y
502	2/21/2019		N	N	Y
503	11/29/2018	Y	N	N	Y
504	11/5/2018	Y	N	N	Y
505	8/6/2019	Y	Y		Y
506	9/10/2018	Y	Y		Y
507	7/2/2019	Y	Y		Y
508	3/12/2019	Y	Y		Y
509	6/12/2019		Y		Y
510	7/2/2019	Y	Y		Y
511	8/30/2018	Y	Y		Y
512	7/11/2019	Y	Y		Y
513	5/6/2019	Y	Y		Y
514	9/10/2018	Y	Y		Y
515	2/19/2019	Y	Y		Y
516	8/31/2018	Y	Y		Y
517	4/9/2019	Y	Y		Y
518	11/6/2018	Y	Y		Y
519	1/30/2019		Y		Y
520	5/24/2019		Y		Y
521	10/15/2018	Y	Y		Y
522	1/17/2019	Y	Y		Y
523	10/24/2018	Y	Y		Y
524	6/13/2019	Y	Y		Y
525	4/26/2019	Y	Y		Y
526	1/29/2019		Y		Y
527	11/26/2018	Y	Y		Y
528	8/9/2019	Y	Y		Y
529	11/7/2018	Y	Y		Y
530	8/22/2018	Y	Y		Y
531	8/6/2019	Y	Y		Y
532	2/11/2019	Y	Y		Y

533	9/6/2018	Y	Y		Y
534	3/4/2019	Y	Y		Y
535	10/9/2018	Y	Y		Y
536	4/23/2019		Y		Y
537	8/6/2019		Y		Y
538	11/1/2018	Y	Y		Y
539	11/6/2018	Y	Y		Y
540	4/2/2019	Y	Y		Y
541	2/22/2019	Y	Y		Y
542	8/20/2018	Y	Y		Y
543	10/1/2018	Y	Y		Y
544	7/18/2019	Y	Y		Y
545	10/1/2018	Y	Y		Y
546	11/14/2018	Y	Y		Y
547	4/16/2019	Y	Y		Y
548	10/30/2018	Y	Y		Y
549	1/9/2019	Y	Y		Y
550	1/15/2019	Y	Y		Y
551	10/17/2018	Y	Y		Y
552	11/1/2018	Y	Y		Y
553	11/15/2018	Y	Y		Y
554	2/4/2019	Y	Y		Y
555	7/15/2019		Y		Y
556	1/29/2019		Y		Y
557	4/8/2019	Y	Y		Y
558	7/10/2019		Y		Y
559	11/6/2018	Y	Y		Y
560	10/9/2018	Y	Y		Y
561	8/22/2018	Y	Y		Y
562	10/30/2018	Y	Y		Y
563	10/4/2018	Y	Y		Y
564	8/15/2018	Y	Y		Y
565	3/28/2019	Y	Y		Y
566	2/15/2019	Y	Y		Y
567	12/17/2018	Y	Y		Y
568	3/28/2019	Y	Y		Y
569	4/16/2019	Y	Y		Y
570	8/23/2018	Y	Y		Y
571	10/11/2018	Y	Y		Y
572	4/9/2019	Y	Y		Y
573	3/26/2019		Y		Y
574	8/5/2019	Y	Y		Y
575	7/17/2019		Y		Y
576	10/26/2018	Y	Y		Y
577	8/8/2019		Y		Y

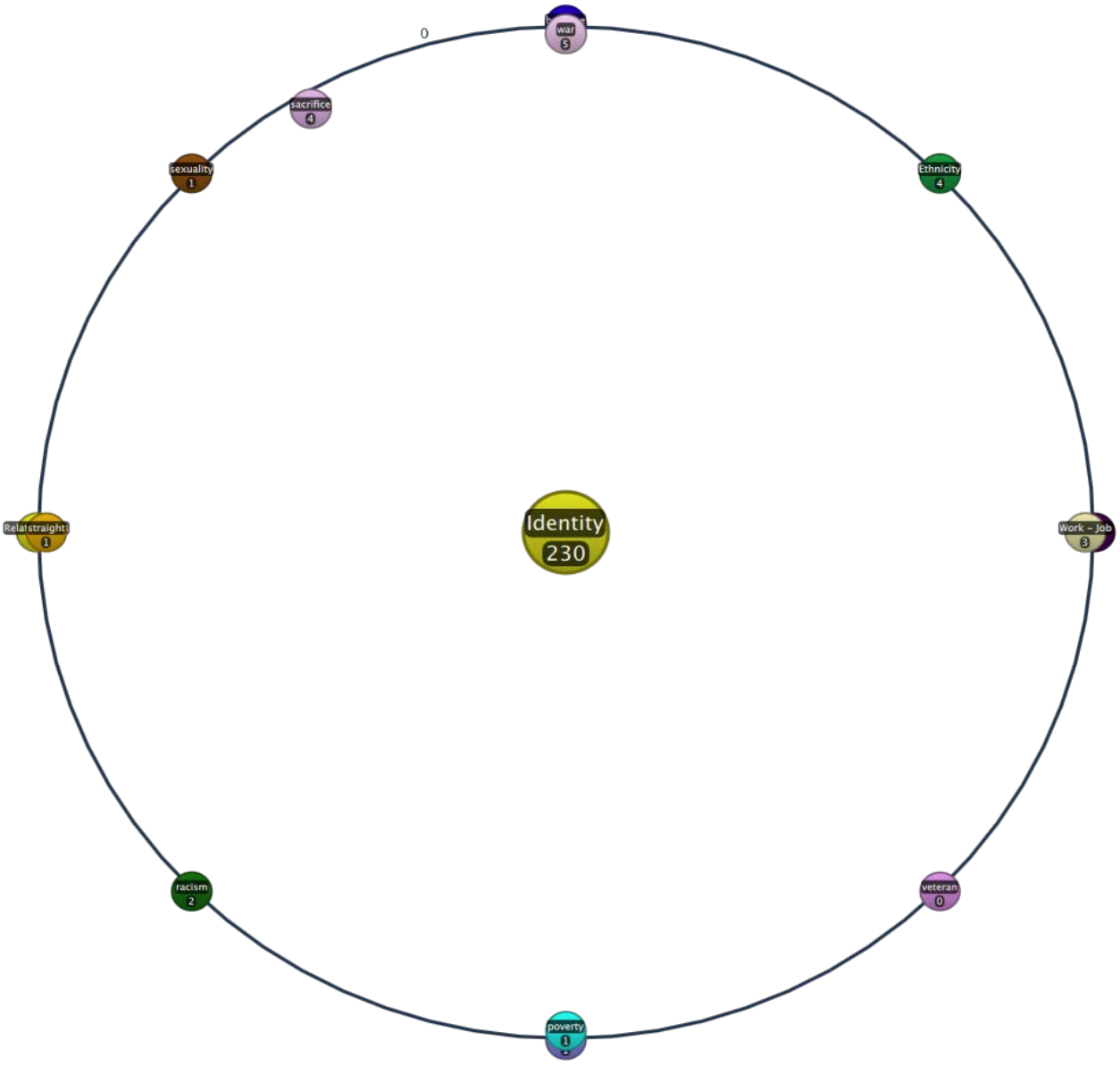
578	3/20/2019	Y	Y		Y
579	3/25/2019	Y	Y		Y
580	12/12/2018	Y	Y		Y
581	1/28/2019		Y		Y
582	5/10/2019	Y	Y		Y
583	11/20/2018	Y	Y		Y
584	4/29/2019	Y	Y		Y
585	7/16/2019	Y	Y		Y
586	1/28/2019		Y		Y
587	6/4/2019	Y	Y		Y
588	1/14/2019	Y	Y		Y
589	11/8/2018	Y	Y		Y
590	7/2/2019	Y	Y		Y
591	5/21/2019	Y	Y		Y
592	7/15/2019		Y		Y
593	12/3/2018	Y	Y		Y
594	8/1/2019	Y	Y		Y
595	8/15/2018	Y	Y		Y
596	3/26/2019		Y		Y
597	2/22/2019		Y		Y
598	8/15/2018	Y	Y		Y
599	8/27/2018	N		N	Y
600	11/1/2018	Y		N	Y
601	10/24/2018	N			Y
602	10/3/2018	N		N	Y
603	10/5/2018	N		N	Y
604	10/18/2018	N		N	Y
605	10/8/2018	N		N	Y
606	10/11/2018	N		N	Y
607	12/4/2018	Y		N	Y
608	10/22/2018	N		N	Y
609	12/3/2018	N		N	Y
610	8/27/2018	N		N	Y

APPENDIX H: QUIRKOS ANALYTICS

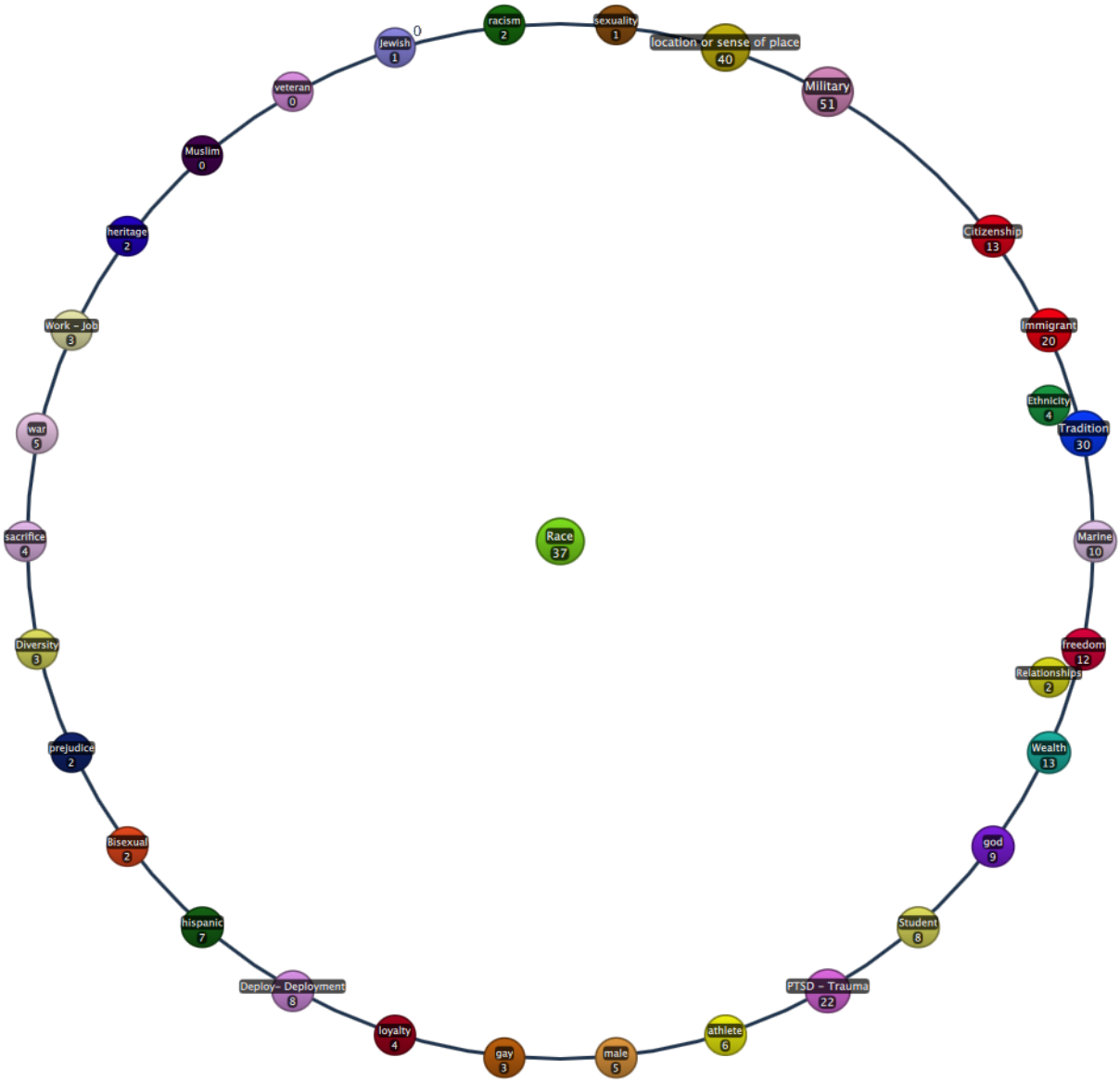
Main Canvas Views



Quirk Overlap View: Identity

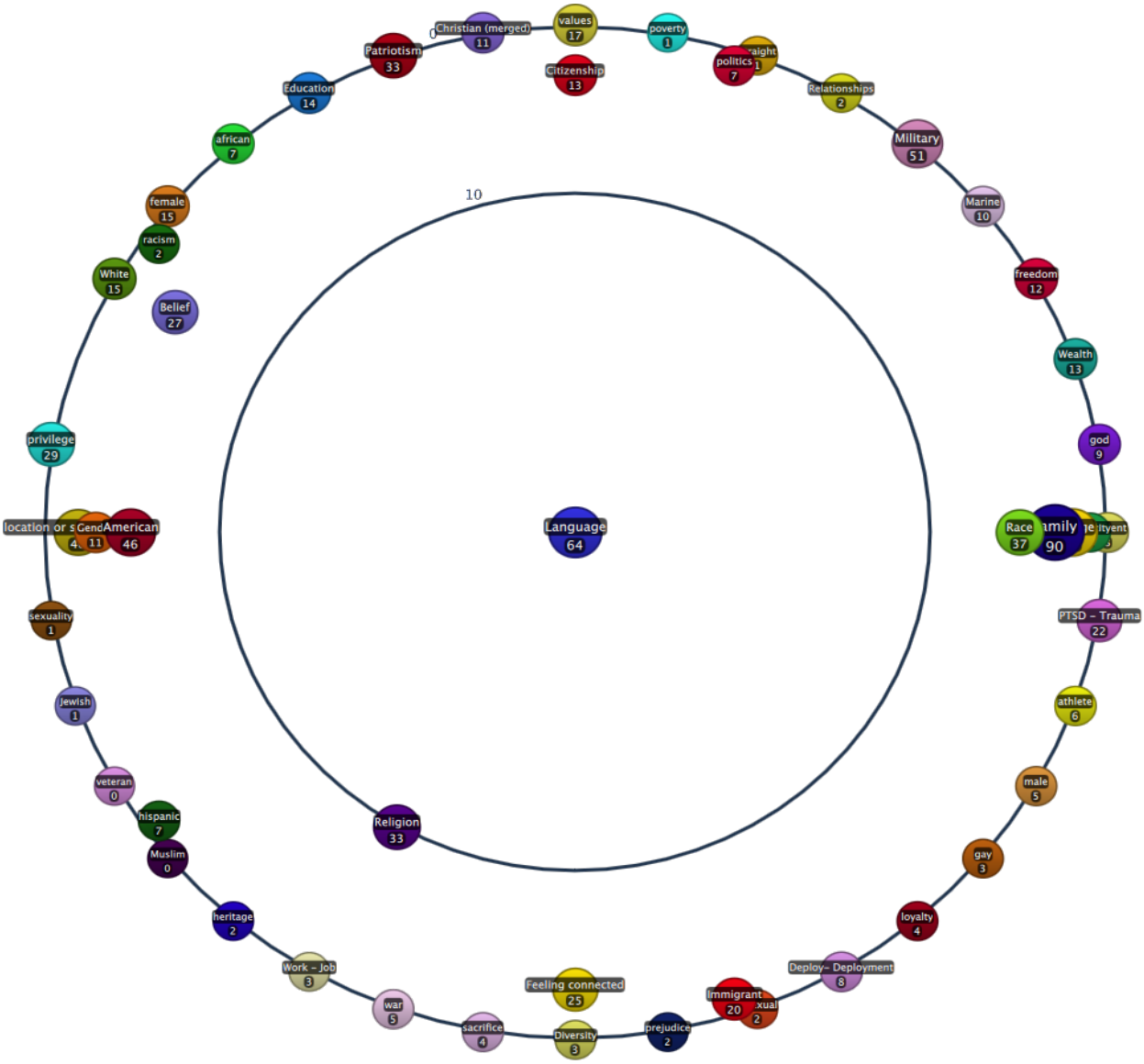


Quirk Overlap View: Race

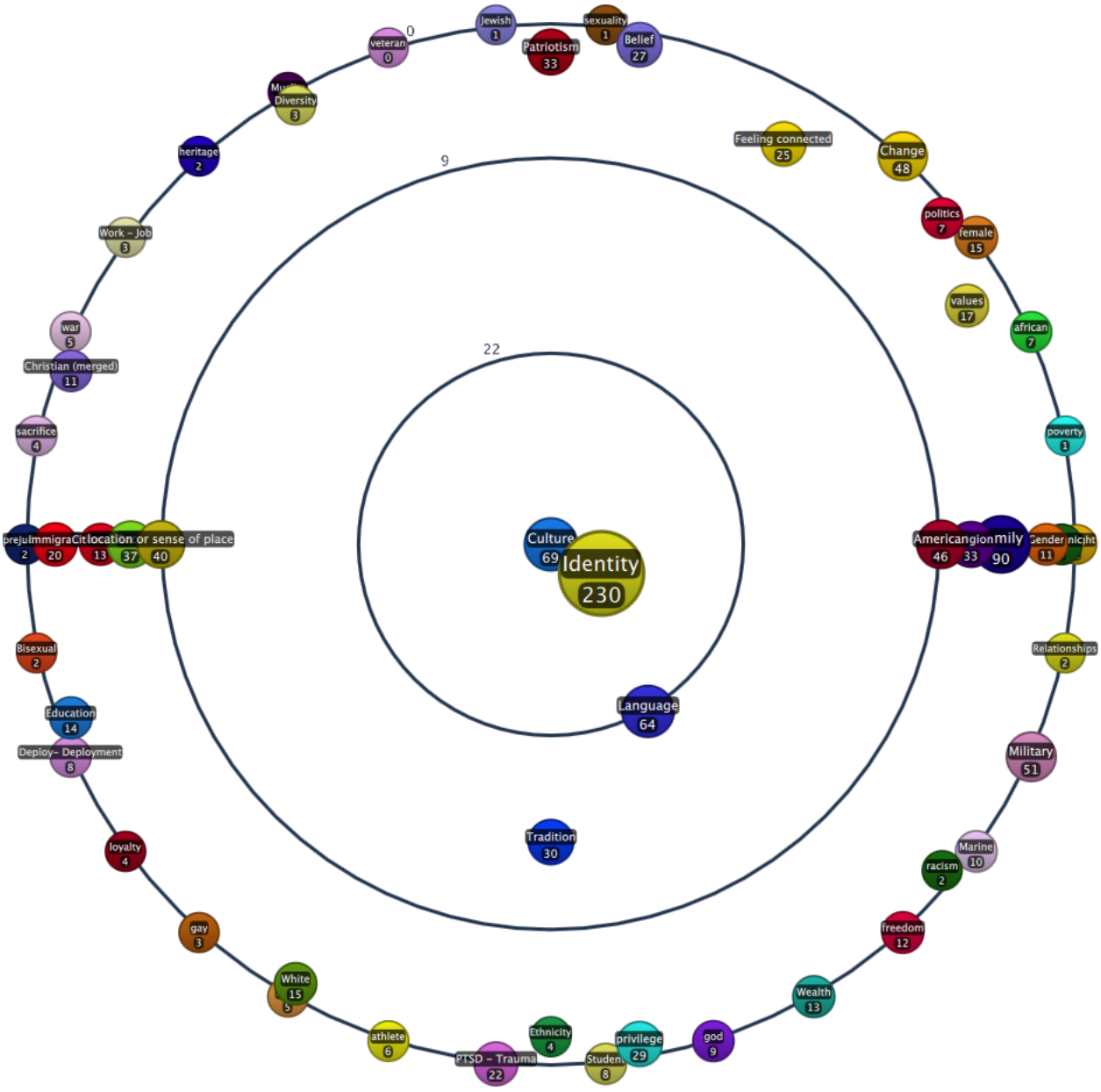


Quirk Overlap View: Language

Language

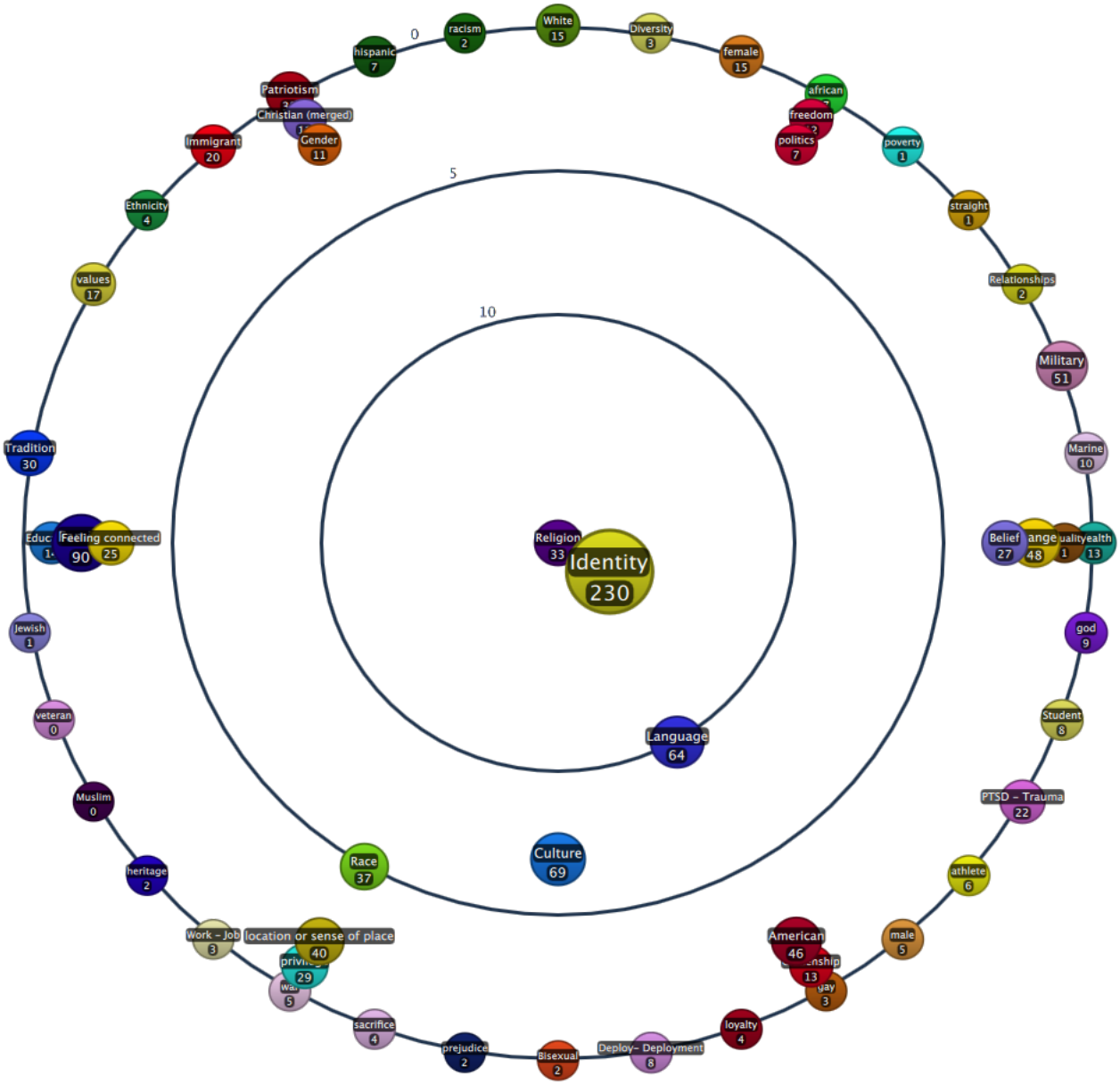


Quirk Overlap View: Culture

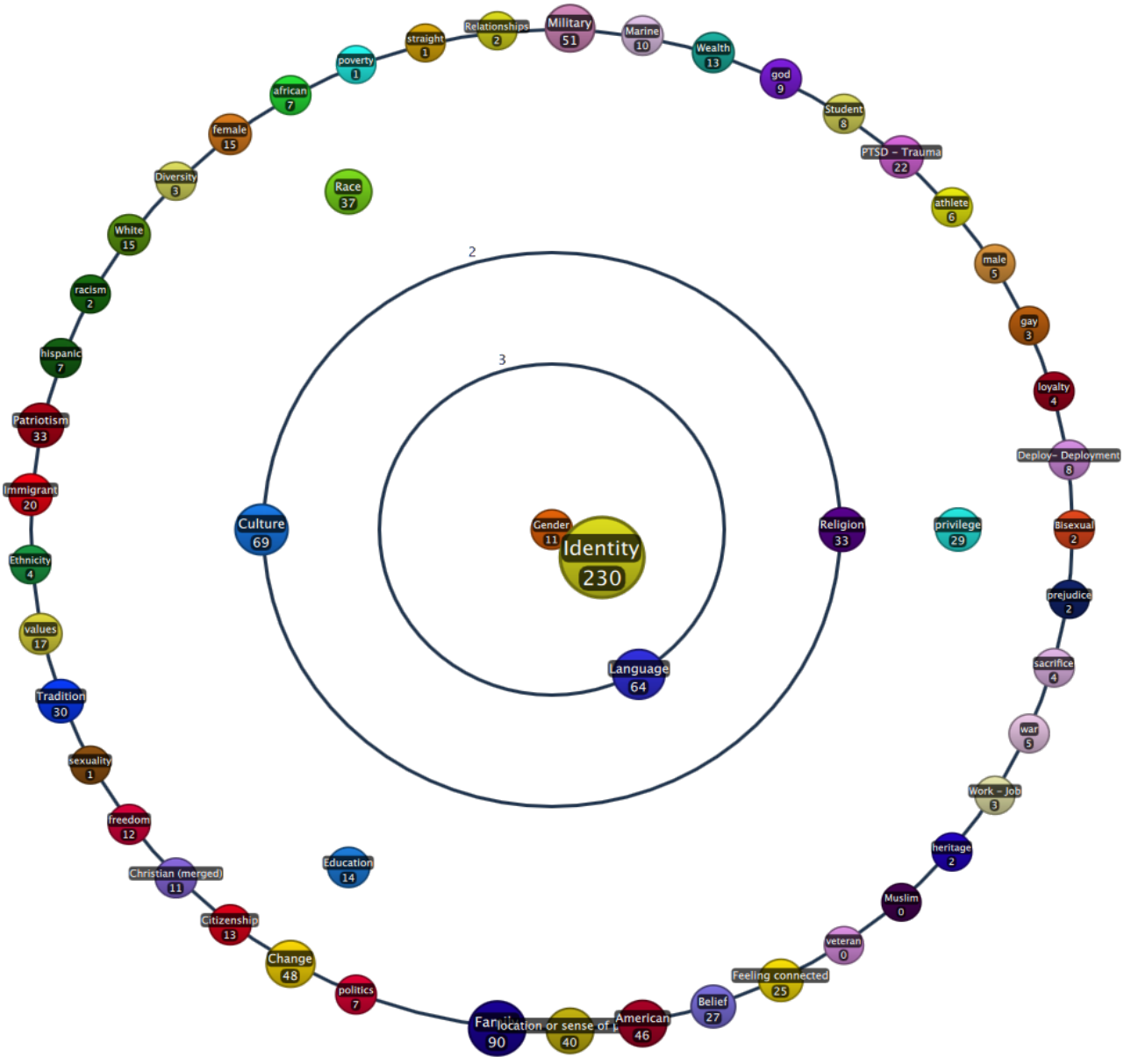


Quirk Overlap View: Religion

Religion

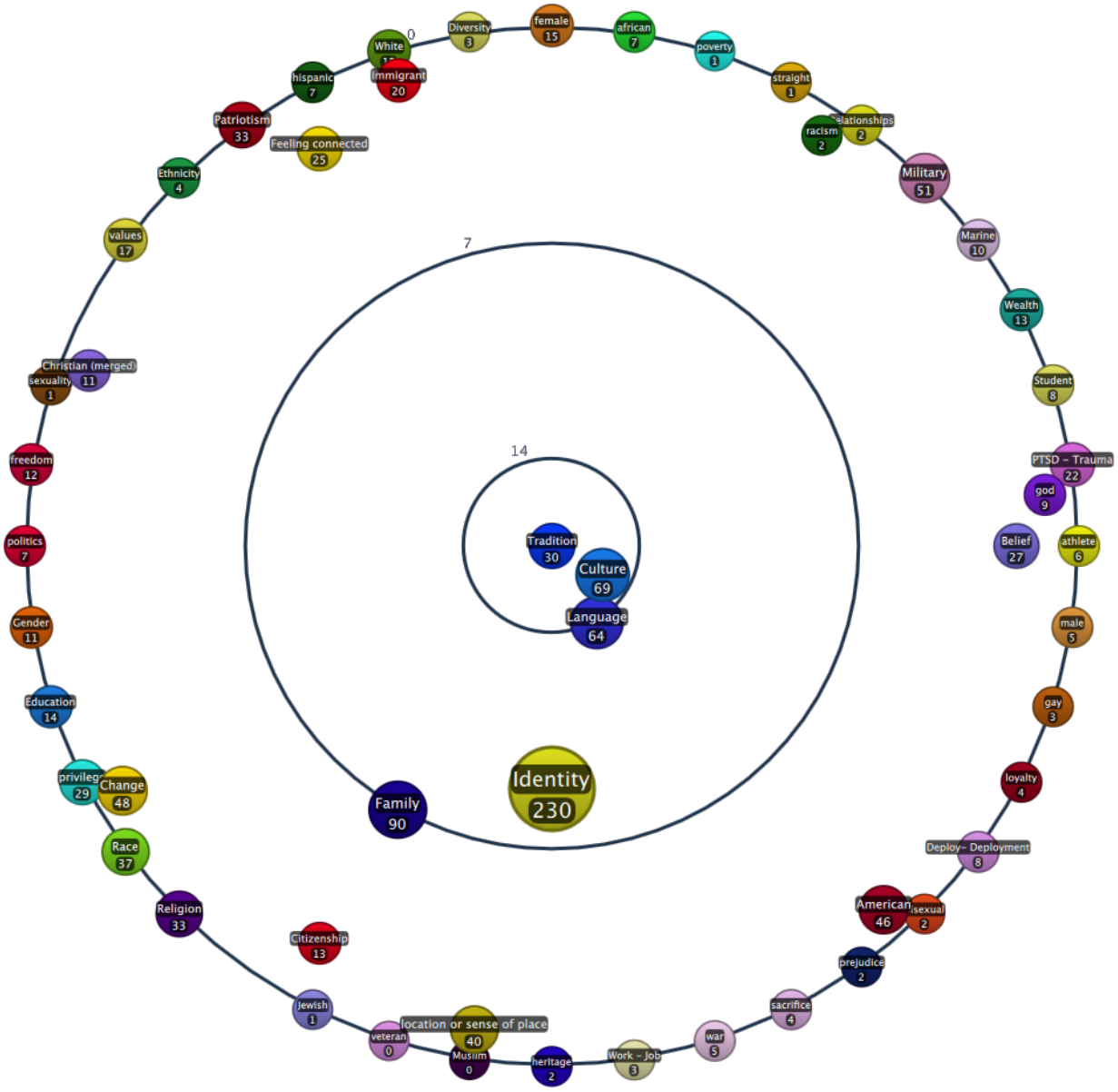


Quirk Overlap View: Gender

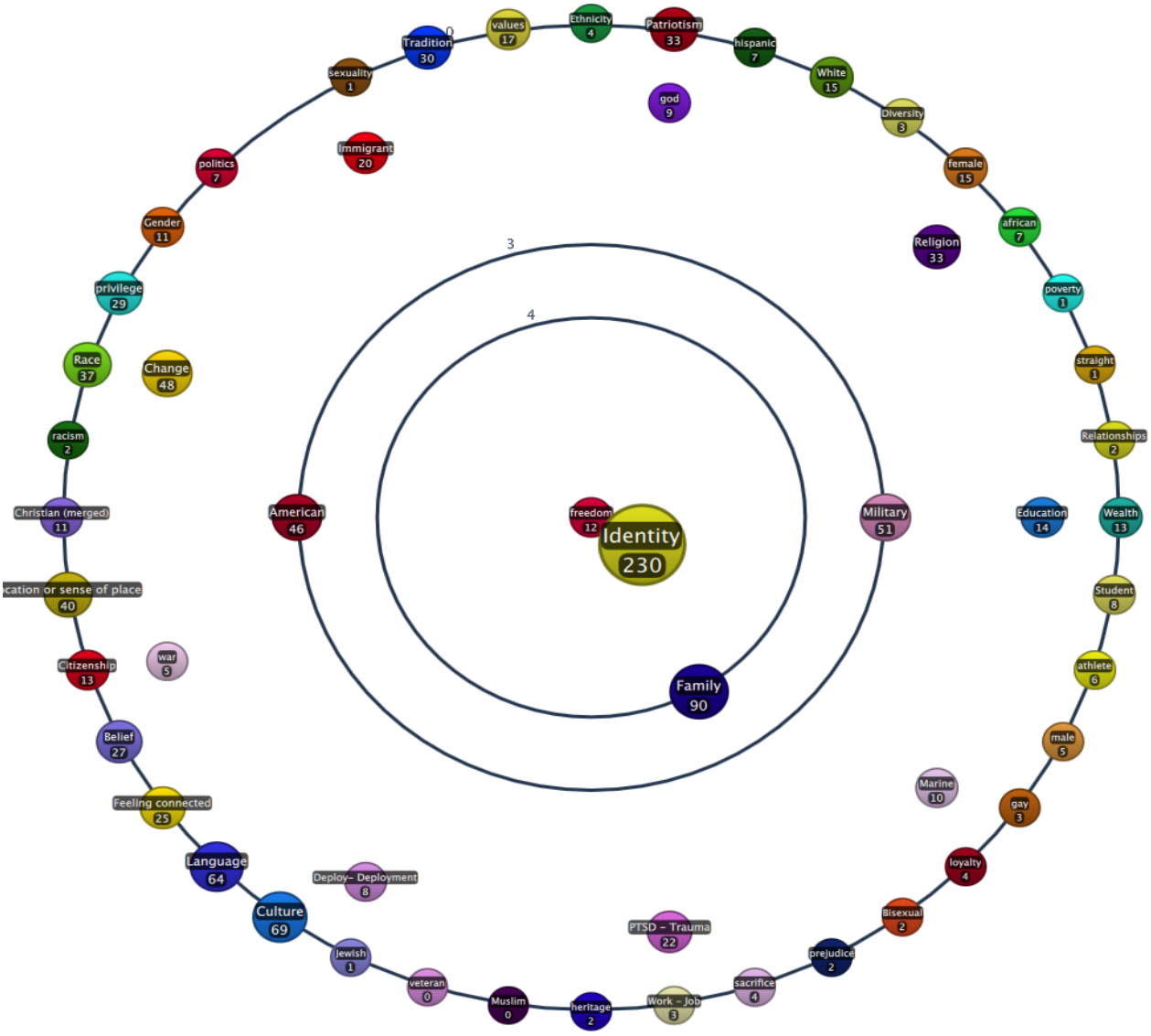


Quirk Overlap View: Tradition

Tradition

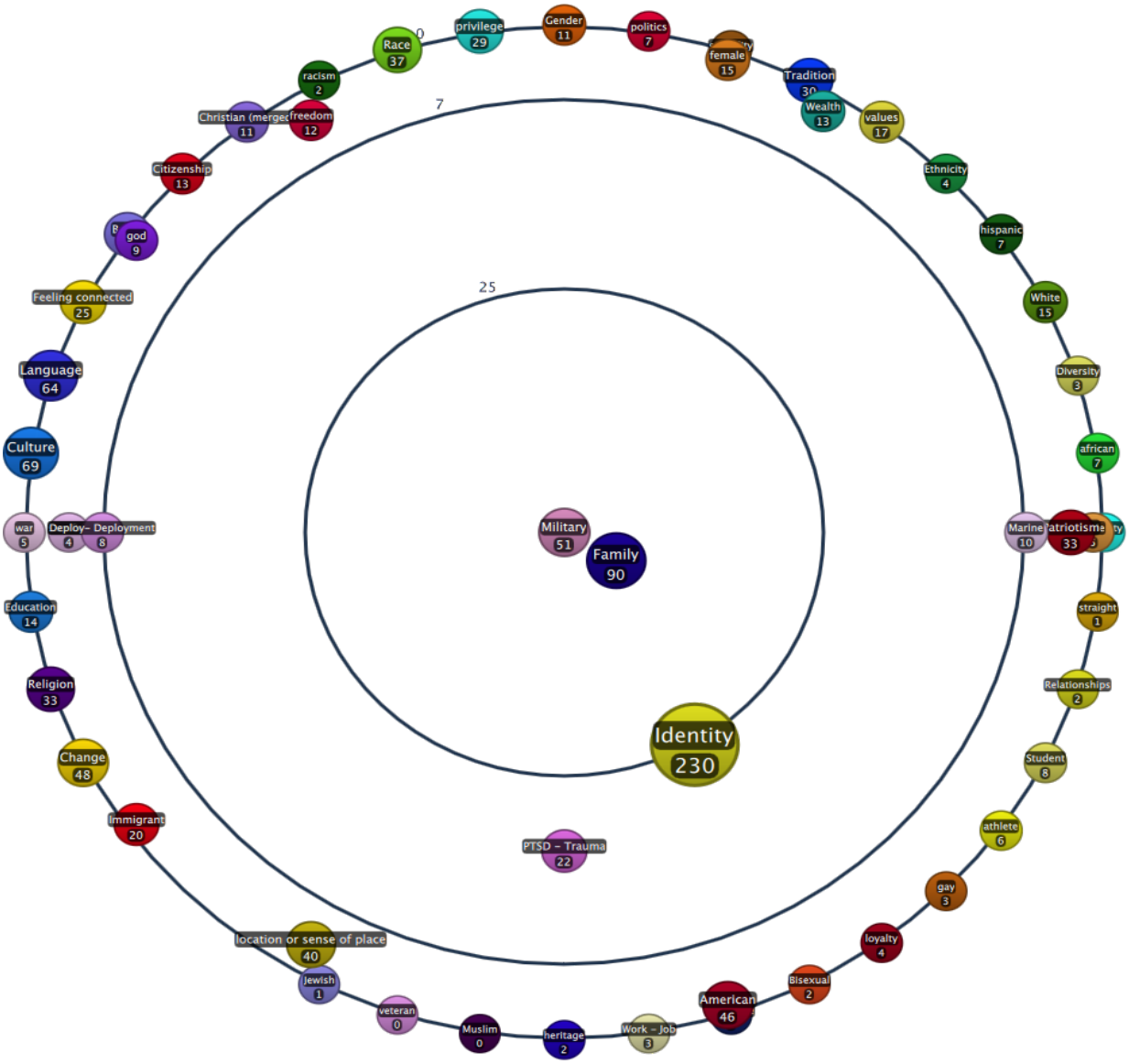


Quirk Overlap View: Freedom

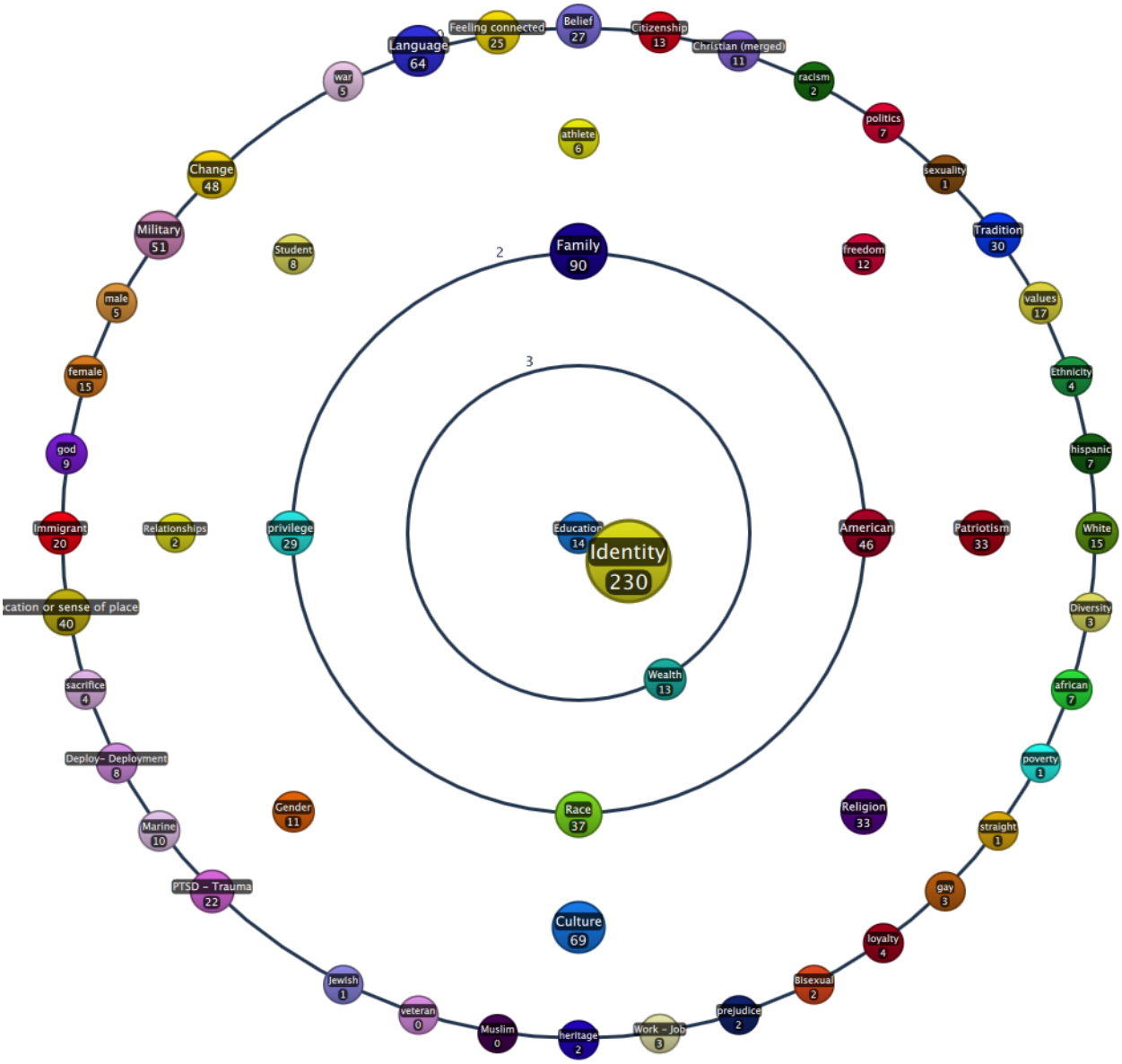


Quirk Overlap View: Military

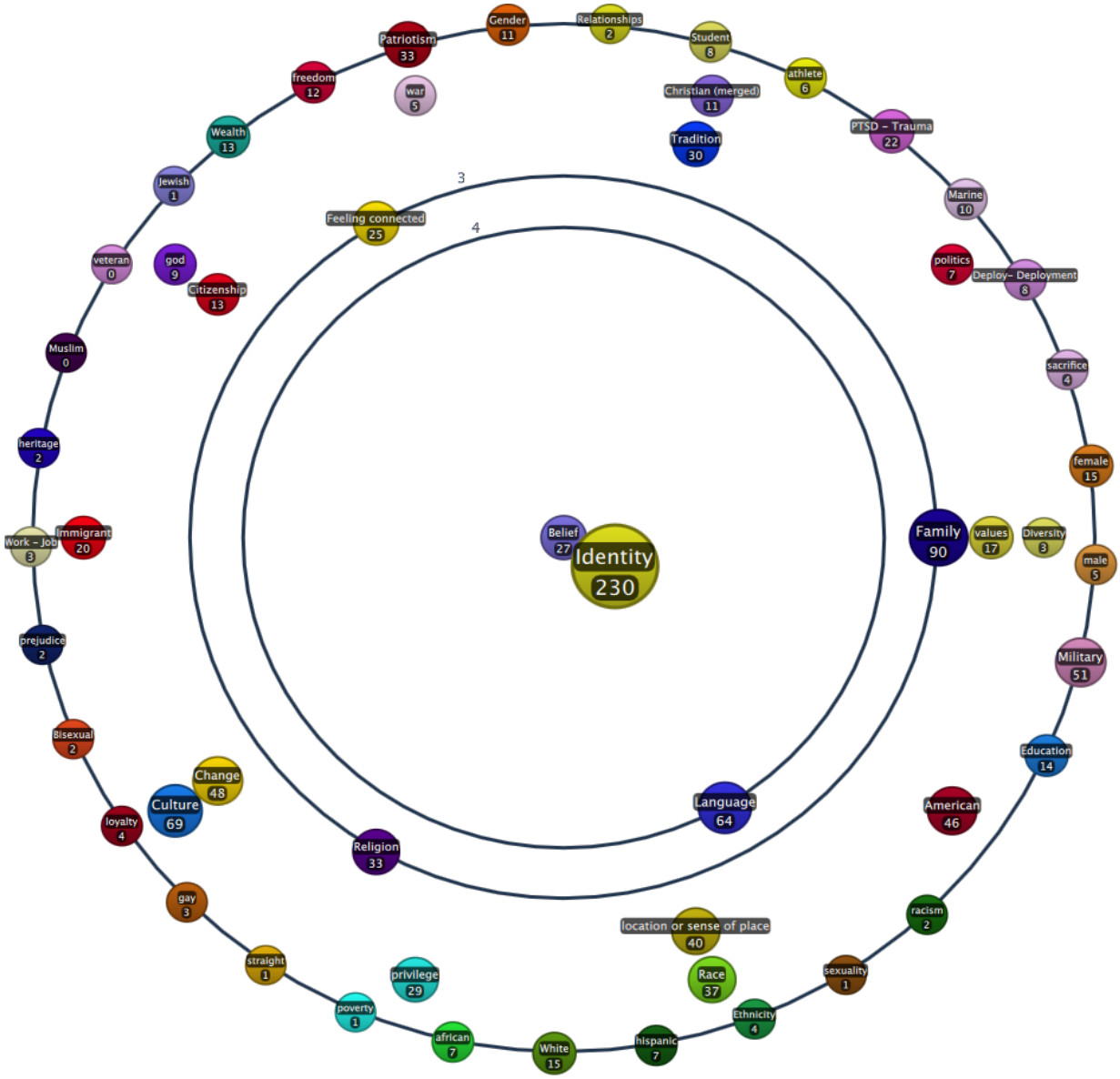
Military



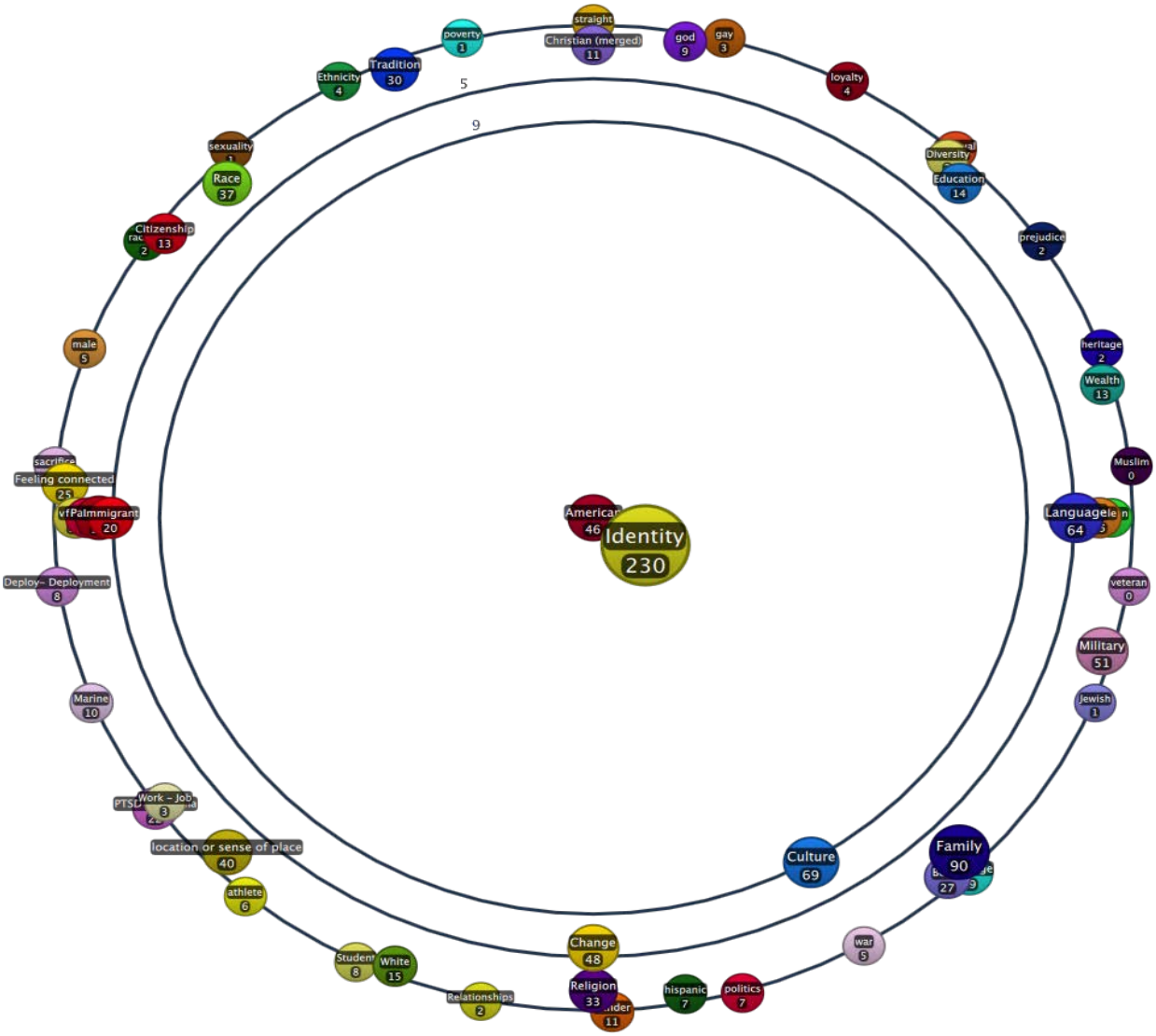
Quirk Overlap View: Education



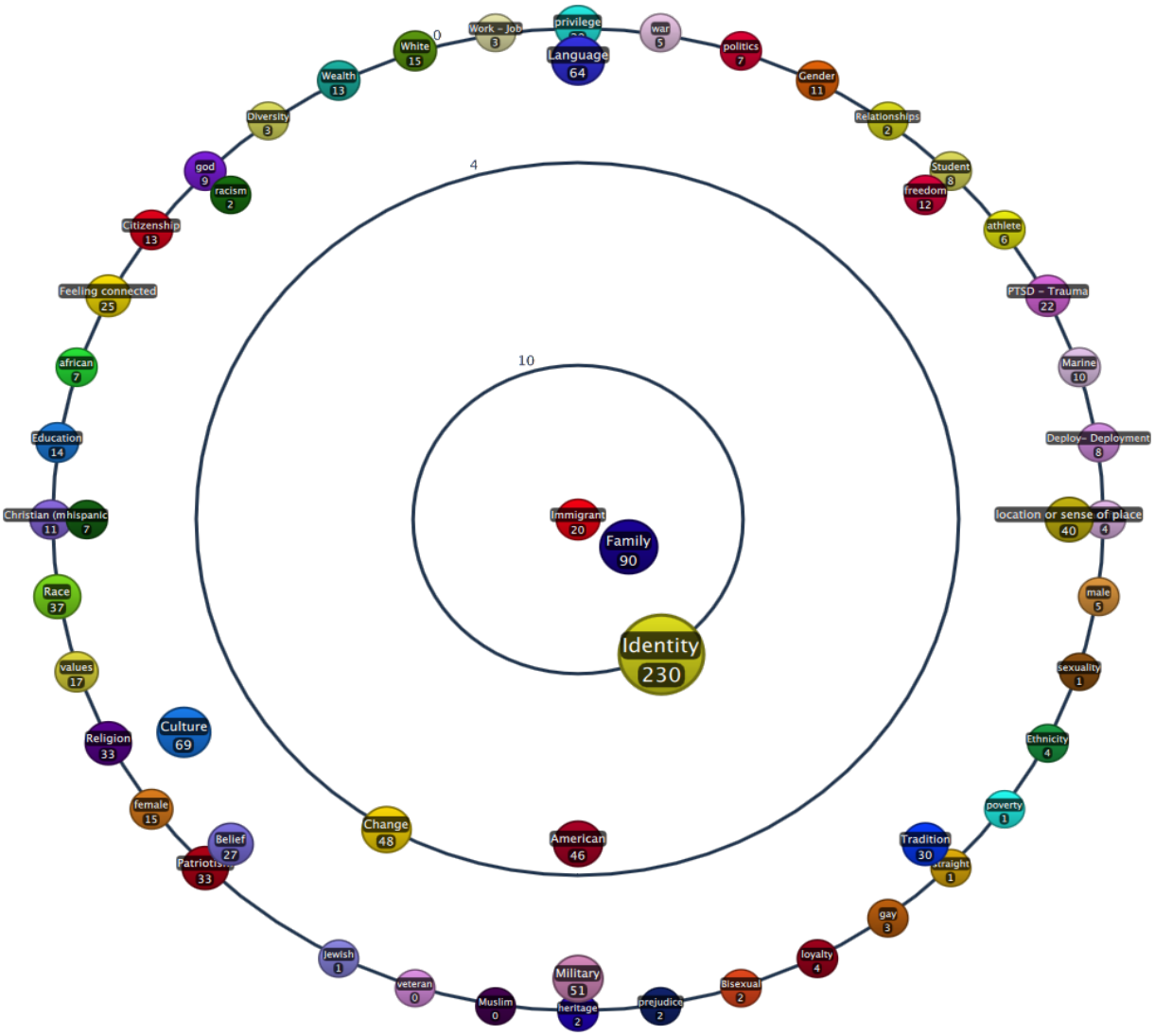
Quirk Overlap View: Belief



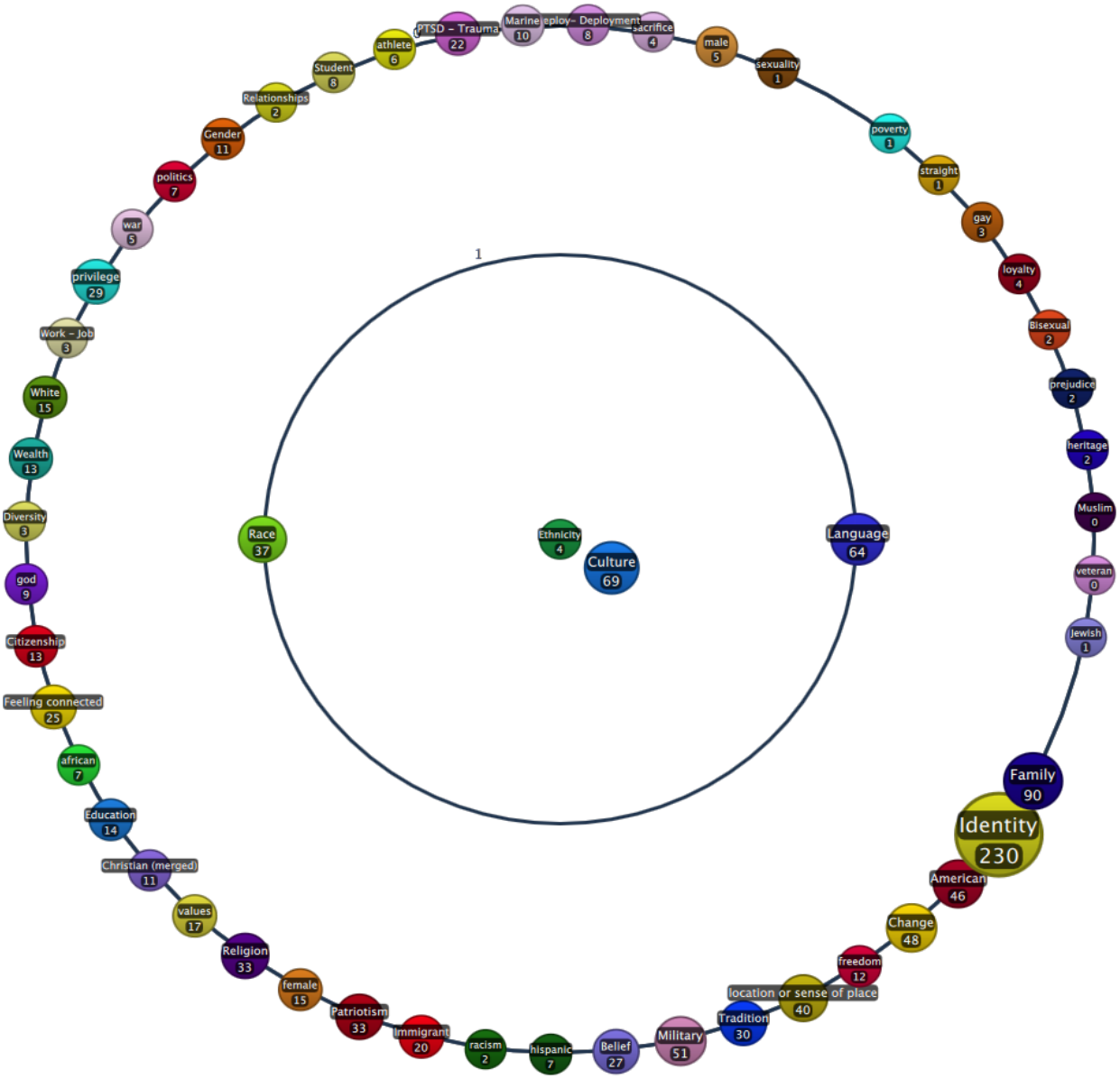
Quirk Overlap View: American



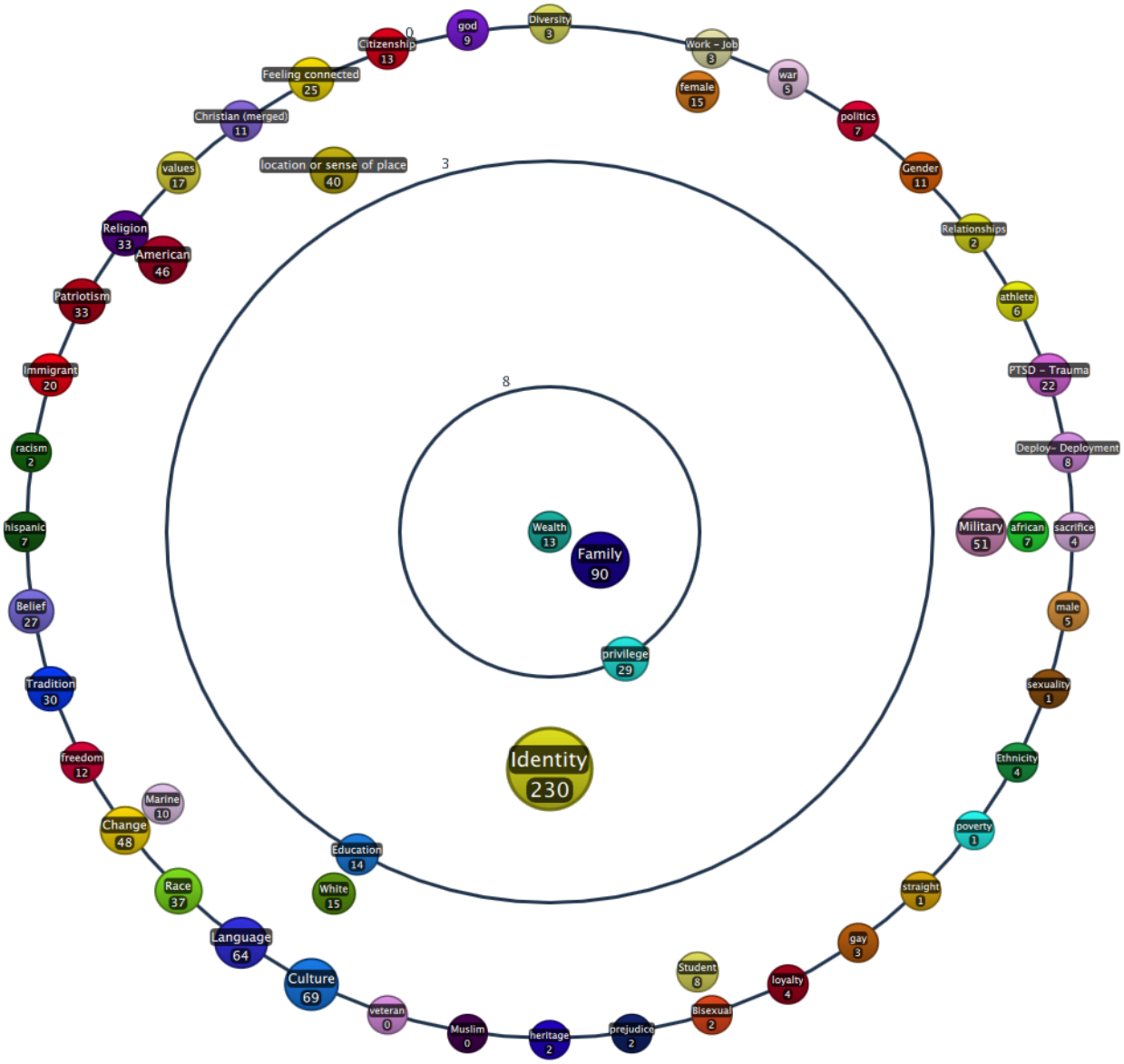
Quirk Overlap View: Immigrant



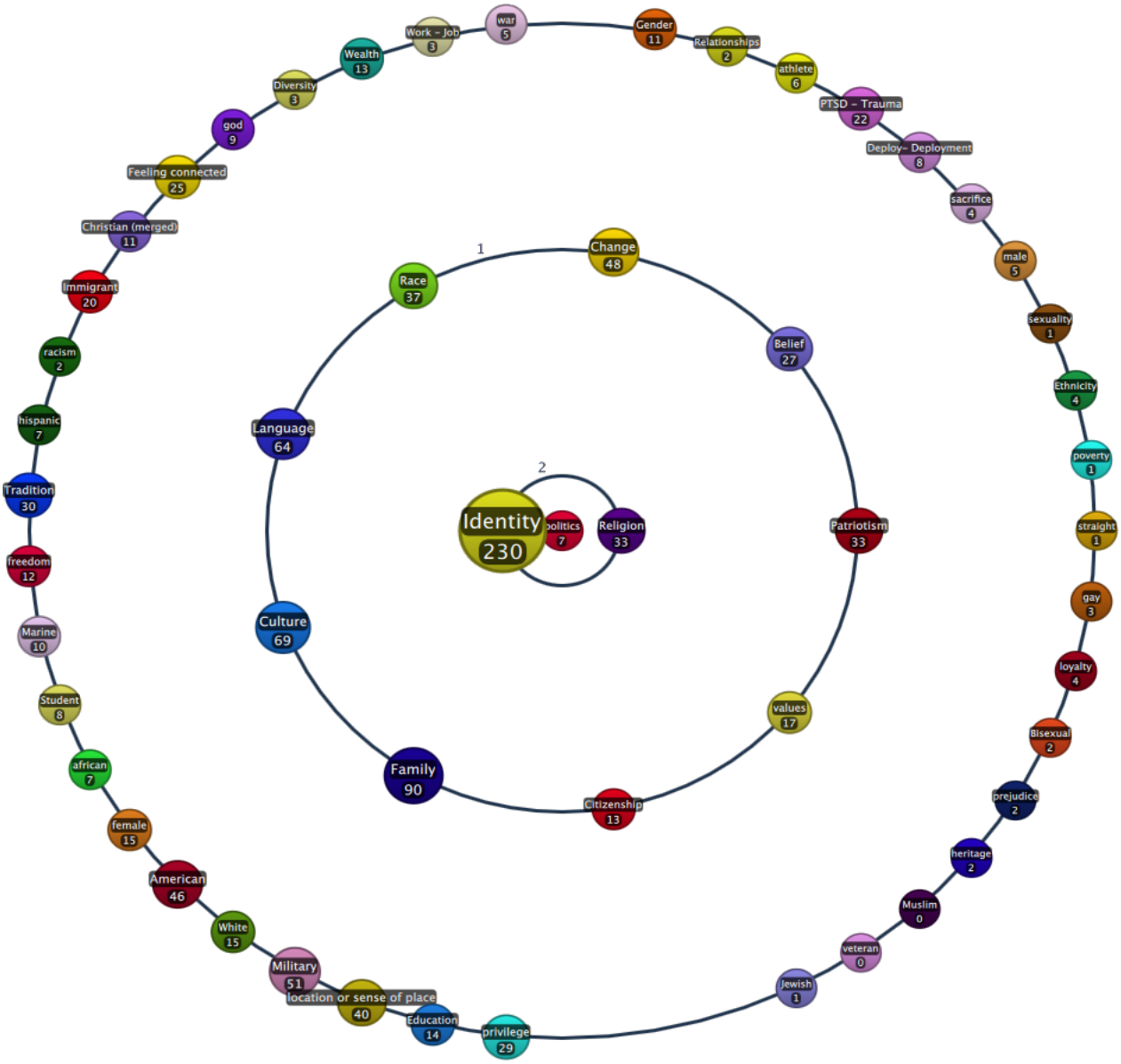
Quirk Overlap View: Ethnicity



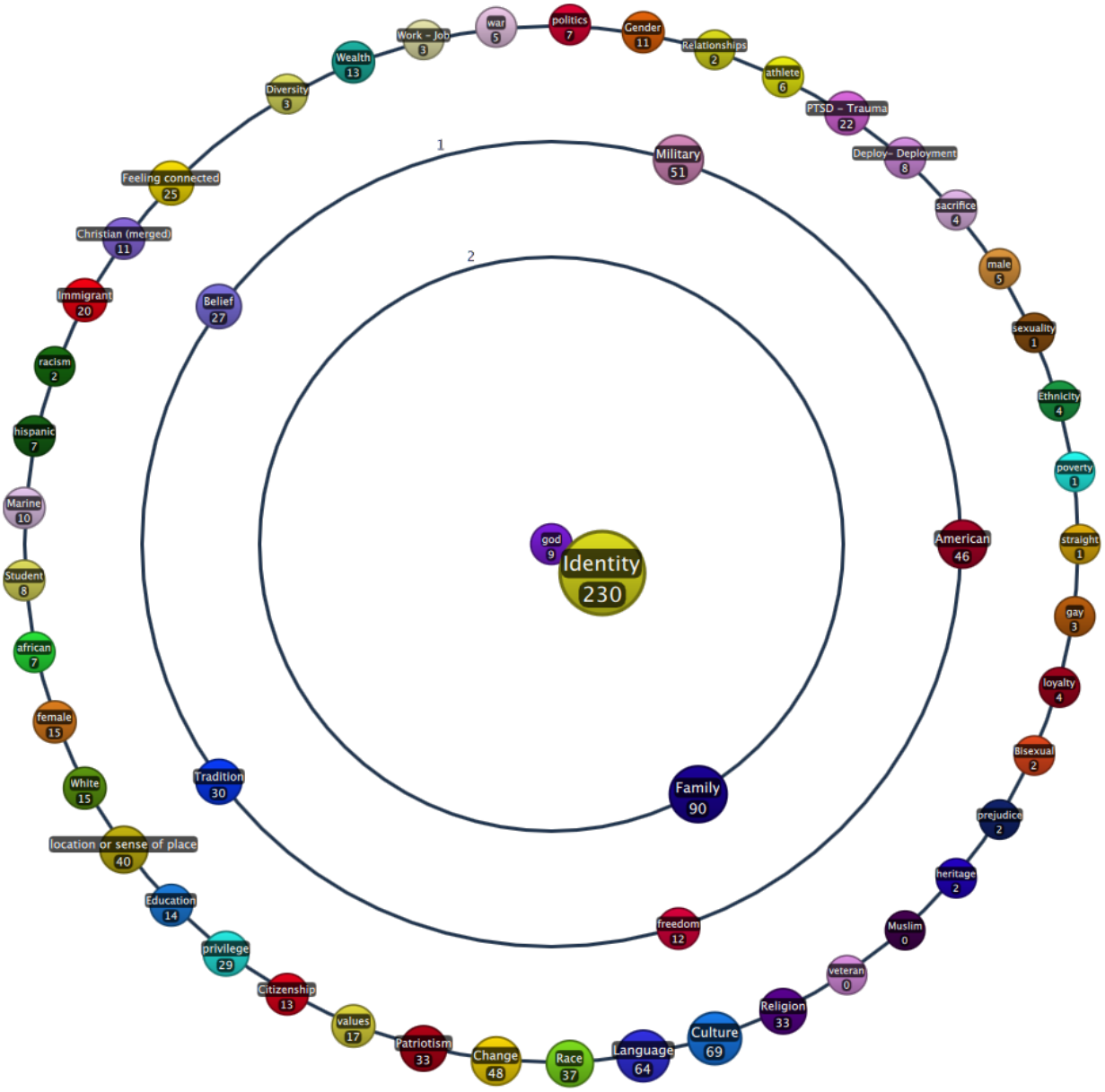
Quirk Overlap View: Wealth



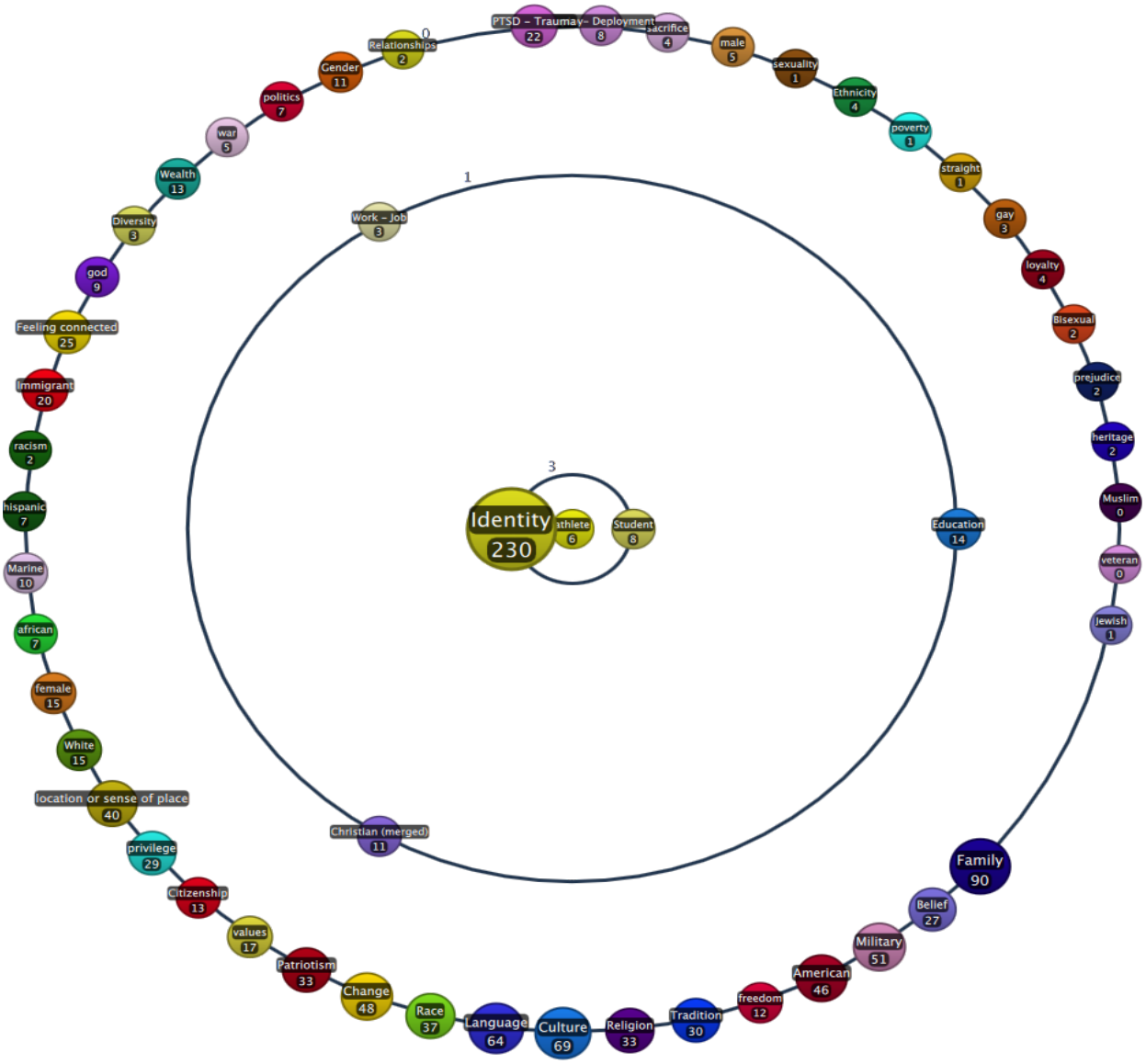
Quirk Overlap View: Politics



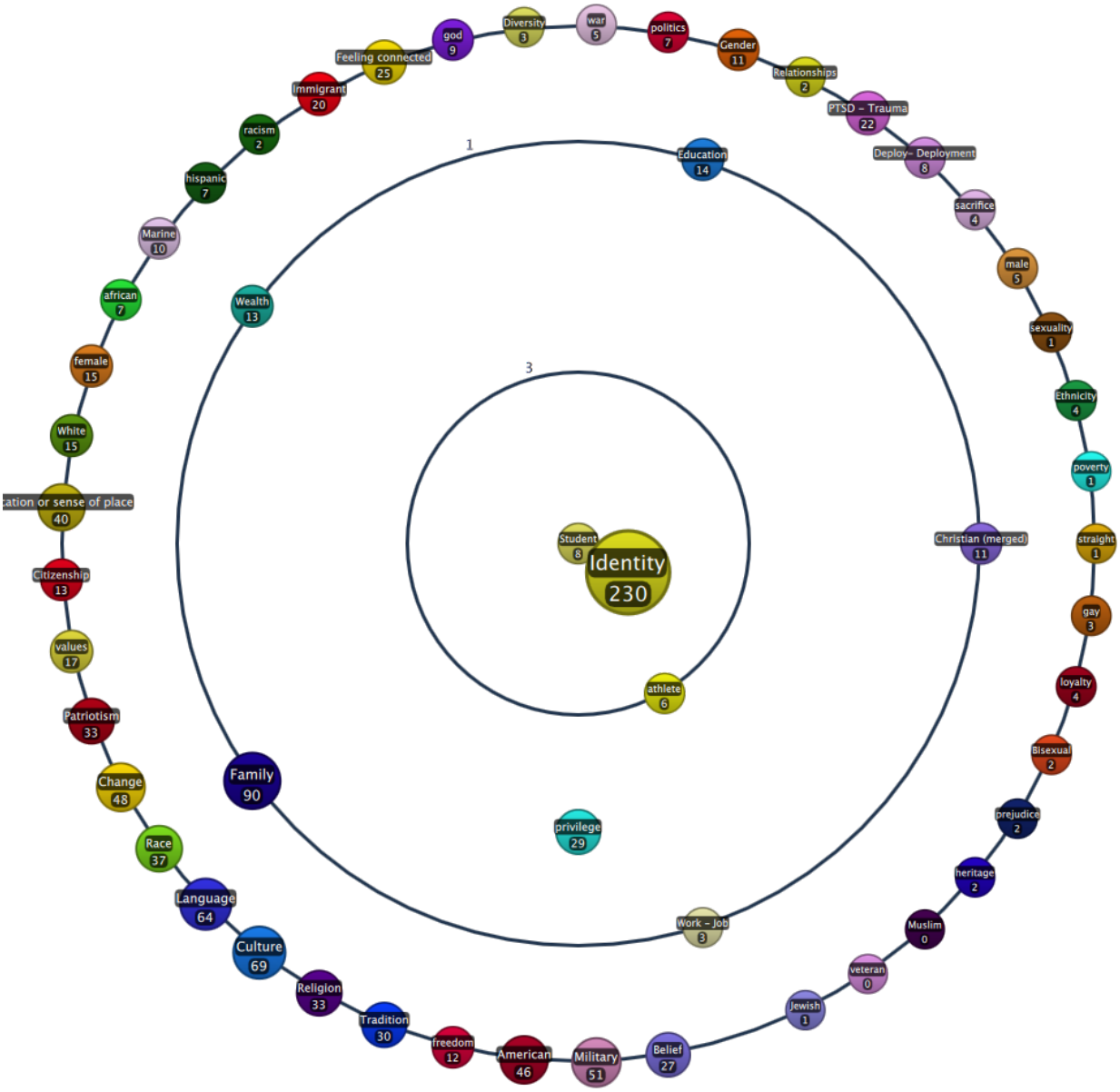
Quirk Overlap View: God



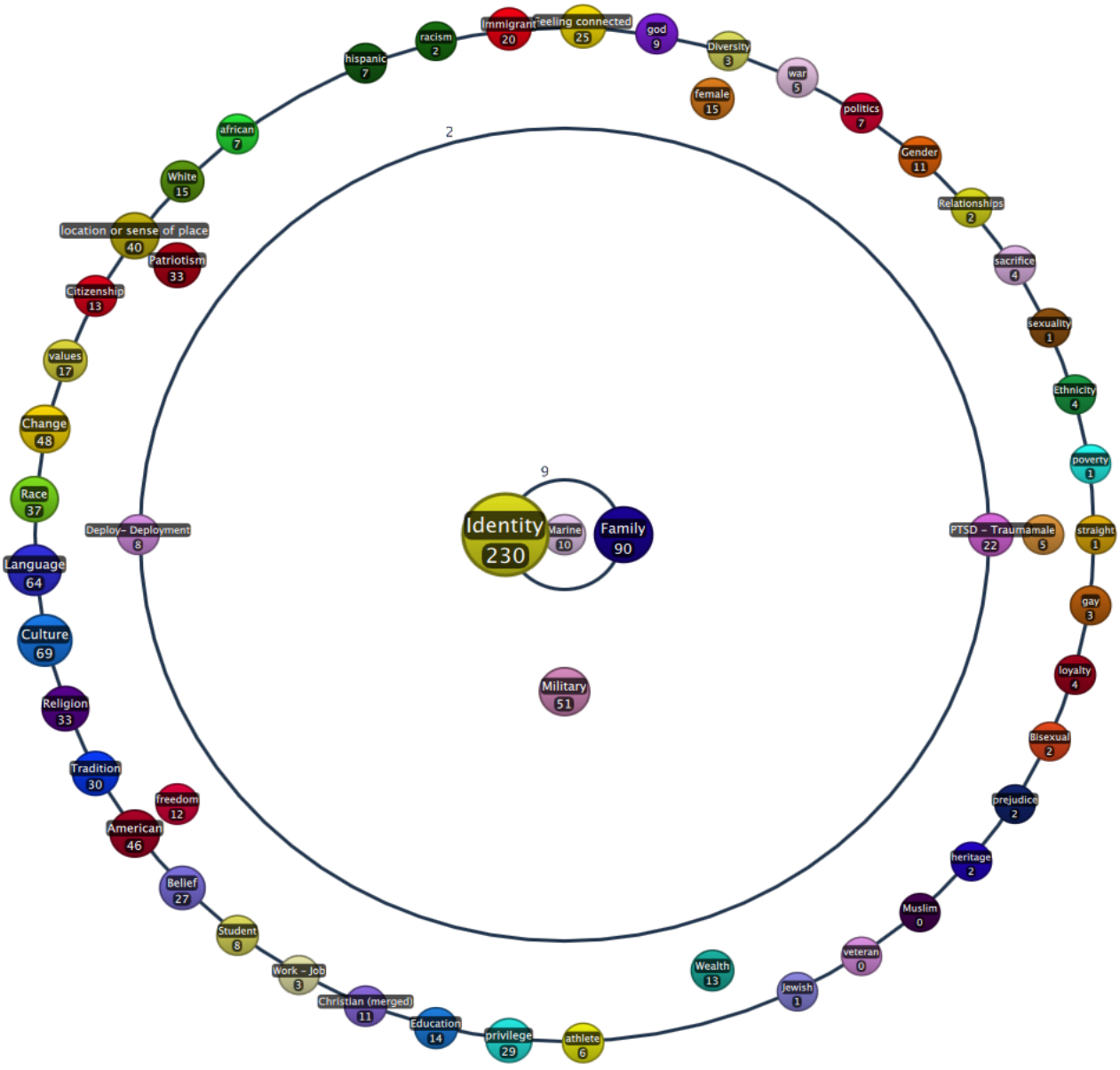
Quirk Overlap View: Athlete



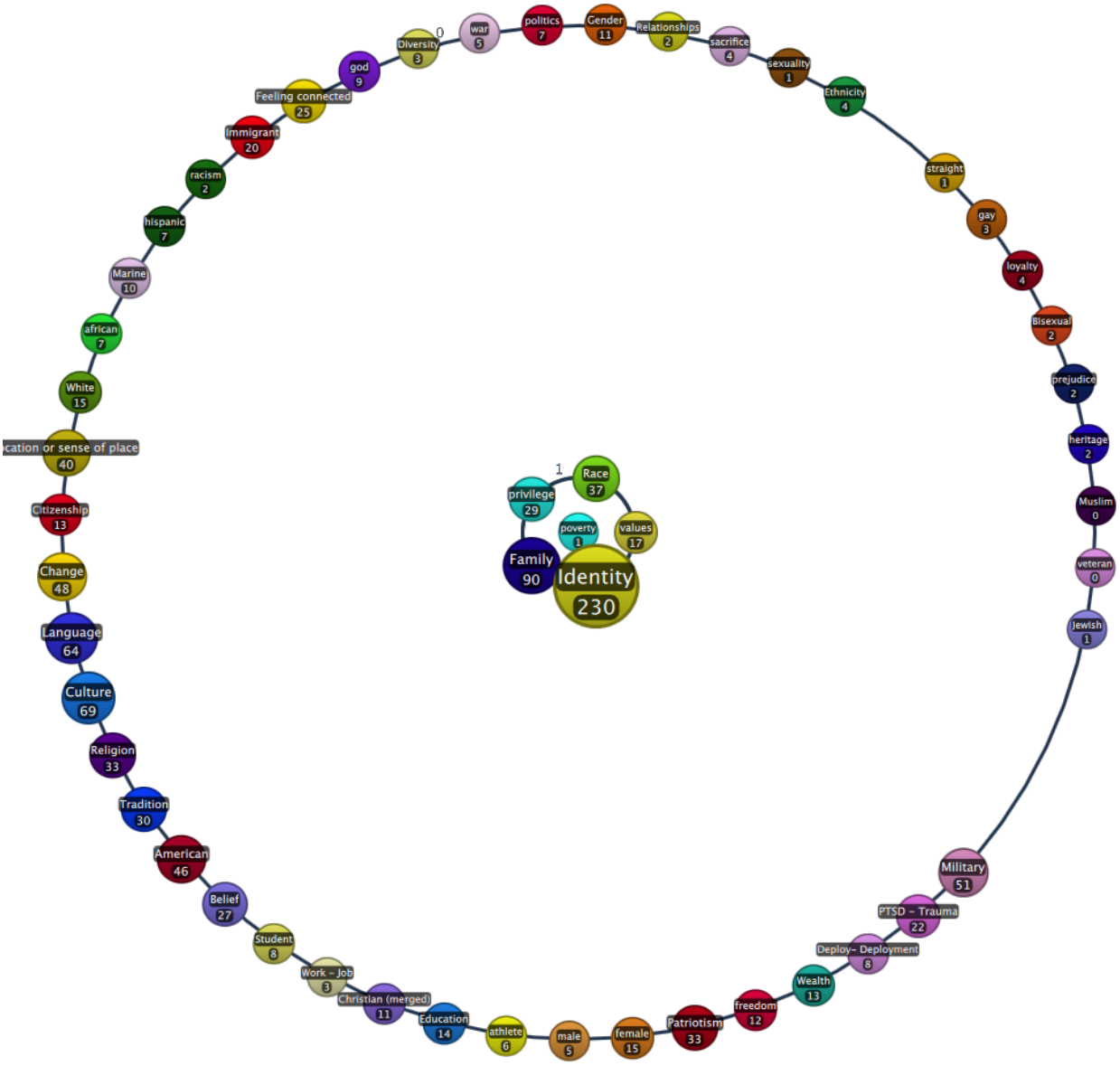
Quirk Overlap View: Student



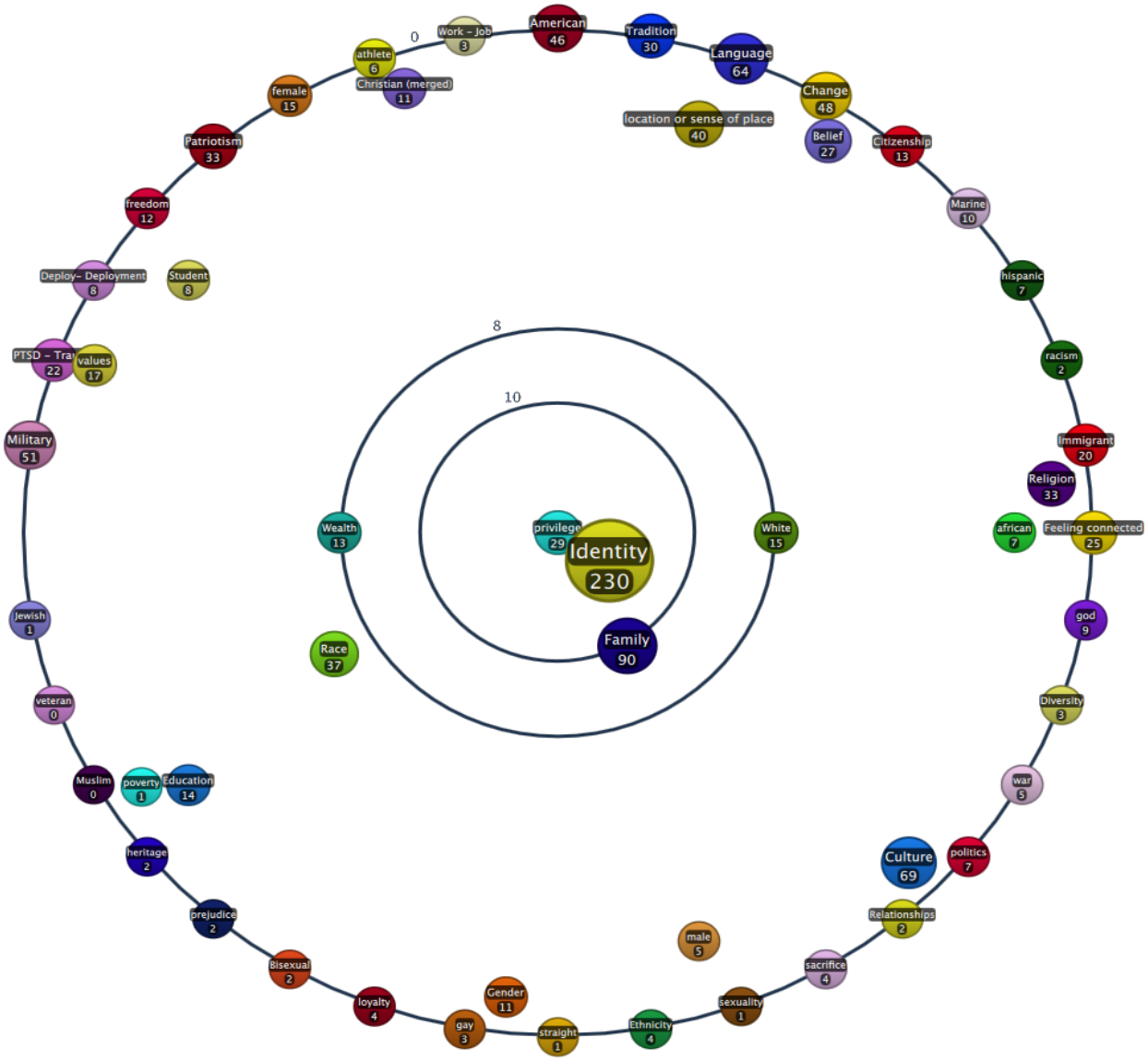
Quirk Overlap View: Marine



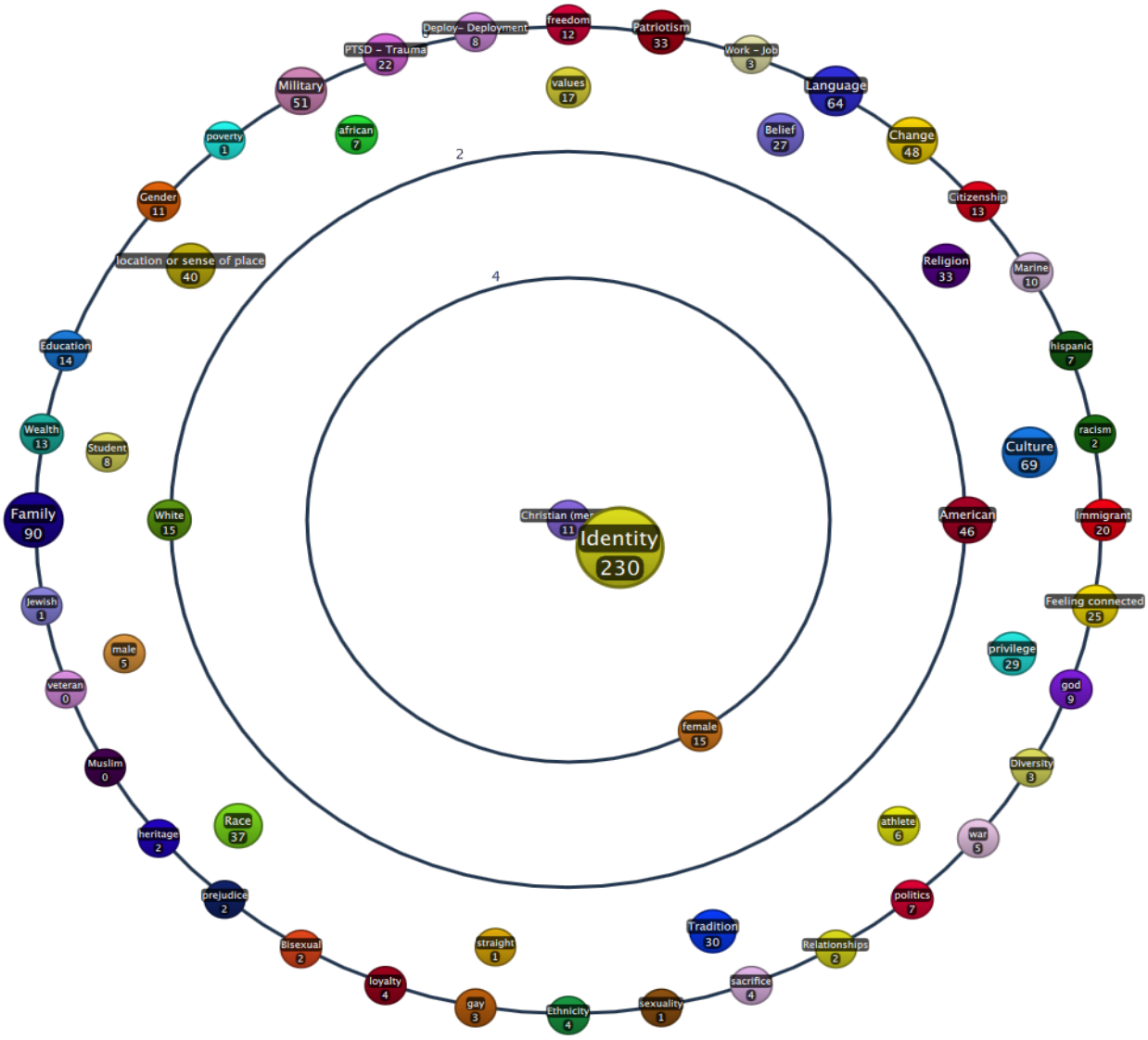
Quirk Overlap View: Poverty



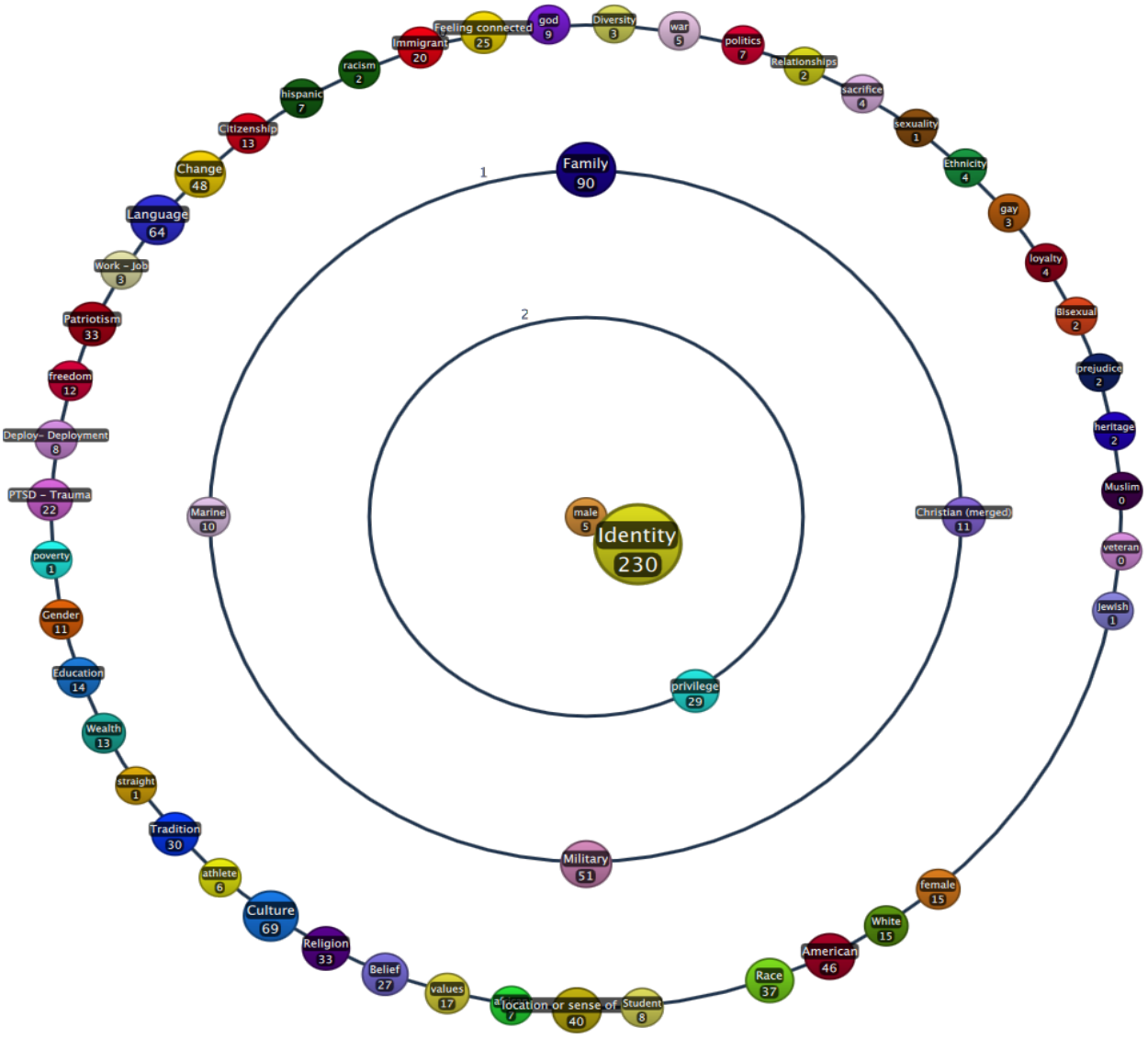
Quirk Overlap View: Privilege



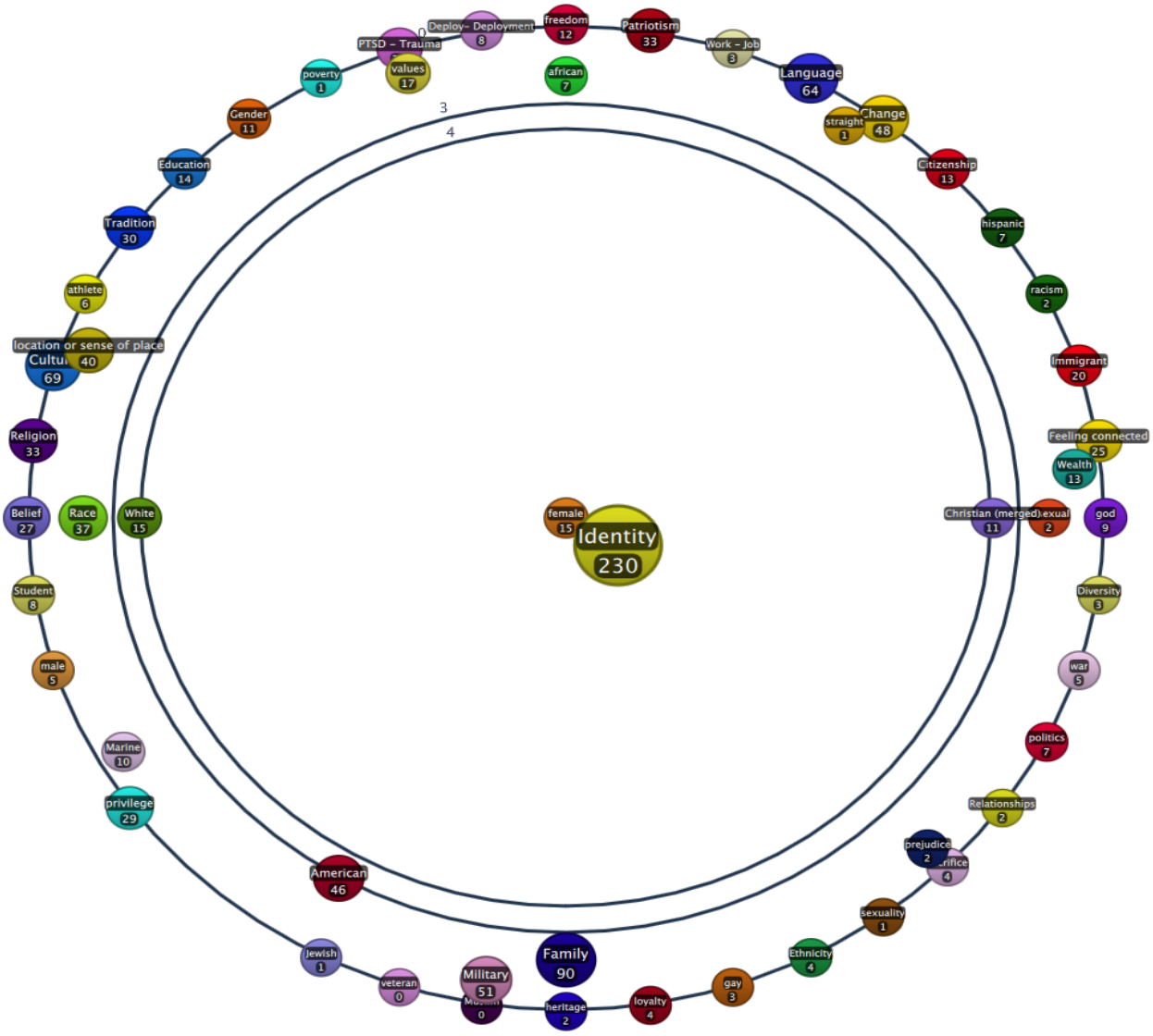
Quirk Overlap View: Christian



Quirk Overlap View: Male



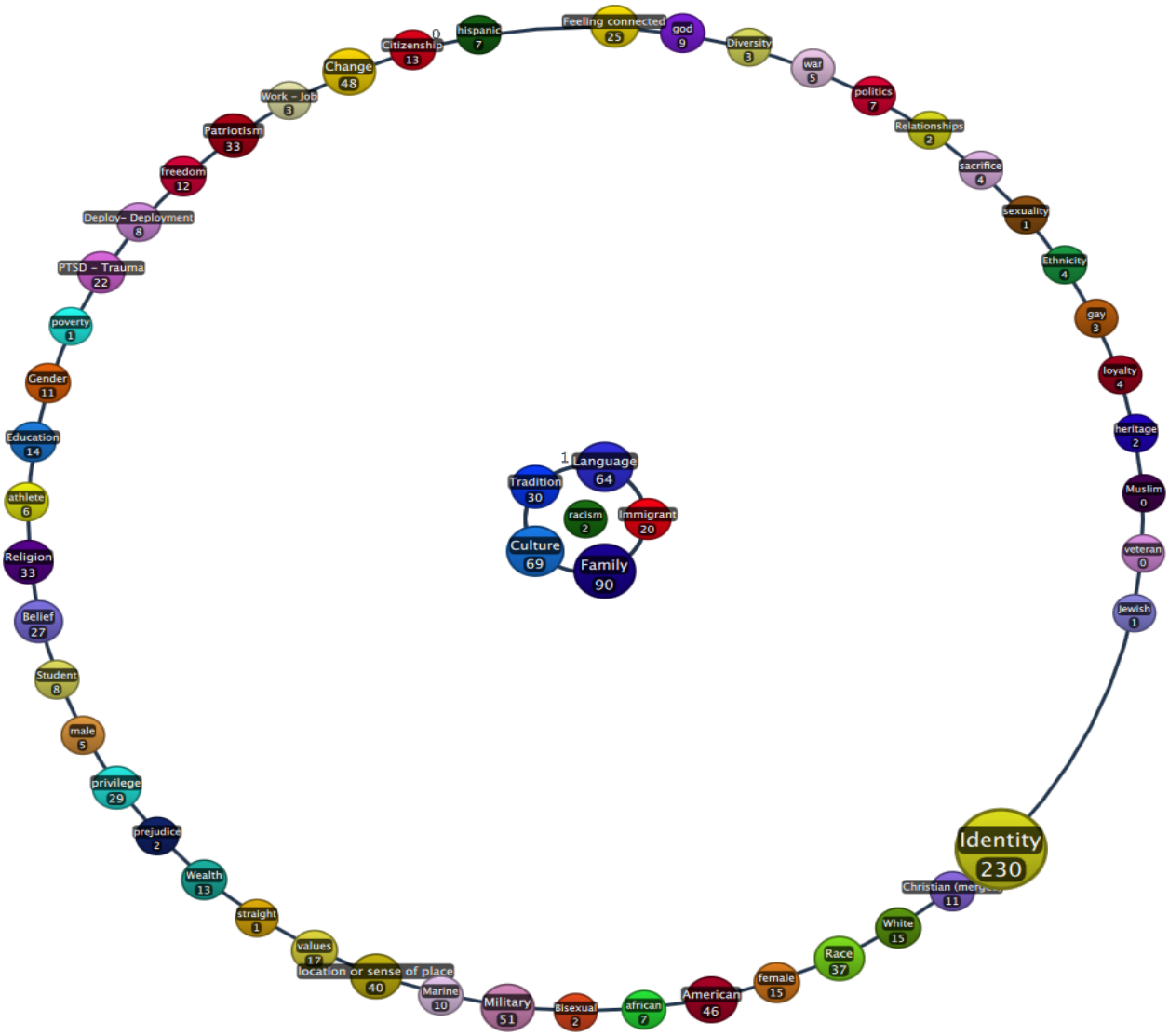
Quirk Overlap View: Female



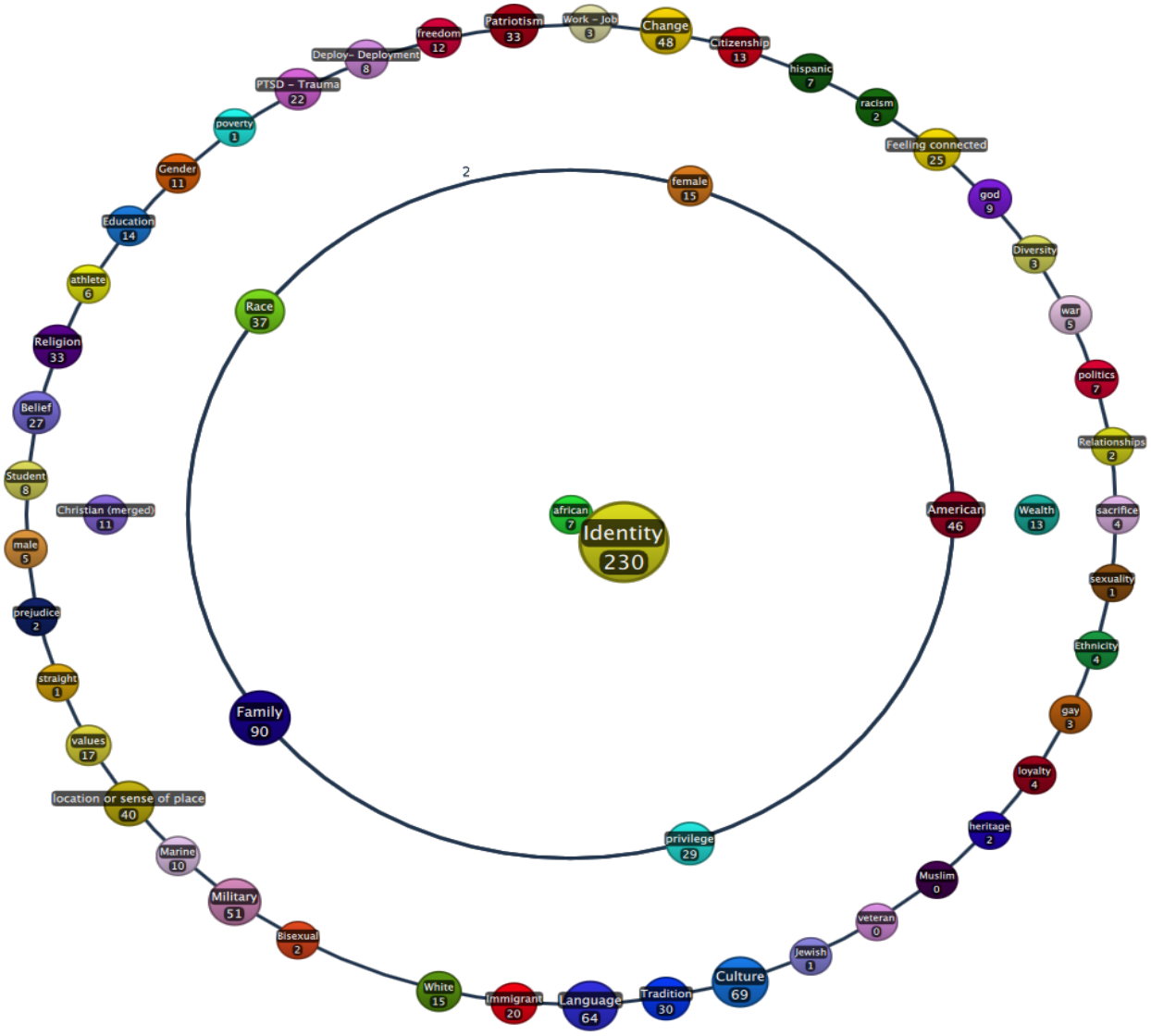
Quirk Overlap View: Gay

Quirk Overlap View: Straight

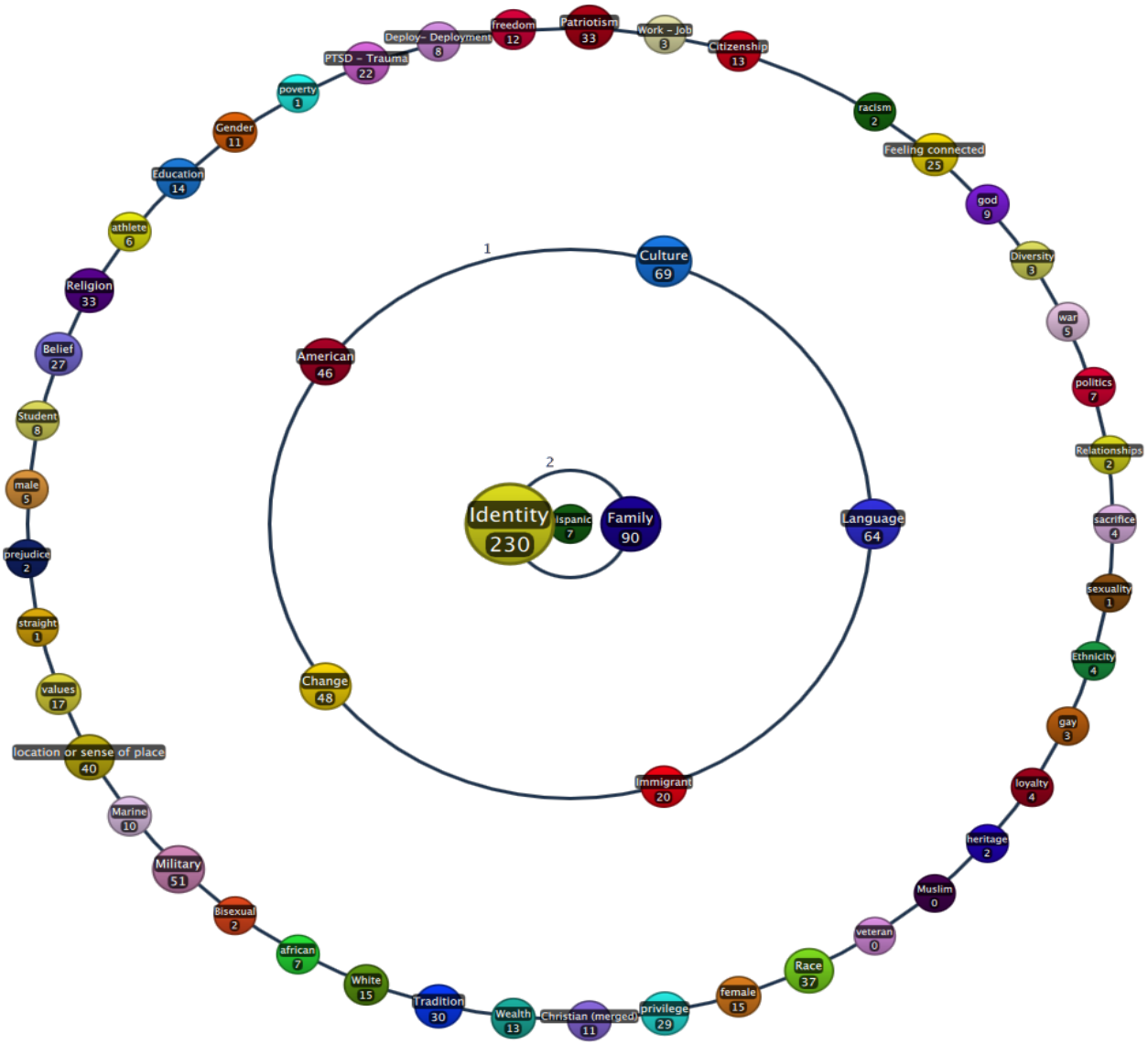
Quirk Overlap View: Racism



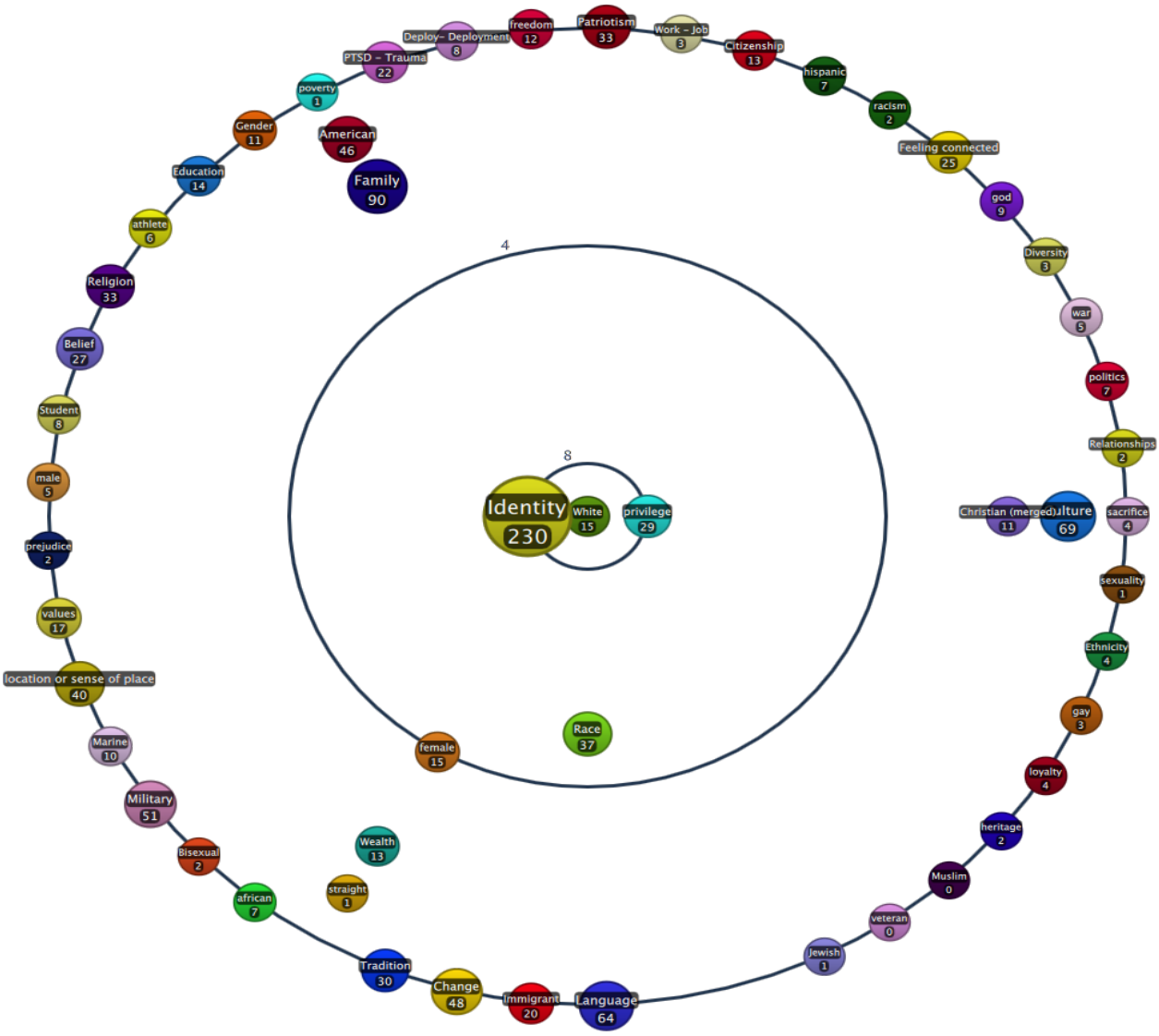
Quirk Overlap View: African



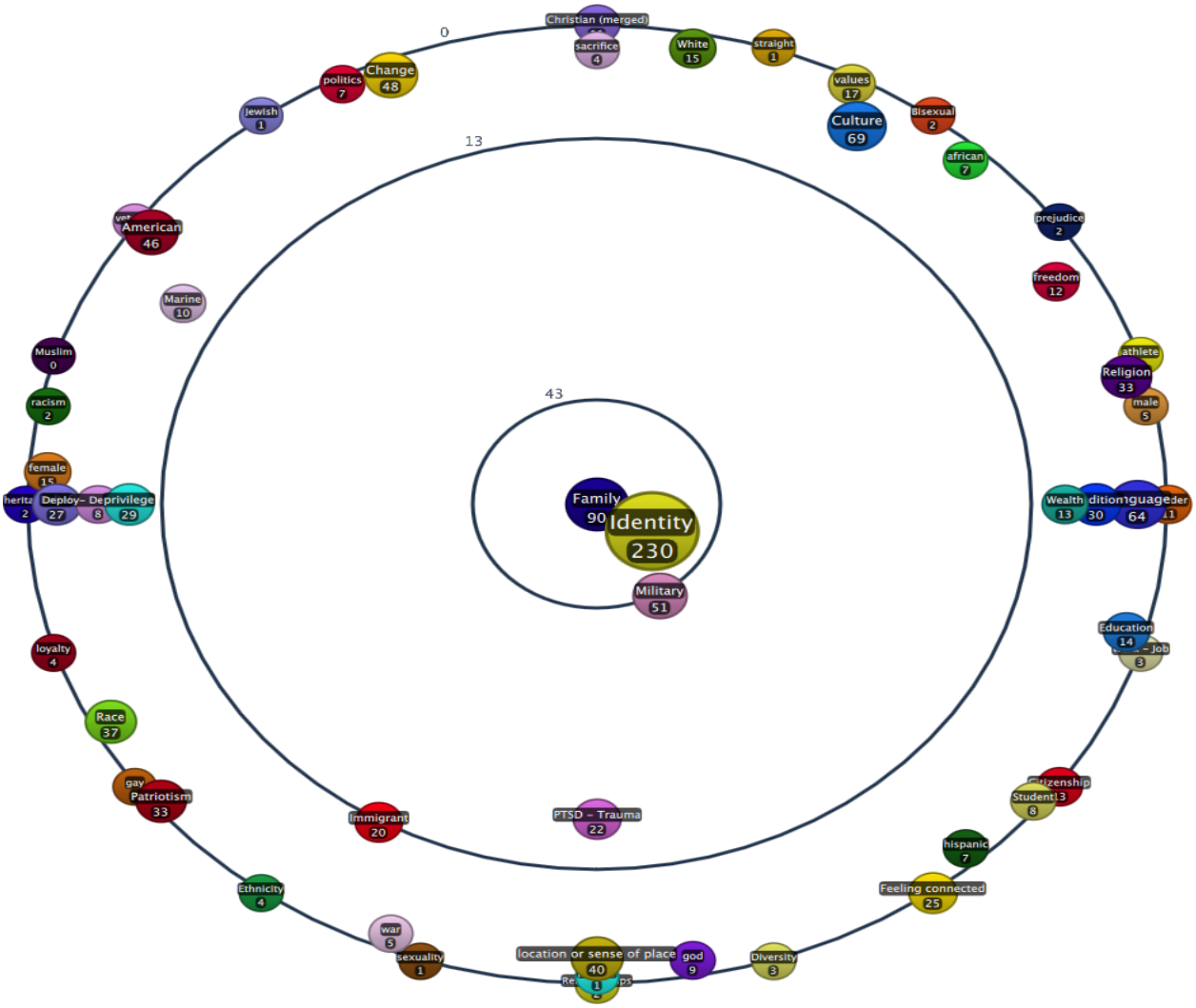
Quirk Overlap View: Hispanic



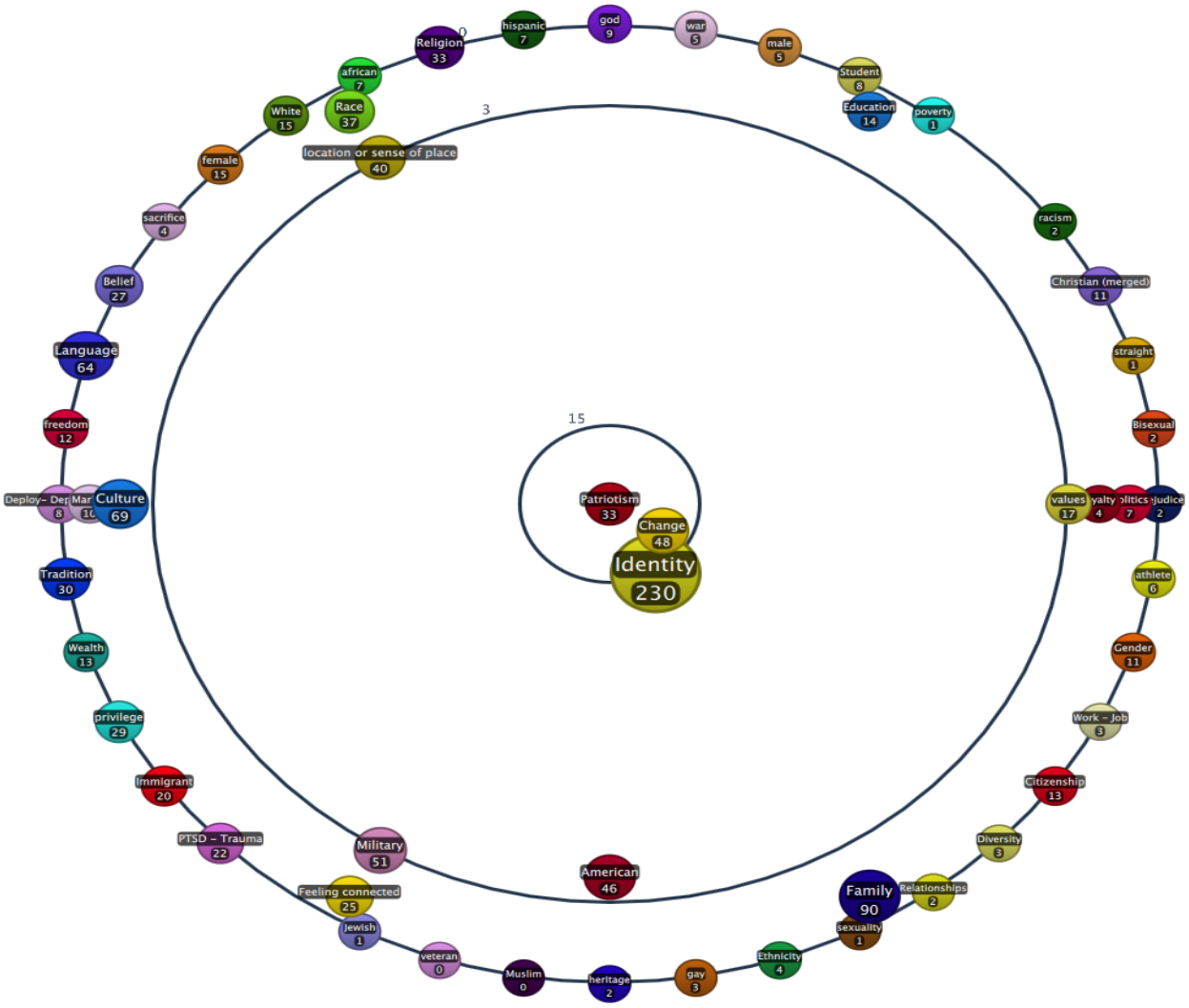
Quirk Overlap View: White



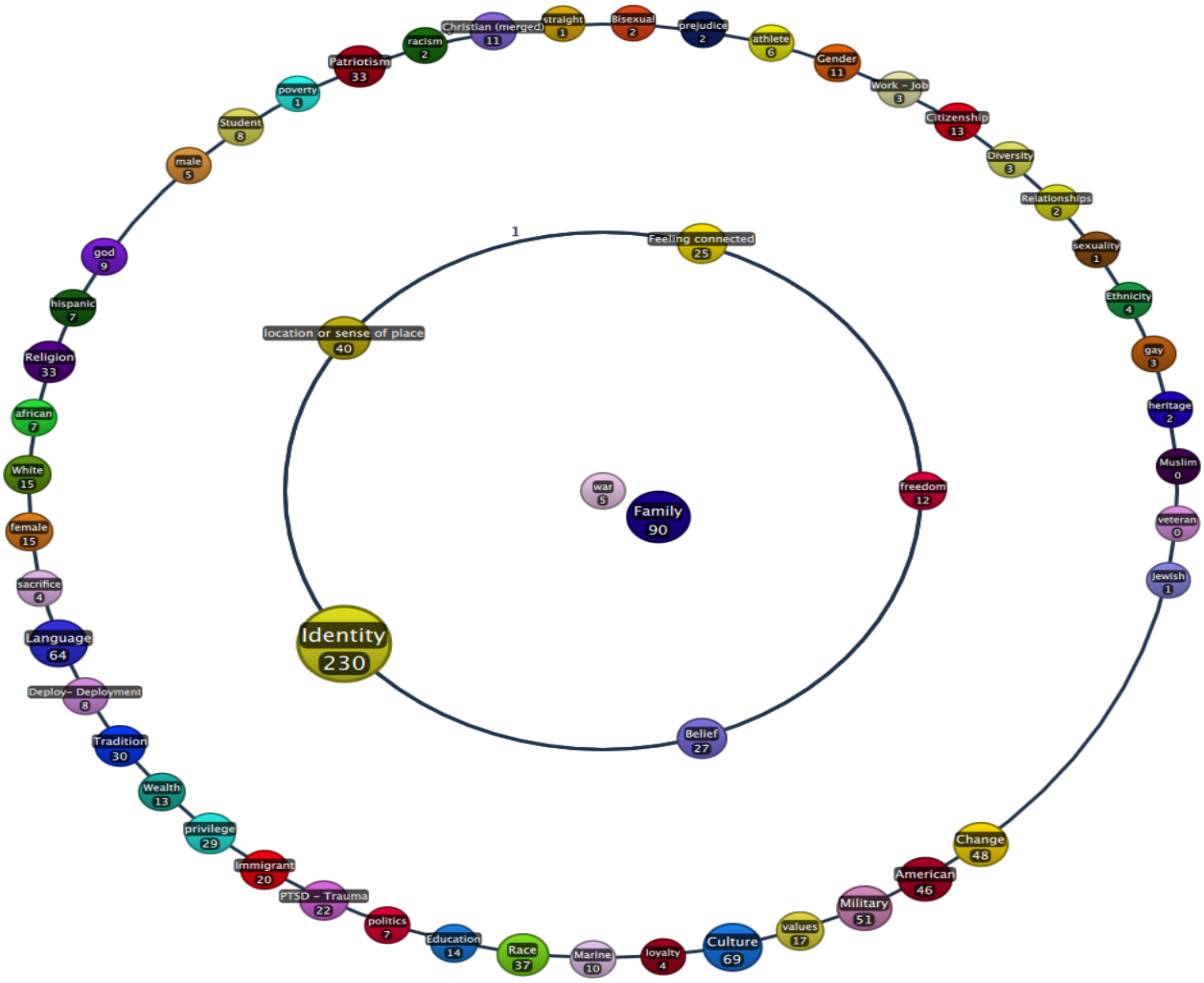
Quirk Overlap View: Family



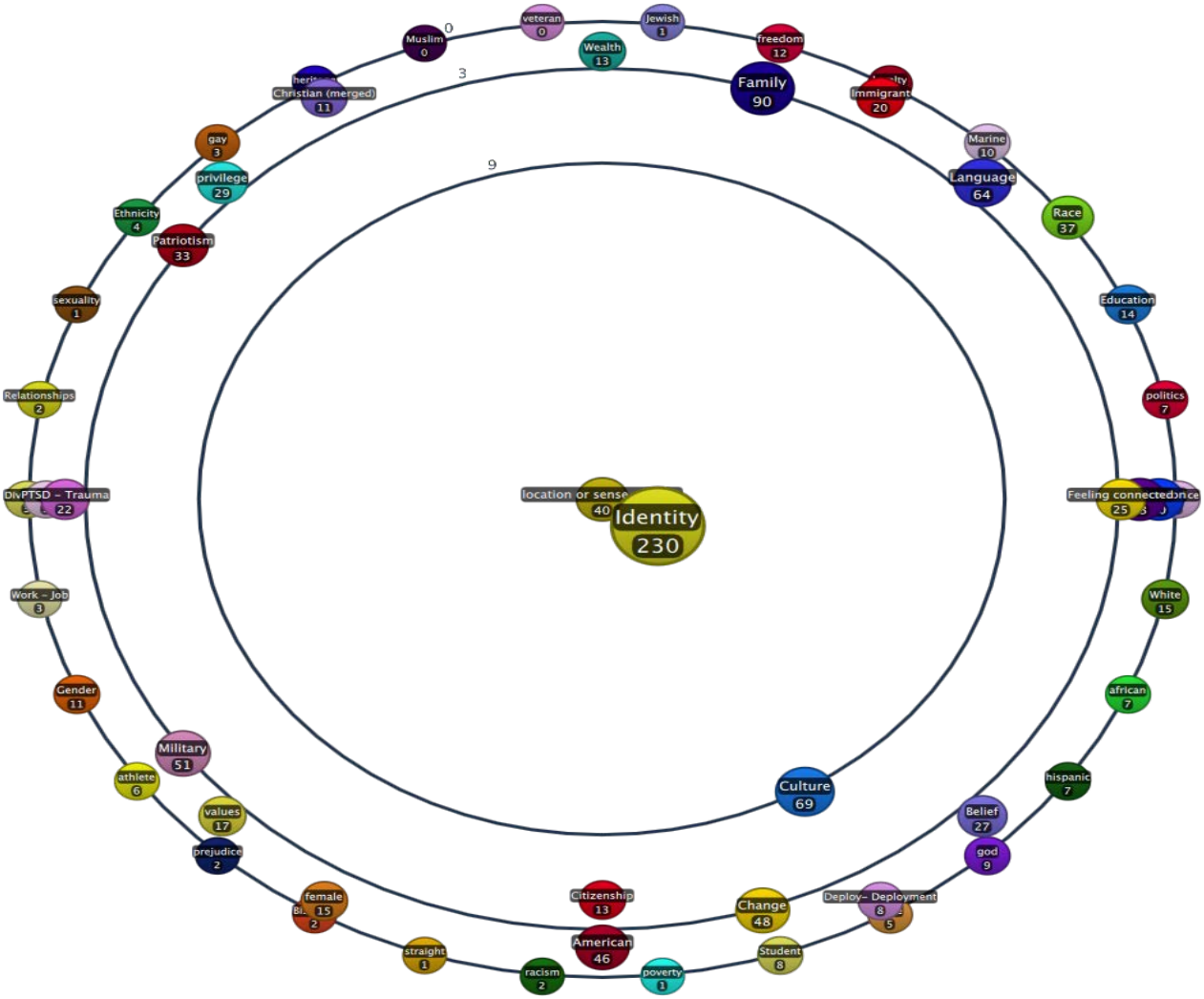
Quirk Overlap View: Patriotism



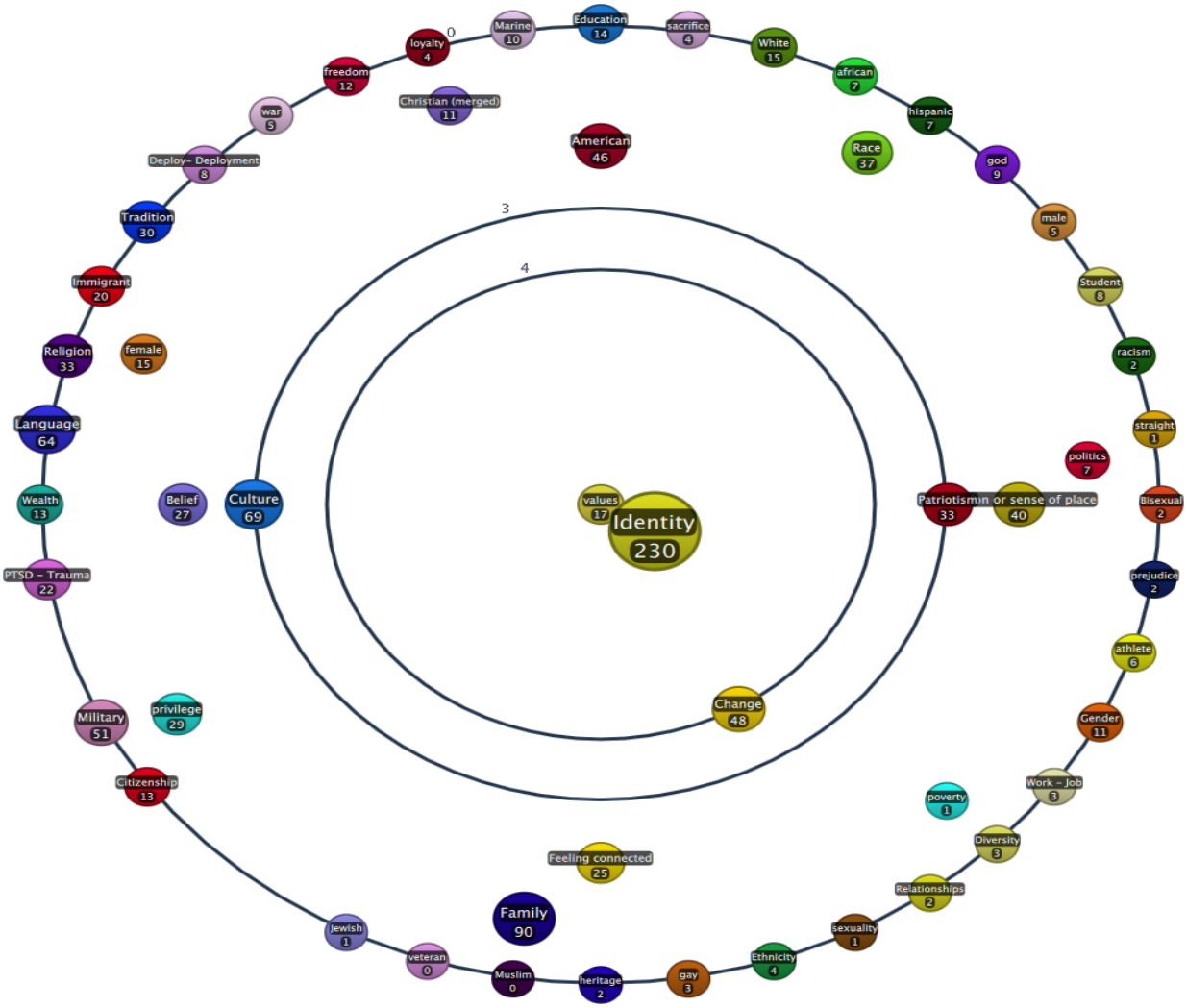
Quirk Overlap View: War



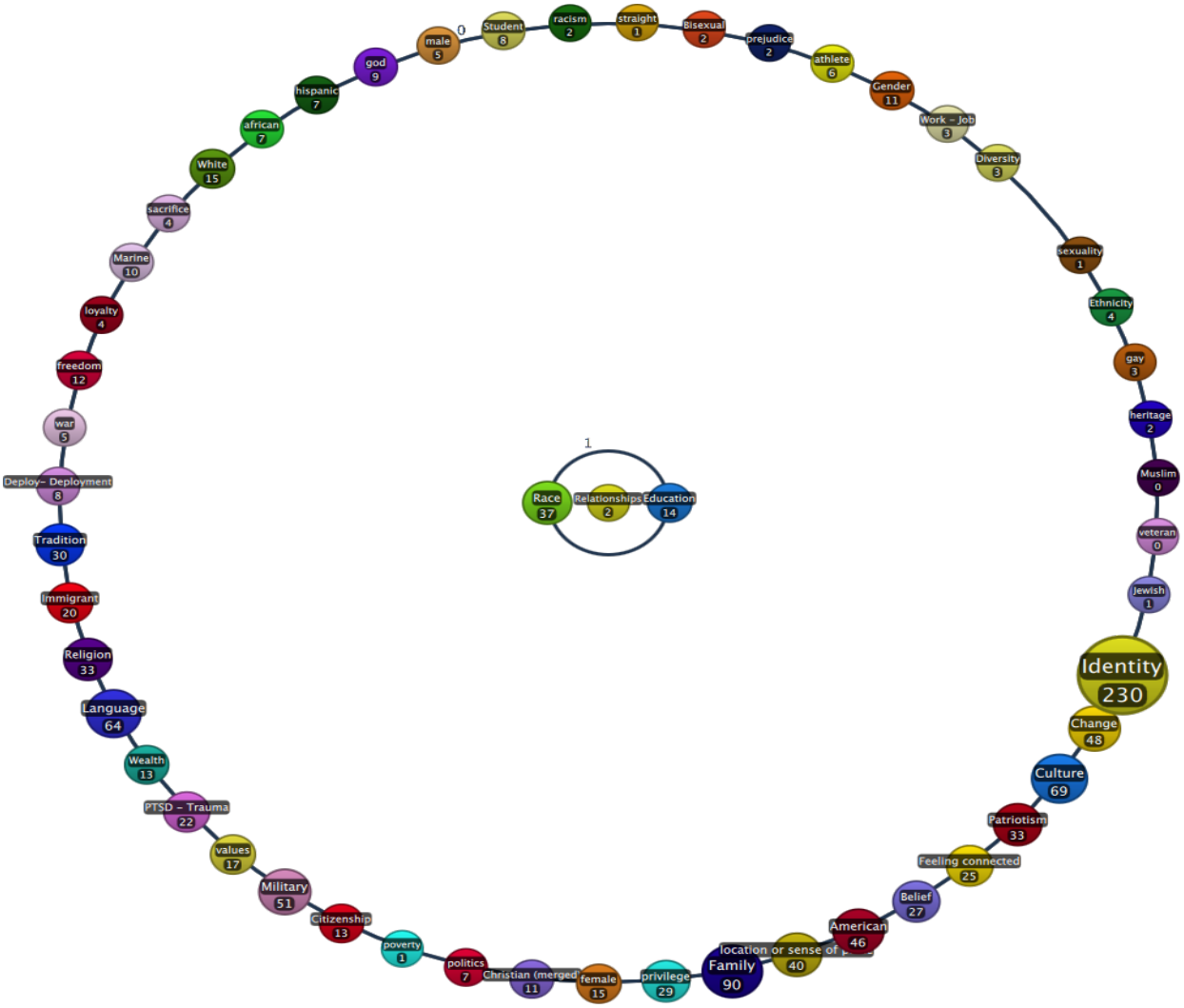
Quirk Overlap View: Location or Sense of Place



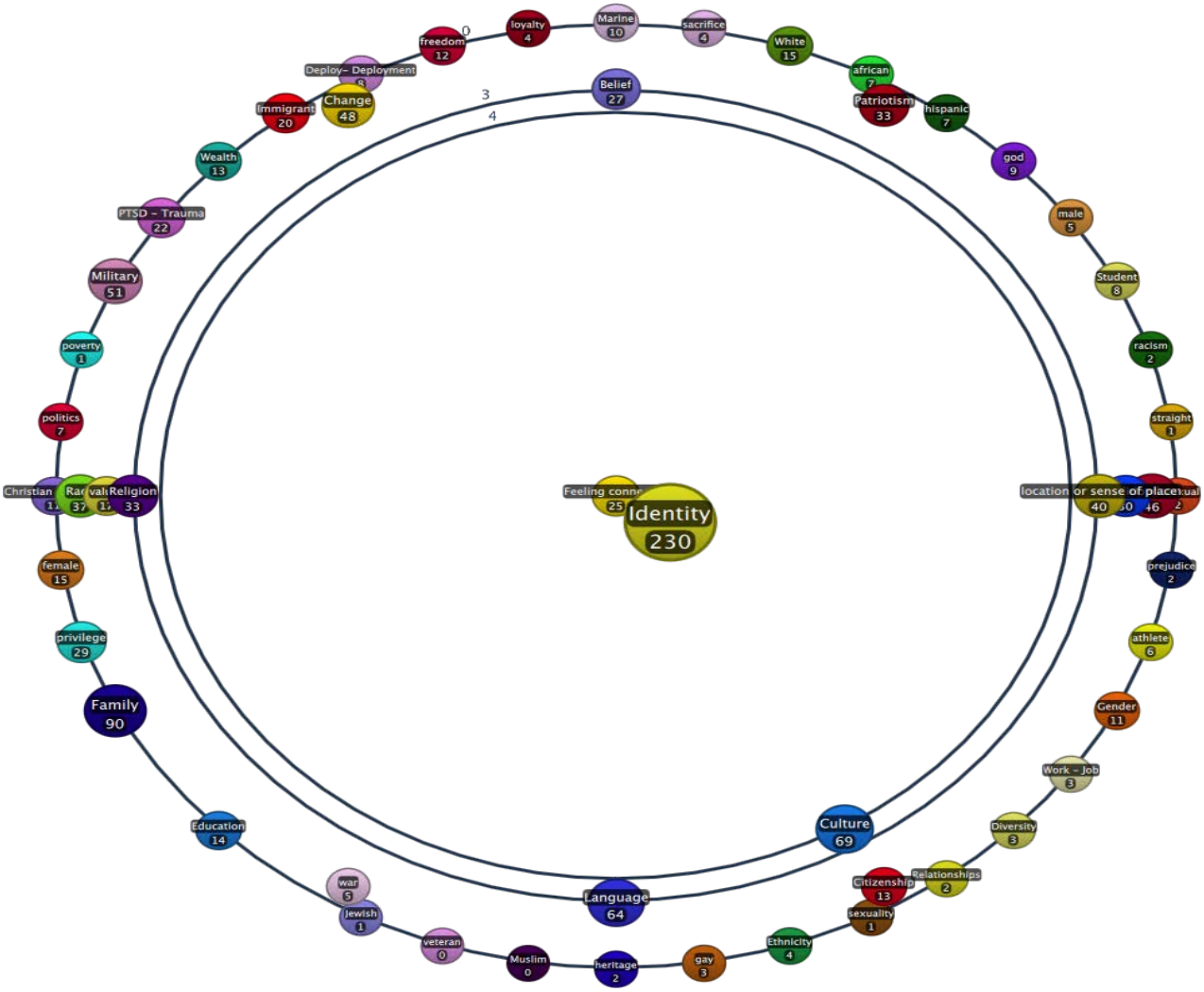
Quirk Overlap View: Values



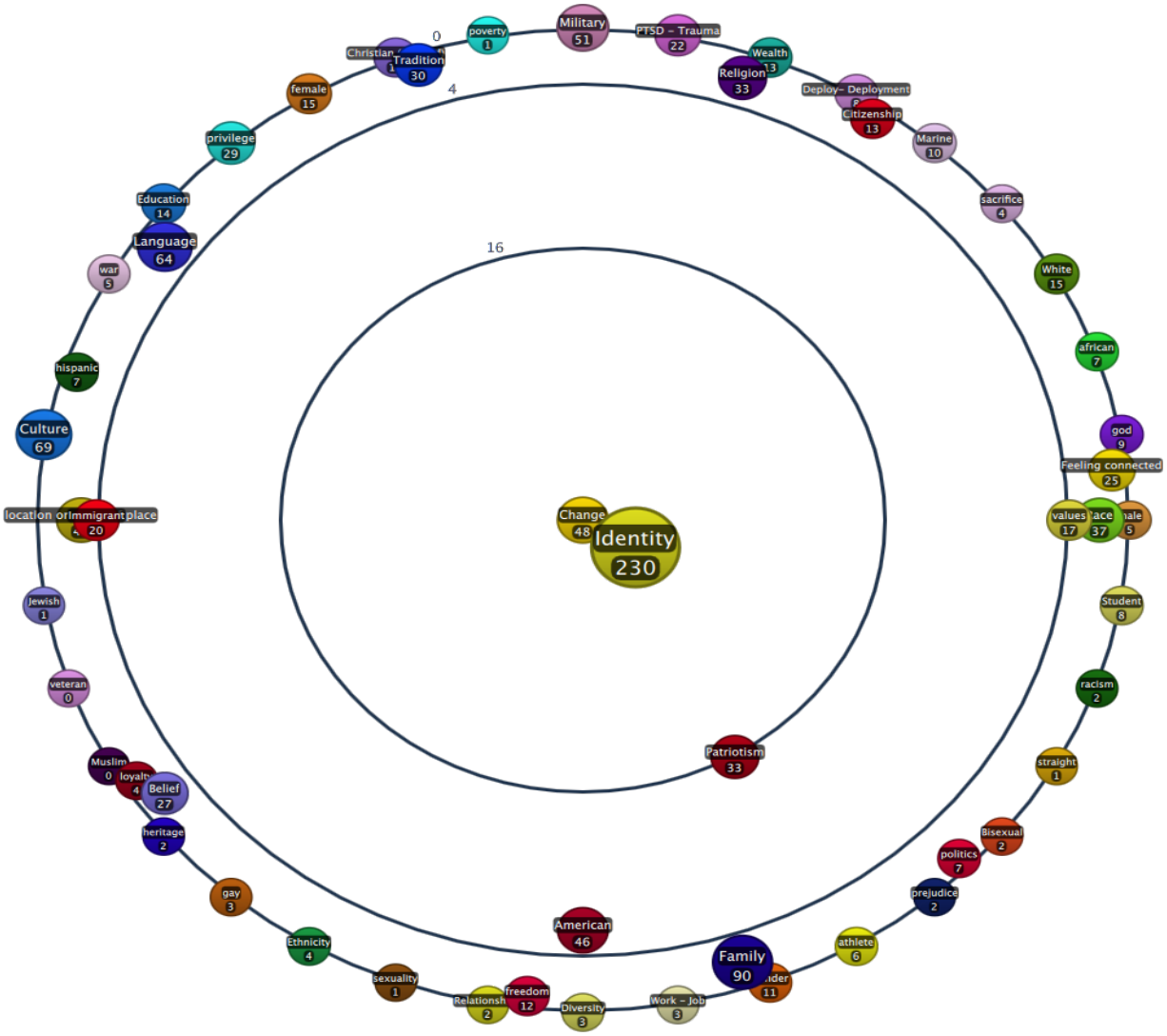
Quirk Overlap View: Relationships



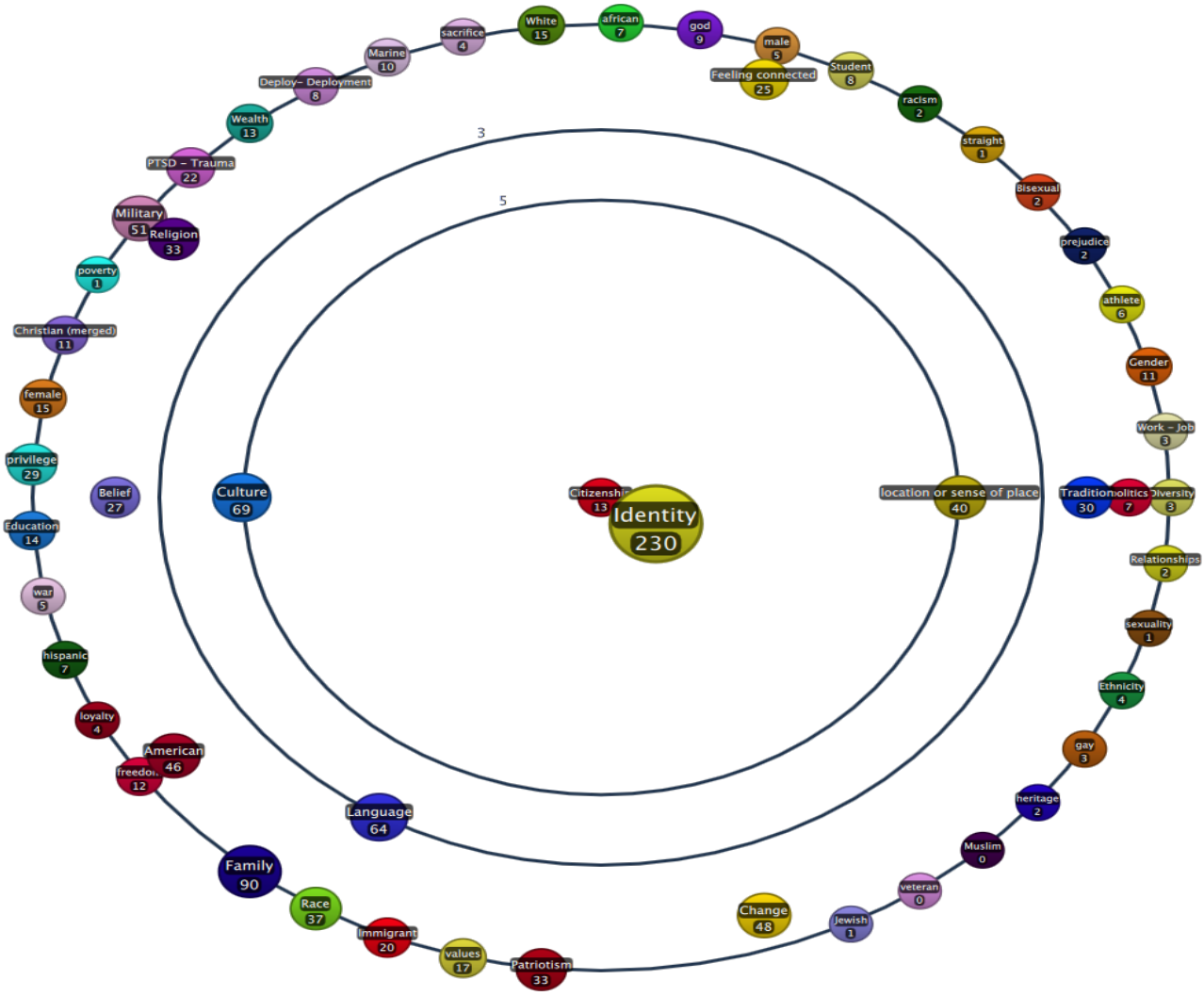
Quirk Overlap View: Feeling Connected



Quirk Overlap View: Change

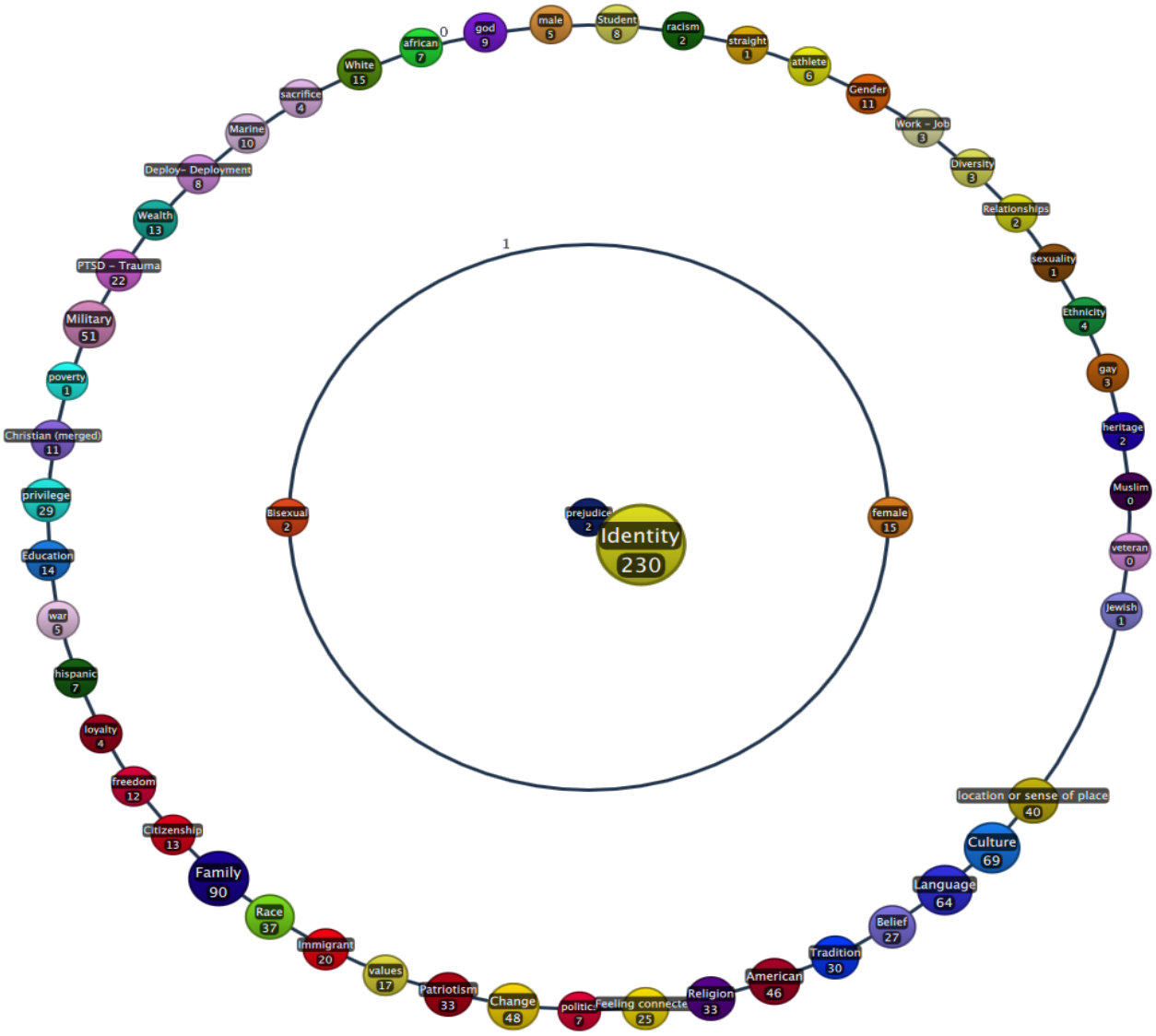


Quirk Overlap View: Citizenship

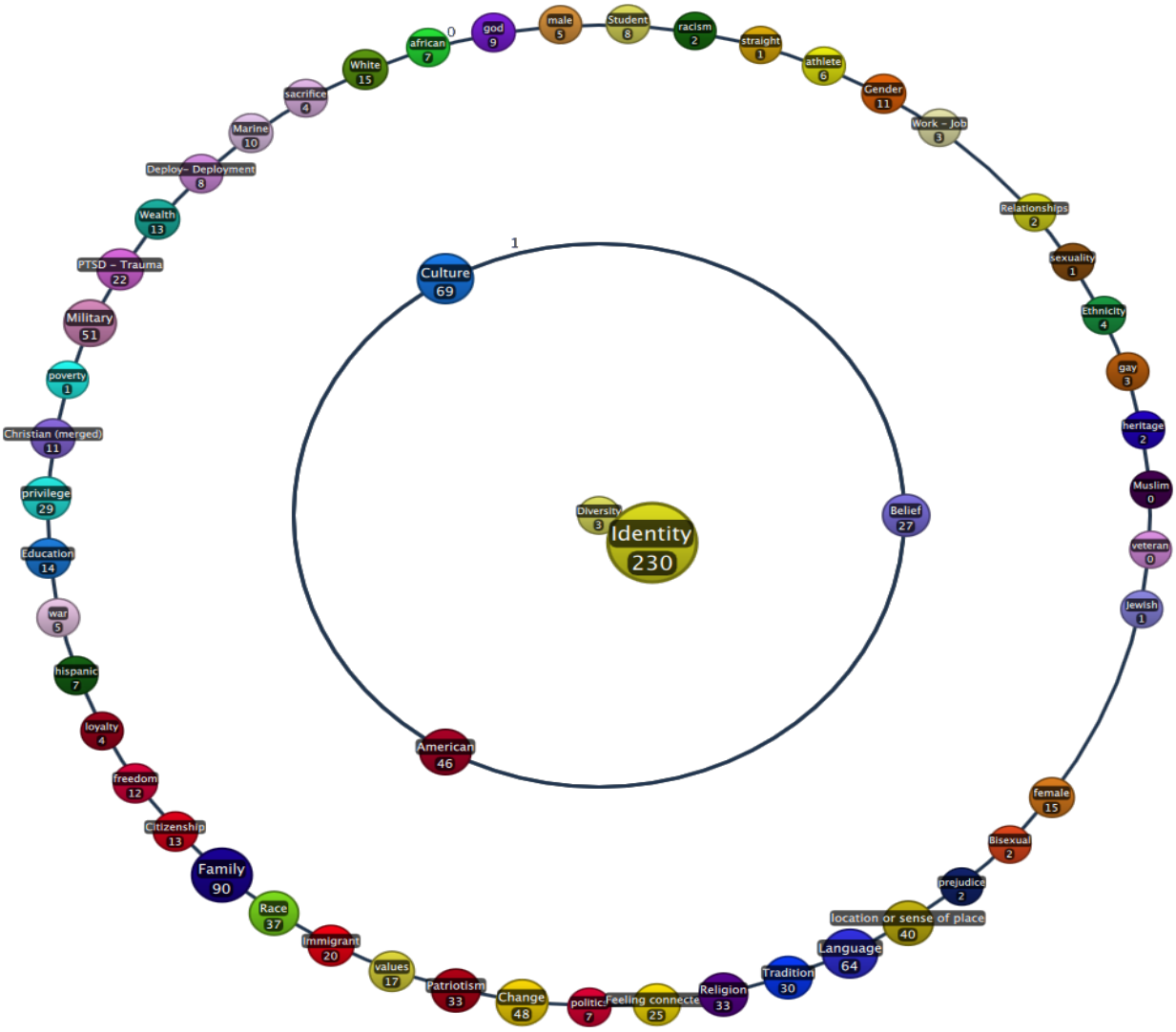


Quirk Overlap View: Bisexual

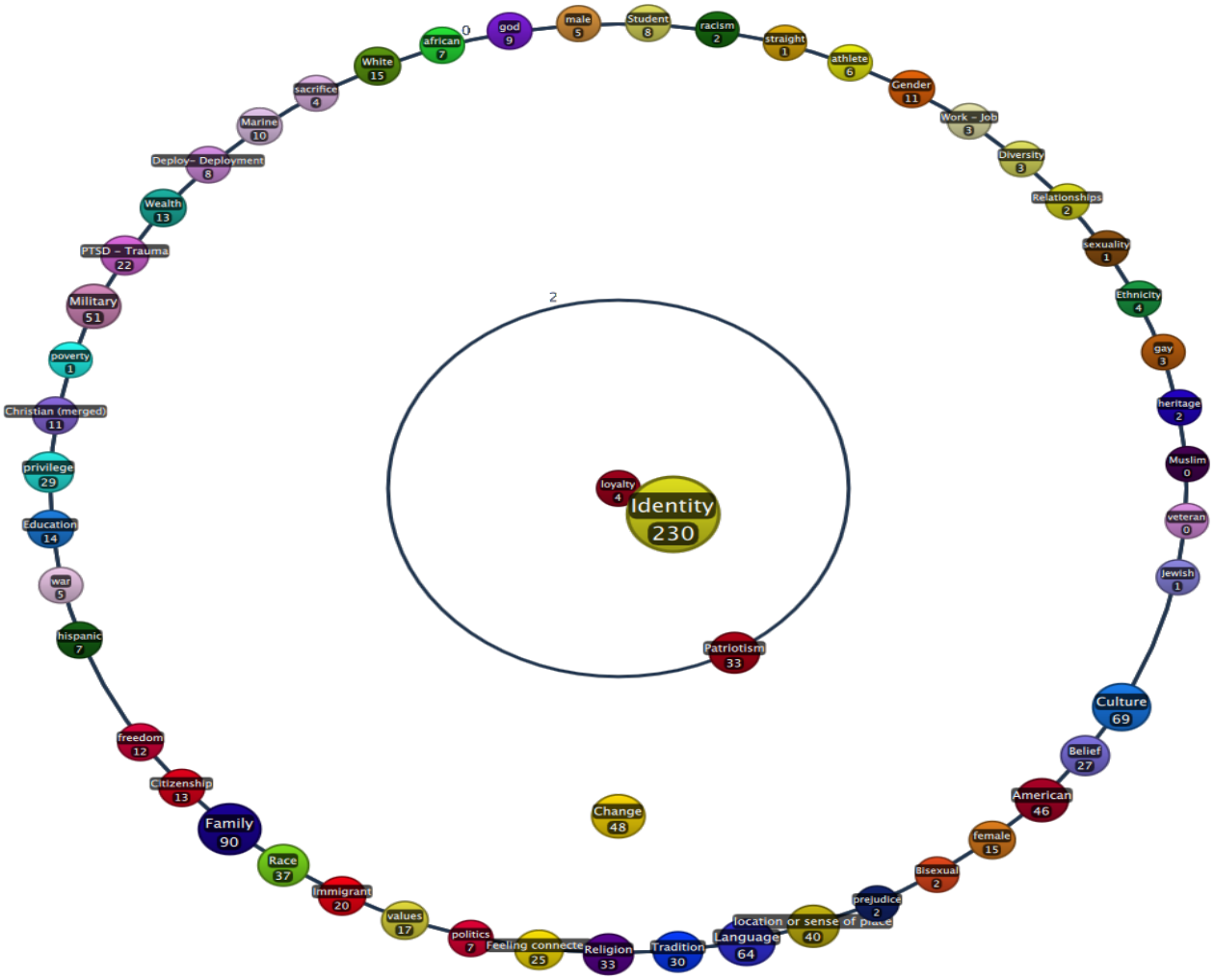
Quirk Overlap View: Prejudice



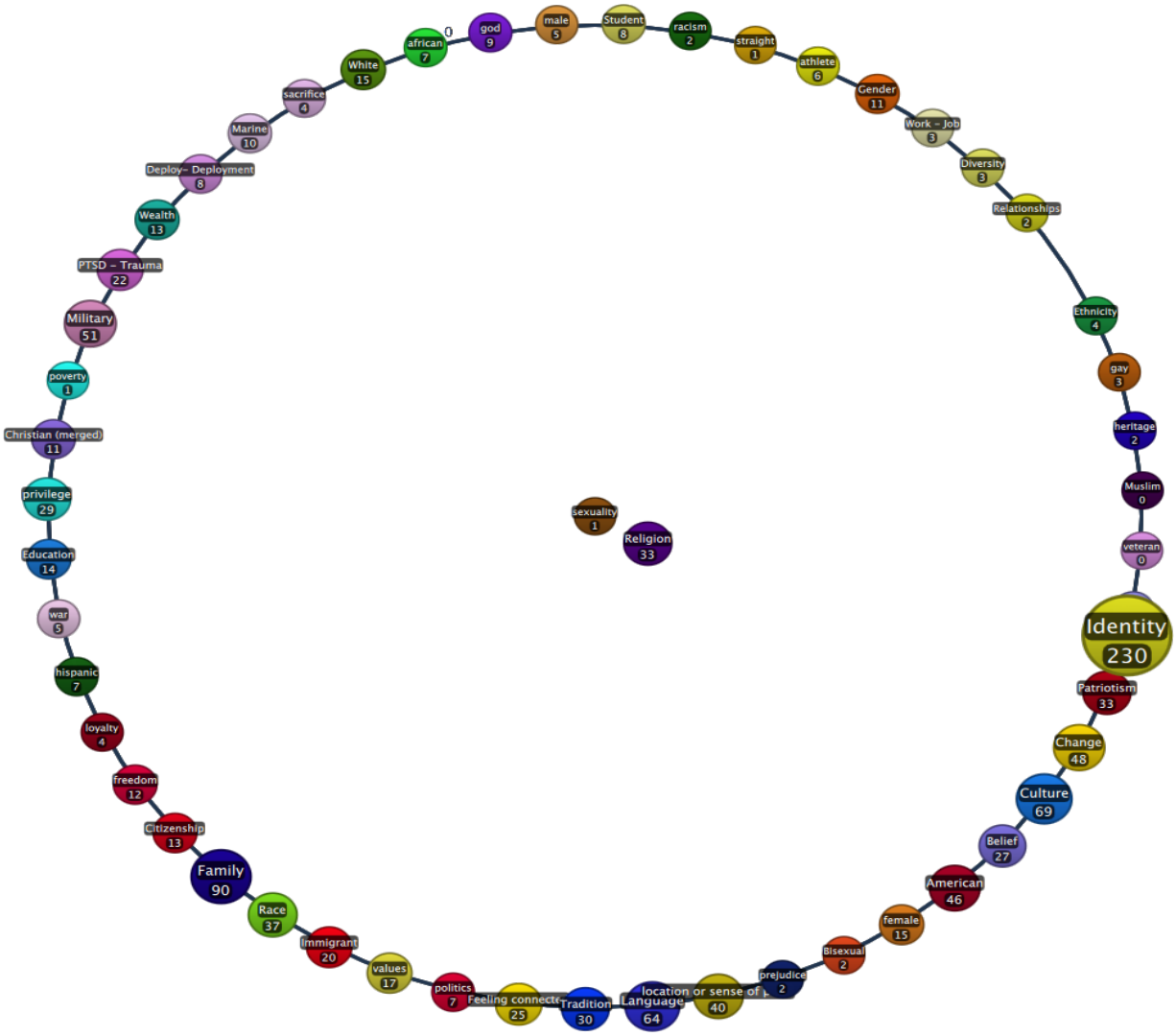
Quirk Overlap View: Diversity



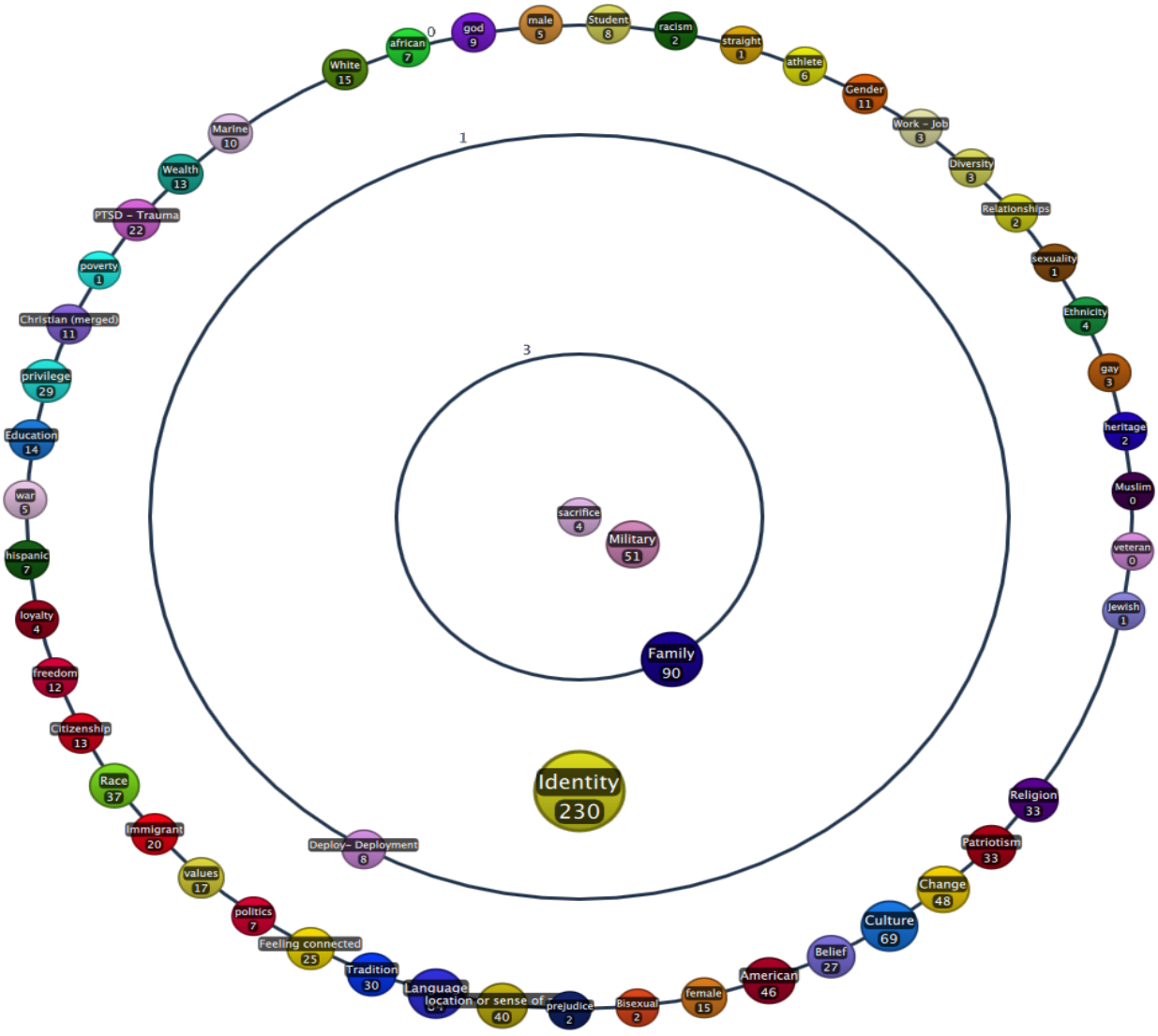
Quirk Overlap View: Loyalty



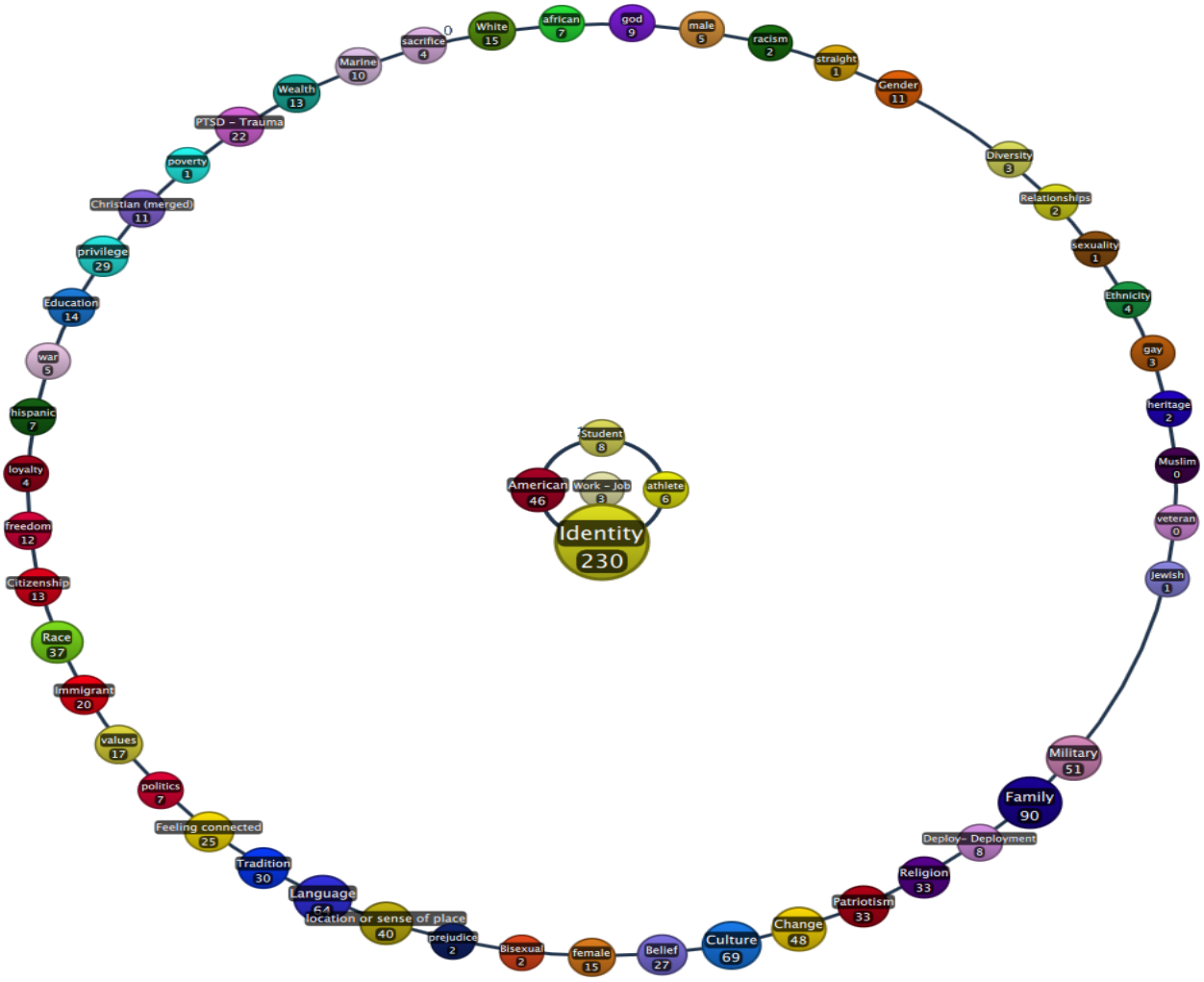
Quirk Overlap View: Sexuality



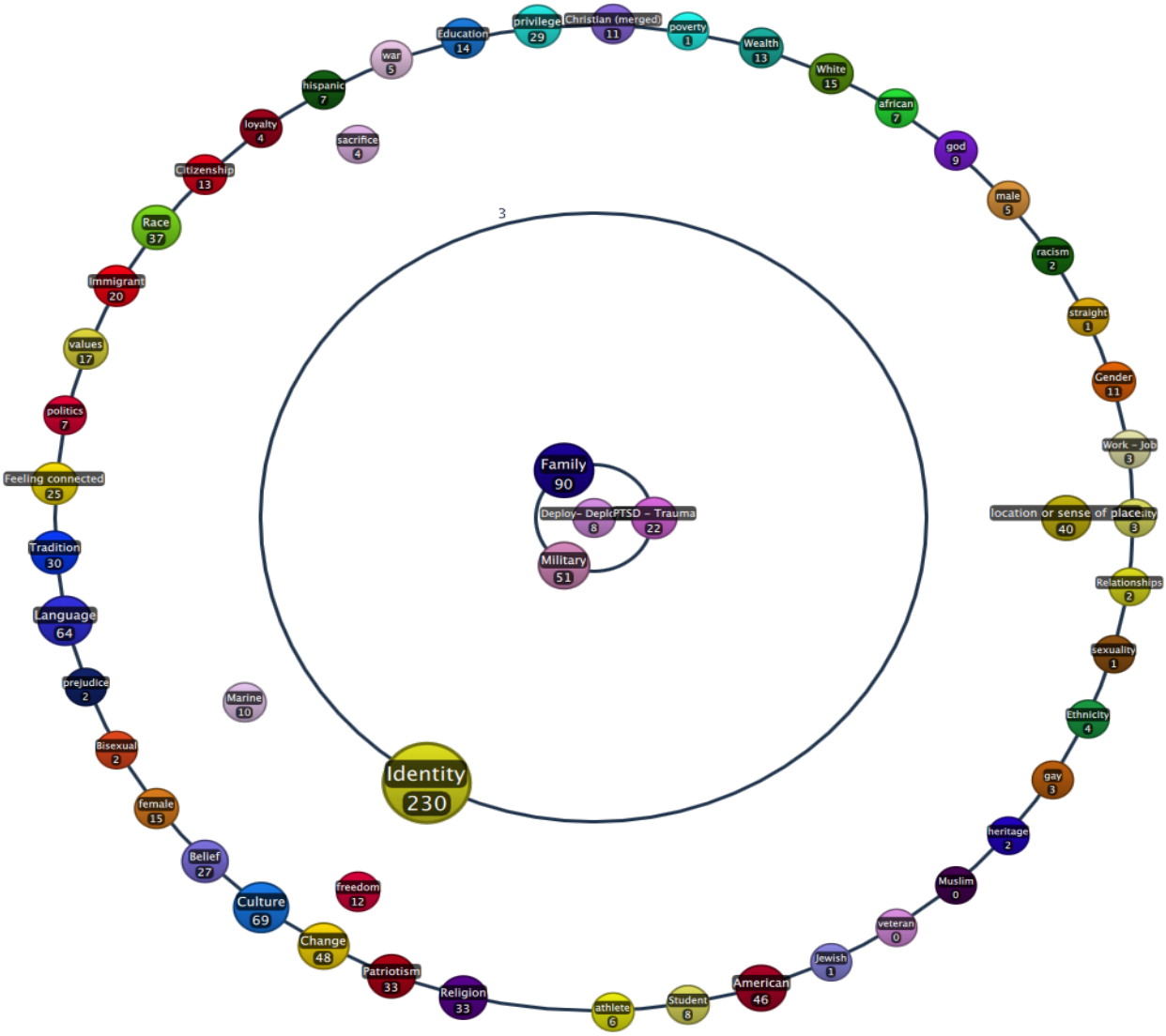
Quirk Overlap View: Sacrifice



Quirk Overlap View: Work-Job



Quirk Overlap View: Deploy-Deployment



Quirk Overlap View: PTSD-Trauma