

FROM “THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS” TO PRACTICE:
NARRATIVES OF FACULTY SENSEMAKING
DURING CAMPUS-CARRY POLICY ENACTMENT

By

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ABSTRACT

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The 2007 mass shooting at Virginia Tech is one part of a decades-long increase in the frequency of gun violence on U.S. college and university campuses (Drysdale, Modzeleski, & Simons, 2010; Ferraro, 2015). The events at Virginia Tech also served as a catalyst for the spread of so-called “campus-carry” laws, or acts of state policy which permit concealed firearms on postsecondary campuses (Aronowitz & Vaughn, 2013; Birnbaum, 2013; Grayson & Meilman, 2013). Despite opposition from the higher education sector, and evidence demonstrating that increasing the number of firearms in a public space increases the likelihood of future gun violence (e.g., Ayres & Donohue, 2003, 2009; Cummings et al., 1997; Duggan, 2001; Helland & Tabarrok, 2004; National Research Council, 2005), Texas became the eighth state to enact campus carry on August 1, 2016.

As a relatively new policy area, limited empirical data exist regarding the effects of campus carry on higher education. This study’s purpose was to identify whether the new campus-carry law in Texas had any educative influence upon the postsecondary learning environment by examining the ways faculty made sense of the new law before and during its enactment. Data were collected during the final three weeks of the fall, 2016 term at one university to explore whether and how the first semester of legal concealed weapons influenced faculty teaching and research decisions. Thirteen participants took part in narrative interviews, which were complemented by field observations and artifact analysis to more fully depict faculty life on a potentially armed campus for the reader.

Findings included evidence of changes occurring to faculty teaching decisions and faculty-student interaction behaviors on two sensemaking dimensions: a conscious-active response and a subconscious-reactive response. A new conceptual model of faculty sensemaking in response to controversial state policy is included to depict the complex, nuanced process observed in the study. Through the campus-carry sensemaking response, this study provides what is believed to be the first known evidence to suggest campus-carry policy may influence faculty teaching and student interaction in ways that could be detrimental to student success and faculty academic freedom for those in the study. Implications for future researchers, policymakers, faculty, institutional leaders, and student affairs and administrative staff are also discussed.

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For my mother.
(She would have *loved* this.)

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I went to college because my mom worked at my undergraduate institution, and as a result, I received free tuition. Actually, I *first* went to college (or so I have been told) around age three, visiting her colleagues with her one day in the Computer Room at Central Michigan University. It was never anything less than assumed that I would go to college, and specifically that college, because of her union-bargained tuition waiver. Today, on the other side of my formal postsecondary experience and finishing a terminal degree studying higher education, I understand the effect this familial expectation – I simply *would* go to college – had upon my personal belief that I *could* go to college. So, I begin by thanking my parents for instilling that belief in me, and for providing the foundation at every step of the way to realize it. The days working on math homework at the kitchen table with Mom, and writing stories on the word processor with Dad, seem to have paid off. I acknowledge the support of the rest of my family as well. They always made it okay for me to be the nerd of the group, and they have understood when I missed family events for school over the last few years. Special thanks to Sue & Jim Allen for coming to every school thing ever, for helping make a master's degree attainable a few years ago, and for furthering the expectations I would keep pursuing academic work.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

I express condolences to the family, friends, and community touched by the tragedy at Virginia Tech. I know I reflect the feelings of the people of Michigan when I say that our thoughts and prayers are with them in this hour of pain and grief.

Senator Carl Levin, April 20, 2007

Violent acts on college and university campuses are not a new phenomenon. In fact, accounts of physical violence are scattered throughout historical records of the earliest U.S. higher education institutions (HEIs) (Brubacher & Rudy, 2004; Geiger, 2005; Thelin, 2011). What has changed in the modern era, however, is the severity and frequency of incidents of campus violence, as well as the collective response of our society to these acts, as reflected in public policy. This chapter provides an introductory overview of the complex situation of violence within the higher education sector of the U.S., focusing in particular on trends and public policy responses over the last ten years, as well as potential implications for faculty. Following this overview, a subsequent section explains the purposes of the study and draws these purposes into two guiding research questions. Outlining the specific questions under investigation in the study leads to a discussion of the study design, followed by a discussion of key terms and their definitions. Lastly, this chapter closes with an examination of the significance of the study.

Contemporary Overview

Tales of student unrest over living conditions and minor physical skirmishes within dormitories of the colonial colleges (Thelin, 2011) have been replaced in the modern era by a

rising frequency of gun violence on campuses spanning multiple sectors of U.S. higher education. In a study of targeted assaults within HEIs from 1900 to 2008, the Federal Bureau of Investigation found that the number of incidents increased decade after decade beginning in the 1940s, with more than 30% of the total number of incidents occurring since the year 2000 (Drysedale, Modzeleski, & Simons, 2010). The vast majority of incidents were carried out with firearms. While that study ended with 2008 data, Ferraro (2015) found that the rates of both mass shootings and the number of associated fatalities within American higher education increased yet again in the years 2009 to 2014. Furthermore, when looking at all active shooter incidents, those occurring within educational buildings tend to have higher total casualties than those taking place in other settings (Blair & Schweit, 2014).

Some may assume that this rise in the frequency of gun violence within higher education could be attributed to parallel increases in higher education enrollment nationwide, but national data show this to be inaccurate. While postsecondary enrollment rates and frequency of violence showed nearly equivalent increases during the mid-20th century, incidents of violence outpaced enrollment growth beginning in the 1990s, and this disparity continues into the present decade (Drysedale et al., 2010). In late 2015, Oregon's Umpqua Community College became home to the third-deadliest active shooter incident associated with a U.S. HEI, while a shooting in June, 2016 left a University of California, Los Angeles professor and graduate student dead. Other attempts to explain the increase in frequency of gun violence in higher education have included causes such as declining resources for campus mental health services and repeated portrayals of violence in various forms of media, but each of these alone falls short. Whether occurring on a college campus or elsewhere, gun violence represents a complex social issue with multiple

potential causes in each incident, necessitating a comprehensive array of possible solutions (American Psychological Association, 2013).

Public Policy Response

While there is no agreement on the best way to curb the rise in campus violence from a political standpoint, regulating gun control is a common topic for debate after each incident. Although any one proposed solution or attribution of a root cause is not enough to solve this complicated social issue, state policymakers have responded to calls for action in some common ways. According to Birnbaum (2013), “the act of a single mentally disturbed student at Virginia Tech in 2007 was a watershed event in the guns-on-campus debate” (p. 6). Birnbaum argued that the shooting at Virginia Tech changed the narrative of, and participants in, the national guns-on-campus discourse. One of its consequences was to unleash a torrent of proposed state legislation to permit more guns on campuses, stemming from the belief that an armed community can serve as a deterrent to violent crime (Aronowitz & Vaughn, 2013; Birnbaum, 2013; Grayson & Meilman, 2013). Those working and studying within higher education have largely opposed such measures. For example, 95% of campus presidents were opposed to the legalization of concealed weapons on their campuses in one study (Thompson et al., 2013), and 94% of faculty opposed concealed weapons on campus in another study (Price et al., 2014).

At the time data for my study were collected in November and December of 2016, Texas was four months into a new guns-on-campus policy, making it the eighth and then-most recent state to permit concealed weapons on college campuses. The Texas law (Senate Bill 11, hereafter referred to as SB 11), explained fully in chapter two, was signed by Governor Greg Abbott on June 1, 2015. Institutions subject to the law then had the following 14 months to prepare for it to take effect on August 1, 2016. This study made use of the contemporary nature of the law’s

implementation by seeking to understand how faculty made sense of SB 11 during the first semester of its enactment as campus policy. During a nearly 3-week period of on-site data collection at one university in Texas, the legislatures of two other states, Tennessee and Ohio, passed similar bills to expand handgun carrying rights on college and university campuses, demonstrating the urgent need for a better understanding of the implications of campus carry, as well as the real-time nature of the topic.

Implications for Faculty and the Academy

In a poll of Georgia State University faculty, Bennett, Kraft, and Grubb (2012) found that most respondents opposed so-called “campus-carry” legislation. Interestingly, support or opposition to the legislation was significantly correlated with political affiliation, but more than 75% of the variance in faculty attitudes could not be attributed to any of the causes studied, which included respondents’ religiosity, gun ownership, and demographic characteristics. The authors called for deeper and more nuanced understanding of faculty attitudes on this topic, and were later supported by Birnbaum (2013) in calling for more qualitative study of the nature of the debate. The year after the Georgia State University study, Patten, Thomas, and Wada (2013) found that the concept of more firearms on a campus made a majority of faculty feel less safe.

Taken together, increasingly frequent campus shootings and public policy changes to allow more guns in postsecondary settings represent a fundamental shift in the nature of the relationship between higher education and gun violence. Concurrent to the rising frequency of gun violence within higher education is an increasingly pervasive awareness of the potential presence of violence in the campus setting (Kaminski, Koons-Witt, Thompson, & Weiss, 2010; Melear & St. Louis, 2015). In the U.S., higher education exists, in part, to discover and disseminate knowledge. To achieve this mission, faculty and students have enjoyed some degree

of academic freedom as a core principle of higher education. That is, faculty are able to teach and pursue research agendas on lines of inquiry largely free of significant oversight or threat of retribution or censorship. It is important to note that there are limits to this notion of academic freedom, however, including that material should be closely related to the subject being taught and academically purposeful (American Association of University Professors, 1940). In response to both acts of gun violence within higher education and the proliferation of laws permitting firearms on campuses, academic freedom for faculty may be under assault. Many faculty have anecdotally indicated concerns over academic freedom in response to these laws, noting that it becomes difficult to foster a free exchange of ideas when one has fear of potential armed retribution (Thomason & O’Leary, 2015).

Generally speaking, faculty fear of crime on campus tends to be significantly correlated with gender, and leads to changes in faculty behavior such as closing office doors and reluctance to make oneself available after typical office hours or when others are not in the building (Gover, Tomsich, Jennings, & Higgins, 2011). Further illustrating this point, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* published responses to an informal survey of faculty and staff regarding fear of a mass shooting and the ways in which these fears may influence behavior. Findings from hundreds of respondents indicated common themes including mapping escape routes, hesitance to give low grades, and generalized worry as news of shootings on campuses became more prevalent over the preceding years (Thomason & O’Leary, 2015).

Purpose of the Study

As stated, the relationship between higher education and gun violence is rapidly changing, with immediate, urgent implications for faculty and potentially for the educative mission of U.S. higher education. After each recent active shooter situation on a U.S. campus,

the response from institutional leaders and members of the media – now a routine – is typically some variation of “our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families.” Therefore, a foundational goal of this study was to understand how this potential new normalized reality may be changing higher education over time. There is a gap in the literature to understand how a nearly decade-long trend of U.S. higher education as an increasingly armed public space is, if at all, altering core functions of the academy, such as teaching and research. Presently, limited studies exist to identify the impact of gun violence within higher education beyond the immediate aftermath in the days following an incident. Nearly all the literature on campus violence is geared toward the shorter-term concerns of crisis response, communications strategy, and public safety.

Based upon my review of the literature, the question of possible longer-term changes in the core functions of higher education has not been investigated. In fact, along with an acknowledgment of the changing relationship between higher education and gun violence or possession, 18 centers for the study of higher education within the U.S. issued a joint call for research on gun violence within higher education in October 2015 (Penn Graduate School of Education, 2015). In a list of suggested potential research topics, the authors repeatedly called for more understanding of the longer-term impacts of campus violence and efforts to expand arms on campus, the exact type of data I collected, naming this line of inquiry “urgently warranted” (Penn Graduate School of Education, 2015, p. 2). While there are frequent and ongoing discussions of these issues in the public sphere and academic media sources such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, academic research has not kept pace to study these phenomena (Kolowich, 2016; McMurtrie, 2015; Olin, 2015; Pettit, 2016; Thomason & O’Leary, 2015; Van Ingen, 2015).

By situating this study as a narrative inquiry at one purposively-selected site, I examined the immediate implications of contemporary developments in the guns-on-campus debate in Texas. Therefore, the purpose of this study was two-fold:

1. To identify and describe the implications of a new campus-carry policy on faculty sensemaking regarding teaching, research, and other routine aspects of faculty work-lives at one institution.
2. To identify a range of factors influencing the ways faculty make decisions regarding their work through in-depth, highly contextualized inquiry.

Research Questions

Given these dual purposes, the research questions I answered with this study included:

1. What do the stories of faculty making decisions about their work during campus-carry policy enactment reveal about the educative implications of the newly enacted campus-carry policy in Texas?
2. What factors influence the way faculty make teaching and research decisions?

Site Selection

In order to investigate the stated research questions, purposive sampling of an HEI in Texas was needed. In chapter two, I detail the circumstances at the chosen university, Metropolitan University (MU; a pseudonym) and their implications for my study. For introductory purposes, however, a working group at MU was charged with translating the newly-passed SB 11 into an operationalized campus policy to allow concealed weapons on the campus. The working group was comprised of academic administrators, staff, students, and faculty, including the president of the Faculty Senate. The draft policy, shared with the campus community in late 2015, was indicative of those at other Texas institutions where leaders were

working to comply with a state law with which most in the campus community disagreed ([Metropolitan University], 2016). The final version of SB 11, signed by Governor Greg Abbott on June 1, 2015, took effect August 1, 2016. By studying the potential ways in which faculty made present-day decisions while this legislation was first taking effect, I gained insight on my research questions regarding the immediate implications for faculty when firearm possession becomes newly permitted.

In a book chapter identifying ten distinct generations within the history of U.S. higher education, Geiger (2005) noted that:

change...is an irreducible reality and must, by its nature, be analyzed in a temporal dimension. The key elements here are understanding the processes of change and aggregating such changes to discern fundamental transformations in the entire system of higher education. (p. 38)

In light of the nearly 10-year rise in violence within higher education, and policy decisions advocating for on-campus firearm possession as a solution, studying the effects of the present era as a potential violent generation of U.S. colleges and universities is warranted. Furthermore, as I explain in chapter three, this dimension of time was investigated through narrative as a methodology that foregrounded the temporal aspect of change as relayed through individual and collective narratives of making sense of complex events and phenomena (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Definitions

As part of establishing the context of this study, it is important to define several key terms and concepts used throughout the work. First, the word violence is often value-laden and context-dependent. For example, violence has been used to refer not only to acts of physical

aggression, but also to colonialist influence (Das, 2012), language use (Pegelow, 2009; Wirsching, 2010), and both intra- and inter-personal violence (Crosby, Ortega, & Melanson, 2010; Grych & Swan, 2012). For purposes of this study, I use the term violence to refer to acts of physical aggression using firearms and, therefore, use the word interchangeably with the term gun violence. Importantly, the term mass shooting, a particular form of gun violence, has no uniform definition across sources or authorities (Bjelopera, Bagalman, Caldwell, Finklea, & McCallion, 2013). The Congressional Research Service, echoing the Federal Bureau of Investigation, defined the term as an incident involving four or more deaths not including the shooter(s)' own (Bjelopera et al., 2013). The 112th Congress amended Title 28 of the United States Code to define “mass killing” as three or more deaths in a single incident, regardless of method and whether the perpetrator is included within the deceased (Investigative Assistance for Violent Crimes Act, 2012). Complicating the matter further, other law enforcement agencies use different criteria to define the term, and various media outlets reporting on multiple incidents do not share a common classification for when an incident rises to the level of a mass shooting. In an effort to avoid confusion, I adopt characteristics of the most recent federal definition of mass killing – three or more deaths, regardless of the shooter’s status, in a place of public use – to represent the term mass shooting throughout this research when a firearm was the weapon used in the mass killing.

Campus carry is used to informally refer to the collective body of legislation, institutional policies, advocacy efforts, and permits relating to the lawful possession of a firearm on a college or university campus by those other than campus police or those associated with gun-related academic programs. Within this body of campus-carry bills, policies, and regulations, there is a common differentiation between open- and concealed-carry laws. SB 11, the Texas law under

study, is an example of concealed-carry legislation, as it permits possession of a firearm only when it is not visible on one's person. Concealed carry stands in contrast to its counterpart – open carry – which is a similar body of legislation, policy, advocacy, and regulation of firearms stored visibly on one's person, such as in a belt holster. While concealed weapons are legal in some form in all 50 states, 19 states ban the practice on college and university campuses at the state level; 23 states allow each individual institution to set their own policy on the matter (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2016).

Faculty behavior refers to the collective and individual decisions and actions faculty members make in carrying out their work. These include, for example, curricular choices, selection of teaching methods, evaluation of student work, decisions on the scope and boundaries of student-faculty interactions, and choices regarding pursuit of research and scholarly activity. This understanding of faculty roles and behavior is rooted in the landmark studies presented by Blackburn and Lawrence (1995; 2002) identifying the ways in which faculty carry out their work, and the inherent series of decisions influenced by environmental and social factors that lead to faculty behavior. While these studies are more fully explained in chapter 2, it is useful here to note that this conceptualization of faculty behavior is grounded in noncognitive theories of human motivation processes including the notion that internal needs and external or environmental conditions, such as safety, often shape human behavior in predictable ways (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995). More contemporary authors have supported Blackburn and Lawrence's (1995; 2002) studies, confirming the conclusions that faculty work and behavior are influenced by the larger social context, by institutional characteristics, by the changing nature of the academic profession, and even by personal emotion and cognition (Austin & Hill, 2014;

Baldwin & Wawrzynski, 2011; Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Neumann, 2006; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006).

Significance of the Study

Understanding the ways in which the lawful presence of firearms may be shaping academia is essential for the continued success of higher education as a social institution charged with expanding human knowledge through teaching and scholarship. This study extends our understanding of campus gun violence and possession by moving beyond the important, but already answered, questions of immediate concern – crisis response, emergency communications, and the like – and instead investigating how longer-term changes in the safety or perceived safety of campus environments influence faculty behavior and the core work of teaching and research, among other faculty roles. While other studies have identified best practices for managing campus crises and their immediate aftermath, this study takes a longer-range view to investigate the intersection of higher education and public policy in an attempt to discern how teaching, learning, and scholarship may be different as a result of increasingly present firearms. Furthermore, this study is the first of its kind known to identify ways in which faculty integrate potentially violent spaces into their workplace decisions. While the impact of violent campus incidents on students has received repeated attention from prior researchers, the impact of the perceived threat of violence on faculty has been studied far less comprehensively (Kaminski et al., 2010).

As explained in chapter two, several factors in the current public policy landscape have rendered fundamental change in the area of gun control policy highly unlikely, at least in the present era. Therefore, this study originates from a wholly different perspective and set of assumptions than work that has been conducted on this topic to this point. If we accept that our

policy environment is presently not conducive to significant changes in the factors that may contribute to campus violence, it becomes important to study the implications – asking just what it is that this trend is doing and has done to shape and change colleges and universities over time. Rather than attempting to discern how policy can serve as a lever to curb gun violence within higher education, as other studies have done, this research begins from a premise of acceptance: accepting that the current policy landscape is not set up to allow such change to occur on this issue, at least for the time being, and accepting that it therefore may be more useful and significant to understand how higher education is changing as a result. Adopting this view at the outset of the inquiry represents a significant, fundamental shift in the scholarly conversation regarding violence or the threat of violence within higher education.

While this information is worth understanding on its own, this study is also significant as an attempt to better understand the implications of campus carry as a matter of public policy. There continues to be debate in the civic discourse as to whether allowing more firearms in a public space reduces gun violence, although empirically, this seems to have been proven false (Ayres & Donohue, 2003, 2009; Cummings et al., 1997; Duggan, 2001; Helland & Tabarrok, 2004; National Research Council, 2005). As the argument that more guns will result in fewer gun violence deaths continues to be used as a justification for public policy, including as part of the rationale for Texas SB 11, this study serves to add a new dimension to the discussion by potentially demonstrating that allowing an increased number of firearms in a public space not only influences the safety of that space, but has an impact on other functions of that space as well, such as teaching and research in the case of higher education.

Finally, this study is significant for its unique use of narrative inquiry as a methodology. No existing study of campus-carry policy has employed the use of personal and collective

narratives as a research methodology, though personal narratives are often used in discussions of public policy and legislative deliberations (Bardach, 2012). Furthermore, the temporal aspect afforded by the use of narrative inquiry as a methodology fosters an additional dimension to the examination of this issue. By examining not only the current state of the relationship between higher education and gun violence, but also considering the developments leading to the present situation, this study adds to our understanding of longer-term implications for campus-carry policies as they relate to higher education. While there have been several recent anecdotal reports in the media (e.g., Kolowich, 2016; McMurtrie, 2015; Olin, 2015; Pettit, 2016; Thomason & O’Leary, 2015; Van Ingen, 2015) no existing studies critically examine the ways in which campus-carry legislation influences how faculty choose to carry out their work.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Your "thoughts" should be about steps to take to stop this carnage. Your "prayers" should be for forgiveness if you do nothing - again.

*Connecticut Senator Chris Murphy, December 2, 2015,
in response to a mass shooting in San Bernardino, California*

In this chapter, I review the relevant literature to provide background information necessary for the reader's understanding of the phenomena under study. First, I outline a timeline and description of campus violence, paying special attention to the 2007 shooting at Virginia Tech as a significant moment in the history of concealed weapons laws within higher education. This discussion of campus violence leads to the next section on the relevant public policy responses that have influenced the guns-on-campus debate in the aftermath of Virginia Tech and other incidents. The Texas SB 11 legislation to allow concealed weapons on public campuses is explored in detail as an example policy. The third major section of this chapter explores the work of faculty, and teaching and research in particular, and the ways faculty behavior and decision making are influenced by social and environmental factors, including perceived threats and harassment from students. Finally, the fourth section of this chapter analyzes the literature on sensemaking as a theoretical framework guiding the study.

Campus Violence

As outlined in chapter 1, violence within academia is not in itself a new phenomenon, but rather the severity and frequency of present-era campus violence are noteworthy (Drysdale et al., 2010; Ferraro, 2015; Thelin, 2011). As these incidents have become increasingly common in the

last two decades (Drysdale et al., 2010), and especially in the years since the Virginia Tech shooting, it is helpful to recognize the historical context of campus violence that led to the contemporary state of U.S. higher education as an increasingly violent public space. In this section, a brief retrospective account of violence within higher education lays a foundation for understanding one possible dimension of the complex and interconnected array of factors leading to today's era of increasingly potentially armed postsecondary campuses.

Pre-2007 era. Higher education campuses in the U.S. have traditionally occupied a space in society as a testing ground for new ideas, a protected place where identities are developed and free exchange of opinions and beliefs is encouraged (Langford, 2004). As a result, college and university campuses have historically been viewed as intellectually (and, by extension, physically) safe spaces for exploration and discovery. One avenue this exploration and exchange of opinions has often taken is through student protests, which have occurred throughout the history of U.S. higher education in various forms (Geiger, 2005; Thelin, 2011). At times, however, the notion of higher education as a laboratory of ideas, sometimes offered through protest, has led to violent clashes. The 1960s and 1970s, for example, are considered an era wherein student protests on campuses across the nation tested and confronted societal values and institutional customs, as similar protests and challenges to social mores and political decisions occurred within the society as a whole (Gohn & Albin, 2006a; 2006b).

A salient example of this is the May 4, 1970 shooting of student protesters at Kent State University. In the context of national anti-war demonstrations, including large-scale protests at college campuses nationwide, the Ohio National Guard was dispatched to Kent State University's protest. In attempting to disperse a crowd of protesters numbering over 3,000, members of the Guard fired more than 60 shots in a 13-second period. Four students were killed

with another nine injured in what is largely viewed as an unjustified shooting on the part of the Guard members (Lewis & Hensley, 1998; President's Commission on Campus Unrest, 1970). Nearly four years prior to the Kent State shooting, a gunman climbed atop the tower in the center of the University of Texas-Austin (UT-Austin) campus, and fired upon 45 members of the campus community. Fifty years to the day before the Texas campus-carry law went into effect, the UT-Austin shooting became the largest mass murder in U.S. history (Lavergne, 1997). In the years following the Kent State and UT-Austin incidents, while a shooting continued to occur once every several years on a campus within the U.S., these were mostly smaller-scale interpersonal conflicts that ended in violence, or situations that happened to occur on college campuses but were not directly related to the operation or functions of the institution (Associated Press, 2007). This era of violence occurring within higher education not necessarily rising to the level of significant, pervasive concern for those within academia, lasted until the 2007 shooting at Virginia Tech.

Virginia Tech shooting. On April 16, 2007, a student at Virginia Tech shot 49 people on that campus in two episodes spanning a 4-hour period. Thirty-two of those wounded were killed in addition to the shooter, Seung Hui Cho, taking his own life. Shortly after 7:00 a.m., Cho shot and killed two students in West Ambler Johnston, a residence hall, and then returned to his room in a nearby residence hall to check his email. At this point, he left the campus altogether and mailed a package containing photos, videos, and a written statement to NBC News at 9:01 a.m. During this post office trip, he also sent a letter to the Virginia Tech English Department offices wherein he aggressively criticized a specific professor with whom he previously had disagreements (Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007). Cho then returned to campus, entering an academic building, Norris Hall, and began a second round of shooting at approximately 9:40

a.m. In this second spree, 47 students and faculty were shot with 30 of those killed by the time first responders arrived on the scene (Flynn & Heitzmann, 2008). At the time, the Virginia Tech incident became the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history committed by a single active shooter – a record that stood until the June 2016 shooting at an LGBT nightclub in Orlando, Florida (Hughes et al., 2011).

The report issued by the review panel appointed by then-Governor Tim Kaine (2007) noted that Cho's motivation(s) for carrying out the shooting remained unknown, though the report did go into great detail on multiple systemic factors that contributed to the incident. These included lapses or oversights at multiple institutional and governmental levels. For example, Cho was allowed to purchase two guns in violation of federal law; Virginia state policy did not require Cho's court-ordered mental health treatment to be included on background check databases used during firearm purchases; Virginia Tech departments or units, including the Cook Counseling Center and the University Care Team, were both under-resourced and incorrect in their interpretation of student and health privacy laws; physical structures (e.g., non-locking doors, numerous windows) aided the shooter; senior administrators failed to issue timely notifications in response to the first round of shootings; and Virginia's state crisis intervention and information systems failed to perform as expected (Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007).

In examining the full picture of the incidents and factors leading up to the shooting, it is important to understand the complex and interconnected array of issues that may have played a role. In fact, concurrent to the panel established by the Governor, a group of federal officials tasked with reviewing the incident by President George W. Bush issued another report. In their investigation, these officials found that K12 staff during Cho's childhood, multiple administrators and faculty at Virginia Tech, health care and law enforcement professionals, and

researchers did not share important information on potential warning signs that may have been helpful in preventing the shooting (Leavitt, Spellings, & Gonzales, 2007). Public health officials, disaster response crews, and the media were among those implicated after the fact (Armstrong & Frykberg, 2007; Nordboe, Kantor, Barker, Ware, & Armistead, 2007; Schreuder, 2007). A later study found Bronfenbrenner's and Ceci's (1994) ecological systems theory, with a consideration of microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem influences on development of the shooter, was useful in identifying some of the myriad reasons Cho may have chosen to carry out the shooting (Hong, Cho, & Lee, 2010).

In the nearly ten years since this shooting, its aftermath has been studied among various populations. Students present at the time of the incident were shown to have heightened frequency of posttraumatic stress symptoms, especially for those who lost someone close or who were unable to ascertain the safety of friends during the 4-hour span of the shooting (Hughes et al., 2011). Faculty have shared similar reactions to the incident, in part exacerbated by what they viewed as inadequate institutional and systemic structures to prevent such attacks and proactively identify students with mental health concerns (Davies, 2008; Roy, 2009). There are, however, far more studies of the impact of campus shootings on students than those that exist to describe the experience for faculty (Kaminski et al., 2010). Furthermore, elements of the Virginia Tech shooting's history could be expected to be salient for this study of sensemaking for faculty considering a new campus-carry policy, given the shooting's place in common discussions of campus safety.

Incidents since Virginia Tech. In the 10 years since the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting, mass shootings on college and university campuses have continued to occur across the country, both demonstrating that this was not an isolated incident and instilling the threat of gun violence

as a topic within our national and institutional discourses regarding higher education and campus safety. February 2008 saw the next two campus mass shootings, with three students killed in a classroom incident at Louisiana Technical College and another five killed and 21 wounded in a Northern Illinois University classroom. These events were followed by the 2010 shooting deaths of three biology professors at the University of Alabama at Huntsville, the deaths of seven in a 2012 shooting by a former student at Northern California University, and 10 fatalities at Oregon's Umpqua Community College in October 2015 (Turkewitz, 2016). In June 2016, a University of California, Los Angeles professor was shot and killed by a disgruntled former student in a murder-suicide (UCLA Newsroom, 2016). While not a mass shooting according to the established definition used in this study, the UCLA incident further highlights the importance of studying the influence of campus violence on faculty behavior, given the shooter's reported motive being a grievance over perceived misuse of the student's intellectual property by the faculty member, though the perception of misuse was not factual (Kolowich, 2016).

Public Policy Responses

In the wake of growing public recognition of and discourse surrounding increasingly frequent gun violence, both in the U.S. generally and within the nation's higher education sector specifically, public policy has been slow in changing to address these issues. While a policy window (Bardach, 2012) opens after each mass shooting garners national attention, significant gun control policy change has not occurred, despite the efforts of several organizing groups and political leaders to capitalize on these opportunities to enact change. A frequent roadblock for discussions of firearms policy rests in the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, traditionally seen as guaranteeing individuals' rights to possess a firearm. Concealed carry policy represents one such example of the regulation of Second Amendment rights that is still

Constitutionally permissible, and that has a direct impact on higher education institutions. All 50 states currently allow citizens who meet various criteria to carry concealed weapons in public, though the individual requirements and restrictions vary by state (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2016).

Within these various state laws that allow permitted individuals to carry concealed weapons in public, there are typically various limitations to the laws that prescribe certain settings where concealed weapons are not allowed, such as court buildings and detention facilities (Uniform Firearms Act, 18 Pa.C.S. § 6106). Additionally, concealed weapons are barred from all K-12 school buildings nationwide under federal law, though a similar provision does not exist for higher education institutions (Firearms: Unlawful Acts, 18 U.S. Code § 922). The responsibility for regulating firearms within higher education is reserved for the states, thereby making room for a patchwork of varied regulations nationwide. Some states, for example, allow institutions to make their own determination regarding whether and how firearms are allowed on campus, though other states enact legislation that removes institutional control over this aspect of campus policy. While all states generally allow concealed weapons to be carried publicly by those who meet various criteria, 19 states ban the practice on college and university campuses, while 9 states now expressly allow (or at least prohibit institutions from banning) concealed weapons on campus. In 22 other states, the decision is reserved for each institution to make (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2016). Texas, the most recent state to permit concealed weapons on college and university campuses, passed its law, Senate Bill 11, in 2015 that took effect August 1, 2016. The case of SB 11 in Texas is explored more fully in a subsequent section, as its timely implementation rendered it a prime opportunity for further study.

Gun lobby influence. In the face of overwhelming public support for some gun control measures, and an increasing belief of a public threat posed by gun violence both on and off college campuses, it can be difficult to understand why these measures fail, in the rare instances they are allowed a vote (Fingerhut, 2016). In many cases, campus-carry laws are advanced, and proposed gun control measures are sidelined, through the influence of the nation's powerful gun lobby and in particular the National Rifle Association (NRA) and its members. The NRA grew as an organization throughout the twentieth century, in part by aligning itself with American gun culture and individualism, economic waves, and collective societal emotions during times of national crisis, with a membership now numbering over 4,000,000 people (Melzer, 2009). As a result of strategic efforts during the 1990s to position the NRA as a leading voice for protecting individual freedoms (not solely relating to gun ownership), both membership and financial donations soared. These donations, then, are typically given through political action committees to fund the campaigns of politicians who support and advance the causes of the NRA. Effective member mobilization strategies are then employed to ensure votes and public support back up the financial support politicians receive (Center for Responsible Politics, 2016; Kenny, McBurnett, & Bordua, 2004; Melzer, 2009). As a result, the proliferation of campus-carry policies such as SB 11 in Texas represent one way in which the entrenched influence of the gun lobby on policymakers and the state higher education policy agenda-setting process takes shape (Cook, 2010; Green-Pedersen & Walgrave, 2014; NRA Institute for Legislative Action, 2015)

Another important example of the firearm lobby's influence on gun policy as it interacts with higher education is the more than 20-year ban on federal funding for research into gun violence. In 1996, an amendment to the annual appropriations bill explicitly prohibited the U.S. Centers for Disease Control's National Center for Injury Prevention from using any federal funds

“to advocate or promote gun control” (Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act, 1997).

Informally titled the Dickey Amendment, for its author, NRA-supported Arkansas representative Jay Dickey, the measure was seen as a response to contemporaneous publication of CDC- and NIH-funded studies conducted by university researchers that demonstrated a link between gun ownership and the likelihood of firearm deaths in U.S. households (Kellermann & Rivara, 2013). Though the amendment did not specifically discuss university research activity, most view the wording as so vague as to have a chilling effect on federal funding – or even the appearance of federal support – for firearms research of any kind originating on higher education campuses or from any department or agency of the government (Jamieson, 2013; Kellerman & Rivara, 2013). Similar language has existed within the federal appropriations bills since the Dickey Amendment’s initial approval in 1996.

While the Dickey Amendment continues to limit federal funding for faculty gun violence research, other lobbying efforts have had similar effects at the state level. For example, after a 1997 study using state gun registration data in Washington demonstrated a link between gun ownership and the risk of homicide or suicide, the state’s firearm registration data is no longer accessible to the public (Cummings, Koepsell, Grossman, Savarino, & Thompson, 1997). Meanwhile, Florida enacted legislation in 2011 to prohibit healthcare practitioners from discussing firearm safety, making such a clinical conversation punishable by a fine and the loss of one’s license. While many mental health practitioners, neurologists, and gerontologists opposed the measure, it was enacted despite ethical, legal, and constitutional objections (Cooke, Goddard, Ginory, Demery, & Werner, 2012). Taking the preceding factors – the outsized influence of a powerful gun lobby, closely aligned political leadership, and a vocal and mobilized base of public opposition to any proposed gun control measure – into account, it

becomes clear that a policy change toward limiting firearm possession on college and university campuses is unlikely in the near term, even in the face of broad public support for such measures (Bardach, 2012; Fingerhut, 2016). Therefore, this study is rooted in acceptance that if a change to the conditions that shape campus gun violence is improbable, there is value in understanding the outcome of these conditions. A policy response can reasonably be believed to influence higher education and the ability of institutions and faculty to enact dual purposes of teaching and research, as will be outlined in a subsequent section of this chapter.

Texas SB 11. The trend of a highly effective gun lobby influencing state policy is evident in more recent developments and present-day policy implementation issues as well. An example from Texas offers further evidence that both the conditions around limiting gun possession on college and university campuses are not changing, and that their outcomes should, therefore, be studied. In June 2015, Texas Governor Greg Abbott signed Senate Bill 11 allowing concealed handguns to be possessed on all public Texas higher education institution campuses, thereby nullifying many existing institutional policies barring firearms from the campus (Act Relating to the Carrying of Handguns, 2015). The bill went into effect August 1, 2016, by which time all institutions must have distributed a public plan for compliance with the law including specific institutional regulations regarding firearm storage, safety, and any areas where guns are not permitted. Institutional leaders were, therefore, permitted to designate some campus spaces as gun-free in the interest of public safety such as large scale sporting venues; however, they were not allowed to adopt regulations that have the effect of prohibiting guns campus wide. In fact, the law requires institutional leaders to file reports with the state every two years to explain these campus-specific exclusory regulations and the rationale behind them (Act Relating to the Carrying of Handguns, 2015).

SB 11 legislation originated, in part, as a result of prior shootings and the previously discussed belief that increasing the number of firearms in a space serves as a deterrent to violent acts. It was advanced by both the NRA and by state legislators and executive branch officials with close ties to the organization, and became law despite significant and nearly unanimous opposition from the Texas higher education sector (Aguilar, 2015; McCuistion & Dorn, 2015). While other empirical studies of faculty reaction to the law have yet to be conducted, multiple anecdotal reports in the months since the law was signed indicated that faculty and academic administrators in Texas believed SB 11 would likely influence the ways in which faculty carried out their work, especially with regard to teaching and research as two core areas that warranted particular attention (Kolowich, 2016; McMurtrie, 2015; Olin, 2015; Pettit, 2016; Thomason & O’Leary, 2015; Van Ingen, 2015). In fact, three University of Texas-Austin professors filed suit in federal court in July 2016 to block SB 11 from taking effect. In the court filings, the faculty situated their argument primarily as a First Amendment issue because they taught courses that dealt with controversial social issues such as abortion. The professors alleged that class discussions could be stifled as a result of SB 11’s implementation, and that their right to academic freedom would be infringed upon by not having an ability to limit the possession of firearms in their classrooms (*Glass et al. v. Paxton et al.*, 2016). The professors’ suit was ultimately unsuccessful, and no action was taken to block the law prior to its August 1 enactment. Importantly, the defendants’ lawyers suggested in court that the allegation that faculty teaching behavior would be affected by SB 11 was not based in any empirical evidence, as none yet existed (Watkins, 2016). Here, again, is a prime example of the immediate applicability and significance of this study as a potential tool to inform the ongoing debate over campus carry as a matter of public policy.

In the case of Metropolitan University (MU; a pseudonym), the site of this study, the Faculty Senate passed a resolution in opposition to the proposed campus implementation of SB 11, as did many other Texas institutions' faculty governance boards. The Faculty Senate also was similar to those at other institutions in that it offered a series of events to explain the developing campus policy and identify potential ways faculty might choose to respond once it became implemented, such as altering course content and pedagogy ([Metropolitan University], 2016).

Traditional Dimensions of Faculty Work

In addition to faculty shared governance as in the case of the MU Faculty Senate, the nature of typical faculty work within U.S. higher education is well documented. Faculty work generally includes duties grouped within the three broad domains of research, teaching, and service (Blackburn & Lawrence, 2002; Mamiseishvili, Miller, & Lee, 2015; Neumann, 2009; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). While the precise configuration of these elements of faculty work varies by institution type, individual appointment, and other factors, the basic elements remain generally similar. From these three core domains of faculty work, in this section I detail the two most salient to the study, teaching and research, and identify the ways in which academic freedom and tenure have historically safeguarded faculty in carrying out this work. Lastly, I offer an exploration of literature regarding factors that motivate faculty in carrying out their work, paying special attention to the way student behavior and perceived threats of conflict with students influence faculty behavior in teaching and research decisions.

Teaching and research. The dual tasks of teaching and research occupy a prominent role within the work responsibilities of most postsecondary faculty at 4-year institutions like MU, and often consume more time and attention than the third typical domain, institutional service responsibilities (Link, Swann, & Bozeman, 2008). While a tension between responsibility for

and recognition of research activity over teaching at certain institutional types has received regular attention throughout recent decades (e.g., Bok, 1988; Boyer, 1990; Fairweather, 1997, 2005; Hardré, 2012; Massy, 2003), both elements are largely viewed as the essential tasks that comprise the role of faculty members at postsecondary institutions by those in the public who may not see the background work of institutional service as a part of the portfolio of faculty responsibilities (Mamiseishvili et al., 2015).

First, the role of faculty as teachers takes many forms, including teaching undergraduate, graduate, and professional students in both brick-and-mortar and online classrooms of varying sizes across countless disciplines within the U.S. higher education environment (Hoffman Beyer, Taylor, & Gillmore, 2013). As teachers, postsecondary faculty generally enjoy a degree of independence to deliver courses using the teaching methods of their choice, typically relying upon texts and other materials of their own selection in most instances. As a result, prior studies have found that many faculty teach and make teaching-related decisions by relying upon their own past professors as models to emulate, while others rely upon disciplinary mentors or customs, institutional culture, and campus resources such as faculty development centers (Mazur, 2009; Oleson & Hora, 2014). A significant body of literature on effective college teaching exists both within the scholarly and popular media (e.g., McKeachie & Svinicki, 2006; Tagg, 2003; Wiemer, 2013), though it is often incumbent upon faculty to make use of such materials out of their own interest and motivation. Accountability for quality teaching, typically evidenced by anonymous student course evaluations, is only one aspect of many faculty members' overall promotion and tenure evaluation procedures (Bakken & Simpson, 2011). These subjective student evaluations can sometimes create tensions within the classroom environment and student-teacher interactions, with women and minority faculty often receiving lower marks than

their male and non-minority colleagues, for example (Morgan et al., 2016; Smith & Hawkins, 2011). Campus violence, or the perceived threat thereof, could further test the faculty teaching/student evaluation dynamic, rendering faculty less likely to argue about grades or engage in difficult conversations in class.

Scholarly activity such as conducting, presenting, and publishing research, as well as securing financial grants in order to do so, comprises the second salient major domain of faculty work. Depending on the type of institution where a faculty member works, research may be perceived to be of higher or lower value than quality teaching in promotion and tenure decisions (Bakken & Simpson, 2011; McGill & Settle, 2012). Nonetheless, generating and disseminating knowledge is frequently viewed to be among the core functions of academic work for faculty in the U.S. Additionally, typical faculty duties related to both research and teaching, such as holding office hours to both meet with students and conduct research activity, may be influenced by gun violence and campus-carry policies. For example, anecdotal reports of Texas faculty planning to hold so-called “virtual office hours” over video conferencing software surfaced in the media so as to prevent in-person interactions with potentially armed students after SB 11 went into effect (Tinsley, 2016).

Academic freedom and tenure. Success in carrying out the teaching and research spheres that characterize faculty work is often bolstered by two complementary principles within academia: academic freedom and tenure. Academic freedom refers to the general guiding principle that the teaching and scholarship carried out by faculty (and students, for that matter) should be free from outside influence that would limit the pursuit and dissemination of truth and of knowledge discovery. For example, influence exerted by political leaders or institutional donors should not be allowed to hinder faculty research on controversial topics such as stem-cell

therapy, evolution, and the like (Bilgrami & Cole, 2015; Cole, 2015). While it originated in part from the German model of higher education, American notions of academic freedom for faculty are also partly rooted in an understanding of the First Amendment's protection of independent speech, especially for faculty at public institutions (Post, 2015; Stone, 2015). In carrying out their teaching and research, faculty enjoy a buffer from undue influence rooted in a desire to protect the pursuit of truth and knowledge as a fundamental social purpose for higher education. Academic freedom codifies this purpose of higher education and acts as an attempt to ensure independence of scholarly investigation and of thought (Zimmer, 2015).

In fact, the document that became the founding charter for the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) stated that academic freedom preserves the university as:

an intellectual experiment station, where new ideas may germinate and where their fruit, though still distasteful to the community as a whole, may be allowed to ripen until finally, perchance, it may become a part of the accepted intellectual food of the nation or of the world. (AAUP, 1915, p. 297)

In making this stand, the AAUP statement situated academic freedom as essential to realizing a purpose of the university as a tool to “advance the sum of human knowledge,” which necessitated “complete and unlimited freedom to pursue inquiry and publish its results” (p. 295). Since the 1915 statement, some limitations to academic freedom have become generally accepted, including operating ethically, and ensuring teaching is appropriate for and germane to the course (AAUP, 2014). The notion of tenure serves to further protect academic freedom for higher education faculty by safeguarding that those who earn tenure are guaranteed their employment until they resign or retire, barring any activity considered cause for removal such as harassment or inappropriate behavior (Bakken & Simpson, 2011). By ensuring faculty are

protected from retribution for their intellectual pursuits and scholarly work, tenure serves to enact and protect academic freedom as a core element of higher education.

Influences upon faculty behavior and decision-making. Multiple factors influence the behavior of faculty and the decisions they make both in the classroom and in carrying out their research. Using the results of a large-scale, national study of faculty motivation across multiple institutional settings and disciplines of study, Blackburn and Lawrence (1995) developed a theoretical model that situated faculty behavior as a central hub of activity influenced by environmental and social conditions and responses, as well as an individual's social- and self-knowledge within the higher education environment. In testing their model, the authors found that social interactions with and responses from students were among the factors that influenced faculty behavior. Other factors included characteristics of the institutional environment, as well as the larger national climate of higher education, and the national conversations occurring around postsecondary education at the time of the study (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995, 2002).

While student interactions have been shown to shape faculty behavior and decision-making (Blackburn and Lawrence, 1995; Ginsburg, Lingard, Regehr, & Underwood, 2008; Pritchard & Potter, 2011; Volpe, Davidson, & Bell, 2008), scholars have gone further to identify the ways in which negative student interactions in particular, or the perceived threat of a negative student interaction, play a specific role in shaping faculty behavior and decision-making. Although "conflict in the classroom has been a part of higher education since its inception" (Holton, 1995, p. 11), it is nevertheless a dynamic that influences the ways faculty approach their work. Among the factors shown to influence ways in which faculty make decisions about their teaching and research duties, scholars in psychology identified bullying or incivility toward faculty as a potential factor. Lampman, Phelps, Bancroft, and Beneke (2009) acknowledged this

phenomenon as one example of what they termed contrapower harassment, part of a larger body of literature describing situations wherein those with lower power or status within a social institution or organization attempt to intimidate or victimize those with greater power or status (Benson, 1984). In other studies, 78% of faculty respondents indicated that they had experienced at least one instance of angry or aggressive behavior from a student over the preceding year (Desouza & Vasquez, 2011), while 80% of surveyed faculty at Indiana University reported witnessing contrapower incivility from students (Royce, 2000).

Scholars have suggested that the occurrence of contrapower harassment in higher education can, in part, be attributed to the neoliberal belief that students represent consumers within the modern U.S. postsecondary environment and, therefore, feel entitled to the benefit of a customer-first mentality that commonly permeates commercial interactions (Baer & Cheryomukhin, 2011; Epps, 2016; Lampman, 2012). Regardless of the source, students' contrapower harassment and bullying of faculty represent a portion of Feldmann's (2001) taxonomy of student incivility, which ranges from behaviors as mild as minor classroom annoyances to those as severe as threats or enacted violent acts. It appears student contrapower harassment has become increasingly frequent over time, and prior authors suggest further examination is necessary to completely understand this phenomenon and its effects (Ausbrooks, Jones, & Tijerina, 2011; Burke, Karl, Peluchette, & Evans, 2013; Clark, 2009).

In addition to the data showing student incivility behaviors to be widespread, it seems these student behaviors often affect faculty decision making in the classroom. In a quantitative study of 397 faculty members at one institution, Lampman et al. (2009) found that contrapower harassment was a direct cause of professors' decisions to alter assignments, limit classroom discussions of controversial topics, or to modify their planned teaching methods. As the authors

noted, “these data suggest that experiences with contrapower harassment can have a substantial impact on all of a faculty member’s students, potentially stripping them of important discussions and experiences” (p. 344). The fact that an ever-larger share of the faculty workforce is employed on an adjunct basis, without the benefit of tenure system protections of academic freedom, further restricts faculty decision making with regard to teaching and research (Kezar, 2012). An adjunct appointment could be expected to further exacerbate a risk-averse orientation to teaching and research, which could come about as a result of contrapower harassment from students (Hoikkala, 2012; Whalen, 2012). Therefore, taking into account the nature of faculty work and its influences as well as the history of violence on college campuses and the associated public policy responses, this study rested on the premise that student-perpetrated gun violence, such as the June 1, 2016 shooting of a University of California, Los Angeles professor, represented a form of contrapower harassment within higher education. The potential for further similar incidents as a result of campus-carry policies could lead to changes in faculty behavior similar to those found by other scholars in previous studies of contrapower harassment in the postsecondary setting, thereby acting as a de facto limit on academic freedom.

Theoretical Framework: Sensemaking

Given the research questions regarding how faculty integrated their understanding of the new campus-carry law into their workplace decisions, sensemaking served as a useful theoretical framework to guide this study. Sensemaking is an ongoing social and cognitive process by which people come to interpret meanings within their lived experiences and environments and integrate them within their identity and decision making (Weick, 1995). Of particular importance, the theory of sensemaking considers the ways in which “meanings materialize that inform and constrain identity into action” (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005, p. 409). This was particularly

salient for the present study given the research questions seeking to identify how faculty at an institution with a new campus-carry policy made sense of the law as an environmental characteristic informing decisions about their work. In conceptualizing this study as an investigation into the ways in which faculty have responded to information gathered from their lived experiences and their environments to make decisions about future action, sensemaking offered a helpful guide.

Weick (1995) identified a 7-factor construct of sensemaking noting that the process: is identity-driven; occurs retrospectively with time as a key factor; includes a level of enactment by which individuals create their understanding through narrative construction; transpires socially, through both individual and group conceptualization and re-conceptualization of narratives; is ongoing and cyclical; rests upon cues individuals acquire from their context (such as institutional and colleague-to-colleague messaging regarding responses to campus violence or the threat thereof); and relies upon plausibility more than accuracy. Moreover, sensemaking has been shown to be triggered in many instances by shocking disruptions to systems in light of one's expectations, especially those that may be complex, challenging, and difficult to fully understand at first glance (Powell & Colyvas, 2008). The potential new perceived threat of violence stemming from concealed-carry legislation could certainly fit within this notion of a shocking disruption requiring a process over time for one to find and act upon meaning.

Powell and Colyvas (2008) also elaborated upon the importance of time as a factor within the sensemaking process, confirming Weick's (1995) understanding of sensemaking as inherently retrospective. As meaning is derived in this framework through discourse, both with the self/prior experiences/expectations and others, examination of the storying and re-storying of events becomes key. In fact, Weick et al.'s (2005) construction of sensemaking was dependent

upon time as a factor in two central questions the individual must consider: “what’s the story?” (p. 410) and “what do I do next?” (p. 412). The construction and reconstruction of stories through time provides a helpful way to examine a complex situation, as explored more fully in the next chapter’s discussion of narrative inquiry as a methodology.

Sensemaking has been previously employed as a theoretical framework for several inquiries into the lives and work of faculty within U.S. higher education, especially with regard to difficult situations faced by faculty. O’Meara, Lounder, and Campbell (2014) found that sensemaking offered a useful frame to understand faculty members’ decisions to leave the profession, and suggested that the theory should be used in the future to identify ways in which a variety of faculty perspectives can be leveraged through dialogue to improve work environment issues. Sensemaking has also been a theoretical framework useful in understanding how pre-tenure faculty at a top-tier research institution cope with potential denial of tenure (Robinson, 2010), how faculty make sense of mission creep and institutional change (Gonzales, 2013), and how faculty identified as change agents work within their institutional culture (Kezar, 2013). In each of these cases where sensemaking has been used to understand the influence of institutional or social changes upon faculty and their work, it has been employed as an inherently narrative process – organizing and voicing the unexpected through storytelling as an attempt to make meaning of the reality of a complex, and in many cases difficult, situation (Bochner, 2001; Weick & Quinn, 1999). Therefore, this study builds upon a long line of scholarship using a sensemaking framework to better understand the ways in which complex social and environmental changes are integrated into faculty work-lives.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The liberal/Kantian critique of “thoughts and prayers” after massacres or the deaths of refugees or storms is that we do have power over gun laws, asylum policies, and carbon emissions. Yet, I know I’m not alone in feeling powerless in the face of all those policy environments. To put it another way, the recourse to “thoughts and prayers” doesn’t only mark the gap between what humanity as a whole could do in principle and what’s only in God’s hands, but also the communal breaches of kindness and generosity that make democratic deliberation impossible or counterproductive.

Christopher Ashley, Theologian

Within the limited studies that exist on the topic of campus-carry legislation, almost all are quantitative in nature and most are focused on issues of immediate concern in a violent campus situation, such as emergency response, prevention, and general safety strategies. As a result, the need for more nuanced qualitative examination exists (Birnbaum, 2013), as does the need to study the longer-term implications of campus carry upon the learning environment. A qualitative study of the implications for campus-carry policy could have wide-reaching influence, and narrative inquiry offers the methodology best-suited to my dissertation. Narrative inquiry exists as a way to elicit, recreate/represent, and then interpret the lived accounts of multiple individuals who experienced a complex phenomenon. Furthermore, as Haaken and Reavey (2010) demonstrated, memory plays a key role in making meaning of events deemed to be difficult, and can actually lead to rich and useful data that complement an understanding of individuals’ immediate reactions. Narrative methods allow space for respecting participants’

authority to describe conflicting feelings and consideration of difficult incidents and their aftermath as one part of a larger temporal story (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In this chapter, I outline the rationale for selecting narrative inquiry as the most appropriate methodology to conduct this study, given the purposes and research questions described in chapter 1, as well as my constructivist epistemological perspective (Creswell, 2014; Crotty, 2015). As a reminder, this study is guided by two research questions regarding the ways in which stories of faculty work in a potentially-armed campus space shed light on the sensemaking processes faculty use in making decisions regarding teaching and research activity. The research questions guiding this study were:

1. What do the stories of faculty making decisions about their work during campus-carry policy enactment reveal about the educative implications of the newly enacted campus-carry policy in Texas?
2. What factors influence the way faculty make teaching and research decisions?

Narrative Study Design

Narrative inquiry was an ideal method for this project for several reasons, which I explore in this section. Labov (1972) identified the positive role narrative serves as a method of inquiry for depicting difficult events in particular, such as “sex, death, and mortal injury” (Patterson, 2013, p. 33). Labov’s approach places the narrator’s voice and role at the center of the construction of the event, while recognizing that the event itself is only able to be depicted through representation and memory, rather than recreated in narrative form fully as it was, independent of others’ interpretation through memory. Furthermore, narrative inquiry allows space for examination of the everyday aspects of larger stories that often go unexplored, thereby identifying the particular lived ways in which larger phenomena affect daily life (Kim, 2016).

Additionally, Hollway and Jefferson (2000) have shown narrative inquiry to be a successful method for applying diverse biographical accounts of difficult incidents to an understanding of the incident itself. As a method for stepping into and recreating an event such as a controversial policy enactment (as fully as possible without having been present for the event itself) in order to depict and understand it, narrative has been shown as a useful way forward. When it comes to complex and difficult events, narrative is a way those involved can make meaning of the experience and take future action. This notion of temporality – that what one experienced in the past can be built upon and integrated as part of their life moving forward – is integral to narrative inquiry, in that it is central to personal narratives and the way we experience our lives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). It is also core to the process of sensemaking, the theoretical framework which guided this study (Weick, 1995). Beyond benefits for collective knowledge as a tool for the production of research, narrative can serve to benefit participants and the institution as well.

I approached this study's design cognizant of the fact that I would be "beginning in the midst" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) in that I entered into others' stories both after and as they were unfolding, and that as I left, their lives and narratives continued. Operationally, stories are the way in which we organize and make meaning of human experiences, so to study the stories of faculty experiences with teaching and research in light of a new campus-carry policy served as a way to better understand the experience itself (Kim, 2016). In particular, narrative inquiry is suited for qualitative study of teaching, as "to understand a teacher's practice (on her own part or on the part of an observer) is to find an illuminating story (or stories) to tell of what she has been involved in with her students" (Dunne, 2003, p. 367). Narrative inquiry has been used by education researchers to foreground the lived experiences of teachers in efforts to shape social

views of education as it allows for the telling and reconstructing of the complex experiences of teaching and learning (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Kim, 2010). Connelly and Clandinin (2006) suggested three specific aspects of narrative thinking that must be considered in exploring story as a methodology: temporality, sociality, and place. Narrative inquiry makes space for acknowledging people and events exist in the context of their past and present, while also sometimes projecting a future (temporality); the narratives shared by participants are inherently personal while simultaneously embedded within social contexts (sociality); and that physical environments, such as a higher education classroom or campus, impact the narratives under study and their retelling (place) (Clandinin, 2013; Kim, 2016).

Data Collection

Kim (2016) described the work of a narrative researcher as “excavating stories” (p. 156), making careful planning of fieldwork paramount for understanding both the existing, individual stories of participants as well as the larger narrative of the collective phenomenon under study. Metropolitan University (MU) was selected as the best institutional site for answering the research questions for several reasons. As explained further in chapter four, MU was an ideal site to conduct the study as it held a public, deliberative, year-long process to translate the law into campus policy, and its size, mission, history, and location aligned with the consideration of time, place and sociality required for narrative inquiry. The data collection process included interviews with faculty, observations of campus spaces, and collection of relevant institutional artifacts at the site. After IRB approval, I pilot tested this study with one similarly situated professor at MU via video conference. This allowed me to ensure the interview protocol I developed (a copy of which appears in Appendix A) would work to collect the data necessary to answer my research

questions, and to make sure that any potential issues could be minimized prior to entering the field (Creswell, 2014; Maxwell, 2013).

Participant selection. I was fortunate to already have a contact at the institution who helped me identify faculty members willing to participate in semi-structured, narrative interviews (Kim, 2016). Employing this purposeful sampling technique allowed me to identify seven initial participants who were most able to help explore the research questions guiding this study, as a result of their MU roles, their availability for narrative interviews, and their willingness to discuss the sensitive topics under study (Creswell, 2014; Maxwell, 2013). It is important to note participants were not screened based upon their views of campus carry per se, but rather upon their willingness to discuss the law, regardless of whether they approved or disapproved of it. In particular, I sought participants who met both of the following criteria: 1) were presently employed in an on-campus faculty role at the institution, and 2) were engaged in teaching and/or research activity during the fall 2016 academic term. In selecting potential participants, I sought a diverse panel of faculty in terms of demographic characteristics and academic disciplines, so as to attempt to depict a range of faculty experiences (Maxwell, 2013). For example, I interviewed faculty who held various appointment statuses, such as both tenured and adjunct professors, given the potential variation in the experiences of faculty of different ranks that I suspected may be present in an exploration of the policy's influence. The purposeful sampling strategies outlined above provided a framework for answering the research questions while allowing for the necessary participant-researcher relationship to develop, given the sensitive nature of the topics to be discussed (Maxwell, 2013). At the close of each interview conversation, this purposeful sampling technique was enhanced by a form of participant-driven sampling, wherein I asked if participants knew others on the MU campus who would both meet the selection criteria

and add additional insights and dimensions to the study (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). As a result of these participant introductions, an additional four faculty members were interviewed. Lastly, an interview with the MU campus police chief, as well as his chief of staff, provided additional insight into campus processes and the campus-carry policy from an administrative and safety perspective. A total of 13 participants were interviewed in the course of this study. A table of participants is available in Appendix B.

Interview procedures. Data collection occurred over the span of nearly three weeks, at which point field notes and researcher reflection determined data saturation, or the point at which gathering additional data only confirmed existing information rather than generating new insights (Charmaz, 2006). The rationale for this extended-visit plan rested in the need to have multiple conversations with participants over time in order to build trust and rapport, especially in light of the potentially sensitive topics under study. Grinyer and Thomas (2012) suggested that after a first initial interview to build trust and allow participants to gain familiarity and comfort with the researchers and their intentions, subsequent interviews provided richer and more meaningful data. Because narrative inquiry is inherently social as a methodology (Clandinin, 2013), and the topic under study was potentially uncomfortable, I did not impose an arbitrary ending date for my time at MU, but rather waited to reach data saturation before leaving the field. Ultimately, I spent 18 days in the field, coinciding with the final three weeks of the fall semester, and I departed the day of the commencement ceremonies that marked the close of the term.

Kim (2016) suggested that two specific phases were necessary for effective narrative interviews. Therefore, I designed the interview protocol to use this method when it coincided with participants' schedules. First, a narration phase allowed the space for a participant narrator

to share their story(ies) of the experience under study, based upon a brief prompt and without further interruption from the researcher. By asking participants to share a full account of their experience, I worked to foster narrative thinking on their part, while allowing me to be engaged in “narrative listening” (p. 168) in order to observe fully the words of the participant’s story, as well as nonverbal aspects of their communication such as body language, pauses, emotional expressions, and feelings.

Subsequently, a semi-structured conversation, the second phase for a narrative interview, allowed me to ask questions on pre-determined topics they may not have covered, as well as clarifying and probing questions generated based on the first phase of narration. Because narratives are socially constructed re-depictions of events and complex phenomena (Clandinin, 2013; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), this phase provided space for a collaborative process of meaning-making between the researcher and participant-narrator (Goodson & Gill, 2011). This second phase was a conversation in which I came with pre-selected prompts for topics to discuss, but these were supplemented by further questions that arose through conversation and re-creation of meaning over the course of the collaborative interview (Kim, 2016). Each participant was given the choice of either one 90-minute interview, or two 45-minute interviews. The two-interview option was preferred by the researcher, as it allowed space between first and second conversations for processing and reflection on both my part and the participants’, as well as fostering rapport so as to get at deeper or more sensitive topics in a second interview (Kim, 2016). I recognized, however, that participant schedules may not accommodate two interviews, and offered the option of one longer conversation during which I attempted to build rapport and then go deeper into sensitive topics, as I would in two separate interviews. Of the 13 participants, only one selected the two-interview option. Interview conversations ranged in length from 26

minutes to more than two hours, with the average interview lasting 85 minutes in total. All participants were able to indicate their preferred meeting location. As a result, most interviews occurred in private faculty offices, though one occurred in a private department conference room, and three occurred in campus coffee shops. The interview protocol and participant recruitment message are included as Appendices A and C, respectively.

During my time at MU, in addition to meeting with faculty participants and collecting data through interviews, I spent time exploring institutional archives to gather documents and other artifacts that provided further detail of campus history and MU processes leading to the present day, thereby addressing the temporality inherent in narrative inquiry designs (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition, I spent significant time exploring the campus spaces of importance, such as the residential and classroom buildings, for example, in order to address one aspect of the “place” consideration involved in thinking narratively and constructing the narratives of faculty experiences (Clandinin, 2013; Kim, 2016). This exploration of campus spaces was complemented by my weeks living in Greenoak, MU’s home city, which was another salient factor in many participants’ narratives. Considering both the campus and city together, and their interaction with each other and with the state of Texas, was a helpful way to understand and make meaning of this story’s “place.” These methods for collecting data beyond interviews with participants allowed me to gain an expanded understanding of the phenomena under study, attempting to more fully live within and explore the spatial and other factors that gave additional shape to participants’ stories.

Lastly, I kept a journal of field notes to record my own observations of myself as a researcher and my reactions to the experience of studying these topics. This field journal served both as a methodological tool to identify potential areas of bias as they came about from my own

personal interaction with the topic, as well as a way to foster reflexive practice. For example, I was aware of my own personal beliefs about the campus-carry law prior to entering the field, and used my field journal to reflect upon interview conversations and campus observations in light of my own pre-existing thoughts about the law. As a narrative inquiry methodology accepts the researcher's and participants' collective re-creation of the story, I was able to see through this journal where my views were supported, challenged, and expanded through participant narratives. This reflexive practice enhanced subsequent interviews because I was able to identify recurring topic areas and probe deeper into aspects of the story which were unclear. As I made meaning of participant interviews during data analysis, this field journal provided additional nuance to help identify themes and findings as well.

Transforming Stories into Data

Each interview was transcribed through a 2-part process while still in the field. First, I used an encrypted, anonymous online service to turn interview recordings into text through automated voice recognition technology. After this first pass at transcribing, I reviewed the text version while listening to the audio or video recording in real time to check for accuracy and make any necessary corrections. In this second phase, I also relied upon my field notes and the audio recording in order to add notable pauses, gestures, laughter, and other affective elements which were relevant to my efforts to re-depict the stories participants shared. This combined process of both automated and semi-manual transcription allowed me to become deeply familiar with the data shared by participants through the second phase of corrections and affective additions, while the first phase enabled transcription to move forward efficiently. As a result of this strategy, I was able to complete the transcription of each interview conversation in the evening of the day it occurred. Therefore, the next day's interviews were informed by a

preliminary understanding of, and initial reflection upon, what I had learned from previous participants. Following the preparation of each written transcript, I re-read it for understanding and to begin identifying preliminary ideas that seemed most salient. As my time in the field continued, and I began considering more of these preliminary commonalities emerging through my participation with the data, I departed the field with an early sense of some potential codes.

Analysis processes. In light of the research questions, and a theoretical framework of sensemaking focused on identifying meaning in chaotic events in order to shape future action, I made use of Polkinghorne's (1995) method for the narrative mode of analysis. The narrative mode of analysis provided a manner of examining the storied thinking characteristic of complex personal experience situated within particular settings. This mode of analysis was particularly useful for the present study as it is chiefly about "the configuration of the data into a coherent whole" (p. 15) by attending "to the temporal context and complex interaction of the elements that make each situation remarkable" (p. 6). In using this analytic method, the common elements of story such as plot points, actions, and exposition that originated within both the interview and fieldwork aspects of data collection were united both within and across individual participant and site narratives to compose a "temporally organized whole with a thematic thread, called the plot" (Kim, 2016, p. 197).

This process used individual participants' narratives as the units of analysis, identifying common themes both in terms of content (as in the coding of more traditional qualitative data) and in terms of narrative structures such as plot, in order to help readers understand the "richness and the nuances of meaning in human affairs" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 11). The central organizing thread in the narrative mode of analysis is the timeline of the plot, so I coded both for common themes and for time and space. As a result of this dual coding process, 58 initial codes

were identified through my time in the field and initial engagement with the data. These first-pass codes included, for example, discussions of teaching decisions, chronologies of institutional and state processes, institutional messaging, sociocultural factors, and influential fear or apprehension causing behavior change. After these codes were identified both during data collection and during a subsequent initial analysis phase, a second round of coding allowed me to condense the developing system of data organization into larger categories of potential findings. The data were organized in two parallel ways – content and narrative structure –to begin laying out the plot while identifying categories from the codes themselves. Categories were subsumed into themes, with findings presented as storied accounts of the topics under study throughout the subsequent chapters (Kim, 2016; Smith & Sparkes, 2005). Because sensemaking, my theoretical framework, was built upon a premise that chaotic situations lead to a search for individual and social meaning which then informs present and future action over time, I also analyzed the data to identify the ways in which the events on the MU campus led faculty to meaning and action (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). A complete codebook, including detailed descriptions of each code and its inclusion/exclusion criteria is provided as Appendix D.

Data (re-)presentation. The findings, depicted in chapters four through eight, use personal and collective narratives to answer the research questions. In so doing, these stories can appeal to audiences within and beyond the academy, such as in the political sphere, while helping readers understand the reasons faculty made decisions in the university context (Kim, 2016). After providing a description of the geosocial and temporal context in chapter four, chapter five describes the major findings of the study through the use of multiple participant stories structured thematically. Then, because this method of analysis is built upon the interconnectedness of stories from multiple narrators and at multiple points in time, as well as

uncovering the importance and meaning of a lived experience that may not be apparent from an interview transcript alone, chapter six provides two composite narratives, each attributed to one storyteller and inclusive of multiple similar voices (Coulter & Smith, 2009).

Confidentiality

Protecting participants' confidentiality is an essential ethical consideration for any study, but it was of special importance given the sensitive, politicized, and potentially transgressive nature of the topic and the narratives participants shared. At the same time, narrative methodology uncovers often deeply personal (and therefore, potentially personally-identifiable) stories so as to fully explore the dimensions of complex experiences and to share insights from those experiences as aesthetically compelling documents and presentations that can engage wider audiences (Kim, 2016). I did not take lightly the responsibility that came with being entrusted with participants' stories on this topic. As a result, participant confidentiality was ensured through several strategies.

First, all participants received an informed consent form prior to any interviews, which is provided as Appendix E. Operationally, all interviews were audio-recorded (with permission granted by each participant) using an encrypted mobile device. All audio and video files were backed up on an encrypted physical drive rather than in any digital cloud service accessible to a third party. Participants were de-identified during the transcription process, and any particular requests for specific privacy measures or de-identification participants made were honored. Furthermore, all participants were given pseudonyms. Data were stored and analyzed using MaxQDA software natively on the same encrypted devices, rather than online. Only the faculty primary investigator and the researcher had access to participants' identifying information at any time.

Delimiters

While they are not limitations of the study, given the qualitative design and narrative methodology, several delimiters exist based upon the particular parameters of the project. First, the temporal thread at the core of the design caused many of the data collected to be either retrospective or anticipatory. In addition to present day decision-making and work-life considerations, participants discussed both their accounts of prior events throughout the campus-carry enactment process, as well as their anticipation of future actions. As a result, much of the data collected could have been shaped by the effects of participants' memory or expectations, rather than objective facts, in addition to the element of present-day action comprising a part of my inquiry. Another parameter of the study acting as a delimiter is the fact that both sensemaking and narrative inquiry exist in the space of particular individuals' circumstances and the meanings they attach to them, embedded within and formed by specific social contexts. As a result, this is not intended as a representative and generalizable study of all faculty at MU, or of all those in Texas, or of all faculty in U.S. higher education. Rather, these delimiters render this a study of unique individuals' experiences within specific institutional and societal settings, and from which other similarly situated readers may be able to gather insight into and understanding of complex social phenomena as they may apply in their own circumstances.

Trustworthiness

A variety of strategies were employed to best ensure the trustworthiness of the data and conclusions in this study, or the degree to which readers can expect the findings to be both accurate representations of the participants and transferable to any larger context (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). First, credibility – the notion that the data and findings represent an accurate portrayal of the interview conversations and the field – was aided by the length of

my time engaging in the field site, the use of member checking to confirm accurate representation of participants' stories, and triangulation through document and artifact analysis, as well as field observation (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002; Maxwell, 2013). While generalizability is not a goal for a qualitative study, transferability, or the ability for a reader to find applicability in the data and findings in their own life, can be potentially achieved by the use of thick, rich description in chapters four through six presenting data, and by the purposeful sampling strategy identified in the data collection sub-section (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Geertz, 1973). In addition, a peer debriefer reviewed an initial draft of the manuscript to ensure the data were presented accurately, the findings and conclusions were sound, and the writing correctly depicted the study and its findings. I used an audit trail to aid in ensuring dependability, or overall consistency and stability within the process of conducting the study and analyzing the resulting data (Miles et al., 2014). In this audit trail process, I both mapped my research questions onto the four narrative prompts in the interview protocol prior to data collection, and then worked backward during data analysis to map the initial themes, which may not have been expected, onto the research questions. Furthermore, I employed a systematic approach to data analysis and coding, with the work occurring between each round of coding clearly organized into files. The relationship between the various iterations of the coding process, as initial codes were subsumed into themes and findings, was tracked through categorization of codes in the codebook found in Appendix D. (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002; Saldaña, 2009). Each of the above strategies to ensure trustworthiness of this study allowed me to maximize the quality of the data and the veracity of findings (Koch, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Researcher Positionality, Reflexivity, and Wellness

In the course of preparing for this study, and during the various guidance committee and planning meetings leading to this document and my preceding coursework, I was repeatedly asked about my plans for preserving my own well-being in the study of a difficult topic. The concern from faculty and colleagues for my wellness was both appreciated and warranted, so in the interest of working with personal narratives, I offer a brief explanation of this study in the context of my interest in campus crises and this topic in particular. I realize that I am heavily situated within the context of my research. In fact, my topic followed a thread from a previous project regarding college students who experienced the death of a parent, which was informed by my own prior experience. I spent July 2013, the month before my first year in doctoral study began, in my mother's room at a hospice facility as her 5-year battle with ovarian cancer came to a close. Beginning my doctoral work situated in that sort of personal and emotional context absolutely shaped my research agenda.

McCann and Pearlman (1990) wrote of vicarious trauma as a phenomenon affecting nurses and social workers whereby in hearing and working with the trauma of others, these professional caregivers experienced similar physiological and psychological symptoms indicating a response to trauma. There remains very limited literature applying this notion of vicarious trauma to researchers, though in 2007 Dickson-Swift et al. offered initial findings that qualitative researchers studying difficult, traumatic, or transgressive topics often face feelings of guilt, vulnerability, and physical and emotional exhaustion. Importantly, however, beyond the potential for vicarious traumatization, a concurrent theme is beginning to emerge in the literature today – vicarious resilience. That is, by searching for meaning in these symptoms of trauma, those in professions who work with trauma paradoxically build a resilience through developing

strategies and ways of being that support continued work in this area. As I explored this topic throughout the study, I found this to be my experience – most often, I felt prepared to handle difficult conversations in the field. Running, journaling, and other self-care strategies aided this preparation, and I used these strategies while conducting this study.

With that said, feelings of resilience have not always been the case. The June 2016 shooting at an LGBT nightclub in Orlando was particularly impactful upon me and the development of the study's proposal, which was in progress at the time. The Orlando incident crossed several dimensions of my identity in multiple ways: as a member of the LGBT community, as someone who studies gun violence, and as someone with a partner whose family is Muslim. I had been mostly able to explore violence within higher education from a safe, academically-detached distance until this shooting occurred. The Orlando incident marked the second time in as many weeks that I needed to revise passages in an initial research proposal, as previous mass shooting statistics or discussions of violence became outdated. The UCLA faculty shooting was the first. As a result, my plans for protecting my own psychological well-being during this study became newly imperative. To address these concerns, I kept a field journal during my time at the site to record and consider my personal reactions to the data and the conversations I had with participant-narrators. I was encouraged by faculty to consider the future scholarly utility of writing about the process of conducting this study, and intended for this field journal to be a starting place to capture these feelings and reactions, while also acting as an avenue to process the experience of engaging in co-construction of the narratives of campus-carry policy enactment (Kim, 2016) with participant-narrators in this study.

Lastly, the data collection period began three weeks after the 2016 U.S. presidential election, and every participant, unprompted, brought up election results during the course of our

interview conversation. For most, the outcome of the election was not viewed favorably, and despite my initial reaction that these discussions were tangents not directly relevant to the topic of the study, participants often spoke of the parallels between the election and the campus-carry enactment process in Texas. It was clear from the first interview that this was a sensitive topic for participants, in fact serving as another sensemaking catalyst originating externally to the university and to each person's immediate work-life sphere. Given the temporal considerations present in the study, I included a 2016 election theme within my coding system, as the topic was salient to varying degrees for every participant. I include this in a discussion of my positionality, as I shared most participants' expressed feelings of grief and negativity regarding the then-recent election. While I was not a similarly situated colleague who could connect to a shared experience of teaching in Texas, or of a faculty career in a campus-carry environment, similar thoughts regarding the election provided an avenue to discuss and make sense of a shared experience with participants. While I intentionally never introduced the election as a topic, once participants discussed it, I made use of our perceived similar reflections and beliefs as a way to build rapport and trustworthiness. As a result, most participants subsequently became more candid about the study's topic after discussing the election and identifying this shared characteristic of perceived political beliefs.

Conclusion

This study's design, including data collection strategies, participant selection, and analysis of the data, were informed from the start by a desire to identify these types of shared experiences, including even the reaction to an election, and learn from them. With the goal to "excavate stories" (Kim, 2016, p. 156) so that others with similar experiences can learn from the lived and perceived realities shared by participants, considerations were made at every step to

fully foreground MU faculty participants' knowledge while protecting their confidentiality. In working with faculty narratives, one of my foremost considerations was to maximize the degree to which participants were fully represented as complex actors engaged in a (for many) difficult process of enacting a policy with far-reaching implications. In the chapters that follow, the reader encounters both collective and individual accounts of coming to terms with change and making sense of new, complex additions to faculty work-lives.

I am grateful to the participants in this study who trusted me with their stories, some of which became deeply personal. I hope this sense of gratitude is evident in the degree to which participant-storytellers' voices are present throughout. For analytical purposes, and in the interest of foregrounding their expertise, I frequently omit my voice throughout chapters five and six, choosing instead to highlight and only minimally comment upon the stories shared by participants so as to link them for the reader. This should not be construed as a removal of myself or my voice from the construction of the data, but rather an intentional choice to honor the narrative accounts I was entrusted to depict. My overt voice returns in chapter seven, which includes a discussion of the implications and practical significance of the study's findings. Chapter eight, an epilogue, closes the dissertation by providing a narrative coda to invite further consideration by the reader (Clandinin, 2013; Kim, 2016). This (re)presentation of MU faculty colleagues' experiences begins in the next chapter with an exploration of the social, geographical, political, and temporal contexts.

Chapter 4: Considering Place and Time

Americans will wrap everyone grieving with prayer and our love.

But as I said just a few months ago, and I said a few months before, and I said each time we see one of these mass shootings, our thoughts and prayers are not enough.

President Barack Obama, October 1, 2015, in response to a mass shooting at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Oregon

Behind a solid, sturdy wooden door, crickets were chirping. As I waited in the shared entrance lobby area to a suite of faculty offices where student meetings were taking place, the voices of professors and their students discussing exam results and study strategies were overtaken by the unmistakable sound of crickets. Hoping the crickets – remarkably vocal for 8:00 in the morning – did not represent an omen for this study’s first interview conversation which was about to begin, I shifted my attention to consider the setting I encountered so far. This faculty suite was on the first floor of a modern science laboratory building, complete with shiny stone flooring, plush, contemporary furniture in Metropolitan University (MU) colors, and flat-screen televisions proclaiming the special bond between the institution and the city within which it resides. The building is situated at the northern edge of the MU campus, deep in the center of Greenoak, a large, urban, Texas city. I would later learn the neighborhood immediately across the street was considered “dicey” according to several participants, and that Davis Street just outside the door, which acted as a campus boundary, also separated this neighborhood from the University itself. The first floor of the 4-story science building unfolded as one long hallway containing eight teaching laboratory rooms on each side, with faculty and administrative offices

occasionally separating the labs. As I walked down the hall on my way to the crickets' and faculty members' office suite, classes were in session in most rooms and students awaiting their next class sat in the hallway. Some held tri-fold, cardboard science project boards, evidence of end-of-semester projects about to be presented. Other students focused squarely on their smartphones, white earbuds in place, while others quizzed each other with flash cards. In other words, this was an overwhelmingly typical campus environment on an overwhelmingly typical Wednesday morning in late November.

And then I noticed the signs.

Next to nearly every laboratory door was a laminated, 8.5" by 11", black sign with a bright red handgun icon. The handgun was overlaid with a red circle with a slash through it. The upper portion of the signs, which were both strikingly uniform and uniformly placed near doors lining the length of the hall, listed in white uppercase letters the legal notice: "PURSUANT TO SECTION 30.06, PENAL CODE (TRESPASS BY LICENSE HOLDER WITH A CONCEALED HANDGUN), A PERSON LICENSED UNDER SUBCHAPTER H, CHAPTER 411, GOVERNMENT CODE (HANDGUN LICENSING LAW), MAY NOT ENTER THIS PROPERTY WITH A CONCEALED HANDGUN."

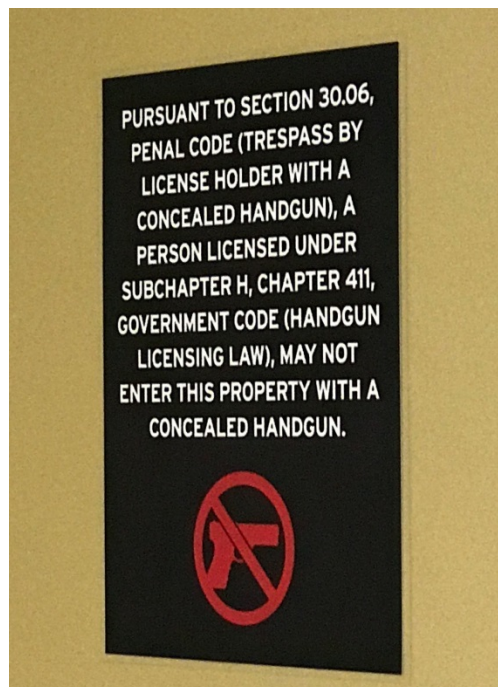


Figure 1: Exclusion zone signage

CONCEALED HANDGUN), A PERSON LICENSED UNDER SUBCHAPTER H, CHAPTER 411, GOVERNMENT CODE (HANDGUN LICENSING LAW), MAY NOT ENTER THIS PROPERTY WITH A CONCEALED HANDGUN.” These signs, which I later learned were standard across the campus and the state, were intended to inform the viewer that the indicated campus space was an exclusion zone, or one of the few carefully vetted, officially sanctioned places where concealed handguns were not allowed. These signs with their red handgun imagery and legal language lining the corridor stood out to me as decidedly atypical. And yet students were still being students, classes were still in session, crickets were still chirping. The apparent sense of normalcy in this, my first morning on the campus, was unnerving as an outsider anticipating a university community in fearful uproar. These signs were a striking addition to my experience of a typical university environment, but I seemed to be the only one noticing them.

Without warning, the chirping crickets were interrupted by Susan, the first participant, inviting me to join her in her office and begin our conversation. As I turned the corner following her down the small path toward her office, an aquarium full of insects illuminated by a heat lamp sat in the corner area of the suite. “I do teach biology lab, after all,” Susan said, noticing my apparently unsuccessful attempt to hide a significant phobia of insects.

“After a while, I sort of forget they’re even here.”

In this chapter, a series of contextual factors relevant to the reader’s understanding of the data and findings are explored. Both narrative inquiry as a research methodology and the study of sensemaking processes are deeply embedded in the social, temporal, and environmental contexts within which participants make meaning of the topic (Kim, 2016; Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). It is therefore necessary to situate the work within each of these three

dimensions in order to more deeply understand the phenomena under study. Furthermore, as narrative inquiry is an attempt to recreate a version of the “excavated stories” (Kim, 2016, p. 156) created in interaction with participant-storytellers, a re-creation of the environments and place in time must come before stories can be fully depicted for the reader. This chapter, therefore, is organized into four sections, each representing a progressively expanding view of a particular sociocultural and physical space. First, a description of Metropolitan University gives the reader an initial glimpse into life at the institution. The next section widens the reader’s view to include the city where the University resides, while a third section takes the reader one step further to consider how the participant-identified culture of Texas shaped the data. Lastly, the specific point in time at which data were gathered is depicted through a chronology of the state legislation and resulting campus processes that led to the institution and people encountered in the course of the study.

Metropolitan University: “We Get Stuff Done and We Do It Without Drama”

Data were collected during the final three weeks of the fall semester in November and December 2016, on the main campus of Metropolitan University (a pseudonym, as are city, street, and persons’ names), a public research institution located within Greenoak, a large, urban city in Texas. MU was founded near the turn of the twentieth century, and is recognized as a tier one research institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. More than 25,000 students attend MU, with roughly 80% of students at the undergraduate level and 20% at the graduate level. Most MU students commute, though there are several residence halls housing students on the outer edges of the campus. The majority of MU undergraduates are either local to the metropolitan area or are from no farther away than a 150-mile radius, while MU attracts graduate students and faculty primarily from outside the state and even

internationally. The result is a campus community that is notably diverse across many sociocultural and ideological dimensions, both to external observers and to members of the campus environment. In fact, nearly every participant noted that MU had recently been identified as one of the most diverse postsecondary campuses in the United States.

The MU campus architecture visibly reflects its history with many art deco features and brutalist or midcentury exteriors. A relatively new biosciences complex serves as a gateway to the campus from the northern edge, with modern architecture including glass and steel building facades that would be at home on nearly any present-day university campus in the U.S. Beyond the biosciences complex, the campus opens to an expansive grassy area in the center, lined with academic buildings on all sides. The perimeter of the campus is ringed by a sea of parking lots to house the commuter population, as well as several residence halls clustered near each other, and various athletic facilities. A student center complex sits near the southern boundary of the campus, bordered on one side by the edge of campus and a busy freeway, and on the other side by the sprawling MU library. These two facilities seemed to comprise the nexus of student social life on the campus, and were typically full of students. I mentioned this to a library staff member who agreed MU's was the most-used university library she ever encountered. Throughout my time on campus, the modern and stylish student center was similarly filled with a vibrant energy from students. Immediately past the front door of the student center building was an expansive atrium terraced with deep carpeted and wooden steps where students congregated. Impromptu musical performances filled the space, which resembled a contemporary version of a 1960's-era sunken living room. Posters highlighting an array of past cultural celebrations – Holi, Diwali, Dia de los Muertos, and Kwanzaa, among others – filled windows on the first-floor exterior of

the facility, a further nod to the institutional pride in a diverse campus community repeatedly emphasized throughout the study.

MU is home to what many described as a robust system of faculty governance, and several participants, unprompted, noted the sense of pride they had in belonging to an institution with what they believed to be strong shared governance and a sizable role for faculty in shaping the direction of the University. The Faculty Senate acts as a focal point for faculty participation in University administration, and was integral in the year-long process of translating SB 11 into operational campus policy, as will be explored in a subsequent section. In describing the aspects of their work environment that influenced how they made sense of campus carry, the ability to have a voice through the Faculty Senate, and the belief that MU administration would hear that voice, was a common theme for many participants. In fact, several faculty members spoke of the administration-Senate relationship as a partnership wherein each side supported the other through the SB 11 process, and looked to the other for support or political cover at various points.

In describing the typical faculty work culture of MU (in contrast to the public and politicized nature of the SB 11 enactment process), the following participant quote from Jill is illustrative:

There were multiple ways that I could voice my position. And I saw the university respond thoughtfully to that. I mean, me as one of many; a big gaggle of faculty. I think senior leadership was very interested in making sure that to the greatest extent possible, they were listening, they were responding to the full range of concerns, that they were being respectful of a full range of perspectives. You know, we're a campus that has spent in a couple of different ways now some time, some good, thoughtful time, understanding

the balance of how one is respectful, how one articulates in a freedom of speech context useful discourse. And we take that super seriously. Like, we get thrown into the hot mess of stuff and we're like, "huh. OK. We need to really grapple with this. So, let's do that." We tend to do that kind of internally. We're not a big, like, "Look at us, world!"...I mean we're kind of this very workhorse university, right? Like we get stuff done and we do it without drama. That's just our ethos. So. The drama around it has been a little weird.

Jill's quote is one of many uncovered in this study that paints MU as a collective group of faculty and administrators who prioritize substantive work over flashy notoriety, or the pursuit of prestige as its own end. Taken together with the student profile, the institutional mission and history, and MU's close ties to the surrounding city just across the street, this description of a university community focused on productivity and inclusion demonstrates the effect of the mutually-influential relationship between the institution and the city.

Life Beyond Davis Street: "[Greenoak] is a Funny Place"

Just as the MU administration-faculty relationship was generally characterized as inclusive and mutually supportive, so was the relationship between MU and its home city, Greenoak, Texas. Greenoak, a sprawling metropolitan area, is among the most populous cities in the U.S., and is home to several public and private higher education institutions. Due in part to its numerous postsecondary campuses, a burgeoning technology sector, its proximity to the energy industry, and several waves of immigration which occurred throughout the 20th century, Greenoak is also home to a diverse population spanning a wide range of sociocultural and socioeconomic dimensions. For example, there is a sizeable LGBT community and more than 20 percent of the Greenoak population was born outside the U.S. This diversity was celebrated through multiple pro-immigration rallies and diversity-affirming public statements from elected

local officials during the data collection period. The city itself, as well as the county within which it sits, are helmed by mostly democratic elected officials, and many participants, unprompted, described the area as predominantly liberal in political ideology. This stands in contrast to most other areas of Texas, a generally politically-conservative state, which was a point of pride for most participants. As data collection began just three weeks after the 2016 U.S. presidential election, many participants described Greenoak as a blue patch in an otherwise red state, referencing the fact that Greenoak County was one of a small number of counties within Texas to cast a majority of its votes for Hillary Clinton, the democratic presidential candidate.

As referenced in the preceding section, the MU campus is situated within Greenoak such that it is landlocked, and its northern border is delineated by Davis Street, a main thoroughfare separating the University and a residential neighborhood known as Avalon. Avalon is a predominantly African American neighborhood largely considered to be the cultural home for Greenoak's African American community. Several historic jazz and blues clubs dot the neighborhood map, as do plentiful parks and cultural centers. Avalon is, however, also among the lowest-income areas of the metropolitan Greenoak area. Standing on the MU side of Davis Street and looking to the other side, a person's view is filled by vacant houses with unkempt lawns, a government-assisted, low-income housing complex, and dilapidated former fast food restaurants. The contrast between the Avalon side of the street and the contemporary MU biosciences complex, football stadium, and manicured landscaping on the MU side is a stark one. The Avalon neighborhood is also considered by many to be rather dangerous, particularly after dark. Avalon regularly ranks on lists of the most dangerous neighborhoods in the country based on per capita violent crime rates. As a result, Clery Act notices of crimes occurring on and

adjacent to the MU campus are sent to students, faculty, and staff with frequent regularity according to many participants.

The Avalon neighborhood is also home to another public, 4-year university in addition to MU, while the gated campus of a prestigious private university lies just a few blocks away. MU marketing, widely visible throughout the city, proclaims the institution to be “[Greenoak]’s Public University,” a slogan that is borne out by the enrollment of many students from the local community. The sizeable commuter student population, as well as tens of thousands of employees, pass through areas of Avalon in order to reach MU each day, leading to a visible and evident daily reminder of the economic disconnect between the institution and its surroundings. Given the physical configuration of the campus, this dissonant view is unavoidable when parking in any of the garages or lots that ring the MU grounds. Unsolicited comparisons to the other postsecondary institutions within Greenoak were made by many participants, with many viewing MU as standing – to its core – in strong, purposeful contrast to the perceived exclusivity and elite attitude of the private institution within walking distance nearby. As Pauline explained the MU ethos:

I took this job although a lot of people thought I was crazy to do it. But I saw...the kind of place it was, was very similar, and the kind of students I would be teaching were very similar to the kind of student I was. First, a lot of our students are the first ones to go to college in their family. A lot of them work while they go to school; they have sometimes two jobs while they're going to school. They're very hard working. I really liked that, the kind of ethic that these were working-class students. I wasn't going to be teaching a lot of elite kids who had lots of money.

In this quote, we see a MU faculty member describing why she chose to teach at the university despite the perceived prestige at other nearby institutions within the Greenoak metropolitan area. Additionally, this quote indicates the role students from the area surrounding the campus play in shaping the culture of the institution.

“Texas is a Weird Space”

Just as MU is both deeply influenced by and stands in stark contrast to the neighborhood and city around it, Greenoak is a unique area within, yet also shaped by, the broader Texas context beyond the city. While participants had varied methods of characterizing Texas, one thing was clear: Texas is a unique state with several aspects of a clearly defined culture that influence the operations of the university and the daily life of faculty. First, a strong gun culture was at play, particularly in the geographically spacious rural areas of the state. Many Texans use guns recreationally, hunt with firearms, or collect weapons as a hobby. In fact, Rachel, a participant of this study who grew up in a rural area of western Texas, described it this way:

I mean I grew up in the country. I grew up with guns but it was very clear that they weren't toys and they weren't there for fear, they weren't there for protection. Nobody was thinking that they were there for protection. They were there for hunting. And it just never dawned on me that I would need to be protected...Guns are a part of Texas. You were seen as being too much of a wuss if you needed it as self-protection. You know, what's fun in that? [laughs] So I know individuals who sort of use them as self-protection. And I'm sort of uncomfortable with that. You know they tell me [Greenoak] is a dangerous city. I go, “Yeah! Because you've got a weapon!”



Figure 2: Open-carry signage is publicly prevalent throughout Greenoak, such as on this Target store entrance.

This quote is one of many stories uncovered in the course of this study which demonstrated the routine and omnipresent nature of guns as part of daily life for many in Texas, stretching back generations. Moreover, as of January 1, 2016, licensed gun owners were legally permitted to carry their weapons openly in public, though not on college campuses, in courtrooms, or certain other designated gun-free areas. As a result, most restaurants, big-box retailers, shopping centers, and other public venues typically post state-approved signage prominently on their doors indicating the types of weapons allowed on the premises as patrons enter. These signs offer a clear indication of the culture of gun ownership in Texas, although many participants in liberal Greenoak noted that they rarely see anyone openly carrying a weapon in the city. When they do see an armed person in public, participants explained those individuals are often met with social scorn and derision. As one participant put it, “[Greenoak] is

a funny place. The city of [Greenoak] where I live...you see very little open carry. It's a much more suburban and rural phenomenon.”

The enactment of statewide open-carry in Texas, a precursor to the campus-carry law taking effect later in the same year, was controversial in the state, and particularly in the diverse and ideologically liberal Greenoak. For example, multiple participants noted that they began shopping at a different local grocery store chain, because Kroger, their usual store, initially supported the law. Over time, however, it seems apparent that residents became inured to the idea of firearms potentially being present in public settings throughout Texas. For example, Lester disclosed that he was licensed to carry a weapon under the law, and explained:

The truth is that they're everywhere...And I can tell you as a [concealed handgun license] holder myself, I don't carry all the time, but at times when I carry, I even forget that I have it on my side. You know? It's not like you're thinking constantly “I have a gun, I have a gun.” It just becomes part of your regular routine...I wonder how much of it is just that people think it's normal. You know it's just like everything else, I don't have to worry when I'm going to H-E-B, or to Kroger's or Randall's. I'm not thinking about “oh my God, who here is going to have a gun?” ...I don't think about “is somebody gonna pull out a gun and shoot me at Walmart?” So...we quickly transition cognitively to a new normal so that it becomes a non-issue.

Here, again, the routine nature of guns as an accepted part of public daily life in Texas is explained as a part of the state's culture. Mark, a participant who previously worked in several other states throughout a decades-long career summed up his experience of Texas thusly:

When I came to Texas, I thought “OK, this is...Texas is a weird space.” And I remember realizing it for the first time when I was walking to the gas station one day, like to get

some exercise and something to drink. So, I'm walking, and there's a sign in someone's yard that says, "trespassers will be shot." [laughs] And I thought, "oh my God, what have I gotten myself into?" Well, that sign didn't stay up for long. But I thought, "wow, this is the wild, wild west."

A strong foundation of gun ownership as a part of Texas culture, as this participant described, is not the only facet of Texan society that seemed to influence faculty members' lives. Other aspects of the state's culture which influenced the phenomena under study included a strong sense of independence and self-reliance acting as a foundation for public decision-making. One example of the noted independent streak in Texas is the fact that the state legislature meets only every two years, and only for 140 days at a time. One of only four states with a biennial legislature, this means that laws passed in one session such as the 2015 campus-carry bill are unlikely to be revisited for two years at minimum. Participants discussed this governing model as an example of Texas seeking to stand out from the rest of the country, and to stand in opposition to the federal government in support of what many perceive as the state's sovereignty. A strong – but so far unsuccessful – secessionist movement exists within the state, with followers advocating that Texas should stand on its own as an independent nation.

The contours of Texas culture outlined above were salient for this study in part due to the fact that most participants were not originally from Texas. They shared stories of their experiences coming to understand the state and its social norms and mores as newcomers with fresh eyes. Participants gleaned the information to form their understanding of a Texas culture through their environment, and often in small ways as they navigated routine daily life. For example, Jill described the cultural omnipresence of guns through this anecdote of preparing to

take her teenage daughter to the Department of Motor Vehicles to apply for a learner's driving permit:

I have to take all of these forms of identification for me that I'm a state resident to go with her. And there's a list of all of these things that you can bring that identify you as a state resident for a certain amount of time. One of which, like near the top of the list, was my – not my, I don't have one – but was a license to carry. [laughs] I was like “really? This is on the list? I don't see passport. I don't see these things, but I see license to carry.” [continues laughing throughout] It was like “ugh, I now am reminded that I live in my state.”

This example illustrates the ways a perceived culture of Texas is transmitted to faculty living in the state through even minor or informal channels as the general responsibilities of daily life unfold. It is not the case, however, that faculty simply received the culture and accepted it. In fact, many in this study discussed their aversion to some of the Texas-specific customs. As one participant noted, “We are a barbaric culture. Texas especially. You know, if the United States is barbaric, we're going to be super barbaric! [Claps hands] We're gonna be the best barbarians we can. That's Texas for you.” While this comment was made in jest, the sentiment was echoed by other faculty on the MU campus. An overall impression that many faculty felt a strong sense of purpose to oppose the aspects of accepted Texas culture they disagreed with permeated the data, including numerous points of opposition during the process leading to the implementation of SB 11 on the MU campus.

Place in Time

The period of data collection for this study, occurring through the final three weeks of the fall 2016 semester, represented the conclusion of the first academic term since the enactment of

SB 11 on August 1, 2016. The specific moment captured in the data reflects the culmination of two parallel processes at MU to translate SB 11 into an operationalized campus policy – one occurring through the Faculty Senate, and one through the official MU Campus-Carry Work Group appointed by the chancellor. The work of these two MU-specific bodies went into action following the SB 11 legislative process, which began with the bill’s filing on January 26, 2015. In this section, the relevant history of developments in both the campus-carry legislation and the resulting campus policy is chronicled in order to situate the reader’s understanding in the context of time within the MU campus environment.

Legislative process. While the legislation leading to legal campus carry in Texas passed in June of 2015, SB 11 marked the last in a series of similar, but ultimately unsuccessful bills stretching back to 2008. Sensing a policy window (Bardach, 2012) opening after the 2007 shooting at Virginia Tech, the NRA and other advocacy groups associated with the firearm industry worked to advance similar campus-carry bills in multiple states by leveraging relationships with state legislators who had received prior campaign support from the organization. This multiple-state work occurred through the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), a conservative organization of private industry and business representatives. ALEC operates in part as a clearinghouse for model legislation in the interests of business and industry. As industry groups determine needs that can be met through legislative action, ALEC drafts sample bills and language, then circulates them to amenable state legislators and governors. Given the large number of member businesses and industry groups within ALEC, the pressure to act on the organization’s requests is significant (American Legislative Exchange Council, 2016; NRA Institute for Legislative Action, 2008)

The Texas campus-carry bills came about, at least ostensibly, as a result of prior shootings and the belief that increasing the number of firearms in a space serves as a deterrent to violent acts. Campus-carry bills were proposed in 2008, 2009, 2011, and 2013, but failed to pass, often due to parliamentary maneuvers by the democratic minority in both houses of the Texas legislature. In 2013, however, a preliminary version of what would become campus carry was enacted allowing college students with concealed handgun licenses to keep their weapons in their cars parked on campuses across the state (Texas Concealed Handgun Association, 2016). Each time the bill failed to pass, it became more of an expectation for faculty participants in this study that future iterations of a campus-carry law would also be unsuccessful. However, the 2015 version was advanced by both the NRA and by state legislators and executive branch officials with close ties to the organization, and became law despite significant and nearly unanimous opposition from the Texas higher education sector (Aguilar, 2015; McCuistion & Dorn, 2015).

While this opposition included numerous formal and informal statements from MU itself and members of the MU community, the 2015 version of the bill did pass, and was signed by the governor on June 26. All public, 4-year institutions were subject to the provisions of the law, while all private institutions were able to opt out. Community colleges were not included in the 2015 law, but were informed that a similar bill is set to be advanced to allow concealed weapons on Texas community college campuses in the 2017 legislative session (An Act Relating to the Carrying of Handguns, 2015). It is important to note that the 2015 law only extended the existing Texas concealed handgun license (CHL) law to apply on university campuses, where carrying handguns was previously prohibited. Therefore, only those licensed under that existing process are legally able to carry concealed weapons on college and university campuses. To obtain a CHL permit in Texas, one must be over the age of 21 (or a member of the military age 18 to 21),

thereby making many traditional-age undergraduates ineligible. Additionally, a CHL holder must also be a legal resident of Texas for six months, must not be a felon, and must pass a 4-hour training class. Given the student population at MU including many post-traditional students of varied ages beyond the picture of a “typical” campus environment, the over-21 provision within the law was less of a buffering factor at MU than it was perceived to be at other Texas institutions.

MU institutional processes. Despite their publicly-stated opposition, the MU system chancellor, like the leaders of all other public, 4-year institutions in Texas, was charged with creating an official campus policy to allow for concealed weapons in compliance with the law. SB 11 required universities to consult with the campus community in order to craft an institutional policy, to have the policies approved by their institutional governing boards, and to then submit their campus policies, including justification for any areas deemed to be exclusion zones, to the state legislature for review. In fact, the language in SB 11 required this legislative review not only during the initial enactment period, but also every two years moving forward as an oversight and control mechanism. In the initial implementation process, universities had until August 1, 2016 to complete this policy work and permit guns on campus.

For MU, the process included the work of two parallel groups – the Faculty Senate and a Campus-Carry Work Group established by the chancellor. While both MU groups included mechanisms to gather feedback from members of the university community on the draft policy, the Campus-Carry Work Group was the official committee charged with creating the final policy and logistics for MU, including determination of exclusion zones. The Faculty Senate’s process was primarily focused on providing a space for members of the community, particularly faculty, to voice their thoughts on the law, the draft versions of the policies as they became available, and

the influence of the law upon the classroom environment. While both groups held a series of forums for community dialogue as part of their work, all but one of the forums hosted by the Faculty Senate were limited exclusively to faculty, with identification checked at the door. Conversely, the Campus-Carry Work Group included a representative from the Faculty Senate, as well as student and staff representatives, upper-level administrators, student affairs professionals, university legal counsel, and the campus police chief.

Throughout the fourteen months between SB 11's signing and its effective date, many members of the MU campus community were active in these parallel processes. Among the Faculty Senate, a series of forums allowed faculty to voice concerns or support for the law and to have a stake in offering feedback on the draft policy. Additionally, the Faculty Senate president and other core leaders offered educational and informational workshops for faculty throughout the policy drafting and enactment period in order to translate policy language into operational plans and to provide strategic suggestions for moving forward after the policy went into effect. Participants characterized the majority of these forums and other meetings as emotionally charged and occasionally confrontational, with many faculty in attendance questioning why more was not done by the university to stop SB 11 from going into effect prior to its signing by Governor Abbott.

In contrast, the Campus-Carry Work Group, chaired by an MU legal scholar and former federal administrator, took an all-business approach. Based upon archival documents and participant discussions, it seemed to be the case for this group that the work emanated from a different premise altogether: SB 11 was accepted as the established law; they believed the time for sharing feelings and debating the details of the law had passed, and as a result, that their task was to create a policy within that legal framework that was tailored and responsive to the needs

of the MU community. Multiple members of this group were interviewed as part of this study, and each characterized it as not the place for the emotive discussion occurring contemporaneously within the Faculty Senate. This is not to say the Work Group did not solicit feedback from the campus community – in fact, more than 1,000 comments were received and considered in the process of drafting the campus policy – but rather that the focus was on logistics of implementation, safety, and legal compliance. Several rounds of draft policies were created and shared with the MU community online throughout the spring of 2016, with feedback sought after each latest version was shared. In addition, the Work Group examined the policies and processes of other Texas campuses as well as universities in other states where campus carry became legal to gain insight into potential pitfalls to avoid.

The resulting policy, approved by the MU Board of Trustees in May 2016, made special note of the degree to which constituents in the MU community were consulted for the creation of the document. In line with the law, the campus-carry policy requires handguns to remain concealed – they may not be visible in part or in whole, or even an outline underneath clothing – and not discussed. Weapons cannot be declared by the holder, nor can a university employee other than campus police inquire as to whether someone has a concealed weapon. Exclusion zones approved for the August 1 effective date were enumerated in the policy, which also maintained that additional zones may be determined on an ongoing basis by the Campus-Carry Work Group upon request through an online form. Standard exclusion zones included areas of the campus frequented by children, healthcare facilities, athletic venues, chemical or animal laboratories, and all but one residence hall. While numerous exclusion zones were requested through the online mechanism prior to the policy going into effect, many of these requests were denied, as the law prohibited significant exclusion that would violate the spirit of campus carry.

Because of ambiguity in determining approval of exclusion zone requests, many on the campus remained unclear as to the rationale and criteria for their approval into the fall 2016 term.

Revisiting Susan's Faculty Office

As my conversation with Susan, a biology faculty member, on the first morning of data collection in Greenoak continued, it became clear this sense of ambiguity around the campus-carry policy had not been fully resolved as the first semester after its enactment came to a close:

To me, this whole building ought to be eliminated. We have chemistry on the top floor. It's a research facility up there and then we have kids in here all the time. So, to me the whole building should be excluded. But we were told that we can't exclude the whole building. And I don't really understand the logic of why the whole building wasn't just excluded based on chemistry and kids. And the biggest concern are offices, right? I mean I have these wonderful windows but they don't open up. [Tries to lift the window to demonstrate.] They're not an escape hatch. So, if somebody comes in, I'm trapped here and that's true of just about any office anywhere, right? That's just how they're designed. They don't generally have an escape door, although it would be nice. So, the offices are certainly a concern. I think the way the law ended up being interpreted, it was that single-occupancy offices you can ban carry. But if it's a group space you can't. So, where something like this suite will fall I'm not even sure. I mean technically, this is a single-occupancy office, but it's within a suite. So, you know, who knows? I never bothered to find out because I just don't care enough to go find out. I figure if a student wants to do me in, the law is not going to make a difference one way or the other on that front.

As Susan continued reflecting on her thoughts and experiences surrounding the first semester of campus carry at MU, it became clear that the issue was complex and nuanced, as

reflected in this quote. For her, messaging from upper-level administrators in both the Faculty Senate and the Campus-Carry Work Group had not clarified the process by which exclusion zones were determined, and the bureaucratic layers of approvals and seemingly opaque criteria only complicated the matter. But beyond the issue of exclusion zones, her sense of ambiguity regarding the policy and the law itself extended to a more philosophical level that caused her to question her own values and beliefs over the course of our discussion:

Philosophically, I don't think we should have [campus carry] here. No. But on the other hand, people do have a right to defend themselves. You know, I have this psycho stalking ex-boyfriend. I like the idea I could concealed carry. Because while he's [several hundred] miles away, he could still come back down here. Right? It's always an issue. There is no panic button for me. You know, it's not so much the students that worry me – it's him. You know, and I, I...I deal with students every day. I can't tell you how many women come into my office with these types of issues. It's a serious concern and they should have the right to protect themselves. Because as much as we want campus to be a safe place, I can tell you from experience when you're dealing with a nut case it's not a safe place. There are too many students with these types of issues. So, from a personal standpoint, I like the fact that I could [carry a handgun] if I wanted to. I won't; I'm a little trigger happy. If he showed up, I'd just want to shoot the guy. But, you know. I like the idea I could if I chose to do that.

Susan's search for meaning in the campus-carry policy through her personal history was the first of what would become a recurring theme in the ensuing weeks speaking with faculty on the MU campus. For all participants, the campus-carry law and associated MU policy were understood through prior personal experiences as much as through environmental cues such as

university messaging and peer interaction. Beyond that, however, a sense of uncertainty about both present conditions and potential future developments permeated participants' discussions. Despite the seemingly routine Wednesday morning in the corridor of a university academic building encountered on the way to this faculty office, the days that followed included continued descriptions of conflicting and nuanced feelings about the law. As faculty reconciled their philosophical beliefs about higher education with the ramifications of the new law which they observed in the first semester of its implementation, a complex system of shared and individual sensemaking embedded in particular temporal, environmental, and social contexts emerged.

Chapter 5: “Nothing Has Changed”/“It Changes Everything”

My thoughts and prayers go out to all those affected by what appears to have been a murder-suicide on the campus of UCLA. This horrific event, at an institution dedicated to learning and mutual understanding, reminds us once again of the fragility of a peaceful society.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, June 3, 2016

Susan, the biology professor depicted in Chapter 4, offered an initial glimpse of the complex, nuanced, and occasionally conflicting process of faculty sensemaking occurring on the campus of Metropolitan University (MU) at the end of the fall 2016 term. This chapter offers a comprehensive overview of the data from all thirteen participants taken together from a collective, campus-level view, while chapter six goes deeper to explore the data through the eyes of two particular professors in more granular detail. Specific findings are identified in this chapter to unpack the particular aspects of two parallel processes – those who said “nothing has changed” and those who noted that “it changes everything” – in order to better understand in detail the issues at play in answering the dual research questions guiding this study:

1. What do the stories of faculty making decisions about their work during campus-carry policy enactment reveal about the educative implications of the newly enacted campus-carry policy in Texas?
2. What factors influence the way faculty make teaching and research decisions?

Identifying Dual Sensemaking Response Groups

The 13 participants in this study offered stories of their experiences with and perceptions of campus-carry legislation and policy enactment that largely fell into two seemingly opposed

categories. One set of participants mostly expressed an urgent belief that faculty life on the campus continued as usual, while another group deeply felt a seismic shift in their work environments. In analyzing the data, I labeled the faculty who mostly believed nothing changed as a result of campus carry the “subconscious-reactive sensemaking response group.” Those who primarily spoke of significant work-life differences after campus-carry enactment are referred to as the “conscious-active sensemaking response group.” To only identify these two sets of responses, however, oversimplifies the factors at play. In each case, these two general categories of participant narratives mask an intricate process by which MU faculty reached individual and social understandings of their work-lives in the context of legal concealed handguns within campus spaces. Additionally, it is important to note the two sensemaking response groups were not mutually-exclusive, but rather represented a dominant participant characteristic. That is, while faculty in either group would mostly share beliefs and experiences that aligned with the characteristics of their primary sensemaking response group, they would also sometimes speak of limited feelings and understandings aligned with the other group. This characteristic of occasionally conflicting statements offers further evidence of a complex and ongoing sensemaking process for the faculty in this study. The next section identifies the personal, institutional, and social dynamics that led some faculty to outwardly state that their work-lives had remained the same in the face of campus-carry enactment, while also considering elements occurring beneath the surface to cause faculty to reach this conclusion despite some evidence to the contrary. The second major section of this chapter explores the experiences and beliefs of those who identified the arrival of SB 11 as a catalyst for fundamental change in the nature of their work as MU faculty. Subsections within each category further examine the experiences, beliefs, and attitudes which caused participants to explain that either nothing changed as a result

of campus-carry enactment, or that monumental change occurred. Lastly, a third major section of this chapter explores areas of commonality between the two groups.

“Nothing’s Changed:” A Subconscious-Reactive Response

Several faculty on the MU campus interviewed for this study expressed a belief that the enactment of SB 11 and the MU campus-carry policy had not influenced their teaching or research work. For participants in this group, various aspects of the environment around them, broadly defined, contributed to their understanding of the law and its effects, or lack thereof, on their work and lives. Participants in this group seemed to reflect portions of the MU faculty generally, and included professors from several academic colleges, teaching in undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate programs, holding various administrative and service roles, and at multiple promotion and tenure levels, including pre- and post-tenure and adjunct faculty across a spectrum of career stages. While these participants did not necessarily share significant commonalities in their appointments, student interaction patterns, or fields of study, they expressed remarkably similar beliefs about the role of SB 11 in shaping their work-lives.

Seeking external cues. First, a seemingly universal reliance upon external indicators from the world around them undergirded the overall process of sensemaking for participants in the subconscious-reactive group. Faculty who believed limited change occurred as a result of campus-carry enactment typically reached that conclusion through an often automatic or subconscious examination of possible external markers of change. This group, for example, relied quite heavily on institutional messaging, including statements from campus police regarding the likelihood of encountering an armed student. As Alan explained:

[We had] an eight-hour training and it included a visit from our campus police service.

And he was the one who said, “this is what you're allowed to do. This is what you're

allowed to say.” And he was very comforting, also, in the idea that you probably won't ever encounter this. You probably won't ever have to face this. It probably won't change a darned thing. It's very likely that the people that you mill around on the street, probably here on campus as well, probably still already have guns. Guns are part of Texas. And so you've probably been exposed to them without knowing it. And it probably will not change your life, which was a little comforting.

In addition to this statement, where Alan explained how he found solace in the statements of a campus authority figure, the MU Police Department also offered training presentations during Faculty Senate events and to other campus constituent groups in an attempt to influence the process of sensemaking for members of the MU community. Furthermore, other participants repeatedly referenced an unofficial spreadsheet circulated from colleague to colleague demonstrating an estimated calculation of the number of potential licensed gun-holders on the campus as being lower than what many had anticipated; the document's creator and data sources were unknown beyond being a generic “faculty colleague.”

Another external cue for faculty in the subconscious-reactive group was a perception of general environmental safety, often informed by the lack of incidents of gun violence in the first semester after campus-carry legalization. For example, Lester noted:

I don't agree with some of my colleagues who've taken an extreme view of this as the world is coming to an end. You know, it's almost like you would have thought that the day after the campus-carry law went into effect, the world was ending. And you know, it hasn't. Thankfully, we haven't seen any incidents. It doesn't mean that at some point it couldn't happen. They happen on other campuses throughout the country. So, I think we exaggerate our reactions a little bit. And I think a lot of the reactions to this have been

exaggerated. Now, I hope I don't have to take that back ever. You know, I hope you're not here interviewing me a few years later because there has been a, you know, a massacre on campus by somebody who brought in a gun.

Lester's attribution of a lack of feelings of influential change to the fact that no gun violence occurred was not the only one. Nearly every participant in the subconscious-reactive group relied upon the lack of known incidents of gun violence at MU in the first semester after campus-carry implementation as a justification for believing that little change had occurred in their work. Multiple others in the subconscious-reactive sensemaking response group explained this in the following ways:

And I honestly don't know. I don't know what else needs to be said. I think, I think... as awful as this sounds, until something happens – or doesn't, you know, because when something doesn't happen, and when nothing happens, we all just can go “alright, fine. I guess it was an experiment that worked and we'll just let it go.”

And from the implementation phase of it, nothing has happened at the [college building name]. We've had no incidents. Since it's gone into effect: nothing. August 1 came, and I honestly sort of forgot. It was a non-issue. I missed the day, actually.

There was some talk about [the state legislature] revisiting campus carry. Ummm... I haven't seen anything at this point because nothing [long pause to carefully select a word] *dramatic* has happened. We've been very lucky this semester. No major incidents have occurred. We've been very lucky in this department, this building, uh... While we've had students who were stressed and upset, no weapons have been pulled out. Our real concern

now, though, is after the [2016 presidential] election, the stress levels among our students just skyrocketed. And I'm just hoping that we - that, you know, guns do not become a part of that. This semester, I think there's been a real sense of relief, just a sense of relief that nothing has happened. Um...that we know of. But it's only been a few months.

In each of the quotes above, faculty on the MU campus who believed the implementation of campus carry had not affected their work predicated their beliefs on an understanding that no evident act of gun violence had occurred on the campus after the law took effect. At the same time, however, many of these participants went on to say they may need to revisit their beliefs should this environmental indicator no longer remain accurate. The sense of uncertain future actions potentially altering faculty experiences also extended to possible legislative developments or changes to the law itself, and were particularly salient for those in the subconscious-reactive sensemaking response group.

Identifying insulating factors. While participants demonstrating a subconscious-reactive response to the implementation of campus carry sought environmental cues upon which to make sense of the policy, these cues were not limited solely to statements from authority figures on the campus or to the apparent lack of violent acts. In fact, many participants in this group seemed to put effort into identifying elements of their work environments that could be seen as insulating buffers between themselves and the potential reality of the presence of guns in their workplaces. These insulating factors included characterizations of the population of students with whom one interacted, beliefs about the city of Greenoak and its residents, and generalizations about the types of people whom participants typically expected would or would not carry firearms. The law's strict guidelines that no one other than an institutional police officer may inquire as to whether a person is carrying a concealed weapon resulted in a disempowering sense of

uncertainty that caused most participants in the subconscious-reactive response group to seek, often unintentionally, these generalized insular factors from which to derive a sense of safety and control over their work environment.

“...But my students are...” For example, a common theme for participants who sought insulation was to rationalize that the types of students with whom they regularly interacted simply were not the type to carry a gun, and therefore, they did not need to feel any difference in their work-lives. Alan, a faculty member who taught exclusively in a residential honors program described this phenomenon:

So, even though we're still a commuter college in a lot of ways, or a commuter university, the Honors College is a lot more like a standard college experience. So, for that reason, in part because our students are in a special kind of honors dorm situation as well, I don't have to think about [campus carry] impacting their lives all that much because they're not typically – our demography is not full of the kinds of students that would own guns to begin with. And given the sort of different demographic, it's just not a big, salient issue. Alan was not alone in suggesting that perhaps he would be concerned were it not for the student population with which he regularly interacted. Jill demonstrated the subconscious-reactive response characteristic of identifying insulating factors when she described life after campus-carry implementation:

... for me personally, largely unchanged. You know, I work exclusively with graduate students, and actually, exclusively with doctoral students. And so, I feel like I have a very insulated engagement with the learning community on campus and I think there's a... There's more homogeneity among students. I mean...I guess there's more homogeneity

around this issue among our students so...It hasn't really been something that I've felt a particular presence of.

Jill's belief that teaching graduate students rendered her less likely to encounter an armed student was echoed by Kim, a graduate-level professor in the MU School of Education:

I have always taught graduate courses. So, I've never taught any undergraduate students here. So, the graduate students here in [name of specific academic program] are mostly educators, in one way or another. So, I don't want to necessarily generalize, but...I tend to think that people who want to be in the education profession have certain attitudes and personalities. They consider themselves more as helpers, so I like to think that people – especially master's or mostly doctoral students I work with – are very ... You know, I don't associate educators with guns, and that might be my misconception. But that's how I feel. Because I teach mostly educators on the graduate level.

While both Kim and Jill believed graduate students were less likely to carry a weapon, another participant who exclusively taught undergraduates disagreed, believing she was at a lower risk as a result of teaching students with what she perceived to be less pressure on their performance:

And again, remember, I mean I'm in a mostly female field, and so women are less likely to be carrying, not unlikely entirely but less likely. But the issue with grads is that it's higher stakes once you get in, and it's more expensive; you're spending more money; you're committed; you quit a job; you've committed to 40 hours a week of people telling you how smart you are or how unsmart you are. So, if I were going to be worried about people having guns it would be that set. It really would. I mean the stakes being higher I think would be something to be worried about. I imagine like in pharmacy or in the professional colleges...I mean it's a professional program, so if they fail out - fail out?

Get a C! [laughs] - but if they get a C or lower that means that they can't keep going. And that means that their careers are over. And in undergraduate, there's lots of different places to go from there. But as a graduate? It's what I was gonna do, and I've put five years into it, and now what?

Again, this participant demonstrates the idea of identifying a set of traits – in this case, being mostly female and undergraduates under perceived limited pressure – that she believes her students possess which renders them less likely to warrant her fear as gun carriers. This statement is directly opposite her graduate colleagues' beliefs that graduate students inherently posed a lesser risk. Throughout multiple interviews, faculty in the subconscious-reactive response group identified and relied upon particular beliefs about their students, whomever they may be, in order to make sense of the level to which they could consider themselves to be insulated from fears about campus carry and subsequent changes in their work. As another example, Becky, a professor of introductory, undergraduate engineering lectures delivered in large auditoriums, noted “engineering doesn't bring up subjects that are hugely sensitive. So, I have a lot more sympathy for faculty in areas where the classes are smaller and discussion-oriented. I mean in a class of 180, it's hard to even know them.” Once again, regardless of the typical population of students with whom they interacted, participants whose sensemaking processes relied upon external cues and insulators as part of the subconscious-reactive group could find an attribute of their students to hold onto in order to feel less fearful in their work environments after the enactment of campus carry.

“It’s a more rural phenomenon.” Another insulating factor participants in this group relied upon to justify a sense that nothing had changed post-campus carry enactment was the sociocultural context surrounding MU. A number of faculty noted the fact that MU exists within

the politically liberal city of Greenoak. For many, this sense of living and/or working within an ideologically progressive, urban city was inextricably linked to a perceived lack of guns within the environment. Subconscious-reactive faculty participants viewed the city's liberal leanings and urban setting as another level of sequestration between themselves and the larger culture of Texas as a typically gun-friendly state. In fact, for some, the simple fact that Greenoak was an urban area alone was enough to see the community as unlikely to harbor concealed handgun licensees. Mark, a participant whose career caused him to previously live and work in several other states, described Greenoak's liberal and urban buffer against guns this way:

You know, it's city living, and compared to the rest of Texas we might have fewer guns per capita [laughs] or something. But...if you are in the Mountain West? You know, I was much more likely in Montana, for example, to see someone with a rifle or a shotgun. Like they're hunting or whatever it is. You know, they think of the bait and tackle shops...and bullets. I mean it was like where people go to a gas station, and they also sell ammunition. I mean I was much more likely to see it in those contexts than I would ever be to see it in [Greenoak]. And I think for the universities outside of the cities, you know [Other Texas City] and here or wherever, that this was much less of an issue because people grew up, whether they grew up on a farm, or ranch, or wherever they lived. The houses were far apart and so you, you did feel, really feel, like you needed it for protection from wildlife and from people. Yeah. So, I think [Greenoak] is a little bit different, perhaps.

In this quote, Mark identifies Greenoak's unique position as an urban and progressive sanctuary set within the larger Texas sociopolitical context. Mark referenced his prior experience working in the Mountain West to justify feeling that Greenoak is an insulator from the pervasive gun

culture within other areas of Texas. Jill also spoke of Greenoak's culture as an insulating buffer when she said:

You know, you're not absent some support for open carry or campus carry. But [Greenoak] the city is an incredibly international place, right? I mean we just have a large presence of residents who come from around the world. And so I would say there's a much more open problematizing of, or pushing back around, the issue of like why in the world would we carry? Why would anyone walk around and carry a gun because it really is in cultural conflict with so many people's life experiences. So, [Greenoak] really is a different place. I mean [since open-carry became legal statewide in early 2016], people or businesses in the city have really kind of leaned, pretty heavily, towards an exclusion zone policy because they can, right? I mean as privately-owned businesses, they have that possibility.

Here again, a participant notes the uniqueness of Greenoak as a space within Texas that stands in contrast to the larger pro-gun culture in several ways, including a common experience pushing back against open-carry in the community beyond the borders of MU. Notably, however, Greenoak City University (GCU) [a pseudonym], one of the numerous other postsecondary institutions in Greenoak, had a series of shootings during the time MU was in the process of translating SB 11 into campus policy. Several participants identified these incidents, all occurring within a few months after campus carry was signed into law, but did not see a gap in their logic of perceiving Greenoak as a buffer from guns on campus. Instead, Rachel, who grew up with guns in rural Texas, attributed the incidents to carelessness and lack of respect for the weapons in question:

And so, you know, the last thing I want is a bunch of yahoos who haven't had serious training on 'em. Because my real worry isn't the fact that someone's carrying. It's how careless we are as human beings. And when people got hurt it's because they're careless and just clowning around with these things. Well, we had an incident, I think it was over at [GCU], where some guy shot someone else. They were clearly clowning around with a weapon. You know? They didn't want to admit to what happened.

While Rachel attributed the GCU incidents to user error and did not see them as a cause for alarm at MU, or a reason to reconsider the belief that Greenoak was a progressive, urban safety zone, another subconscious-reactive professor who was a member of the Faculty Senate at the time of the campus-carry law's implementation took a different view:

And there was the shooting over at GCU, which...didn't help. And actually, there was the shooting in [another state] during that time first. And so the shooting in [that state] happened on a Thursday. And the shooting at GCU happened that Friday right after. And um...and that was just...awful. It was...it was just a bad time to be thinking about having guns here. Because we were being faced with the reality of what was happening on campuses. Um... [Takes a long, 38-second pause. Her face reddened and she began to cry. She spent several seconds in silence, eyes closed, trying to regain her composure.]

Just. Those are the people who would, who are, are kind of on the fringes. They don't involve themselves in the Faculty Senate and those kinds of things. And they'd come and they'd talk to Faculty Senators and be like, "well, why aren't we fighting this?" It's like, there's nothing to fight. We can't fight it. We have to work within it. And um, a number of people that I work with on a daily basis were just furious. "Why isn't the chancellor

doing this?” And I, I couldn't explain it away. I couldn't. I couldn't make it clear to them that [the chancellor] really had no choice in this. Which was, again, powerlessness.

Which is, um, it's hard for professors to manage powerlessness, because we have a lot of power...within our own little world. [She laughs; the mood lightens a bit.] And so, it was scary. And it was in our face. I kept saying it was, you know, three and a half miles away. “It’s three and a half miles away. Three and a half miles away!”

For this professor, it became difficult to see a nearby institution dealing with a spate of gun violence while she was intricately involved in the process of responding to colleagues’ criticism of Faculty Senate processes and draft versions of the MU campus-carry policy. The local shootings indicated that perhaps Greenoak was not an insulating factor after all. She and several other colleagues who made sense of the policy through external cues and a subconscious-reactive approach often noted that this would be the time they instead began to choose not to think about campus carry as a reality in their work environment.

“I’m avoiding that thought in my own head.” Many in the subconscious-reactive response group employed strategies to avoid having to think about the campus-carry law altogether. Beyond just considering and holding onto identified insulators in their environment, these participants simply chose in myriad ways to avoid the topic completely. For some, this took the form of outright avoidance and decisions to disengage from the issue. In the extended, important quote that follows, Kim explained how she stayed largely uninvolved in the process despite holding a position on the Faculty Senate:

I could see a way to remove myself from having more opportunity to be personally upset and feel disempowered. And I felt there was only so much I can do as a faculty to change the big narrative. But I need to depend on my own strength to navigate this

situation...And, and it was more of a very happy ignorance I guess. Because now that I know the idea of it, it's like there is a part of me who looks at other people and has no idea who they are. I just, I chose to kind of have wishful thinking of [campus carry] not being enforced on campus. And there were always enough instances of gun-related violence in the past couple of years that people can imagine having this on our campus. I guess I had a very naïve notion that it's not going to be enforced. It's kind of like wishful thinking.

I mean to me, the very simple narrative or thought process was “this doesn't make any sense, so it can't be. And Faculty Senate is made up of a lot of smart people. So, they're going to do something about it to make sure that it doesn't come to the campus.” Because, I mean we *are* sensible people. That's what I thought. And for me there were three Faculty Senate-run meetings. And I chose not to go to any of them. I was in, I don't want to say selfish, but more of a self-preserving mode of like, how can I want to keep working in this institution that I love and like, and work with my students with a sense of trust, and not fear them as gun carriers? And for me, for me to be able to do that? I don't want too many horror stories. I don't want a lot of faculty-student conflict. I'm going to kind of protect myself from all these stories where once you know it you cannot un-know it, right?

For Kim, a protective choice to pursue avoidance took the form of not only engaging in a more limited fashion with her Faculty Senate responsibilities, but also with her considerations of how to manage campus-carry policy processes in her own classroom. While other faculty participants added language to their syllabi regarding concealed handgun policies, or engaged students in discussion about the law, Kim described her approach as more minimalist:

I almost choose to not think about it. I'd put it like I choose not to foreground it in my syllabus or thoughts. I mean, I guess somebody who just disagrees with my way of dealing with it can define it or characterize it as avoidance, because I'm avoiding that topic. And in my head, I'm avoiding that thought in my own head.

While Kim and some of her colleagues characterized this choice toward purposeful, protective disengagement as avoidance, other MU faculty actively disengaged from the law through a sense of acceptance that SB 11 was going into effect regardless of their concerns. Though the end result was largely the same – coping by removing oneself from considering the legalization of campus carry – those who took the acceptance route simply acknowledged the legal, social, and political realities of the time and place rather than seeking to ignore them. As Lester explained:

It's just a matter of it's the law of the land and there's nothing I can do about it right now. The legislature is not going to take this on in this coming session to try to undo it. So why bother, right? Let's just accept it, and let's wait for a time when we might be able to impact some change...The majority of my students, I expect them to make the right decision. I think the same is true when it comes to guns. You know, I think that those of my students who choose to bring weapons to campus, if they're legally authorized to do so, have the maturity to handle that responsibility. And to know when they would draw and when they wouldn't draw, and to know that it wouldn't be appropriate to draw a weapon because you have a dispute with a classmate or with a faculty member. So, maybe I'm naive in that regard. But I always trust that the best of us will come forth. It hasn't let me down yet...I could take the other view and say “oh my God, this is terrible. This is the end of the world and it's only a matter of time before that happens here, too.” I

choose not to. I choose to believe that we can have safe spaces where we can engage in healthy debate without anybody feeling the need to resort to a weapon.

Lester's explanation of accepting the law's existence and seeking to not be alarmed further demonstrates his choice to disengage from the process as a means of coping with a work environment wherein fear was a new potential response. Rather than leaning into those fears, participants in the subconscious-reactive response group seemed to make sense of the law by removing themselves from it through an avoidance or acceptance strategy which allowed them to purposefully disengage from consternation around the policy and its implementation. At the same time, however, nearly all participants in this study spoke of SB 11 legislation and the resulting MU campus-carry policy as a disempowering factor in their work. This sense of disempowerment is evident in the quotes above regarding seeking to avoid or simply accept the law rather than engaging with it. The sensemaking processes for those in the subconscious-reactive group often caused these professors to continue to feel disempowered as they made meaning of the law.

Continued feelings of disempowerment. Participants across both sensemaking response groups identified feelings of disempowerment, helplessness, and defeatism associated with the enactment of SB 11 and development of the related MU campus policy. For most faculty in both sensemaking groups, these feelings began during the multi-year process of prior campus-carry legislative debates, and were related to both a perceived loss of agency to make workplace decisions and an erosion of academic freedom. The difference between the two groups was that those who made sense of the law and policy through a subconscious-reactive response using external cues, insulation, and avoidance/acceptance strategies continued feeling disempowered into the first semester of legal campus carry. For those in the subconscious-reactive group, it

seems their process of sensemaking through reliance upon external factors and avoiding consideration of the law only exacerbated the existing sense that SB 11 removed a level of agency faculty felt in their work. Jill explained the contours of this sense of disempowerment by saying:

And every time it came up in the legislature, the thing that bothered me was the idea somebody gets to decide that they come into my workplace and I don't get a choice. I don't have a choice in that. So, half of me thinks, "well, yeah, I do have a choice: I could go work at a private university." But I couldn't stay in [Greenoak] and work at a private university because there's no [academic discipline] programs in any private university in the city. So, I'd have to move if I wanted to go to a different place, a different university. And, and [starts laughing] not to put too fine a point on it, I was here first! So, you're changing the rules, and that's not fair! And so, I guess part of what bothered me first was that I didn't feel like I had a choice. Felt like all of a sudden, somebody different was making a decision about the safety of my workplace, as opposed to his or her own workplace. So then in the lead-up, that was my biggest argument, was about why do you get to decide? And the argument back from most of the people who were for it was, "well, we pay taxes." And I'm like, "well, yeah, so do I!" But that argument didn't win, clearly.

This participant was not the only one to offer an example of the sense of disempowerment associated with campus-carry enactment as a contrast to typical notions of academic freedom enjoyed by faculty. For example, Mark, the faculty participant who was involved in the MU Campus-Carry Work Group tasked with developing the campus policy and determining

exclusion zones, noted academic freedom and disempowerment in his rationale for believing the policy was a non-event for him in contrast to some colleagues:

Well, it wasn't difficult because I accepted the job. Alright? And I accepted the job of translating the law into policy. And so, I understood what my role was. And, um... [prolonged pause] I think it was difficult for *others* in that sense of lack of control in their environment. We as faculty like to think the classroom is our kingdom, you know, we make the rules. It's our domain. We have academic freedom, have all of those other things. I just accept that this is the law, and the university made its position known before it became law. People were free to organize and make various protests and appeals to the legislature individually. But that just wasn't my job. And if I felt like I needed to do that, do protesting and that sort of thing, then I wouldn't have taken the job. OK? But I'm going, in fact, to try to comply with the law to the best of our ability.

This participant, closely involved in the upper-level discussions around the MU campus policy development processes, was typical of those in the subconscious-reactive response group in that he accepted the law rather than trying to challenge it and expressed a lack of agency as a result. This notion of the SB 11 legislative process and resulting MU campus-carry policy being agents of disempowerment extended to nearly all participants, though those in the subconscious-reactive response group had far stronger and more sustained beliefs about their lack of ability to influence change in their environment. For some, the processes of gaining feedback on the draft campus-carry policy even furthered this sense of disempowerment:

It was always there in the background, and then we would have forums where we would talk about it. I would say all of that, even though I think it was necessary and I'm glad I went to all of them, it probably raised my level of anxiety. You know, it didn't actually

result in my feeling reassured. It resulted in my feeling more anxious about it, and also feeling my own lack of control over my environment in my classroom. I mean, the classroom is my domain. And I don't have the control of my domain that I once had. And in the university, the people on high, the Faculty Senate chair, the campus police, the main counsel for the university, the lawyers, they made it very clear that if faculty violated these rules about what we were allowed to do, say, et cetera about guns, that we were on our own. We would not be supported. The university would not support us. So that's another chilling effect. You know you're on your own; you're out there in the wind. And it also would make me think twice about doing anything that might be provocative, because I know I don't have support.

This participant references an extended sense of disempowerment that stemmed from not only the law and campus policy, but also from the institution's perceived desire to comply with the law rather than support concerned faculty. Other subconscious-reactive participants, including Jill, noted this as well, but rationalized the university administration's response as a political necessity, even accepting part of the responsibility for not supporting the administration in the first place:

So, I felt really powerless. We all, well, I can't speak for everybody. *I* felt very powerless. And I felt that no matter what we said, since it was going to happen anyway, there was always this defeatism. And that wasn't...our administration was kind of along the lines of, "we have to implement this. We're going to do it with as much faculty input as we can have." And [the MU Chancellor] did have to implement it; it's not like we had a choice. But the defeatism, really, really was sad. I guess part of me...and if it's not clear. I am a loud, noisy, liberal person. So, I don't take that stuff lying down, myself. And I'm always

surprised when other people are just like, “well, you know, there's nothing we can do about it.” I'm thinking, you don't have to be loud; you have to at least express your disappointment. Or your disagreement. If you don't do that, then everybody thinks you agree. And I know that our chancellor's hands were really tied. We need that money [from state appropriations]. We have to have that money. If we don't have that money, we can't keep the lights on. So, [the chancellor] can't...[they] can't fight the governor. [They] can't. And people who wanted [them] to do that weren't really recognizing [their] constraints. I don't think [they] could have said anything. [The chancellor] was relying on us to be the ones who could do that for [them] because...That's what we were supposed to be doing for [them], and I don't think that we did that. I don't think we were very effective with that.

For Jill, a self-described “loud, noisy, liberal person,” the feelings of disempowerment associated with SB 11 and the MU campus policy development process were unusual given her typical activities. While she was a regular political activist outside the university environment, she did not feel she or her colleagues did an adequate job advocating against the law prior to its enactment, particularly when viewing the overall political landscape in Texas and the relationship between MU and the state. Looking retrospectively at the situation, she believed it was the role of faculty to provide political cover for the chancellor, who was also in a position of disempowerment given the financial position of MU as a state institution. Jill believed MU's role as a public university with a comparatively large share of lower-income students explained the institution's strict interpretation of the law regarding faculty agency. Additionally, the fact that the law required total non-disclosure of weapons – faculty cannot ask if anyone is carrying, and carriers cannot say whether they are doing so – seemed to engender a level of uncertainty among

faculty that exacerbated notions of disempowerment. When barred from even determining whether guns were present in their environment, the default assumption became that firearms often were present; as a result, subtle changes in faculty work and student-faculty interaction became apparent despite the initial statements from this group that the law had no effect.

“I haven’t changed what I do, but...” Participants in the subconscious-reactive group used a common rhetorical turn to describe their campus-carry work lives. While these professors initially stated that nothing had changed in their work as a result of campus carry going into effect, or that it was a non-event altogether, they often went on to describe a series of subtle changes occurring beneath the surface, often at a subconscious level. This phenomenon of subtle, subconscious alterations was best encapsulated in this quote from a subconscious-reactive participant in responding to whether change had occurred as a result of campus carry: “I haven’t changed what I do, but I admit I added language to my syllabus, and sometimes I do think twice about the way I present.” This contradictory sentence – stating that nothing had changed, then explicitly identifying changes which occurred – is an example of the degree to which faculty in the subconscious-reactive group seemed to experience changes in their work. They experienced work-life alterations that were subtle, often subconscious or intuitive, and typically not the result of their own decision making.

For many in this group, these subtle and subconscious changes were often the result of a general tendency to seek external cues and environmental factors in order to make sense of the law and its influence (or perceived lack thereof) on their work. For example, at the end of the conversation with Jill, the doctoral professor who had not perceived any changes in her work environment, upon further reflection she discussed the role of exclusion zone signage as a subtle change agent:

I would say, you know, on most days it doesn't [affect me]. On the vast majority of days, it feels no different than it did three years ago or five years ago for me. So, you know, life as usual. Because I find myself around campus for a variety of reasons, where I find it jarring is to clash into the...like...how much you notice the signage, right? So, exclusion zones. Like, that's where I think I sort of take, take this breath when I, when I walk by and you see sort of lab after lab after lab. In that [building name], or over in our science research lab buildings. So, door after door after door with these approved signs that talk about, you know, this is a gun-free space and blah, blah, blah, and you...you get more used to that. I would say I think I was used to that. I am used to that in the broader [Greenoak] environment because you run into that a lot. When I pause is when I'm reminded that - as is the policy, right? - that the exclusion is just that, right? It is the space where...It is this space where guns are prohibited. So, you know, the counterfactual to that now is the norm. Absent that sign, these are places where people can bring concealed weapons and...have them...be... have them be part of the daily life.

Jill was joined by several other participants experiencing exclusion zone signage as a signal something subtle had changed on the campus, and having signage cause “a breath,” as she put it, or a moment of reflection and consideration of safety despite believing that nothing changed. Susan, a professor in the new biosciences complex referenced in the preceding quotation, explained it this way:

It hasn't really changed anything. The most noticeable change of all this is the signage which is kind of just depressing, right? This is a wonderful space. But now we have all these signs. You know it gives it kind of a...an inner city kind of...unsafe feel just because the signage is up. It's not that anything substantial actually changed. But having all that

signage - this room's excluded, this one's...this one's...you know there's just signs all the way down our hallway. It's just...it's depressing. You know, it ruins the look of the building, it takes away from the feeling of safety. Right? A sign that says [enthusiastically] “no guns” implies that lots of people might want to carry them here and they have to be told *not* to do that. So, yeah, the signage has been the worst of it I think.

The continued presence of signage reminding Susan that guns could be present in her daily life seemed to be a salient factor in consideration of her work despite initially stating that nothing had changed as a result of the law. The subtle and subconscious changes informing the work of faculty in this group were not solely related to exclusion zone signage, however. For others, the characteristic decision to avoid consideration of the law’s implementation extended to a choice not to consider the ways in which interactions with students had changed as well. Kim, a subconscious-reactive sensemaker who taught in the MU School of Education, described specific changes to her behavior which she identified as resulting from the law. In the following substantial narrative, Kim first stated nothing changed in her interactions with students, and then went to great lengths to explain precisely how campus carry affected her thought processes and influenced her interaction with students:

I was, really surprised how um...it didn't affect me. I thought that a lot of things would have changed around me, and my way of interacting with students or... But I guess in a lot of ways, the only way for me to say it is that I almost have forgotten it. Now it's August 2016. We are on a different campus in a kind of way. It was like before campus carry and after campus carry, but it just seemed to me on a daily basis that nothing has changed. Or on the other hand I just...I want to completely...I don't even want to think about that I'm working on a campus where campus carry has passed and it's enforced,

because I just choose to not think about it. I guess I choose to come to campus thinking, “hey, nothing has changed.” Right? And you know, 2016 December. Right now it's not any different than 2014 summer. Which is not true. But you know, in some ways I guess somewhere in my head I'm actively kind of denying that change, so on a daily basis, I don't think about it.

But do the [things I do as a teacher] change? Yeah, hm, I think so. I think so. I can't go into detail because I'm not supposed to. But like, this whole campus-carry conversation came about at a time that ... let me just say that I had opportunity to understand more about how the complaints are filed, how the grievances are filed, either regarding me or my fellow colleagues, and my association to the role. So, I had an opportunity to understand more about the process and kind of got to know how it's so much more common and frequent that students are upset about either the smallest thing, or the triggers to upset students. It's very, very low. I mean it's low. Like there are many triggers for those students to be upset. And I read some other faculty's issues that a student forwarded me about another faculty member's action. And during that time of campus-carry conversations, I had the opportunity to see, wow, people can misinterpret other people's intentions. And it really surprised me how people can misinterpret and misunderstand each other. And in a way, I think that got connected somewhere in my head with gun control.

So, if the student's in that situation, if it's very clear that student was upset and misinterpreted another faculty member's intention, and if that student chose to bring a gun and use it, that would be the situation that would have escalated. So, I was able to kind of spot the possible potential instances. And it made me think that there needs to be

some kind of conversation with the students really explicitly saying even something like what my philosophy of education is, and that I will choose to take a very hard role of giving you hard feedback if needed. I'm not going to say yes to everything or just compliment you on mediocre work.

But I guess I became more aware of where the situations are that the student will become very upset. And I would try to not necessarily prevent it, but I think I try to provide more ways for them to really understand my grading or feedback as something useful and constructive so they also do not take it personally. So for example, I would think more about finding ways to support the students in class, so they can feel that my support and my intention for support is real. So I became much more explicit about my rubric, and I'm a qualitative researcher. So before that, I was much more narrative in my rubric. But I think I became much more explicit in my rubric. So they have exactly the scores that they get, but they also have an opportunity to revise and resubmit. Things like that. So, I don't want to avoid sensitive topics. I don't want to give everybody an A because I'm scared somebody is going to bring a gun and threaten me. I want to keep the integrity of my instruction. And, but at the same time be more...I guess sensitive to what my good intentioned, strict or constructive feedback, how it can be interpreted. And find different ways to address it if they choose to. So they're not getting all A's for effort, but at the same time, I try to do more position-taking from the students' perspective.

And what I realized is when you blow out, and when you want to, you know...um...you know, use the gun, it's usually when you think that the sense of fairness has been violated. I can kind of see that as if they have some maybe psychological issue. Coupled with those conditions and those thoughts will be a perfect kind of combination where

people want to bring that gun and use it. So I try to avoid that kind of feeling. And I'm trying to think as an instructor, what can I do to minimize the sense of unfairness? So I guess gun control and the whole campus-carry issue, in a practical way, made me revisit my syllabus so that it became much more clear in terms of my assessment and instruction. And I hate the word “evidence-based.” But I think of it as what are the evidences I can present? So just, if I can't control people bringing the guns, and wanting to use them, let me at least try to prevent escalating that situation.

This story of Kim’s experiences with student grievances during the enactment of campus-carry policy at MU provides evidence of the overall sensemaking process characteristic of those in the subconscious-reactive response group. She began by saying that nothing changed as a result of the campus-carry policy, and predicated this belief on her choice to avoid the topic altogether in her consideration. Immediately thereafter, however, she went to great lengths to explain the subtle change that occurred in the ways she thinks of interaction with students, particularly around the processes of evaluating student work. This explanation – “nothing has changed, but here are all the changes I have made” – seemed to be rooted in the core processes of sensemaking for this group: seeking external cues, labeling insulating factors, and employing reactive avoidance/acceptance strategies.

“It Changes Everything:” A Conscious-Active Response

Standing in stark contrast to the subconscious-reactive group, another set of participants made sense of the arrival of campus-carry policy through direct, purposeful changes in their own decision making. For faculty whose sensemaking took on a more conscious-active pattern, explicit decisions to change aspects of their work were made after identifying meaning in the policy through internal factors, including personal experiences and strongly-held beliefs and

values. As a result, conscious-active participants not only made clear, unambiguous statements of the exact changes that occurred for them, but also seemed to feel a sense of reclaimed power and purpose through their active role in decision-making. They also acted, in many cases, as sensegivers for their colleagues, and made efforts to actively support many faculty counterparts who were likely adopting a more subconscious-reactive approach.

Sensemaking through prior personal experience. A deeply influential prior personal experience with guns or gun violence was one of the most salient and shared factors among nearly all participants in the conscious-active response group. These experiences seemed to color the perceptions of guns on campus for participants in this group, and were a common topic of discussion. Furthermore, some faculty in the conscious-active response group grew up in Texas and had prior experiences with recreational gun use. As a result, past experiences of both positive and negative aspects of Texas gun culture often led to complex and nuanced beliefs about the issue beyond a simple pro or con standpoint. For example, Julie situated her understanding of campus carry by taking into account both her own personal experience and the statewide enactment of open-carry legislation earlier in 2016:

So, in order to put this part into context, I grew up with guns. And I am familiar with them. I shot guns of mine as a child – not a child, as a teenager. It never really had a thrill for me, but my brothers are hunters. I have one brother who feeds his family based on what he hunts for. And another who does it more for enjoyment and for the pleasure of being out in the woods. The fact that he gets to bring home fresh meat is a positive for him. And so I understand the allure for a hunting tool. One of those brothers, however, lost a son. To a hunting accident. And so...I have, um. I probably have more fear of them than I do...comfort. Since that time, the brother who lost his son. I don't think he hunts

anymore. It's not something we've talked about. I don't think he hunts anymore, but his sons, his other sons...do. And my other brother still continues to do so. I can't imagine how I would do that. I wouldn't - I would've... But that's my...reactionary kind of way to be.

So, um, I have an angst about guns. And I try really hard to be rational about that angst. And to be able to say, "I know that it's irrational." And I have to start trying to stay rational, so I try. I do my best with it. I'm not always successful.

So from that context, while we were here in [Greenoak], there was a law passed that allowed for [statewide open carry]. And I remember being very frightened of that during that time. Thinking, "you know that's crazy. Anybody could have a gun and you'll never know, and what is it, that is just a crazy idea." And I was one of those people who was like, "this is going to be like shootin' up everybody. Everybody was gonna die, everybody's gonna be shot, it's going to be a horrible thing."

And it didn't happen. The argument that people would put forth often was, "well, you know, if everybody thinks everybody's got a gun, then everybody's gonna behave themselves." So maybe that's happened. Maybe it hasn't. But maybe it has. I have, I guess, become inured to the idea that there's probably people with guns around me all the time. It is Texas. [chuckle] There are guns, probably, in a lot of people's pockets. Or in their glove compartments. Or strapped to their backs. I mean, I understand that that's there. And I kind of carried on and I don't look at people and think, "well, I wonder if he has a gun." I don't think that anymore. I did when the original concealed carry was passed. I remember thinking that a lot...So, that's the context that I kind of came into the idea that there's going to be guns on campus. I have my immediate bias: I don't like them.

And I had my recognition that my life hadn't really changed all that much; I didn't feel any less safe knowing that the world around me had guns. But, I never had to think about them being in my classroom. Or in my office.

For Julie, reconciling two conflicting feelings rooted in personal experience – the loss of a nephew and the perceived uneventful nature of recent open-carry enactment in the state – became a lens through which she viewed and made sense of campus carry at MU. Hers was not the only story of prior familial gun violence incidents as a sensemaking factor. Pauline, an MU professor for several decades, shared this experience as an element in her understanding of campus-carry policy enactment:

Unfortunately, I've had in my personal experience unhappy experiences with guns that probably shaped the way I feel about guns anywhere, but especially guns in a place of higher education or any education. I grew up in [major urban city] and my family had several houses in [a rural area in a state], one of which was kind of a hunting lodge. A lot of the male members in my mother's side of the family hunted. They did deer hunting every November. My mother's youngest brother actually not only hunted with guns but hunted with bow and arrow because it was fairer to the...you know.

Anyway they were hunters. My father hunted; he wasn't as gung-ho about hunting as they were but he was part of that mix. And every November they would all go to this house where they had property, and they'd hunt deer and shoot and have the guns. I never actually touched a gun in my life and my father had a, I guess whatever he used to shoot deer, a shotgun. But it wasn't something that was ever out. We didn't have handguns. I mean it was just about hunting, really, the guns.

And my mother's youngest brother at age 33 was living in one of the other houses in [the family's rural property area] which was a farm, and he had a live-in girlfriend. I guess they were intending to get married at some time, but they lived together and he had- oh well we don't know. She tells us after the fact that they were having an argument and there was a gun there, a shotgun, and in the heat of the moment she picked up the shotgun and blew a hole through his chest at close range. And, of course, he died at age 33. And we don't- we only have her side of- We... He's gone. We don't know what really happened that led to...

But anyway, that, I think just the idea that having guns in any kind of convenient proximity can lead to the worst possible worst-case scenario has always been...ever since then. I mean he died in like the early 1970s. So ever since then, I mean that's my go-to personal reason to think that having guns around in a house is just a really bad idea. And so you know, not everybody has that kind of an experience in their personal family history. But I do...

So I have that as part of my background for feeling very strongly against a gun culture. And living in Texas, it's sort of hard to kind of... ameliorate myself to a place where people like to have guns and it's getting that way all over the country. But, but I'm really, really anti-gun for personal reasons and for, you know, just philosophical ones. And I really think it's a bad idea to have them in any context where education is happening. So, I don't like the idea of going into the grocery store and not knowing whether somebody's – I mean, you know. I just don't like guns.

Prior direct experiences with gun violence, as Pauline described, were not the only type of personal factors informing MU faculty sensemaking. Alan, a professor in one of MU's

professional schools, grew up in Western Europe during a wartime period of compulsory military service. He related his sense of working in a campus-carry environment to his status as a conscientious objector during the war:

It was strange for me, as I grew up like 10 kilometers from the iron curtain, seeing actually the iron curtain and the tanks on the other side and everything. I'm a conscientious objector in [my country of origin]. I refused to pick up a weapon. I had to go to court and defend myself against 12 judges, with the risk being that if you can't defend yourself, you go to jail until you pick up your weapon. So, this is my background in terms of guns, actually. And I'm still [chuckles] in the same set of mind; my mindset's still the same. So being in Texas, I'm clear about that...it's like very open with guns. And in our house actually, we are totally against guns. My son even, he's not allowed to go anywhere where they have guns. And he himself says he is the only Democrat in a Republican school. [chuckle] So this is more or less my background: very anti-gun, anti-war.

My father was a hunter, too, and I grew up with four rifles in the house. I've never shot in my life. I've never touched it, I never felt like it, was never asked to do it, nothing. So it was like, okay there it is, and it's just another thing. And hunting is a bit different in [my country of origin] because you have to have a license, take an exam, and each shot has to be recorded. So I grew up actually with four rifles in the rifle cabinet, but there was never any reason to touch them or even want to shoot.

When this discussion came up, I read in the paper, and I don't know if it's true, only like 3 percent of Texans actually have a gun license. So, it's really small. And again, it comes up as how come a minority, only a few pushed for it, right? A tiny minority is dictating

what all of us should do. I mean, what lobby is that? It's unbelievable if I think about it.

It's the same thing back to: I had to defend myself in court if I *didn't* want to kill

someone. It's the other way around here. You're not even allowed to ask them, so you can be not afraid.

For Alan, growing up in wartime with strongly held beliefs about guns acted as a filter through which he viewed the onset of campus-carry policy. However, even positive personal experiences colored perceptions of campus-carry policy for those in the conscious-active group who made sense of the law through their own internal beliefs and values. For example, Rachel, a professor who grew up in a rural area of western Texas, spoke fondly of firearms as she described prior experiences with guns in her childhood, which nevertheless caused her to be wary of campus-carry legislation:

I grew up in West Texas. I went shooting when I was a teenager. My father never owned a gun. But my uncles did. So, my uncles and my cousins and I would go shooting with them. I have one uncle who is an avid gun collector. I mean he has amazing pieces. So, I always grew up with them. But I was also taught very carefully around them. You always locked and separated the ammo from the weapon itself. I mean the level of confidence with weapons was, explained to me by my uncle, always dependent on how careful you were. There is no casualness around these weapons and everything was always locked away. So I think a couple of colleagues, including myself, had thought about concealed carry. [Long pause, deep breath.]

I'm not comfortable with that right now. I know how clumsy I am. [Another deep breath].

I also know I drop things a lot. Now I also know how heavy a weapon is. It is not, it's not light. It's, it's a bulky, awkward weight. So, I had thought about getting a concealed

license. In fact, I probably will eventually. You know it's only 50 bucks, four hours [of state-mandated training]. I mean eventually I probably will do it. But in actuality, I really would prefer that those who are carrying guns I know are carrying them and are well trained.

But...[big sigh]. So, when I heard the discussion going on about campus carry happening, I toyed with the idea of saying, “wow. I guess I should carry.” But then I, I know what it takes. Not sure I want that bulky, heavy piece in my backpack. I've always been taught you only put ammo into the weapon when you're going to shoot. Because the last thing you want is a loose, loaded weapon floating around somewhere. It takes a lot of force to pull that trigger, but you never know what can happen. Pin can get caught, you can drop it and put some weight on it. Next thing you know, you got a bullet flying somewhere.

For Rachel and her colleagues who also shared deeply influential prior experiences with guns and/or gun violence, the decision to allow concealed weapons on Texas campuses was intertwined with these past encounters. In contrast to the subconscious-reactive group who sought external cues in order to make sense of the law, the conscious-active group turned inward and identified personal characteristics, experiences, and values in order to achieve sensemaking. For many, these internal sources of meaning led their workplace decisions during the legislative and campus implementation policies, as well as after the fact as the law went into effect in its first semester.

“It can’t help but have an effect.” Partly as a result of the strong internal foundations from which the conscious-active group came to understand the law and their place within Texas higher education and the MU campus after its implementation, these faculty were very clear about the specific classroom and student-interaction choices they made differently due to campus

carry. Instead of their subconscious-reactive colleagues' descriptions of an outwardly unchanged environment, conscious-active faculty readily shared specific and tangible examples of changes in their teaching and in ways they chose to interact with students after campus-carry enactment. Julie, who spoke earlier about the loss of her nephew to a hunting accident, shared this story of reconsidering the ways she interacted with students outside the classroom:

I teach in the [first-year student seminar program]. And we had a student who was really struggling. And [this course] is for the undecided freshmen, the freshmen who haven't made a decision about what to do. And he was clearly in crisis and he was very... combative. Would send e-mails, you know, about how he hated it here and why are we making him do things. So, it's like, "OK. So don't come." [chuckle] But anyway, I was really sad that my response to him was a little bit different from what I think it would have been previously. Because in the previous times I would have brought him in and sat him down and said, "look. You got two choices, and work on it." But in this case, I completely jettisoned him off to the Dean of Students. I'm like, "you know what, I'm not paid...to...to confront this anymore." And that bothered me.

So from an...attitude and a change in behavior that really bothered me, and it bothered me more than I- ...I mean, knew it was going to. I knew it would bother me, but I didn't know how much it would bother me until I was in the middle of it. And I thought, "gosh, I would never have done it that way." Because that's not how I do things. And it's what I did. Because...I'm not positive if I was af- Well, no, I was. I was afraid of him. And I thought, you know that's...I don't think I've ever been afraid of a student. I've had some really difficult students and I've never been afraid of them. But that one, I just, yeah. I did I just completely pass the buck. It really pissed me off! [Laughs.]

For Julie, the experience of dealing with a challenging first-year student who she felt was combative took on a different tone in the context of campus-carry policy than in prior semesters. Pauline, the professor who taught at MU for several decades, spoke of changes in her interaction with students in similarly direct ways in this extended narrative:

When you know that there are people on the campus with guns, you don't know who they are. You can't tell who they are. You can't ask who they are. It certainly has a chilling effect on how open you are with students, how much you are willing to engage them about their personal problems or any of those things that many of them really need, especially if they're here, the first time they're away from their parents and are living on their own perhaps for the first time, and are really confused about a lot of things, they need, they need... They need to talk to somebody sometimes. Just, just to talk. It's just probably not even that I can guide them or anything but they just need to say something to somebody about what's going on in their life. But I really feel constrained about doing that because of my knowledge that I don't know whether they're walking into my office with a gun in their backpack or wherever.

So, the other thing that it has changed. It has...It's too soon; it's only been one semester for the...impact...and I only taught one class this semester so I've had a limited experience with having guns in- possible guns in my classroom this semester. But knowing that in August campus carry became a law, I changed my syllabus from 40 years of always calling what I had "office hours" and changed the word on all of my syllabi to "conference hours" so that if I feel...[long pause]. I don't necessarily meet the student in my office if I don't know very much about the student. I'll suggest that we meet out there [in the hallway] in chairs. I'll just make up an excuse saying it's hot in my office or

whatever. I don't tell them that it's because of guns.

But, it has changed the way I consider my office hours, and that's detrimental to the students...If they don't know something about a subject that they're studying in my class, or they're trying to come up with a term paper topic, or they're not sure what they want to do, or they're having trouble finding books or articles or whatever about the research topic that they've chosen. I would openly go pull things off my shelf and say, "oh take a look at this, and here's that and..." You know, if I'm sitting out there [in the hallway] I won't do that. They lose, I mean, they lose. I might look up something on the Internet for them and say, "well wait, let's look up the library and see what the library has on this." I can't do that if I'm sitting out there, if I'm sitting in another place.

I know some of my colleagues now have their quote unquote office hours or conference hours in a coffee shop or another public place. I could do that. But it wouldn't be the same as being in my office and having all my materials at my hand and being able to just say, "Oh, I think there was an article about that; let me go see if I have it on my shelf."

It's just changed... It's changed the way I teach. It's also...(sigh) so far... I wouldn't say it's put a clamp on what I feel I can say in class, but it has somewhat. Some of the texts that I teach have kind of sensitive, personal issues in them. We have a very big LGBT community at [MU], and I've had a lot of LGBT students in my classes. And one of the texts that I teach, I just finished teaching it this semester... And it's this... kind of raises all kinds of sensitive issues about what makes us what we are and what makes you female, what makes you male.

And this time - I teach it every year - and this time, uh....I was a little careful in the way I said things, because, I don't know. I just don't want to provoke anything. I think students

are in college to have their ideas challenged. They're in college to- I mean maybe not so much in high school but certainly in college. They're supposed to be being exposed to different ideas than what their parents told them was right or what they think is right or, you know, they're supposed to be challenged. That's what college is supposed to do. And with guns in the mix, I don't think I can be as challenging as I used to be. I still am somewhat. I'm kind of provocative. I do crazy things in the classroom and that's part of why my students like me and respect me and, and get excited because I'm so excited that I do all these crazy things I do. Crazy stuff. Because I figure if I do out-of-the-box sorts of things it will make them remember it. And they all tell me, they come back later years later and "I remember when you did..." you know, whatever.

So but I think, I just think. [long pause to reflect]

I'm probably going to be more conservative about how I try to engage students, provoke them into thinking in a different way. I don't necessarily want them to think one way or another, I just want them to think about different things in different ways.

After identifying the specific changes to her teaching and office hours in the quotation above, Pauline went on to label these choices as made intentionally in light of campus-carry legislation, and leading to specific conclusions about her effectiveness as a teacher as a result:

It's, it's just off-putting. It's somewhat nerve racking. So I, I have to do things in a different way than I did before. Does my different behavior perhaps result in a less effective teaching compared to what I did before? I would say probably. But I have to protect me and I have to protect the other students, and I can't... you know, I have to not perhaps go so outside my box that I raise issues that could provoke students to an extent that they could perhaps...use deadly force or even threaten to. You know, it just puts a

chill in the discussion. It just...And I know, I've talked to some other colleagues who also because of the subject that they teach raise sort of sensitive issues and they, too, have said that they are now scaling back what they say, what they bring up, even maybe what text they decide to have the students read or not. It's going to change, probably changes your curriculum somewhat. Choices that you make about what we're going to teach now. So, it's...it can't help but have an effect.

For Pauline, a member of the MU faculty with decades of service, her reflections on what had changed at the end of the first semester were rooted in a carefully developed understanding of her role as a teacher, scholar, and supportive resource for students. In addition to choosing to alter the format of office hours so as to no longer be private, as well as reconsidering aspects of her curriculum and pedagogy in order to be less provocative or controversial, she spoke of a general sense of guardedness in the classroom overall. Rachel, the professor who was generally comfortable with guns if not with campus carry per se, echoed this sentiment when she spoke of her own sense of being newly guarded in classroom discussions, evinced through the social aspect of sensemaking:

I know the faculty are nervous. I know the colleagues (because we've spoken to each other about it) are uncomfortable with the idea that... Yeah. Wow. Something else we have to worry about. You know there are volatile students, and, you know. Now, they might be able to pull a gun out on you. Um...[Long, thoughtful pause.] You know. [sigh] At the beginning of the semester we were doing Freud, I remember. Freud's essay on femininity, and how frustrated I was with Freud, and I realized, [this semester] I'm not as in the open. I'm usually very open in the classroom. Very. The students are pretty clear when I'm happy or unhappy, especially with a reading like Freud. And I realized that I

had pulled myself back a little bit with my frustration on Freud, and that, that was one of the first times I remember thinking about that simply because - and to a certain extent it really was - because, wow, maybe I need to be a little more cautious here.

And then after the [2016 U.S. presidential] election. My class meets [at specific days and times], so we're meeting Wednesday, and walking in, getting ready to talk about annotated bibliographies, and it was November 9th, and every single student either had their phone open or their computer or iPad open. And I knew, because I'd been sitting in here waiting for Hillary Clinton to give her concession speech and I knew it was on my heart, so I said, "OK, we're not going to get anything done." And so we started talking, and one of the things I realized as I looked around is, and this I wasn't sure whether it was that political or whether I'm just starting to get used to the fact that there might be a concealed-carry gun in there, but I was trying to be a great deal more even in my response than I have been in the past.

And with that one, I'm not sure if it's the fact that we're about to get an administration that scares the heck out of me, or if it really is, you know, the lingering saturation of concealed carry now. So those are the two times I know that, in terms of back of my mind, a certain level of caution has kicked in that I don't remember having previously.

Rachel's story of feeling more guarded and cautious in classroom discussions as a result of recognizing that there may be armed students in her environment provided further evidence to support the idea that for faculty with a conscious-active style of sensemaking, campus carry contributed to intentional choices to alter typical teaching behavior when compared to prior semesters.

Re-empowerment, defiance, and sensegiving. For many faculty participants in the conscious-active response group, making intentional choices to change their behavior was rooted in a desire to regain a sense of power and control over their work environments. While the subconscious-reactive group generally continued to feel disempowerment and a loss of agency during the first semester of legal campus carry, the faculty in this group seemed to actually restore some of their own sense of ownership and control through their response. One characteristic trait of those in this group was a sense of purposeful defiance, in contrast to acceptance or avoidance. This is not to say that they defied the law, but rather that they approached their new work environments with a seeming desire to affect change in whatever ways they could. Julie described this sense of purposeful defiance by continuing to share disappointment in her response to the combative student she referred to the Dean of Students earlier in the term:

And part of that might be defiance. I flatly refuse to be a different professor. I don't, I don't want to it. I don't want to be like that. And in fact, I dragged my feet with the one that I had to refer off, because I really didn't want to have to, and you know, I didn't think to myself "guns" but I definitely thought to myself, "you know, the old [Julie] woulda, woulda stuck with this kid." And I probably stuck with him longer than I should have, because he probably got help faster when he got to the right person. But yeah, I think it's more defiance than it is anything else.

I choose not to be afraid. I don't know what to do with my fears because I don't know. I mean that's not my usual place; that's not where I'm supposed to be. And so I don't know how to... I have no idea how to process them. And so without the practice, I don't know what to do with it. And I think with the gun thing, I just, more than anything else, I don't

want it to be...I am wondering how much that is my defiance though, too. My determination that I just will not live like that. I have no intention of being frightened. It's not a good place to be there. I think it's a healthier response than some of the responses I've heard from colleagues who have said, you know "well I'm not going to say X to a student because I'm afraid."

And I, I just... all I can think is why would you... why keep coming to work? You know? I don't know why you keep coming to work if you can't do your job. So. It's almost like a pathological caution because it prevents you from, from acting, from doing the things you really need to do as part of your responsibilities.

Julie's active choice not to be afraid – a part of her own self-described sense of defiance – exists as a counterpoint to her colleagues who took a less direct approach to the issue. She went on to describe the solace she took from conversations with the MU campus police who explained what she and other faculty could do in response to a visible gun in her classroom:

I had our police chief come in and talk about, well not the chief, but one of the officers, come in and talk about what it meant, and what our rights were as instructors, and in the classroom and stuff. And one of the things he said that made me feel so much better was that the rule is concealed. If you see it, if you see its outline, you need to call the police. And I went, "oh! So, it's that easy?" And he says it's completely that easy. If he itches his leg and it's in an ankle holster, and you see it, you can say, "put that away. I don't want to see that." And you're allowed to do that, because it's supposed to be concealed. You should never know it's there. And I thought, you know what? There is some comfort in that. That's my power. That's my tiny little bit of power [holds fingers up close together

indicating a tiny amount of power] that I needed, and I don't expect to ever have a need to use it.

While this example demonstrates a police officer's explanation of one area where faculty retained some agency over their classroom environments with regard to concealed weapons, it also offers a case of sensegiving or acting to try to influence the sensemaking process of another person through advice, explanation, or support. In part a result of their conscious-active approach to sensemaking, faculty in this group often shared stories of becoming sensegivers for their subconscious-reactive colleagues. For example, Julie took the experience of realizing she had a "tiny little bit of power" back to her colleagues:

That gave everybody a moment of going "oh well there is a little bit of something we can do." And so, I made sure to share that with my faculty at the department, which they didn't know either. Part of it is, though, that they rely on other people to get that information and bring it in. And we have a few, very few who actually get out on campus a lot.

As this quotation shows, Julie actively decided to serve as a sensegiver for her colleagues as did most in the conscious-active response group. These faculty often seemed to be known in their colleges, or even across the campus in some cases, as the person to speak with for anyone struggling with the implementation of the law and its practical effects upon faculty. Similarly, Rachel shared multiple stories of attempting to influence the sensemaking processes of colleagues in her department, as this particularly salient example demonstrates:

I've had more conversations with colleagues. I had a colleague who, as we were doing this over the spring and summer, we were having conversations about how she was going to put it in her syllabus and I said, "you know, one of the things you need to do is get to

the town halls.” And she did that. She was very attentive to the town halls. And when I gave her my syllabus language as a draft of my language, she had her own, I said, “you know, the thing about the university is they will protect you as long as you do it the way they want you to do it. You veer from that, they're not going to play.” So...I think it calmed her down.

Rachel’s sensegiving work, a part of her active response and overt decision making, extended not only to faculty colleagues but to a desire to influence the sensemaking processes of students and staff in her department as well. In recognition of the role of the 2016 presidential election in complicating the social climate of the MU campus, coupled with the newly-present concealed weapons, she shared this story:

We have vulnerable students who are - for good reasons - scared. We have a good amount of DACA students. So, we have to be very careful on our campus. We're ready. We've put out notices. There's a couple of signs if you look on our bulletin board just above the water fountain, basically say, “being a decent person is in your best interest.” You know, “let's try to be OK with each other.” It's a tough time. Those went up after the election because you know... We are looking into trying to figure out how to help lower the temperature because finals, and then the election, and the stress levels are just unbelievable right now... It's like, [sigh] look we have an enough tension-filled campus. I also know it's the end of the semester, and I've already had two or three students in here crying, stressed out, freaked out. The last thing they need is something volatile.

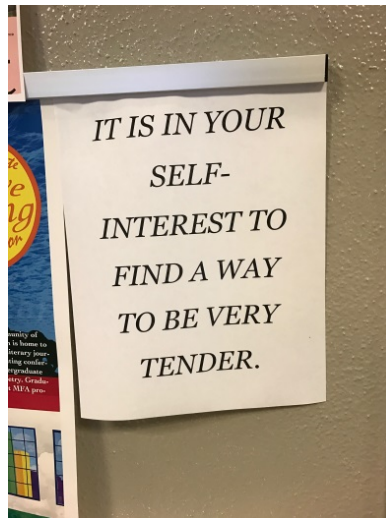


Figure 3: English Department sensegiving signage

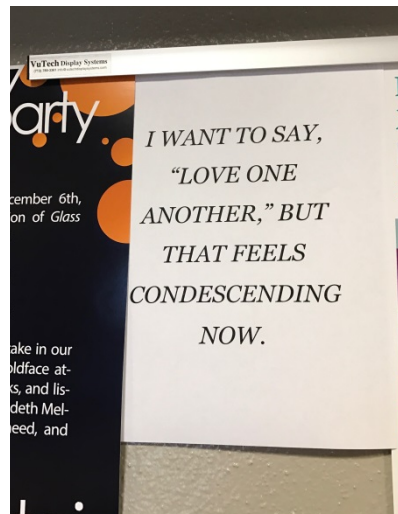


Figure 4: English Department sensegiving signage

Rachel's signage is another way to influence the sensemaking processes of others, particularly students in this case, in recognition of the confluence of an election's consequences for the MU student population, the campus-carry law's enactment, and the timing of already-stressful final exams. The signs Rachel referenced were hanging conspicuously in multiple public locations

throughout the building, and had two messages in simple black text centered on an otherwise blank, white page: “I want to say, ‘love one another,’ but that feels condescending now” and, “it is in your self-interest to find a way to be very tender.”

Shared Experiences Across Both Groups

Although two clear and distinct sensemaking processes seemed to occur for faculty on the MU campus at the end of the first semester of legal campus carry, there were still shared experiences and beliefs that connected the two groups. For each participant, their own background characteristics and prior experiences served as a filter through which they viewed the campus-carry policy, and the MU institutional processes, messaging, and feedback mechanisms provided a common foundation for understanding. Additionally, each participant shared an opposition to the law from a core, philosophical understanding of the purpose of higher education as a social institution in the United States. Multiple participants across both sensemaking groups considered the role of time and future developments, and for all participants, some degree of identifiable changes in their work did occur, though these changes took different forms depending upon one’s subconscious-reactive or conscious-active approach to the law.

Background characteristics act as a filter. For all participants, personal background characteristics represented one of the primary factors determining whether faculty adopted a subconscious-reactive or conscious-active approach to campus-carry sensemaking. Most commonly, any experiences with guns or gun violence, or a lack of familiarity with firearms, was a particularly relevant background characteristic shared by participants. Those with substantial prior experience with guns or who had direct or familial prior gun violence in their lives tended to be within the conscious-active group. Those without significant prior experiences to draw

upon, or whose experiences with guns and/or gun violence were only indirect or second-hand, typically approached the campus-carry policy from a subconscious-reactive response. This filtering aspect of the sensemaking process typically occurred at the outset, and colored the resulting beliefs, actions, and comfort level of a participant's sensemaking process as a whole.

The role of institutional processes. For each participant, the MU institutional mechanisms that went into action in order to translate SB 11 into the campus-carry policy over the course of the 2015-2016 academic year were an important part of the sensemaking process. Mark, a faculty member involved in the leadership of this process described it by saying:

I had two goals for the year: that we have a process that was accessible to all. And a transparent process; that people had an opportunity to meaningfully participate in the process. And then I had a content goal, right? Obviously that we develop a policy that would be in compliance with the law, but also recognizing the nature of our campus and our community, and being respectful of that community, and trying to maintain that sense of community safety and security.

It...was an interesting year in that hearing the different perspectives on the issues, learning about special areas or populations that might be differently impacted than you might think of the university population in general, and I think was a difficult year for a number of people. [Emphatic and matter-of-factly:] It wasn't difficult for me. But it was difficult for a number of people because of very strongly held beliefs. And to realize that despite all of the process that was going to occur, that the end result would not be what they would have liked. So, it is the result of compromise and consensus and the Texas legislature. So, I think that was difficult for people to reconcile - this idea that even though we're a state institution, that something that was so fundamental to our everyday

lives was being mandated from without, despite the University, at least from the top, having voiced a number of concerns about the law that was being debated.

The MU process, with both the Campus-Carry Work Group and the Faculty Senate, included public forums and online, anonymous feedback mechanisms to gather input on the draft policies. In addition to hosting the forums and drafting the official policy, the Work Group was also charged with fielding requests for exclusion zones, the limited spaces which MU could declare to be gun-free in line with the SB 11 legislation. Julie, like many faculty, found the exclusion zone request and approval process to be less than ideal:

So, part of the thing that makes [MU] really awesome is our shared governance, the fact that faculty has our hands in stuff. And since faculty is so entrenched in policymaking and in approval of things, I think that we were under the impression that we would have a little bit more voice once those policies started being developed. And so, what happened is once our voices were out there and once our statements had been made, the attorneys took over. And, and of course they took over [laughs] because they had to take over, because it has to be...they knew the law and had to make sure that we were hitting the law.

However, at that point it became less clear to me that there was still an ear. It felt really that they were like, “OK, fine. We have all the information we need, and now we've got to, we've got to manage, we've got to do this.” But not saying, “alright so, we're going to do this, and then we're going to double check back with all the things we've heard.” It never felt like there was any of that double checking back. And like I said, there were so many departments on campus who were like “well we have kids here all the time so we should have an exclusion zone.” [Rolls eyes.] Yep. But we *actually* have kids in [my

clinical center building] all the time. But when you have a field trip coming through, that doesn't really count. Actually, I think it should. I think they're... I think we have kids here all the time. We have *kids*. 18 year olds are kids. And in fact, we have some 16 year olds, too. But I really kind of got the sense that they were saying, "OK, fine. Isn't that nice that you guys have feelings? But this is what the law is."

Because I lost it when I saw it, when I saw our building plan. I got- I was mad. I'm like come on! They never even never came to the building. Never set foot in the building and went, "OK, this part is where the clinic happens, and this part is..." Clearly, or they would have recognized that it was a bad plan to do it the way they'd done. And so I felt like why did we bother with all these forums? Why did we bother with all this discussion? Why did we bother creating a statement from the Faculty Senate if it was just going to end up being people kind of going [points around the room at random] "oh, well, that one. Oh, well that one."

In this quotation, Julie identified the perceived haphazard nature of the exclusion zone request and approval process and the degree to which faculty forums offered the chance for feedback to be meaningfully considered by the administration. For others, the forums were frustrating in that the sense of alarm and concern around the campus seemed misplaced, as Lester described:

They were kind of along the lines of what you would expect. You know, in any situation. There was a large group of people who were primarily there to listen and to observe, and who didn't feel like they could or wanted to contribute to the exchange. And there was a smaller group of people who were very upset and very, very vocal. And you know, the Faculty Senate did a formal presentation of what the situation was and what faculty could

do and couldn't do. And I've got to tell you I was not happy with my colleagues in those meetings.

You know, I understand that many people fundamentally are opposed to this and they feel like it's an affront to everything they believe in. But the kind of [tone gets harsher here, verging on anger] viscerality that some of them displayed, primarily filtered through concern for themselves, really turned me off. And I had a conversation about this with other colleagues afterward. You know there were faculty members who got up and asked if they could meet with their students during office hours off campus. One faculty member asked, "could I rent space off campus and have my office off of campus?" You know, "can I, can I refuse to meet with my students at my office if they have a gun?" You know? So, I understand that those meetings were for faculty to come and vent and learn and express their concern. But there were very few, if any, faculty members who brought up the issue of the safety of students. And I remember saying to one of my colleagues, you know, "I really am not worried about a student pulling out a weapon in my classroom or pulling out a weapon if they're meeting with me in my office. What really worries me is Friday nights or Thursday nights in the dorms, when they're drinking like crazy. And then there's nobody there to supervise them." And nobody talked about that. There was no concern expressed, at least in the meetings that I went to, about the safety of the students, and what the university could do to ensure the safety of the students. It was like me, me, me, me, me, me, me. And frankly I was disappointed in how selfish some of my colleagues came across in those meetings.

In addition to the contentious forums Lester described, MU messaging after the law went into effect was a clear marker in the sensemaking processes of all faculty participants, as this quotation from Pauline demonstrates:

I know some faculty have [made their own rogue exclusion zone signs], and they end up taking them off the door because you're not allowed, or somebody takes it off your door. But putting signs on their door saying it's a gun-free zone. Their office is a gun-free zone. You can't do that. You're not allowed. It's illegal. And in the university, the, the people on high, the Faculty Senate chair, the campus police, head of police, the main counsel for the university, the lawyers, you know, they made it very clear that if faculty violated these rules about what we were allowed to do, say, et cetera about guns that we were on our own. We would not be supported. You know the university would not support us. So that's another chilling. You know you're on your own, you're, you're, you know you're out there in the wind.

As Pauline's story showed, institutional messaging from MU leadership and from authority figures in the campus-carry policy enactment process strongly influenced the ways faculty in both groups interpreted the law and campus policy. Even for those in the conscious-active group who relied more on their own internal foundations to make sense of the policy, the statements and direction from campus leadership were considerable factors in faculty campus-carry decision making.

Core philosophical beliefs. Without being prompted to do so, every participant in the study indicated they fundamentally disagreed with the presence of guns within a higher education environment at a core, deeply philosophical level. Even for faculty with mixed feelings about the law from a personal standpoint, or those who were critical of what they viewed as an overly-

dramatic response from colleagues, guns were simply in violation of foundational principles of higher education as a social institution for all participants, as the following collection of quotations from multiple participants demonstrates:

Jill: It takes you back to that that sort of, what I think is the essence of ... the longstanding historical understanding and historical frame in our country that guns are in conflict with opportunities to have meaningful learning opportunities. [We] talk a lot about Jefferson, I mean some of the really core, core ideas that were in the origin of our institutions of higher education, which had their own problems, but also had some really deep and valuable lessons. So, I think for me it's that. It's sort of this strange reminder of that nice, logical book *The Way We Never Were*, right? So, in some respects, I don't want to over-idealize some life that I think we had in the past as institutions of higher education. But certainly, it is a stark reminder of a loss of control, a loss of autonomy that I think institutions are facing on this issue in particular...We need to stay grounded in the fact that we are an academic enterprise. That is our job, right? We need to do everything we can, both visually and in policy and in action, to live that out every day. We have to think about these practical issues like signage and how we're going to display that, both as a function of staying in compliance with our policy and with the law, and equally importantly as a function of representing and reflecting our values as an academic enterprise. So, you know...that sits with me here. Because I think it's a very stark, physical, visual reminder of a point of conflict that says, you know, how do we...how we push against that in constructive ways?

Lester: You know if you're really true to the spirit of what a university is about, it's about the healthy exchange of ideas, and not necessarily just ideas that agree with yours. But you have to be able to engage in meaningful dialogue with people that have ideas that are very different from yours. It's really what [campus carry] represents, right? And what it, what it, what it represents is kind of a threat or an affront to academic freedom and to the free exchange of ideas without fear of harm.

Susan: I do agree that, fundamentally, weapons don't belong on a university campus for many different reasons. This is not a place where you should feel unsafe and where you should feel like you need to defend yourself. At the same time, you know, I'm not naive. Crap happens everywhere. I mean it's supposed to be a place of exchange of ideas and where people care about the future. You know, the reason you're coming to get an education is to improve your life and the life of those that you care for, and the country that you care for, and contribute to society in meaningful ways.

[Later in the discussion:] I'm right on the middle. Philosophically, I don't think we should have it here. No. But on the other hand, you know, people do have a right to defend themselves.

Pauline: I just think guns are antithetical to learning. If you know that there are guns, there possibly it can always be a factor that perhaps changes the way your brain thinks. And when you're trying to learn something, I just think it's a distraction. It's a possibly fatal distraction. It's a bad thing. Go through high school, or go through any of the stages. You know, how can it be good? How can teenagers who are in their hormone-surging

years when their brains are not caught up to their bodies, how can having guns there possibly be conducive to civilized discourse, to receptivity to ideas?

Kim: It's just, it just strikes me as... how can people devote their minds fully to what they're supposed to be here for, which is to learn and to be exposed to different ideas, if they know that perhaps more than one member of their cohort in this space of the classroom is carrying a firearm? I just think it, for so many different possible reasons, it's a bad idea to have guns in an educational environment.

In the quotations above, the complex nature of the MU faculty participants' views regarding the core of higher education being in conflict with concealed weapons are evident. Even for those who saw some rationale for the campus-carry law, as with Susan who noted that "people do have a right to defend themselves," this rationale was still prefaced by a fundamental belief that the foundational purposes of higher education in the U.S. are incongruous with the presence of dangerous weapons.

The role of time and anticipatory concerns. Time became a factor for participant sensemaking in two ways: as a precursor to a sense of normalization and as an anticipatory concern for the unknown. First, many participants spoke of the notion that over time, one can become familiarized with something that was once new, jarring, or scary. As a reminder, open carry became legal statewide in early 2016, prior to campus-carry enactment. Many participants discussed a sense of normalization that occurred regarding open carry in the months after it went into effect. They drew similarities between the presence of guns in their daily lives from that law, and a potential sense of normalization of campus carry which could occur. Julie described this idea as a sense of inurement:

I have, um, I guess become inured to the idea that there's probably people with guns...around me all the time. Um, it is Texas. [chuckle] There are guns, probably, in a lot of people's pockets. Or in their glove compartments. Or, strapped to their backs. I mean I understand that that's there. And I kind of carried on, and I don't look at people and think "well, I wonder if he has a gun." I don't think anymore. I did when the original [open] carry was passed. I remember thinking that a lot.

Julie identified these feelings of normalization after statewide open carry in Texas as a factor informing her understanding of campus carry. Lester, a professor and clinical psychologist who also has a concealed handgun license himself, shared similar observations:

You know, I think some of it is maybe some colleagues have come to the realization or some people in the community have come to the realization that guns are everywhere. You know, I go to the supermarket, I go to Starbucks, I go to Target. I go to Sam's. I go to the movies. You know everybody has a gun. I go to a sporting event, and sporting events are places where if you have a concealed carry, you're not supposed to carry. But how many people forget to take the gun off their holster and leave it in the vehicle? And I don't go through a metal detector every time I go everywhere... We quickly transition cognitively to a new normal so that it becomes a non-issue... You know that's all you can do, right? We are a resilient people and we move forward. And despite all the angst leading up to August first, it happened, it's here, it's not going to go away, and we'll deal with it.

While Lester and Julie identified normalization as a potential detrimental factor, Mark adopted a more positive view of the potential influence time could play in making campus-carry a non-issue:

I think that that, in fact, is part of what some people were fighting so vehemently about was that we're free to make choices here and this is a choice that was made for us. But again, we're a state institution. Choices are made for us all the time. We're just not aware of them. They're part of us, right? You've forgotten about them. And that's just the way that we do things. And so, my hope is that 10 years from now if this law is still in effect, that it's going to be just another one of those things, you know? We will explain it to people at orientation, that among all these other policies that will govern their lives here at the university and it won't be the...the...I don't know the right word...the trauma. It won't be the big deal that it was in coming into being. The new normal.

This quotation from a MU faculty member deeply involved in the process of creating the MU campus-carry policy provides evidence that some faculty viewed the role of time as a force for inurement in a positive light. This aspect of time as a factor in the sensemaking process of MU faculty was not solely limited to a normalizing agent. For some, considering the role of time provoked additional anxiety. A level of uncertainty about possible future developments that could upend the entire sensemaking process became apparent, as Jill described:

We're anxious I think. We're not talking about it publicly at all, but I think there's some...anxiety as the legislature goes back into session in January [2017]. You know everybody... The way that things got left is that community colleges are now on the hook, too. We [4-year, public institutions] were required to implement August 1 of 2016. Community colleges are required to implement a year later. In this legislative session, some of what got left open in the deliberation of last time was basically, the sort of admonition [from the state legislature] that "we're going to look at all of your campuses' policies and if we don't like them, we may have something to say about it." I think there's

some anxiety about that because we've all kind of settled, I mean I think. It's my perspective, and others may have really different perspective. But, certainly in my context we've all kind of settled into life as it is. The new normal I guess. But this looming idea that it can all kind of boil up again and...become this new iteration is intimidating.

In this quotation, the uncertainty borne of the structure of the Texas Legislature's biennial meeting schedule coupled with the review and approval mechanisms of the SB 11 law led to future-oriented anxiety regarding possible changes in what had become a somewhat settled issue for this participant. For others like Kim, future-oriented anxiety around campus-carry policy was more closely connected to the potential for future violence rather than legislative developments:

So, um, there is still a part of me that... I think if something like that, something gun-related were to happen, related to people that I know or close to me, I honestly don't know how I would handle it. I would probably, my first thought, regardless of if I actually carried it out or not, I would try to move to another state. That would be my first thought.

The sense that this is not fully a settled issue even at the close of the first semester after the law took effect was apparent in many participant interviews. As Kim explained, that a future act of violence is possible partly as a result of the law is not only a factor in the back of her mind as she carries out her work, but she also feels a sense of uncertainty or instability regarding the overall law and policy itself.

Change occurs for both groups. Lastly, a shared characteristic for both sensemaking groups was that changes in their work did seem to occur. While for some it was a subconscious change beneath the surface, and for others it was more overt and a result of their own decisions,

an overall sense that changes in the work-lives of faculty had occurred was clear. For some, these changes went beyond teaching and student-faculty interaction to more operational aspects of the university. For example, Rachel mentioned a new awareness of the law as it relates to recruiting students and faculty for her academic program:

We've had to make it clear: [Greenoak's] not Texas. It's a very different place. We are in a major cosmopolitan city with a diverse population. You know, we're not all the redneck state reps that, unfortunately, Greg Abbott and Rick Perry keep parodying. Like, oh God. Thanks a lot guys. I suspect that if students have options to go to a place where guns aren't allowed on the campus....you know. The scary part for me is those who would be attracted to a place where concealed weapons are allowed. It's like wow, what kind of audience is that? And do I go recruit at the local NRA meeting? [Laughter] I was like wow. That's the other thing I was thinking about was who are we going to be attractive to now? The thing I'm a little bit relieved about is that we're not the only school facing this. All the public schools in this state are facing it. All the private schools had the option of not allowing it on their campus and every single one of 'em took it [exasperated sigh] because they had the option. I think that's unfair. In my opinion, that's one of the realms we need to sue, is why do they have the option and we didn't?

Rachel referenced enrollment issues she considered while conducting faculty searches and student recruitment events for her academic unit, which is part of a very competitive field in Texas. For her, the issue of change affecting recruitment was linked to the disparate impact of the law on public institutions versus their private counterparts. This public/private dichotomy came about in several interviews, demonstrating that it was on the minds of multiple faculty members at MU. Kim, a professor in the subconscious-reactive sensemaking group, explained

her thoughts on the public/private institution dichotomy as they related to her own son in this extended personal narrative:

The fact that [nearby private university] is not affected made me um, just... I didn't know how to deal, how to make sense of that. I mean I understand it, why [that institution] is not. It's exempt. And we have to follow the rule, of course. I know why it is. But like, what does that mean? I can't, I can't put my head around that thought because I have a son who graduated from [the private institution]. So, on one hand as a mother, I'm... I'm glad that he's protected. I mean he has a better protection than I do here. But at the same time, like as a...as a teacher. Not only myself, the safety of myself... like why do my students, why should they be more subjected to that possible gun violence? In my mind, only because you know, they can't afford to go to private school. Is that what it is? And it just seemed very, very unfair to me.

And um...if something were to happen on this campus gun-related, and...and if I were the parent of that, you know for example...[long, silent, uncomfortable pause with one of the only moments when she made direct eye contact with me] I might think that if I had more money, if I could send my kid to, to [the private institution] as opposed to MU, would I have prevented this situation? I think I, you know, I could...I could go there in my thoughts and use that as another level of...like feeling guilt.

So, we are in the same, same city. And the [private institution] campus is protected. And I'm not naive to think that people will find their ways to bring the gun and do things if they choose to. And no protection or no gun laws will completely prevent that. But it's - for me it's like... You know, I know that bad things happen. You can get mugged in the daylight on the street in New York or in Chicago. But you know, we have campus

incidents where it's like 2:00 p.m. at a bus station and people get robbed or mugged. So that happens. But at the same time also the statistics say if you are in a very bad neighborhood at 2:00 a.m. in the morning, you increase your chance of getting mugged. So, you know nothing is foolproof in life. But in terms of safety you always want to decrease your odds. And so for me, if you know people on the [private institution] campus definitely have better odds of avoiding any gun-related tragedies, and the odds are higher for us because we have campus carry?

So that's what I think. And that just gives me another level of... I guess frustration, or even anger. It's like you know, is your safety something that you should buy, or you should pay your money for? And if you can't, are you more vulnerable?

The questions Kim raised were poignant, deeply personal, and intricately connected to both her work as a faculty member at MU, and to her family. Despite an initial statement that nothing changed in her work life, it was clear from both this interview and several others that, in fact, complex, nuanced changes had occurred. Kim was only one of many participants who shared stories of changing work lives during the enactment of campus-carry policy. For faculty in both the conscious-active and subconscious-reactive groups, the enactment of campus carry at MU led to the ongoing sensemaking processes I observed. To better understand these change processes for faculty in both groups, the intricate interplay between each of the factors found in this study must be considered, as will be explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 6: Restorying Through Composite Narratives

“At this difficult time, we want to say to all those affected by the terrible tragedy at Virginia

Tech our thoughts and prayers are with you.”

Ryan Seacrest, Host, American Idol, April 17, 2007

The complex factors influencing faculty sensemaking during the enactment of campus-carry explained as a grand narrative (Kim, 2016) in the preceding chapter warrant deeper understanding of what the sensemaking process looked like for individual professors. To complement chapter 5’s overview of the collective sensemaking process, this chapter goes further by exploring the stories of two specific faculty members who serve as exemplars for the phenomena under study. First, Pauline’s experiences as a MU professor with decades of service to the institution illuminates the experience for those who made sense of the campus-carry law through a conscious-active sensemaking frame. In contrast, Kim’s story of subconscious-reactive sensemaking demonstrates some common features of the work-lives for faculty in that group. In each case, the use of an extended composite narrative, anchored by one participant in each case, helps to more fully appreciate the sensemaking process through the eyes of one particular individual. In line with the research questions guiding this study, the experiences of faculty working within a potentially-armed environment are more fully understood through the composite narratives that follow. In each case, a narrative approach to both data collection/construction and (re)presentation makes space for understanding the contexts of time, place, and sociality as “common places” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 479) from which the narratives of MU faculty emanated.

Pauline: “The Box is a Little Smaller”

Six expressionless, bright white styrofoam heads, each wearing a different but equally bright, neon-colored wig, filled two shelves on the far wall, striking in your field of view when walking through the door to Pauline’s office. A pair of plush, black velvet hats sat next to the wigged foam heads, each adorned with silver pins. Behind me on the opposite wall, a wooden axe hung precariously above the door itself, noticeable only after walking in and trying (but failing) to take in a full inventory of the contents of the office. While Pauline wrapped up an end-of-semester conversation with a student in a seating area in the dimly-lit hall outside her workspace, she invited me to take a seat in the office and get comfortable. There was one space carved out for a visitor to do so: a small wooden chair, in front of a floor-to-ceiling, glass and wood bookcase on the east wall, directly next to Pauline’s chair behind her desk. The space in front of her desk where one might typically expect a guest to sit was already occupied. Stacks of papers, books, academic journals, VHS and DVD movies, and periodicals filled her desk, the space in front of and behind it, much of the floor, and two of the other three walls. As I took in the surroundings, it was clear the wooden side chair was the one she intended for me, as there was quite literally no other space for a second person to occupy. I sat next to her desk, opposite the fourth, west wall of the long, wood-paneled office. This final wall was home to an array of certificates, plaques, greeting cards, letters, and other framed or at least scotch-taped recognition, including no fewer than six separate awards of teaching excellence from multiple MU provosts throughout the preceding decades. Despite the elongated and truly expansive size of the space, Pauline’s office was tightly filled with artifacts representing more than forty years of teaching, interacting with students, and creating a lively classroom.

“Isn’t it great?” Pauline asked in a thick, east coast accent that was decidedly un-Texan as she walked into the room, noticing me looking around in an attempt to take in the full scene.

Almost climbing over me to land into the chair behind her desk, she continued:

This space...I have the *best* office in the whole place. You know, I have it because the last guy died, and I haven’t yet. It was sad, of course. But I was totally shameless. Totally shameless! [Grins and chuckles, slyly.] He was another literature professor, and you know, we tend to...accumulate. He had lots of stuff. Had a heart attack one day, just dropped dead, totally out of the blue. Terrible. And the dean at the time; I knew it was my only chance! He had so much stuff in here, and literally that next day, I talked to the dean and made this proposition: I said I’d clean out his office, get rid of all the junk so he didn’t have to worry about it, but only on the condition that I could keep the office once I was through. And I think he was just so surprised that I’d ask - I mean the guy’d just died - that he just said sure. And so, my hand to God, I went to the funeral, said my piece and paid respects to his family, and then I came straight to campus to start cleaning.

Despite the fact that this conversation occurred on the final day of the term, with grades due that evening, Pauline spoke with an effusive energy that many of her MU colleagues seemed to lack by that point in the semester. She continued by telling the story of her path to a faculty position at MU, and her career spent solely at this one institution.

Professional and educational experiences? Ok. I’m the first person in my family who went to college. I lived in [a major city] when I was growing up, and I went to what was then a pretty equivalent sort of institution to [MU], which was one of the reasons that I ended up here. I thought I got a splendid education there. I had a State Regents Scholarship, and it was tuition free. I got a really good education there.

I always had planned to be a teacher. My mother tells me that before I even went to kindergarten, I used to line up my dolls and teach them things. So I always knew I wanted to be a teacher. My level of teaching changed over time as I progressed through my different levels of my own education. And when I was in college, I assumed I was going to be a high school teacher. Always was going to be English; always wanted to be English. But my undergraduate college professors encouraged me to go to graduate school because they thought that - I hate to say it this way, but - they thought [leans in and whispers] I was too good to just be a high school teacher. They thought I should be a university-level teacher. And they encouraged me.

I had never thought about going to graduate school before that. And then when they said that, I said "OK. Well I'll try this." And I ended up getting a full fellowship at [Ivy League graduate institution] in their medieval studies program. I was torn between American literature and medieval literature, and I applied to half of the graduate schools that I applied to in medieval, half in American. And I got the best package with medieval, and I sort of...it was like a flying fickle finger of fate kind of thing.

For a variety of reasons, personal and professional, I took this job although a lot of people thought I was crazy to do it. But I saw that...the kind of place it was very similar, and the kind of students I would be teaching were very similar to the kind of student I was. First, a lot of our students are the first ones to go to college in their family. A lot of them work while they go to school, they have sometimes two jobs while they're going to school.

They're very hard working. I really liked that kind of ethic that these were working-class students. I wasn't going to be teaching a lot of elite kids who had lots of money and, you know... anyway. So I ended up here. I didn't really think I would stay here for the rest of my career. I didn't mind being here, I thought it was a good job, but I didn't really expect to stay in Texas for the rest of my life. But life is what happens to you when you're making other plans. And I've been here 40 years.

When I started out, this place was always the lesser school in the shadow of [other Texas public and private institutions]. But that's changed. We're now a tier-one research university. And over the 40 years that I've been here, I've seen lots and lots of changes. The most recent... I'm not happy, not a happy-for-me change, was the decision to implement concealed carry on all public campuses in Texas, including this one.

I teach medieval literature: Chaucer, Robin Hood. I am 72. I could retire, but I have no intention of doing so unless I have to walk here in a Zimmer frame. I enjoy teaching. I enjoy what I do. I have classes that I haven't ever taught that I still want to teach sometime. I still have books to finish writing and lots of research that I still want to do, and I enjoy it. And I'll just do that as long as they'll let me.

As we continued speaking, the topic turned toward notions of campus violence, the Texas campus-carry law that had just been implemented, and Pauline's experiences in that first semester with legal concealed weapons on the MU campus. Given her decades of experience in the classroom, with faculty governance at MU and the Texas higher education system generally, Pauline offered valuable insights. Additionally, with Pauline's being the final participant

interview of the study, her stories also helped to clarify some aspects of preceding discussions. For Pauline, a conscious-active sensemaker, the transition to campus carry caused introspection and a consideration of prior experiences with guns and violence in order to make sense of the law. In addition to losing an uncle due to a shooting at her family's hunting lodge, Pauline repeatedly referenced a threatening student interaction that caused her to consider the SB 11 law in more personal-experiential terms. Her story of a threat from a disgruntled former student illustrated the ways in which conscious-active sensemakers seemed to rely upon prior personal experience in order to make sense of the law.

[My reaction to the law also] is based on a personal experience that I had some years ago with a student. You see where my office is. I'm way down at the end of the hall. The [department] office is way down there at the other end. This office is quite isolated. There's usually, especially toward the end of the day, there's hardly anybody down at this end of the building. It's dark, it's isolated. And so I've been in this office for probably 30 years. And when you have to confront a student in your office about something like plagiarism which is what happened in the incident I'm about to tell you, a student had plagiarized his paper for my class blatantly. I mean it was not the stealing a few paragraphs from here, there, and yon and putting it together, and putting his name on it without identifying his sources sort of plagiarism. It was a taking of maybe one of the most famous articles about Beowulf and putting his name on it and giving it to me and saying, "I wrote this; this is my term paper." And of course I recognized it and knew that this was not done by him. And when I, when I confronted him with it - and my policy is that if you plagiarize you not only earn an F on the paper but you earn an F in the course.

So we were talking about this in my office sort of late in the afternoon. Not very many people around. I always keep the door open but it would have been easy for him to just fling it closed. And as we talked about what his penalty would be and he tried to negotiate a lesser penalty, I was firm in what I did and said and wouldn't back down. And he said, "You know, I'm ex-military and I know how to kill people."

And of course that's a moment when you freeze. I mean you know, what do you do? And he didn't do anything, and I don't know if he was carrying a gun. This was before campus carry; this was way before campus carry. And I don't know if he had been carrying a gun whether he would have...if this was just bluff or what. But it certainly changed my attitude about conferences in my office back then even. So, I'm always much more careful. And you can't always tell. But if I feel a sort of weird vibe about a student, I'll always, even before the gun issue came up, I tried to meet the student, and I did meet him again later on. But that time, I just told him he had to leave. And you know that was it and I slammed the door behind him and locked myself into my office. He contacted me later and said he wanted to meet with me to talk about how he could have done better, which was ridiculous because you could have done better by doing your own work.

But anyway, I said OK you know, I'm not going to close off discussion. We can do that. But he really scared me. And so I told him that we weren't going to meet in my office. I made up a story. I said I'm waiting for an overseas phone call, and that has to come through the main office and we have to sit in the main office to have our conversation there because I have to wait for this call. I had already warned some of the staff people

that I was going to be coming into the office and sitting there and having that discussion with him for that reason. And so they knew. And again, it started off nice and friendly and he said, "oh yes I really want to learn how I could have done better." And then as I kept reiterating, "you could have done better by writing your own paper; even if you had done a bad job on the paper you probably still would have passed instead of getting an F. And that's really not a very good idea, and it's really not a good idea to steal probably the most famous article and then pass that off as your own as if I wouldn't recognize it." I said, "it's not only bad, a bad policy for you to do but it's insulting to me; it really is insulting." Anyway, it started out nice and then as it progressed and he still was trying to talk me down from failing him in the course and as he kept saying I want to know how to do better and I kept telling him how he could have done better. It just got more and more tense.

And finally I just said - and again I was afraid of another reiteration of a threat - I didn't want it to come to that. So I said, "I think we don't have anymore to say. I've told you what I'm doing and why I'm doing it. And it's part of my policy; it's on the syllabus. That's it. It's over."

So, then I get a phone call from the father. He wanted to hear what had happened. And I told him what had happened from my point of view. I didn't tell him that his son threatened me. Maybe I should have, but I didn't know what the father might do to the son. And I just thought it was probably better to leave that out. But to my surprise, I thought the father was going to argue with me that I should have done better and given

his son a pass or whatever. But the father actually said, "Good for you. Somebody finally had to stand up to that little prick." [laughs]

So that was the end of that, but when something like happens to you, it... it changes the way you think about how you're going to interact with students in your office. It's just... And then when you know that there are people on the campus with guns, you don't know who they are. You can't tell who they are. You can't ask who they are. It certainly has a chilling effect on how open you are with students, how much you are willing to engage them about their personal problems or any of those things that many of them really need, especially if they're here, the first time they're away from their parents and are living on their own perhaps for the first time, and are really confused about a lot of things, they need, they need... They need to talk to somebody, sometimes just, just to talk. It's just probably not even that I can guide them or anything, but they just need to say something to somebody about what's going on in their life. But I really feel constrained about doing that because of my knowledge that I don't know whether they're walking into my office with a gun in their backpack or wherever.

It's too soon; it's only been one semester for the impact, and I only taught one class this semester so I've had a limited experience with having possible guns in my classroom this semester. But knowing that in August campus carry became a law, I changed my syllabus from 40 years of always calling what I had "office hours" and changed the wording on all of my syllabi to "conference hours" so that if I feel... [long pause] I don't necessarily meet the student in my office if I don't know very much about the student. I'll suggest that we

meet out there [an open seating area in the hall near her office] in chairs. I'll just make up an excuse saying it's hot in my office or whatever. I don't tell them that it's because of guns.

But it has changed the way I consider my office hours, and that's detrimental to the students because when they meet me here they usually sit where you're sitting. [Because of the tight space, we were seated so closely that our knees actually touched at this point when she gestured to my chair.] If they don't know something about a subject that they're studying in my class, or they're trying to come up with a term paper topic, or they're not sure what they want to do, or they're having trouble finding books or articles or whatever about the research topic that they've chosen, well, look around. I've got all this stuff. They really lose out.

As was characteristic of professors in the conscious-active sensemaking group, Pauline was a vocal, active participant in the campus and state discourse during the year between the campus-carry law's passing and its implementation as a matter of MU campus policy. She participated extensively in the campus forums held by both the MU Faculty Senate and the Campus-Carry Work Group as an attempt to push back against what she perceived to be an erosion of her agency in the classroom.

We would have forums where we would talk about it. It just...I would say all of that, even though I think it was necessary and I'm glad I went to all of them, it probably raised my level of anxiety. You know, it didn't...It didn't actually result in my feeling reassured. It resulted in my feeling more anxious about it, and also feeling my own lack of control

over my environment in my classroom. I mean which is that...the classroom is my domain. And I don't have the control of my domain that I once had?

The university, the people on high, the Faculty Senate chair, the campus police, head of police, the main counsel for the university, the lawyers, you know they made it very clear that if faculty violated these rules about what we were allowed to do, say, etc. about guns that we were on our own. We would not be supported. The university would not support us. So that's another chilling effect. You know you're on your own; you're out there in the wind. And it also would make me think twice about doing anything that might be provocative because I know I don't have support. I don't have control.

I gave my story when I was at one of those forums where you could get up and speak. I told my story about the student threatening me and saying, "I'm ex-military. I know how to kill people." And he didn't mean with guns, he meant he could snap my neck or whatever they do. And I told the story and I said that this was a chilling, you know, imagine if that student had had a gun, yada yada yada. When I walked out of the forum, little did I know, I was surrounded by a bunch of...What's the name for the college students who are in the Army, what is that? ROTC. I was surrounded by a bunch of ROTC people who hugged me and, you know, "oh we're so sorry, we're not like that, we wouldn't..." Leave me alone, you know? I'm sorry. It happened. And whether all ROTC people or ex-military people would be threatening and saying I know how to kill people, I don't care. It happened once and that was enough you know? So that didn't reassure me either. So, lots of well-meaning people; all it takes is one.

Our conversation moved to a deeper level when Pauline explained the ways campus-carry implementation influenced changes in her classroom in its first semester, which for her were an attempt to regain a sense of power and agency that she felt she lost during the implementation process. In contrast to her previously boisterous and lively demeanor, Pauline reflected on her classroom experiences with a sense of exasperation evinced by a somber, softer tone, sighs, and a nod to fighting back against feelings of disempowerment. As I asked her to describe her experiences teaching in this first semester of legal campus carry, the gregarious, assertive personality I first encountered was replaced by a subdued discussion that centered upon her reflections of a professor's life after forty years in this office, on this campus, and in her classrooms. Pauline identified several ways in which the law, filtered through her prior experiences, caused a reconsideration of not only texts and content, but the pedagogy and strategies she had honed over the preceding decades in the classroom. Regarding a particularly controversial text which touched upon themes of gender roles:

And this time - I teach it every year - and this time, uh....I was a little careful in the way I said things. Because I don't know. I just don't want to provoke anything. I think students are in college to have their ideas challenged. They're in college to be exposed to different ideas than what their parents told them was right or what they think is right. You know, they're supposed to be challenged. That's what college is supposed to do. And with guns in the mix, I don't think I can be as challenging as I used to be. I still am somewhat; I'm kind of provocative. I do crazy things in the classroom and that's part of why my students like me and respect me and, and get excited because I'm so excited that I do all these crazy things I do. Crazy stuff. Because I figure if I do out of the box sorts of things it will

make them remember it. And they all tell me, they come back later years later and "I remember when you did..." you know, whatever.

So but I think, I just think. [Long pause to reflect] I'm probably going to be more conservative about how I try to engage students, provoke them into thinking in a different way. I don't necessarily want them to think one way or another, I just want them to think about different things in different ways. I'm not proselytizing, you know, but get exposed to it. You know, there are different people. I had a transgender student a couple years back, who emailed me ahead of time to tell me that he was in the process of transitioning, and could I please call him by his chosen name rather than the female-sounding name the university had on file for him. Everybody knew eventually; he came out. But in the beginning, he was sensitive about it. And so, you know issues like that, if there's somebody who's really homophobic, I mean I just feel... I feel uncomfortable about having firearms possibly in a mix where students might get in a heated debate about something or heated exchange about something. I just, I just think it's bad. It doesn't lead to what they're supposed to be getting which is a challenge of their ideas in a safe environment where they can hear other people's ideas and perhaps disagree with them without the fear that a student might get very angry and pull out a gun and shoot them. That's... I just think it's... it changes the climate.

At this point in the conversation, piqued by both her description and by the collection of wigs, props, masks, garments, and other paraphernalia in her office, I asked Pauline to tell me more about the "crazy" and "out of the box" things she did in the classroom, and what it felt like to

consider these typical teaching methods in what she described as a changing context in the fall, 2016 semester. Her response was striking on its face, but also led to a return to the overall demeanor of a professor excited about her work and who was creatively enthusiastic in the role of a facilitator of learning.

Well I still do out of the box things. [long pause, winks.] The box is a little smaller. You know, I still do wacko things, like I don't know if you saw [points behind me at one of the styrofoam heads, this one with a scary mask and bright green wig] the wigs, the ax, and, ok. I teach a text, and we just did it this semester. I teach a text called *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* which is the King Arthur story wherein the Green Knight, who is this kind of big, green, Jolly-Green-Giant kind of monstrous, hybrid person-man... whatever... he comes into Arthur's court and he brings that ax and he comes in with an ax in one hand and a holly bob in the other hand. And he challenges them to play a Christmas game in which he says "I'm giving you this ax as a gift and you can do with it whatever you like, and I want to challenge you to an exchange of blows, gang, and whatever blow one of your knights who decides to play the game gives, I will accept that blow. But the other part of the game is that a year from now he will have to accept exactly the same return blow from me in my Green Chapel out there."

Well, long story short, King Arthur tells his nephew Sir Gawain to play the game. Crazy stuff. But I have the students re-enact the moment, which is really a choice. It's a moral choice. And so over the years I've picked up various props. I started out with little, silly plastic Halloween axes. One year here, been doing this for 40 years, one year, one of the

young women in my class said, “my father is a woodworker and I was telling him about the ax, and now he wants to make you an ax...”

And that's what he did. He made me that ax [points at the large wooden ax hanging over her door] which is about the right size, too, and everything. But anyway that's for- it gets you the idea of what we're dealing with. And then I bought the holly bob in a craft store. So, I wanted to have a head, because the head chopping-off is this moment where until students are in the moment where they actually have to enact that choice, they don't get that it's a choice. So, I do that every year. And I ask for volunteers and they come forward and I actually have little costumes that they can wear just so that they can get into the spirit of it. And they've got the ax and they've got whatever they want to do, and this year when they did it, I had the head which I got last year. One of the students found it online and gave me the head.

So, this year they really went for it. The students went out of the room to plan how they were going to do this, and they came in and actually figured out a way that once the chopping happened, the guy had his shirt over his head so it looked like he was headless, and the head goes rolling around the room. And it's great - they got into the spirit. But, but they've come back to me afterwards and said you know, that moment, that made me think about the text in a completely different way because I had to actually do it. I had to think about what it means to take an ax to somebody's head and cut it off. Before that it's just words on the page. When you actually have the ax in your hand and you're wielding it, it's different.

So I do things like that. I put them in situations where they sort of have to walk in the steps of the character if I can manage it. I do things like that. And they remember it. And they also, it also brings the text to their mind when they suddenly realize this is not an automatic thing, or that the guy's head goes off no matter what. It's a choice. It's a moral choice, and Camelot basically screws itself by making the wrong moral choice at that moment.

But so will I continue to do things like that? Yes. But sometimes I think twice about it. I kind of take a measure of, by that time in the semester, how I feel the students are going to react to it. I never thought about it twice before; now I think twice.

I had a very good group this time and they seemed gung ho and with me, so we did it. But I don't know. Chemistry of classes is really bizarre. Sometimes you get a whole bunch of good ones and some semesters just by the luck of the draw you get a bunch of people who just, they're not with you; they're not on the same page. They don't want to be with you. They don't. They're trying to get through this and that's all they care about. So, you know I take the measure of, I now would take the measure of the class and see how well this would go over before I would think about doing it.

And I do things like in my Chaucer class, I do a lot with pilgrims in the middle ages. And so I've amassed pilgrim badges. [Finds a plush, floppy velvet hat adorned with small silver pins in various shapes and sizes to show me] This is my regular pilgrim hat with all

the different pilgrim badges. When you went on pilgrimage you always got a little souvenir that you put on there to kind of brag. It's bragging rights about where I've been. So, I get a regular pilgrimage hat, and then I've also collected, there are medieval badges that we can't figure out really what their purpose was. We just find them, excavations find them, and they're really rather risqué. So, for example [begins pointing out specific pins to me to explain their origins] this is medieval underpants with a penis coming out of it. And they're crowning it. And this is the lady riding one. And this is a walking vulva as a pilgrim...

You know I pass this around simply because it's the other side of the coin. And they might as well know that there were two ways of thinking about this. Now maybe I won't. It's just...I don't know. How will this go over? I mean it shocks students. That's for sure. But do I, you know, do I now want to shock students? And I think they should be shocked because that's what they're in college for. But will I do this always now? I don't know. I don't know if I, if it's safe for everybody to challenge their assumptions to the degree that I usually do. It's not only my safety that I consider. I mean I'm 72. They're young.

Pauline made clear, overt changes to the things she does in the classroom in terms of both content and teaching methods. She later spoke of a change in the ways she thought about her classroom as a physical space as well, and how this sort of background concern, manifested as a sense of vigilance, caused further reconsideration of her teaching.

You know, I was in a classroom last fall, not in this building, but way, way, way down at the other end of another building in the basement. And in a room that was tucked in an

alcove, and you wouldn't actually see it right away. And I think now, what would happen if in this particular classroom there were some sort of altercation with a gun? Even if I got to my phone and called 911, and got the campus security police to come, would they be in time? Would they find the room? Would it take them 20 minutes to find that room? Would they ever find that room when they get there?

I mean we have all these possible bad scenarios I think about. There's another thing that I hadn't thought about, but it just occurred to me now: every time I'm assigned a classroom I now think about where the exits are, where am I going to be, how will I deal with it if there's some sort of incident and I have to try to ensure the safety of my students, is there only one door to get out? Is it the most convenient door? I think about these things now. I never thought about them before. A classroom was a classroom. What did it matter? I now think about my classrooms. I think about the logistics, the physical logistics of the classroom. I think about if there were an incident, how would I get the students out with the most safety? How would I get myself out? It's...it's definitely now become a part of what I have to consider when I teach. I get assigned a room; I don't have a choice. There are certain buildings on the campus that they did declare gun-free zones for one reason or another, and all the science buildings that have chemicals and stuff. Those are gun-free and that makes sense. But there are others, some buildings like education buildings, where young children are brought in for whatever reason, those buildings are gun-free because of the possibility that children might be in it. And I think to myself, "How can I get myself in that building instead of where they might send me to?"

It's definitely changed the way I even think about the physical space of my classroom. It has to.

At this point in our conversation, with the initial narrative prompts covered, I asked Pauline a direct follow-up question: could she really attribute these changes in her teaching and student interactions to the enactment of campus carry as a matter of public policy in Texas? Might it, perhaps, instead be the case that prior violence on other campuses in the last several years had caused her to consider similar issues, just by virtue of campus violence making national news? Was it possible that she could attribute all the alterations in her work life, reflections of over 40 years in the profession, simply to this one law? She responded with the following reflection:

I never, ever really thought about it before campus carry became legal. I mean I'm sure there have been students in my classes who had guns before. I didn't know. How would I know? And maybe they were there and maybe it's not a problem. Who knows. But once it's allowed, and I know there can be students in my classroom who are armed, and for that matter faculty or staff, I mean anybody can be armed, I think about everything in a different way. Before when it was a possibility, well you can't, [sigh] you can't obviate every possibility, you know, you just can't. But if you know it's a probability? You have to take it into consideration. So I do. And I think about, I look at the space of my classroom, I look for the best exit. You know I think about – *I actually think about* – what if something happened in that end of the room, what would I do? You know or in the front or...

I have to think about that. I never had to think about that before. I never did. I never felt I needed to. I do now.

I mean I forget myself because as I say, I'm the out of the box. I do kind of crazy things and I do forget. I'm not saying every minute of every class I'm thinking "are they out to shoot me or shoot other people." But I certainly am vigilant. I mean the very fact that I changed my syllabus to call the meetings that I have with students no longer office hours, so that they don't necessarily have to be in my office; I've never done that before. But I felt it necessary, especially after I had that experience with the student who threatened my life. And he may not have done anything; it may have been all bluster. I don't know. But he looked... he was crazy. He looked crazy. And I realized at the moment that he said that I thought, "Why have I been crossing this student?" You know in my office down here where I'm so far away from everybody. What was wrong with me? But I never, I never had to think about that before, and I've certainly had other students who plagiarized and I had to fail them and they had never reacted that strongly. They were never happy, but I've never had one threaten my life.

It was that underlying menace, the threat that he could if he wanted to, that kind of changed the way I thought about it. And that happened years ago, and I don't think about that all the time. But when I knew that the possibility of having a whole classroom full of – I mean I don't think it's probable that a whole classroom full of students are going to be armed. But some of them could be and I'll never know. It's just off putting. It's somewhat nerve wracking. So I, I have to do things in a different way than I did before.

Does my different behavior perhaps result in less effective teaching compared to what I did before? I would say probably. But I have to protect me, and I have to protect the other students, and I can't...I have to not, perhaps, go so outside my box that I raise issues that could provoke students to an extent that they could perhaps use deadly force or even threaten to. You know, it just puts a chill in the discussion...And I know, I've talked to some other colleagues who also because of the subject that they teach raise sort of sensitive issues and they too have said that they are now scaling back what they say, what they bring up, even maybe what text they decide to have the students read or not. It's going to change, probably changes your curriculum somewhat. Choices that you make about what we're going to teach now.

So it's...Look. It can't help but have an effect. It just can't. But it's a choice. *It's my choice.* This is a choice I am actively making, rather than sitting around feeling powerless about it. I'm responsible for protecting me and for protecting the students, and I tend to be very protective of my students in the first place. Perhaps maybe more than they would prefer.

But this is what I can do.

Kim: “I Just Choose Not to Think About it...It Doesn’t Affect Me. ”

“Have you been in this office for a while?”

“Yes, about four years now.”

On my final day in Greenoak, I met with both Pauline and Kim in back-to-back interview sessions. While Pauline illustrated the conscious-active sensemaking response, the following composite narrative anchored by Kim’s experiences illustrates the typical features of the subconscious-reactive sensemaking response group. In contrast to Pauline’s workspace, Kim’s office had a particularly minimalist style. Located in the central corridor of an academic building, and devoid of windows, artifacts, or personal office paraphernalia beyond a couple of family photos framed on her desk, Kim’s bright blue office was cavernous. We sat opposite each other at a small, round conference table in one corner of the room, and her quiet, gentle demeanor was instantly noticeable. Kim seemed apprehensive, and perhaps a bit hesitant to have a conversation about her experiences with campus carry. While Pauline’s interview was scheduled weeks prior to my arrival at MU, Kim waited to respond to an invitation to participate until my last day on the campus in December. She asked several careful, important questions about the confidentiality and participant protection procedures for this study prior to agreeing to meet, and later requested copies of the Institutional Review Board approval documentation. After providing specific guidance on how she wanted to have her identity masked, Kim agreed to participate in the study.

So, I guess as a certain identifier, just say I am Asian, okay? I grew up mostly in [an Asian nation], but just what matters to this discussion is that I am Asian, not [specific nationality]. It is important to this discussion because in most of Asia there's very strict gun control. Even the policemen or law enforcement don't use weapons in public in that

way. So, I grew up kind of having a certain notion about carrying a gun, that it was more of a danger rather than the Second Amendment idea.

I came here in [the early 2000s] to do my Ph.D. in [education] at [a large, Midwestern university]. When I first moved here, I had little children. And a month before the move, there was a shooting, a racially-motivated hate crime where the shooter went around and targeted four or five non-Caucasian people and then they were killed. It included an international student who just moved there from my country for study about three months before. And he was going into an Asian church, and then he was shot in the back.

So that was big news in my country. As I was about to move to the U.S. and I had my visa, and I shipped my things, I was ready to go. And that was the big news. And so I came to the States with that kind of first introduction about guns, and it kind of reinforced my assumption about a “guns-are-dangerous” narrative. I mean, I've never had a personal situation where I was confronted by a person with a gun, or anything gun-related personally afterwards. But it was enough to scare me and have a little bit of fear in the back of my head in terms of protecting my children.

After learning more about Kim’s background and prior experiences, I asked what the debate around campus carry was like for her in the years prior to the 2015 bill’s passage.

This might be not a useful answer to your question, but until 2015, I was not aware of any of the conversation. And it was only 2015 when I knew about it then, more just about the general conversation with campus carry. So if I can explain, because I wasn't a Texan until I came to [Greenoak], and there is a certain kind of caricature of what a Texan is,

from media and TV, right? For example, I love watching police or Law and Order kinds of shows. But there's always some kind of episode where a Texan lawyer comes in with his hat and stuff, and has this very stereotypical, "I can do whatever I want because I'm a Texan" attitude. And you know, it's kind of like he's the butt of the joke. At the same time, you can ignore this caricature because Texas is big. So, in that kind of image or representation of that, I always, I guess, thought of gun-carrying Texans as this image, as something that is probably very real, but at the same time, almost like too caricatured in a way. It didn't seem really real to me.

Not having grown up here and only seeing those stereotypes of representations, I guess I could conveniently – and maybe not intentionally, but conveniently – distance myself from that because it didn't seem really real. And [Greenoak] seemed to me, and still does to me, very different from the rest of my image of Texas. There is still an idea of Texas that is very abstract to me. And so I tend to interpret Texas as [Greenoak], but a lot of times I'm thinking that, I probably have a very narrow and misconceived view.

So in that way, I call myself "[Greenoak]-Texan," but remove my identity as that stereotypical, gun-carrying Texan. And it was always very easy because I guess the gun-carrying Texan to me, in my head, looks different than the people that I see around. And you know, they are wearing probably a different kind of outfit, or drive different cars, or have different demeanors.

For example, it's very hard for me to, until now, imagine somebody like you or me having a concealed weapon, which if I think about it, it's a very stupid misconception. But I kind of realized recently that was my understanding. So, I did not know about it. I didn't pay any attention to it. It didn't seem like something that was relevant or related to me until campus carry. And even the open carry and other gun issues that I should have probably known I only came to know because of this campus-carry conversation. I guess I thought there was more gun control than there really was in Texas, because I didn't pay attention.

And through the campus-carry discussion, I was surprised that it was not as controlled as I thought it was. So, that surprised me. But I was also surprised by my own ignorance. And at times, it makes me more concerned, because wow, I didn't know all this. There wasn't as much gun control as I thought. All these people that I meet on a daily basis, it could have been more dangerous. Now I know. So on one hand, it could make me more scared. But at the same time on the other hand, it doesn't make me more concerned about this particular campus-carry law because in some ways – I know it doesn't make sense – but in some ways, I thought nobody could carry a gun, and all of a sudden now everybody's allowed to. I guess if I had known that, I would have been more worried and concerned while my kids were at home. It was more of a very happy ignorance.

Because now that I know, it's like there is a part of me who looks at other people and has no idea who they are. Are they potential gun-carriers? I think it's something that is very ingrained to one's self. And I know I'm generalizing by saying this, but I think how you

grew up understanding certain weapons matters. I didn't grow up with guns; I've never been to a gun range. So any idea of a gun is scary to me. People wanting to carry a gun to protect themselves is a very new kind of discourse to me. It's definitely less than 20 years that I've been here that I started understanding, "Oh yeah, people here want to carry guns to protect themselves." And that whole notion is something very new to me still.

Texas is a very conservative state. And there's always this us-against-them mentality, and an attempt to hold these academics who are viewed as radical liberals at bay. Some of my colleagues say that campus carry is just another way of the Texas state legislature to kind of put us on notice, like: "but we've got guns on campus now." I do believe there might be something to that, or if some people maybe didn't articulate it, but were thinking that. There's always threats that are made, some subtle threats. I don't think that's the best way to have healthy discourse, but it happens.

But I have always taught graduate courses. I've never taught any undergraduate students here. And my students are mostly educators. I don't want to necessarily generalize, but I tend to think that people who want to be in the profession of education have certain attitudes and personalities. They consider themselves helpers, so I like to think that the students I work with are very...you know I just don't associate educators with guns, and that might be my misconception. But that's how I feel. I don't have any issues with my interactions with students after the law.

Kim's narrative of life in Texas before campus carry described ample dissociation from the debate around the law itself, rooted in her personal history in a less-armed foreign nation. The belief about her Greenoak community that she described as "happy ignorance" and perception of her students as lacking personality traits conducive to gun ownership also served as factors on which she based her understanding. At the same time, our conversation occurred at the end of the first semester of legal campus carry at MU, and the understanding she described was a product of retrospective consideration of the issue and prior beliefs coming into conflict with her lived experience. This conflict between a prior "happy ignorance" and the reality of a signed piece of legislation becoming MU campus policy became apparent as Kim discussed the year between the signing of SB 11 and the implementation of campus carry in August 2016. This was also the year she joined the MU Faculty Senate.

I was new to Faculty Senate. I guess I knew about the Faculty Senate as an organization before, but I didn't pay much attention until I became part of it. And being in academia is probably one of the very unique places where you can do your own thing, and be successful, and not have to really pay attention to the whole organization unless you choose to. And you don't have a direct boss. So, Faculty Senate was there and my relationship to Faculty Senate before I became part of it was like: whatever. If it's important, my chair will tell me. I started serving a couple of months before [the 2015 passage of SB 11] because I got elected to a vacant position.

So 2015-2016 was the first year I started paying attention to Faculty Senate, and campus carry was the big conversation. I had a very naïve notion that it was not going to be enforced. It's kind of like wishful thinking. I mean this, to me, the very simple kind of

narrative, or thought process, was "this doesn't make any sense, so it can't be. And Faculty Senate is made up of a lot of smart people. So they're going to do something about it to make sure that it doesn't come to the campus." Because I mean, we *are* sensible people. That's what I thought. So even when there was a lot of concerns and things, there was a certain aspect of me that just assumed it shouldn't happen, therefore I'm just going to keep hoping it's not going to happen.

I don't think at that time I could reconcile it. I could not accept it. That was the time, at the beginning of 2015, when the discussion was starting in Faculty Senate, and I was still very uninformed. So I...you know I, I probably thought that people couldn't carry at all, and now everybody's carrying. So there was some kind of ignorance and misinformation on my part. And still...I just, you know, I chose to kind of have wishful thinking of it not being enforced on campus. And there were always enough instances of gun-related violence in the past couple of years that people can imagine having this happen on campus. It was always part of it. And some people that I know and trust closely were part of the Faculty Senate with me. So even when I didn't go to Faculty Senate meetings, that would be a conversation, because our Faculty Senate was charged to have the dialogue.

I guess there was still a sense of denial for me. I could see that it was going to...I mean there was no way of avoiding it. And even some effort from Faculty Senate to expand the exclusion zones failed. It was not lawful. So as long as I live in Texas, and work at a state university, you can do only so much about it, aside from that being illegal. So there was a

denial, and there was a lot of disappointment, or probably almost a feeling of like...this defeat.

And for me there were three Faculty Senate forums. And I chose not to go to any of them. I knew in my head that I should, and I also knew that it was my responsibility to. I mean it was not mandatory. It was completely voluntary. And I was not in a position in the Faculty Senate that had to attend. There were people who had to go in and kind of facilitate the discussion. I was not in that role, so I only had as much right or responsibility as any other rank and file faculty to attend those meetings. But I decided not to go to any of them because...[reflective pause]

I guess the choice for me was much more personal. I was already very upset and at the same time I honestly felt, and I fully acknowledged that I shouldn't be thinking that way, but I felt like: what's the use? Like, it's passed. And from the previous conversation at Faculty Senate, a couple of things that I heard, it seemed to me that there was only so much that we can do. And so on one hand I felt like what's the use, kind of like this feeling of defeat, and lack of control or power. Also, I felt because I was teaching mostly educators on the graduate level, I could see a way to remove myself from having more opportunity to be personally upset and feeling disempowered.

There was only so much I could do as a faculty member to change the big narrative. But I needed to depend on my own strength to navigate this situation. And for me to have my continued personal strength, it's better for me to not go there and be upset. So that's kind

of my, my...I guess, I don't know, self-rationalization or something. But I don't want to put myself in a situation where if I go to some of those meetings, I know that...everybody comes from a different place, right? If you're teaching a hundred undergrad students for a required course that they don't want to take, I tend to think you are a different person when you are 19, 20. And the same person will be different when you are 35, 40. A lot of things can make you angry when you are young and full of passion, and have this sense of justice for whatever.

So, I'm sure if I go to those meetings, there will be my colleagues, faculty for whom those issues are very real. So I don't want to discredit any of their concerns. And if I were in that situation, I would feel the same way. And they would need to kind of air out their concerns in a way that is useful for them.

But...I was in a, I don't want to say selfish but more of a self-preserving mode of like, how can I want to keep working in this institution that I love and like, and work with my students with a sense of trust, and not fearing them as gun carriers? And for me, for me to be able to do that, I don't want too many horror stories. I don't want a lot of faculty-student conflict. And I was beginning to get a sense of that myself, because I assumed a semi-administrative position within that time. And because of my position, I had been involved in different roles where I was the on recipient end of students complaining. And if they had to name somebody, I would be one of the people that were named. Before then, I had never had any issues. I got a teaching excellence award. I was good friends with all my colleagues. But I was beginning to realize it's not necessarily my good

personality that removes me from those occasions. That I chose not to serve in certain roles protected me from that. I would be subject to complaints and grievances. And so, I just wanted to do what I can do on my personal, individual level to be a good person. But I'm going to kind of protect myself from all these stories where once you know it you cannot un-know it, right? So that's kind of where my thought process was for the whole year.

At this point in the discussion, Kim paused and returned to a cautious, hesitant demeanor suggesting she was careful not to reveal too much about her role fielding student-faculty grievances. I asked Kim what this first semester was like for her in an environment where that sense of “happy ignorance” she mentioned could perhaps not be sustained.

I was really surprised how it didn't affect me. I had some conversation beforehand, especially with some other faculty who came to the United States like I did after all their 20s in another country, when it was very strictly controlled. So they just could not - and with children - and so they could not believe this. And they were just so upset. And so, I thought that a lot of things would have changed around me, and my way of interacting with students or...But I guess in a lot of ways, the only way for me to say it is I almost have forgotten about it. Now it's August, 2016. In a way, we are on a different campus, like before campus carry and after campus carry. But it just seems to me on a daily basis that nothing has changed.

During the Faculty Senate conversation, there were three scenarios of what you can do as a faculty. Right? So option one is to be minimalist, don't say anything about it to your students. Second is they can talk about something. Number three, you can be much more

open about, you know, “I oppose campus carry, you know show me your hands if you agree, hands if you disagree” or things of that sort. So there were these possibilities.

And I chose not to do it. It has never come to any discussion in class. I don't see anybody wear holsters or anything. So on a daily basis, I was surprised that I don't think about it. I do think that choice to be minimalist relates to this idea of self-preservation. I almost choose to not think about it. I choose not to foreground it in my syllabus or thoughts. I mean, I guess somebody who just disagrees with my way of dealing with it can define or characterize it as avoidance, because I'm avoiding that topic. And in my head, I'm avoiding that thought in my own head. But I don't see it as avoidance, because I actively seek out information and go to the [MU] Police page to read the campus-carry FAQ, right? What do I do; what does that mean? So, if it happens, I do know how to respond or deal with it. But just always thinking about it, doesn't, to me, doesn't necessarily make me more... better or quicker in responding. So, I guess I choose not to think about it.

There is still a part of me that if something gun-related were to happen, related to people that I know or close to me, I honestly don't know how I would handle it. My first thought, regardless of if I actually carried it out or not, I would try to move to another state. That would be my first thought. I came to realize that so much of the decision-making processes and the decisions that I make, it all comes down to a very personal experience or personal level. I guess I'm still at a stage regarding the gun control where maybe I'm still thinking a little bit in two extremes. Almost like when I talk about racial stereotypes, or you know when you talk about race theories. Like when you think of racial

stereotypes, some races were either feared or completely discounted, right? Either a monster or somebody who's not capable of that thought. It's like those two extremes. Or like in 18th century feminism: a woman is either an angel or a prostitute. So I feel like gun control is still something that, on one hand I'm having this idea of a cowboy wielding a long shotgun, and that kind of caricatured Texan image. Or the Virginia Tech person shooting everybody.

Or on the other hand I just...I want to completely...I don't even want to think about that I'm working on a campus where campus carry has passed and it's enforced, because I just choose to not think about it. Because I guess I choose to come to campus thinking "hey, nothing has changed." Right? And you know, it's 2016, December. Right now, it's not any different than 2014, summer. Which is not true. But you know, in some ways I guess I'm actively, somewhere in my head I'm actively kind of denying that change. So, on a daily basis, I don't. I don't think about it.

"So, based on your choice to not think about it, and everything you've shared about your thoughts around campus carry, are the things you do as a teacher different at all this semester?"

Yeah, I think so. I think so. For example, I got kind of a second-hand experience to see student grievances. And in a way, I think that got connected to campus carry somewhere in my head. For the students in that situation, if it's very clear that student was upset and misinterpreted another faculty's intention, and if that student chose to bring a gun and use it, that would be the situation that would have escalated. So, I was able to kind of spot the possible potential instances. I became more aware of where the situations are that the

student will be very upset. And I would try to not necessarily prevent it, but I think I try to provide more ways for them to really understand my grading or feedback as something useful and constructive.

So, for example, I would think more about finding ways to support the students in class, so they can feel that my support and my intention for support is real. I became much more explicit about my rubric, and I'm a qualitative researcher. Before that, I was much more narrative in my rubric. But I think I became much more explicit in my rubric, so they have exactly the scores that they get, but they also have an opportunity to revise and resubmit. I don't want to avoid sensitive topics. I don't want to give everybody an A, because I'm scared somebody is going to bring the gun and threaten me. I want to keep the integrity of my instruction. But at the same time be more sensitive to how my good intentioned, strict or constructive feedback can be interpreted. And find different ways to address it if they choose to.

I guess it came to a realization because I am a qualitative researcher where I always talk about assumptions, and intersubjectivity, and all that. That's just the area of my scholarship. I try to do more position-taking from the students' perspective. And what I realize is when you blow out, and when you want to, you know...um...use the gun. It's usually when you think that the sense of fairness has been violated and that people don't understand you. I don't have an opportunity to show how great I am, or that person hates me and it's unfair. So anytime that somebody is feeling the mixture of it's unfair, and I'm getting the shorter end of the stick, and nobody listens to me, kind of that combination, I

can kind of see that as, you know, if they are, that they are, they have some maybe psychological issue. Coupled with those conditions and those thoughts will be a perfect combination where people want to bring that gun and use it.

So, I try to avoid that kind of feeling. And I'm trying to think as an instructor, what can I do to minimize the sense of unfairness? If I can't control people bringing the guns and wanting to use them, let me at least try to prevent escalating that situation. And for me, as I said, I feel - and it feels a little weird to use the word "fortunate" in this sense - but I feel kind of fortunate that the people that I work with, the students I teach, I don't have to worry about. I feel that's enough for me to address that issue, and I don't have to always feel very scared of my students. And I honestly don't know. I don't know what else needs to be said.

I think, as awful as this sounds, until something happens, or doesn't, you know, because when something doesn't happen, we all just can go "alright fine. I guess it was an experiment that worked and we'll just let it go."

After my conversation with Kim, the final participant interview on my final day at MU, I wrote field notes on a bench near the open quad area at the center of campus. This was a particularly sunny and warm Friday afternoon before a busy commencement weekend, and the final day of the fall 2016 term. Soon-to-be graduates noticeable in their commencement regalia walked by with their families. They stopped occasionally for photos at various campus landmarks, practicing a common graduation ritual that could certainly be observed on nearly any

university campus. Members of the maintenance crew worked to tidy the grounds and make final touches on landscaping prior to the upcoming deluge of graduation visitors. The sounds of their mowers punctuated the constant hums and crashes of a large, ornate fountain in the center of the campus. Reflecting on the preceding three weeks, I thought once again about this sense of normalcy, which initially struck me on the morning of my first day at MU. This was another overwhelmingly typical campus environment on an overwhelmingly typical day.

On the way back to my rental car, I walked one final time through that long hallway in the biosciences building at the northern edge of the MU campus. By this point, the first-floor biosciences corridor became a shortcut to the visitor parking garage. That first day saw this hall lined with students waiting for class, holding end-of-semester cardboard project displays and paying attention to their smartphones. Today, with classes over and the campus fairly empty, there were no students, no other people at all in the corridor. The exclusion zone signs were still there, dotting both walls, identifying the excepted physical spaces where concealed weapons were not allowed. These signs hanging at nearly every door were jarring to me as a visitor new to the environment on day one. I expected, perhaps naively, on that first day to have encountered a radically changed campus environment. After living in the environment for several weeks, and spending hours in conversation with MU faculty, individuals who expressed a range of views on the law itself and its influence on their work-lives, it became clear that the markers of institutional change I was looking for on that first day were not visible on the surface. Signage aside, any transformations which had occurred on the campus required deep consideration to uncover.

Some faculty, to be sure, took overt action, and talked openly about the precise differences in their work enacted in response to the law. For them, this was a way to regain a

sense of agency and power that they felt was lost (or, in some cases, taken) through the enactment of the law. Other faculty only spoke of their reactions to the law after first explaining in detail how, for a variety of reasons including identified insulating factors and purposeful avoidance, nothing changed. The final two interviews with Pauline and Kim, dichotomous as they were, crystallized this observed sensemaking process, snapping into focus my discussions with their colleagues over the preceding weeks. Prior to this afternoon, I wondered how there could be such a clear distinction in the conversations I had with participants saying either “nothing’s changed” or “it changes everything.”

I walked by the office suite of Susan, the biology lab professor, one last time on my way to the exterior door, and heard the crickets chirping through a crack between the door and the floor.

“After a while, I sort of forget they’re even here.”

Chapter 7: Interpretations, Discussion, & Implications

I mean, I knew it would bother me, but I didn't know how much it would bother me until I was in the middle of it. When I'm concerned about a law, I want to know the facts. And so I looked for the facts. But there's just there's not enough of them. I mean there's not good research. Yet.

Julie, MU Faculty

In this chapter, I present a set of interpretations of, and implications for, the practical meaning and new knowledge generated through this study, and the relationship between existing theories and data regarding sensemaking and faculty work. To answer the research questions guiding the study, chapter 5 presented an overview of the grand narrative across all participants, and chapter 6 narrowed the focus to two composite storytellers who illustrated aspects of the sensemaking process in greater detail. By offering interpretations of the practical and theoretical significance of the themes previously identified, I reinforce important ideas and highlight findings centered in a new understanding of faculty sensemaking regarding campus carry as a matter of state policy. This chapter also revisits the sensemaking theoretical framework to identify the ways in which it was both confirmed and expanded by the study, and includes a visual model of the campus-carry policy sensemaking process for the MU faculty participants in this study.

A New Conceptual Model for Faculty Campus-Carry Policy Sensemaking

In August 2016, several University of Texas professors sued the State of Texas in U.S. District Court seeking to block the enactment of the new campus-carry law. The faculty alleged the law would cause a chilling effect on the things they felt they could do or say in the

classroom, and that this chilling effect represented a violation of their academic freedom and First Amendment rights. The State successfully argued in response that the allegation of an infringement upon classroom teaching was not based on any empirical evidence, in part because no empirical data existed at the time, and was therefore unfounded.

This study presents the first known data to support the faculty plaintiffs' claims. In fact, a major finding is that, for the MU faculty in this study, the enactment of campus carry as a matter of state policy did seem to influence changes in classroom teaching, decision making, and faculty-student interaction. Several faculty participants even described the law's implementation as impeding what they were willing to say in the classroom. While the sensemaking processes uncovered during data collection and analysis was complex and nuanced, Figure 5 provides a visual depiction of the apparent model by which the Texas campus-carry policy, as sanctioned in Senate Bill 11, evolved into changes in faculty decision-making for participants at MU.

The conceptual model in Figure 5 distills the complex and individualized sensemaking process identified in this study for faculty at MU as they transitioned to a campus-carry work environment. The diagram is read left-to-right, with time serving as a driver of forward momentum. First, violent acts on other college and university campuses informed the SB 11 legislation, which acted as a catalyst to begin the sensemaking process. Individual professors' prior experiences with guns and/or violence seemed to act as a filter through which they took one of two paths - either a conscious-active sensemaking response or a subconscious-reactive one. In either case, faculty in both sensemaking response groups identified aspects of change in their faculty work-lives caused by the enactment of campus carry, including changes to teaching decisions and to faculty-student interactions. For those in the conscious-active group, these

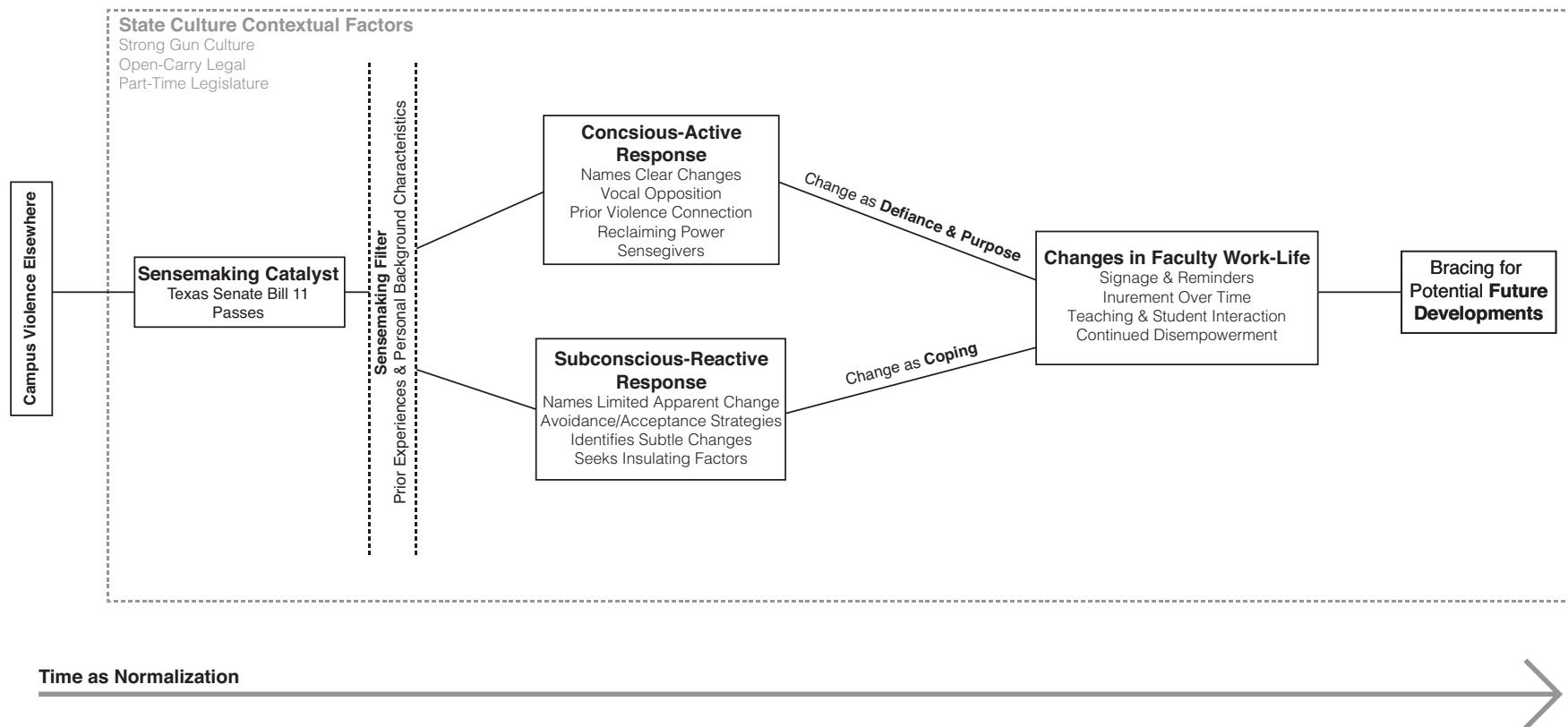


Figure 5: Conceptual model of campus-carry policy faculty sensemaking.

changes were typically the result of their own intentional decision-making in response to the law, and were often rooted in a sense of defiance and purpose as they sought to regain power. For faculty in the subconscious-reactive group, changes to teaching and faculty-student interaction generally took the form of subtle, under-the-surface coping strategies. In either case, the result was described as an altered picture of faculty work-lives on the MU campus when compared to participants' perceptions of prior semesters before the legalization of concealed weapons. For example, campus exclusion zone signage constituted a repeated environmental reminder of a changed workplace for faculty in both groups. Curricular content, pedagogy, and student interaction represented additional changes many participants identified. These alterations influenced the work-lives of participants across both sensemaking groups; the degree of change was different between them.

Finally, the passage of time, at the bottom of the diagram, influenced the campus-carry sensemaking process in two ways. First, several participants across both sensemaking groups spoke of the role of time as a normalizing factor. For those in the conscious-active group, this normalization was something they typically sought to prevent, while those in the subconscious-reactive group expressed hope normalization of campus carry would lead to a sense of inurement and an ability to put the whole issue behind them. For example, Lester, a professor who was previously a clinical psychologist, noted that humans have a tendency to take what was once controversial and view it as commonplace over time: "we quickly transition cognitively to a new normal so that it becomes a non-issue."

Secondly, time factored into anticipatory concerns from faculty in both groups regarding potential future developments after the law's enactment. For example, many discussed that a future act of gun violence on the MU campus or subsequent legislative developments could

cause a new process of sensemaking to become necessary. Finally, as depicted in Figure 5, the entire process of sensemaking in this model was influenced by the uniquely Texan state culture, depicted by the dashed line surrounding the process diagram. The state's gun culture, legal open-carry policy, and biennial legislature were particularly salient factors informing the legislative and sensemaking processes as represented in the model.

In sum, this model depicts the ways in which a contentious state policy was distilled into operationalized classroom and teaching actions by faculty participants in this study. Participants reached their understanding through a partially-dichotomous sensemaking process depending on personal and professional circumstances and prior experiences. Furthermore, the model depicts certain aspects of a professor's identity, motivations, and background which were salient in the process of making sense of a controversial new law. In this way, the model contributes additional understandings of not only higher education policy implementation processes and faculty decision-making, but also the notion of sensemaking as a whole.

Revisiting the Literature

In this section, I offer a description of the ways this study supported, expanded upon, and in some cases contradicted the existing literature on higher education policy enactment, sensemaking, and faculty decision-making processes. In each of these three domains, this study connected with prior literature to further a scholarly understanding of complex phenomena.

Policy enactment and the policy object. Modern public policy theories have shifted toward a recognition of the inherent messiness in having multiple actors involved in translating policy to action. For example, rather than considering this to be an orderly process whereby policies are directly implemented by those in postsecondary education, Braun et al. (2010) used the term enactment to represent the role individual actors at multiple levels have in interpreting

and actualizing public policy on the ground every day. As a result, the idea of education policy enactment is rendered more complex and inclusive of multiple levels of individual action involved in adaptation and practice. Furthermore, elements of the local and institutional context also shape policy enactment. Sin (2014) wrote of the theoretical construct of a policy object, or the socially-constructed understanding one has of the purposes of a policy, which is often more relevant than the actual text of any given piece of legislation. The policy object idea adds nuance to the policy enactment process by considering ontological factors that any individual actor, such as a professor at an institution enacting campus-carry policy, brings with them as they make decisions in the context of a new policy. In this regard, the policy object is more about what actors enacting policy on the ground believe the law to be, rather than what it actually says.

The data in this study demonstrated the role of the policy object as a socially constructed and personally variable aspect of policy enactment regarding campus carry at MU. At the close of the first semester of legal concealed carry on campus, many faculty relied upon both prior personal experiences as well as social factors such as discussions with colleagues and campus messaging to make decisions. As faculty made decisions about their teaching and interactions with students, thereby enacting aspects of the policy on a micro scale every day, they considered their understanding of the law's purpose in both social and personal contexts. Sin's (2014) study found that these "enacted ontologies" (p. 446) shaped the ways individual actors put education policy measures into place, thereby collectively shaping the policy itself. In the case of campus-carry enactment at MU, the individual decisions made by each professor represented the law's collective enactment, such as modifications to syllabi, office hours, grading rubrics, and classroom content and pedagogy.

This study not only confirms the role of a policy object, but also expands it by considering the place of both social and personal factors, such as prior experience with gun violence, in influencing policy enactment on the ground level by individual actors. While the model was developed in this study with specific campus-carry legislation in Texas, it could be considered an overall conceptual model of the ways in which state policies are enacted by individual faculty on the ground, especially controversial pieces of legislation. Furthermore, this study differs from the extant body of literature on policy enactment by calling into question the degree to which personal fear and other negative emotions, including fatigue and resignation after a particularly controversial public discourse, shape individual actors' responses.

Sensemaking, emotion, and time. Continuing consideration of an affective, personal element to policy enactment, many faculty participants at MU openly spoke of their emotions throughout the campus-carry policy legislative, development, and enactment processes. Though the various emotions felt and the degree to which they were experienced were not universal across participants, each person did speak affectively of the role emotions played in their process of finding meaning within the new law. Sensemaking, again, is the process by which individuals develop a feasible story of the meaning of challenging or difficult events, and then use that subjective sense of meaning to make future decisions. In terms of specific characteristics of a sensemaking process identified by prior studies (e.g., O'Meara, Lounder, & Campbell, 2014; Powell & Colyvas, 2008; Weick et al., 2005), such as the role of organizational authority figure messaging, social interaction, and environmental cues, each of these factors was relevant for the participants in this study. Many participants spoke of the importance they placed on campus forums, colleague discussions, and interactions with campus leaders as factors informing their

sensemaking process. Furthermore, exclusion zone signage acted as an environmental cue that influenced participants' experiences of policy enactment and sensemaking.

Weick and colleagues (2005) distilled the idea of sensemaking simply as determining “what’s the story?” (p. 410) and “what do I do next?” (p. 412). The conceptual model developed in this study demonstrated that the story – the law and campus policy – was largely socially constructed and shared among participants. Divergence began to occur when participants then tried to determine what to “do next,” leading to the dual response tracks identified. For some, the next steps included choosing clear, overt modifications to their teaching and student interactions, while others took a subconscious approach including avoidance or acceptance.

Beyond these largely accepted aspects of the sensemaking process, however, understandings of sensemaking as an organizational change process enacted on inter- and intra-personal levels have typically been devoid of any significant consideration of emotion. Only in recent years has the literature on emotions and sensemaking begun to be linked by researchers, starting with a conceptual article by Maitlis et al. in 2013 positing that there may be a connection between the two. In 2015, Steigenberger went further to link sensemaking and human emotion by considering the ways emotions influence cognitive information processing on two levels – a subconscious, rapid one, and a slower, more conscious one. Past emotional experiences tend to trigger the more rapid and subconscious response rather than a longer deliberative process of processing information and making conscious decisions (Izard, 2010). Steigenberger (2015) used psychological literature to make the theoretical case that specific emotions including anxiety, fear, and anger could be particularly salient in the sensemaking process of individuals facing organizational change. For those experiencing anxiety and fear regarding the change, avoidance strategies would be pursued, and the likelihood of engaging in sensegiving activities was posited

to be low. The author suggested anxious individuals therefore only further the sense of disempowerment they may have already been feeling. For those feeling a sense of anger, the opposite was believed to be the case: these individuals were decisive in making changes and they had high motivation to participate in sensegiving toward others.

This study confirms and expands upon Steigenberger's (2015) work in part, and also differs in some key ways. First, the individuals at MU who adopted a subconscious-reactive approach, including seeking avoidance-type behaviors, were typically those who experienced feelings of anxiety around the law. By making sense of the law from an anxious standpoint, these participants were least likely to participate in sensegiving, and also continued to feel disempowered and a lack of control over their environment. However, for those in the conscious-active response group, influential fear based upon prior experiences with gun violence or other violent acts led them to participate in sensegiving and to make the types of decisive changes Steigenberger (2015) suggested were reserved for those experiencing anger. This stands in contrast to the notion that fear based upon prior negative experiences would influence sensemaking toward a passive stance. While the author suggested these types of past experiences trigger a subconscious response to sensemaking, the participants in this study with prior connection to gun violence were actually among the most overt, conscious, and active decision makers. This might be because most in the conscious-active group also experienced feelings of anger given the controversial nature of the law, and the multi-year discourse leading to the campus-carry enactment. The emotional response Steigenberger (2015) suggested for anger may have compounded that of fear for these participants. Future studies explicitly investigating emotional response to controversial policy enactment could prove valuable in more fully understanding this process.

Lastly, this study also expands our understanding of sensemaking by situating the process in a temporal context. Most participants spoke openly about the role of time in shaping their understanding of campus-carry policy, particularly with regard to perceived and/or potential normalization of concealed weapons on campus. Normalization, a term to describe a growing personal and social sense of regularity of what was once new and different (Deatrick, Knafl, & Murphy-Moore, 1999), played a key role in the sensemaking process for many faculty participants. While some sought ways to prevent normalizing concealed weapons on the MU campus out of fear that it could lead to desensitization and further disempowerment, others viewed potential inurement to the issue over time as a positive development to eliminate the need for continued consternation. In either case, time influencing sensemaking is novel in the literature, as is a connection between normalization and sensemaking altogether.

Prior work has discussed any temporal dimension of sensemaking solely in terms of a retrospective process (e.g., Powell & Colyvas, 2008; Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005). The data in this study build upon this scholarship to suggest that not only is time a background-level contextual factor allowing sensemaking to occur, but it can also act as an influential force shaping the sensemaking process through desensitizing what was once challenging, confusing, or fear-inducing. Participants' reactions varied to the idea of normalization over time, but in any case, the process seemed to already have been occurring. Even those who spoke of a need to resist normalizing campus carry identified ways in which the "new normal," as some described it, was diminishing their own sense of frustration, anxiety, and fear. The disparity on this point between the conscious-active and subconscious-reactive groups was that some viewed this as a positive development to rely upon in feeling protected, while others viewed it as something to work to avoid.

Anticipatory or future-oriented sensemaking represents a final contribution of this study to a new conception of time as a factor in the process. The participants spoke openly of their concerns about possible future developments with regard to campus carry. Specifically, the potential actions future legislative sessions could take that may upend their understanding of the law concerned many participants, as did the unknowable possibility of an act of gun violence occurring on the campus at some point in the future. The sensemaking process depicted in the conceptual model of Figure 5 was fragile and tenuous, and it became clear through the course of data collection that future developments could drastically alter the entire process, causing some participants to re-evaluate their entire understanding of the law and their role as faculty. As a result, they spoke of future-oriented sensemaking whereby they recognized that future actions could cause a need to re-evaluate their entire meaning structure developed through the enactment process. In some ways, this mirrored processes of anticipatory grieving and anticipatory anxiety found in psychology and health literature (Boehme et al., 2014; Moon, 2016; Shore, Gelber, Koch, & Sower, 2016), but is a novel dimension to the study of sensemaking and the role of a temporal dimension to the overall process. The sense that participants felt their personal and collective meaning structures were fragile, vulnerable to future developments, and in some ways unfinished, played a key role in continued feelings of uncertainty, disempowerment, and anxiety, particularly for subconscious-reactive responders. For example, Jill described it this way:

We're anxious, I think. We're not talking about it publicly at all, but I think there's some anxiety as the legislature goes back into session in January [2017]. You know, everybody. The way that things got left, community colleges are now on the hook, too. We were required to implement August 1 of 2016. Community colleges are required to implement a year later. In this legislative session, some of what got left open in the

deliberation was basically the admonition that “we're going to look at all of your campuses' policies and if we don't like them, we may have something to say about it.” I think there's some anxiety about that because we've all kind of settled.

Julie, who was involved in the Faculty Senate's campus-carry process, spoke of a continuing sense of anticipatory anxiety. While she suggested she and her colleagues “settled” into a sense of normalcy, she also identified some of the ways in which this feeling of being settled could be upended through future legislative action.

Faculty decision-making. Past studies have shown faculty motivation and teaching decisions are typically influenced by institutional purpose and messaging, student interactions, and social relations with colleagues and other peers (e.g., Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Ginsburg, Lingard, Regehr, & Underwood, 2008; Pritchard & Potter, 2011; Volpe, Davidson, & Bell, 2008). Each of these influential factors was confirmed in the present study, though in more specific ways related to perceived threat and fear. Furthermore, this study adds to the literature a more nuanced understanding of ways in which state policy developments redound to classroom and student interaction decision-making by postsecondary faculty. The enactment of a campus-carry policy in Texas affected the faculty participants' teaching decisions and student interactions, in line with the second research question guiding this study.

In terms of classroom teaching decisions, past studies indicated that when faculty experience fear of their students, or have experiences with openly hostile students, termed contra-power harassment, their teaching and interaction decisions are influenced (Lampman et al., 2009). This body of literature, stemming primarily from psychology and sociology, includes numerous examples of enacted incivility from students toward professors, while authors have called for continued research to better understand its influence (Ausbrooks, Jones, & Tijerina,

2011; Burke, Karl, Peluchette, & Evans, 2014; Clark, 2009; Feldmann, 2001). The present study adds to this scholarship by considering the role of the perceived potential threat of violence in shaping faculty behavior, rather than solely enacted violence or harassment. While Lampman and colleagues (2009) wrote of acts of incivility from students that were reported, this study found similar influences from the perceived threat posed by theoretically armed students for some faculty in a campus-carry context. The Texas law's requirement that faculty cannot ask whether anyone is carrying a weapon seemed to breed uncertainty that caused many participants to consider anyone as a potentially armed member of the campus community. In part because of this uncertainty, faculty participants described the ways they changed their teaching and student interaction decisions to avoid provoking potentially armed students. These modifications included considerations of course content, texts, pedagogy, and out-of-classroom interactions such as faculty office hours.

In each case, changes faculty made to their prior teaching and student interaction decisions were potentially detrimental to student success. Prior studies demonstrated the importance of close rapport between faculty and students, and the manner in which student-faculty interactions both within and out of the classroom influence student learning. For example, Pascarella and Terenzini have written for decades about the role a positive relationship between faculty and students plays in fostering helpful academic outcomes for students (1978, 1991, 2005; Pascarella, 1980). As they and other scholars have found, academic success is heightened when students enjoy academically-purposeful, informal interactions with faculty, such as conversations during faculty office house (Baxter Magolda, 1987; Clark, Walker, & Keith, 2002; Cox et al., 2015; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1978; Sax, Bryant, & Harper, 2005). These open exchanges with faculty, as well as positive classroom interactions, also lead to

increased student persistence and retention, particularly for students of color and undocumented students, such as a large portion of the diverse MU student body (Anaya & Cole, 2001; Cole, 2007; Dwyer, 2015; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Stebleton & Aleixo, 2015). The newfound sense of guardedness in classroom discussions expressed by many MU faculty in this study stands in opposition to the type of faculty-student classroom rapport which prior studies demonstrated support students.

For faculty participants at MU, campus-carry legislation also led to alterations in their office hours rendering them less private and individualized, thereby reducing their educative benefit. Changes to student interaction decisions such as the ones identified in this study align with the limited body of prior research regarding not only contrapower harassment and incivility, but also the ways students shape faculty interaction behavior (Cotton & Wilson, 2006; Frankel & Swanson, 2002; Lampman et al., 2009). While many MU participant faculty members' decision-making in the era of campus carry was altered in response to the law, the effects of this upon student outcomes can only be assumed. For example, it stands to reason that when office hours become "conference" hours held in a public place, students may be less likely to seek help from professors by disclosing academic or personal concerns. Future scholars should consider how to identify any potential changes to student success that may be a result of SB 11 and similar laws in other states.

In addition to office hours and other changes outside the classroom, faculty in this study named specific changes they made to their teaching as a result of campus-carry legislation going into effect. For faculty in both the subconscious-reactive and conscious-active sensemaking response groups, a reconsideration of prior course content and pedagogy was evident though it was more subtle for those in the subconscious-reactive group. Participants discussed a general

desire to avoid provocation of students, particularly since they could not know who was or was not armed. Despite a desire not to incite student reactions, we know provocation through potentially controversial readings or course discussions or experiential learning activities like debates stimulate critical thinking and offer important learning experiences for postsecondary students (hooks, 2010; McKeachie & Svinicki, 2006; Merida, Baratas, & Arrue, 2016; Noddings & Brooks, 2017). For some MU faculty, perceptions of campus-carry policy stood in the way of efforts to promote student learning in certain ways such as critical dialogue and descriptive evaluation of work. For others, the new law challenged their beliefs about teaching and student interactions in ways they viewed as something to overcome. For example, some subconscious-reactive faculty described themselves as “good” teachers, and explained that if you were a “good” teacher, you should not have anything to worry about. These faculty felt insulated from any adverse effects of the law because of their assessment of their own ability, and viewed concerned colleagues as simply not trying hard enough to enhance their teaching so as to not offend a student or provoke a violent reaction.

Implications for Future Work

This study provides several clear implications for campus administrators, faculty, policymakers, future research, and society. Each set of implications emanates from the foundational premise the data demonstrated: for MU faculty in this study, the enactment of campus-carry policy influenced teaching and student interactions in ways that may be detrimental to postsecondary student learning and faculty well-being. First, campus administrators can learn from the experiences of faculty at MU. Many participants identified ways the year-long process, open to the entire campus community, shaped their sensemaking. The use of campus forums – both those open to all and some reserved exclusively for faculty –

were noted by every participant, and most found them valuable. For some, the forums provided a clear avenue to voice their concerns and know that they were heard. For others, the forums represented a way of coming together with colleagues in an organization where people typically operate with a high degree of independence in their day-to-day work. As a result, faculty relied upon each other for aspects of the sensemaking/sensegiving process, and also came to some shared understandings of the law and the policy object. Furthermore, these forums accompanied by an existing, robust system of faculty governance and a highly participatory, transparent, and open Campus-Carry Work Group, helped faculty regain a sense of agency after years of state policy discourse left them feeling disempowered. Contemporaneously, anonymous forms to solicit feedback on the MU Work Group's website allowed anyone in the university community to voice concerns throughout the process if they chose not to attend the face-to-face events. In this way, even faculty who avoided the topic or sought insulation from active consideration of the law were able to participate in a lower-stakes fashion. Institutional administrators at other locations tasked with implementing a similar law, or any controversial public policy, for that matter, should consider ways to incorporate as many voices from faculty in the process as possible through both face-to-face and anonymous, online avenues.

Faculty working in an environment transitioning to a campus-carry law can also learn from experiences of their colleagues at MU. For those feeling anxiety, fear, anger, or disempowerment as a result of similar legislation, this study demonstrates the importance of re-engaging with a difficult topic in order to regain a sense of agency. The sensemaking process for participants in this study was heavily influenced by the degree to which each person chose to engage with the campus discourse and governance processes. Those who chose to stay out of it or remove themselves from meetings or discussions expected to be discomforting seemed to

experience the most persistent feelings of disempowerment, anxiety, and fear. Those who chose to participate in the process, however, often regained a sense of agency over their work-lives, sometimes simply because of their proximity to MU authority figures such as the chief of police who acted as a sensegiver for many in the study.

Policymakers who look to higher education as a social institution charged with generating and disseminating knowledge can identify cause for concern in the data presented in this study. Collectively, as faculty alter their teaching and student interactions after enacting campus-carry laws – whether subconsciously or consciously – the continuation of public higher education as a space for critical thought and discourse, free exploration of new ideas, and expanding access to diverse people is also altered. Those in other states considering similar laws must take into account the core purposes of higher education described by Jefferson and the earliest founders of our postsecondary system. Every participant in this study identified campus carry as being in direct conflict with the philosophical ideals undergirding public higher education in the U.S., including academic freedom, critical dialogue, and access and equity. As teaching changes, in subtle or overt ways, one classroom at a time, the collective influence of SB 11 and similar policies could become profoundly detrimental in shifting the nature of U.S. higher education.

Numerous future research opportunities exist based upon the findings in this study. As an initial exploration of a previously un-studied topic, a goal for this project was to generate a baseline from which future work could begin. As a result, future scholarship can further an understanding of campus-carry policy in several ways. First, while it did not rise to the level of a dominant theme in the interviews, nor was it directly tied to the research questions, the idea that there could be a potential disparate influence of the law on different groups of people and on different types of institutions was raised by some participants. For example, one professor

considered whether African American students could truly have the same freedom to carry a gun as their White peers, given both the current racial climate and recent acts of violence against African American males in particular. Future research should identify differences in ways campus-carry laws are experienced by persons of Color, by people of different gender identities, by faculty of various ranks and appointments (tenured versus adjunct, for example), by student affairs staff and other front-line administrators, and by those at different types of institutions. Future work also should consider the ways in which variations in state higher education governance structures influence the legislative and enactment processes of campus-carry laws. For example, Michigan's unique form of constitutionally-autonomous state universities, free of major state governmental oversight, is a clear contrast to Texas's highly-centralized higher education system. Studies of campus-carry policy enactment in multiple states could provide insight beyond that generated through study of one specific state's experience. Furthermore, this study generated a new model to theorize the ways controversial state policy redounds to decision-making by individual faculty. Future work could attempt to test this model with other pieces of state legislation to identify its utility beyond this issue in one state. Furthermore, the faculty sensemaking conceptual model could also have utility in other crisis or trauma situations within higher education, such as sexual assault on campus, or earthquakes, hurricanes, or other natural disasters striking institutions. As a depiction of sensemaking through a difficult and, for some, painful process, the model may prove useful with other sensemaking catalysts beyond simply matters of policy. While observed in the context of campus-carry policy at a particular institution in Texas, the model could likely have applicability elsewhere, which should be studied.

Another opportunity exists to find generalizable data regarding faculty responses to campus-carry. As this study was designed to be an initial and deeply-qualitative study, embedded in particular time, social, geographic, and personal contexts, the findings are not intended to be generalizable. However, this study led to a wealth of previously un-identified topics for future exploration. For example, subsequent studies might seek to identify the degree to which all faculty in Texas public, 4-year institutions changed their syllabi, office hours, or pedagogy, since those seemed to be common practices for the faculty participants in this study. Through this study, we now have the first evidence of some typical ways in which individual faculty make decisions in the face of campus-carry enactment, and these factors can be explored further by future scholarship.

Finally, some consternation and anxiety around campus carry at MU, and within Texas generally, was attributed to an unknowable future that could regrettably include an act of campus gun violence. As a result, some discussion offered by participants veered toward anticipatory reactions or conjecture about future actions they might take. In the extremely unfortunate event that any act of gun violence did happen to occur on a Texas higher education campus in the future, a new sensemaking process with new dimensions would likely occur for faculty. Therefore, a longer-term analysis to study faculty sensemaking in the years after an act of gun violence on a college campus where one had already occurred could be helpful. Furthermore, continued study of the effects of campus carry over an extended period of time, such as a longitudinal examination of any sustained changes in teaching, student interaction, or faculty recruitment, could shed light on the normalization referenced by many participants. This study was designed to provide a real-time snapshot of the policy enactment process and its effects at

the close of the first semester of legal campus carry. Therefore, future work to revisit the topic would only serve to expand the temporal understanding of the phenomena at play.

Concluding Thoughts

While also generating multiple new questions to consider, the data presented here have answered the dual research questions guiding this study:

1. What do the stories of faculty making decisions about their work during campus-carry policy enactment reveal about the educative implications of the newly enacted campus-carry policy in Texas?
2. What factors influence the way faculty make teaching and research decisions?

In terms of the first question, the MU faculty narratives gathered in this study demonstrated several educative implications for enactment of campus-carry policy in Texas. Educational implications included both direct and subtle changes to curriculum, pedagogy, and faculty-student interaction. Many faculty made decisions to alter their work in ways they acknowledged were perhaps detrimental to students' academic and personal success, such as limiting opportunities for critical dialogue in the classroom or no longer holding private office hours with students. Even many faculty who reported no changes to their work-lives on the surface went on to describe subconscious modifications to their workplace decisions that resulted in educative implications, such as a sense of guardedness or vigilance while teaching.

To answer the second question, this study expands our current picture of factors influencing faculty decision-making by demonstrating the role of public policy and political discourse, peer interaction and sensegiving, prior personal experiences, and feelings of disempowerment or lack of agency in shaping the teaching and student-interaction decisions made by faculty. While research question two was intended to uncover decision-making factors

shaping the teaching and research domains of faculty work, participants generally did not discuss their research. Although they were directly asked to describe their experiences regarding teaching and research, participants chose to talk instead about teaching and faculty-student interactions. I believe this lack of research discussion in favor of describing student interaction could be based upon the open, narrative structure of the interview protocol, which allowed participants to explore four topical prompts in whichever ways they chose. This finding offers evidence that for the MU faculty in this study, research work was a less salient consideration in sensemaking around campus carry. Instead, an unanticipated aspect of faculty work, informal interaction with students, was a stronger factor in decision making. Future scholars may desire to more directly explore any potential relationship between campus-carry policy and faculty research work, and whether SB 11 and similar laws have any influence over research. Nonetheless, for professors at MU, the final three weeks of the first semester of legal campus carry demonstrated ways in which the new law shaped a complex array of new faculty work-life considerations, some of which influence student success and the postsecondary learning environment.

Epilogue: “We Have to Learn from This”

Prior studies have demonstrated a correlation between the number of firearms in a public space and the likelihood of being injured or killed by a firearm in that space (Ayres & Donohue, 2003, 2009; Cummings et al., 1997; Duggan, 2001; Helland & Tabarrok, 2004; National Research Council, 2005). As more campuses become potentially armed through state legislation, the likelihood of gun violence on campus is increased. Despite this, the suggestion that more armed campuses will deter violence persists in the public discourse, shaped by the frequent refrain that “a good guy with a gun” can stop a violent situation. After each of the latest campus shootings, this “good guy” notion joins “thoughts and prayers” as an expected, routine response from government officials, media figures, and those in the firearms lobby. Each time, and in each new state, the debate over a campus-carry bill advances largely along the lines of a more-safe/less-safe dialogue.

Based on an acceptance of the years of overwhelming safety evidence that already exists, this study side-stepped the more-safe/less-safe debate to originate from a wholly different premise: what *else* happens when a higher education institution becomes a potentially-armed public space? This study provides policymakers, campus senior officers, and all within the higher education sector, including faculty and students, evidence that there are other important factors to consider. For the MU faculty in this study, the enactment of campus carry clearly influenced changes in teaching and student interactions that were likely detrimental to student success, to say nothing of faculty well-being, recruitment, and other institutional operations. There are clear educative implications for SB 11 in Texas which must be considered in order to fully understand the influence of campus-carry legislation in shaping higher education as a social institution.

The enactment of campus carry is not a simple issue, as the data demonstrated. Rather, the sensemaking processes and resulting decision-making by faculty in the first semester at this institution evinced a highly personal, complex, and nuanced progression of coming to terms with the law within a specific environment, deeply embedded in a particular time, geographical location, and sociocultural dimension. As more states debate similar legislation – two states have introduced campus-carry bills so far in 2017 (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2017) – the public conversation around the proposed laws must be expanded beyond safety. Consideration of the educative and societal implications, many of which were illustrated through this study, must occur to fully understand the influence of these types of laws upon the U.S. higher education sector. When faculty fear reprisal from students, their teaching changes particularly in areas surrounding controversial topics, as well as pedagogy designed to foster critical thinking. Furthermore, as some participants noted, the recruitment of highly-qualified students and faculty could potentially suffer due to the practical effect of this controversial legislation. This trend could lead to a brain drain (Florida, 2005) as people choose to avoid armed spaces. It is clear from this study that legislative efforts to arm members of Texas campus communities engendered some behavior shifts in classrooms through subtle alterations in individual faculty decision-making for the MU participants in this study.

MU faculty sensemaking regarding the enactment of campus-carry legislation also lacks a sense of finality or completeness based upon my experiences over several weeks on the campus. The feelings of trepidation and future-oriented apprehension that permeated multiple participant conversations are an important consideration. MU faculty in this study almost universally expressed a negative sense of the unknown in terms of any potential relevant future developments. Furthermore, unstated within these discussions was a clear sense of uncertainty

and fragility; the model of sensemaking emerging from this study is a delicate one at best. Nearly every participant based a part of their understanding of and response to the law upon the fact that no MU community members had been shot after campus-carry enactment on August 1, 2016.

This, unfortunately, begs the question: what if?

What happens next if the facts upon which one's understanding is based change? That question is, regrettably, not without merit. As I waited to board my flight to Greenoak to begin data collection, the day's news playing on every television at the airport was punctuated by the CNN anchors' desire to "send [their] thoughts and prayers" to those affected by an act of mass violence at Ohio State University earlier in the day. Once I landed, the weeks that followed saw participants readily speaking of other campus shootings as they discussed their own understanding of safety in light of campus carry. Referred to simply as institutional names at this point – Virginia Tech, Umpqua, Northern Illinois – the message was all too clear: *others have been where we next could be*. Statistics regarding the increased likelihood of violence in an armed environment were openly acknowledged and considered. It is unfortunate to feel a need to consider campus violence occurring anywhere in the future. It is not, however, unanticipated.

Moreover, other faculty spoke of the impending session of the Texas legislature, slated to begin in January 2017, and theorized about possible actions that could further expand the right to carry a weapon on campus. State legislators could limit exclusion zones, for example, or otherwise disrupt the new, albeit tenuous, sense of order that existed on the campus. In either case, the actions of legislators or of an armed individual could place the fragile sense of equilibrium I encountered into disarray. Faculty sensemaking in the face of campus carry at MU was decidedly *unsettled*. The conceptual model depicted in figure five, despite its straight lines and linear progression, is not simple nor complete, nor can it be, given the fluidity of the

situation and the sheer number of potential influential actors. Bold, opaque lines in the graphic obscure thin and tenuous connections between elements of a system of sensemaking that is not finished, if it ever can be.

Several participant storytellers spoke of the idea that campus carry, at the end of its first semester, represented a “new normal” to which they had adjusted, either in overt or subconscious ways. After weeks on the campus, and months in reflection on the experience of conducting this study, I am left with the following question: what will happen when unknowable future actions – legislative, political, violent, or otherwise – cause a *newer* normal to become necessary?

I think we have to learn from this. You know, whatever the eventual outcome of it, whether it's repealed and we go back to not having it, or whether it just becomes natural and nobody even thinks about it, we have to learn from this process. And at the end of the day, I just trust that most people will always make the right choice.

Lester, MU Faculty

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview Protocol

Introduction & Rapport-Building, “Fostering Narrative Thinking”

- Brief re-explanation of the study and of narrative: My interest is learning from you what it is like as a faculty member to work in the context of SB 11 and the enactment of so-called “campus-carry” policies in Texas. In particular, I’m curious about how you make sense of your work in this first semester after the policy’s implementation. As part of that, I’m interested in getting as complete a picture as possible of the ways you think about your teaching and research before, during, and after the bill.
- Therefore, our conversation will have two parts, and it may feel a bit different than the typical interview. First, I’m going to ask you to tell me four “big stories” about your experiences, and as you do, please feel free to take your time. I won’t be interrupting you, or stopping you to ask any questions. I may take some notes to follow up on later, but you have as much time as you need to explore and discuss your thoughts on the topic. In this first part of our conversation, I’m really interested in hearing you tell these stories from start to finish. So, I’ll pose a question or a topic, and then ask you to share your thoughts as fully as you’re comfortable doing so.
- Then after we’ve covered those four areas, in the second portion of our time today (or in a second meeting, depending on the participant) I will pose some clarifying questions just to be sure that I have a good understanding of what you’ve shared.

Prompt 1: Current Role & Work Definition

- So to begin, I'm curious about your career. Tell me about the path that brought you to your current position and how you think about your work? {career trajectory, education experiences, prior professional work, etc.}
- After a clear indication the participant has finished: Is there anything else about your path to your current role and the way you define it that you'd like to add?

Prompt 2: Campus Carry in Texas

- You mentioned that you've been at [MU] (or in Texas as the case may be) for _____ years now. It's my understanding that during that time, campus carry has been a topic of debate across the state, with various versions of bills proposed over the years. What has your experience been doing your teaching and research in this environment?
- After a clear indication the participant has finished: Is there anything else about the public and legislative advancements of campus-carry ideas that you'd like to add?

Prompt 3: SB 11 Debate & Implementation

- So, that brings us to Senate Bill 11 and the University's current campus-carry policy. Tell me about the debate around the bill and the discussion of turning it into an operationalized campus policy?
- After a clear indication the participant has finished: Is there anything else about your experiences during the implementation of SB 11 that I should know?

Prompt 4: The Current Semester

- So this leads to my final prompt for the first part of our time together: Please tell me your story of working in this first semester of legal campus carry.

- After a clear indication the participant has finished: Is there anything else about your experiences this semester you'd like to share?

Possible Clarification Questions for Part 2:

- **Prompt 1: Understanding of current role:**
 - Are there any life experiences that may have caused you to be interested in teaching/research/your particular field?
 - What has been the path of your career, and how did you come to your position at [Metropolitan University]?
 - How do you describe your work? What does it mean to be a “teacher” or “researcher” and how did you come to that understanding?
 - Are there past teachers you've encountered on whom you model your work?
 - What does your time typically look like in an average week?
 - How do you approach preparing for classes you teach? Managing classroom and student interactions? Office hours?
 - What does your research agenda look like?
- **Prompt 2: Campus Carry in Texas**
 - How have you felt about campus carry while people external to the institution debated it?
 - Who may have been involved in your experiences during this time? (colleague discussions, etc.)
 - I've heard from Texas colleagues who are not participating in this study that there's often been a desire among faculty to see how they can bring something to this policy discourse. Have you felt similarly?

- **Prompt 3: SB 11 Debate & Implementation**

- What, if anything, may have caused you to consider the bill as it related to your work?
- Did any experiences during that year of implementation and study cause you to consider the bill as it related to you personally and professionally?
- The bill definitely seemed to gain a lot of attention from people both on campus and external to Texas altogether. Can you describe what the campus was like over that 2015-2016 academic year?
- Did anything seem to be different from prior years that you would attribute to the debate over SB 11 and its implementation?
- What did it feel like to be a faculty member during that period?
- Who played a role in your experiences during this time?
- Were you involved in any way as SB 11 was translated into a specific campus policy at [Metropolitan University]?

- **Prompt 4: The Current Semester**

- What has it been like to teach and conduct research in this first semester after concealed weapons are now allowed on campus?
- Have you made different decisions about your work at all? (office hours, student meetings, language on syllabi, etc.)
- Looking ahead, do you think the University or higher education generally will be different in the future as a result of this policy?
- Who has played a role in your experiences this semester? (colleagues, students, administrators, the public, etc.)

APPENDIX B

List of Participants

Pseudonym	MU Role	Primary Response Group
Jill	Tenured faculty, graduate level. Member of Faculty Senate	Subconscious-reactive
Susan	Adjunct faculty, undergraduate level biosciences. Member of Faculty Senate Leadership	Conscious-active
Eric	Tenure-track faculty, professional school (teaches both undergraduate and graduate)	Conscious-active
Rachel	Tenured faculty, both undergraduate and graduate level. Member of Faculty Senate	Conscious-active
Roland	Head of Campus Police	N/A
Jeffrey	Campus Police Chief of Staff	N/A
Lester	Tenured faculty, graduate level. College-level Assistant Dean of Research	Subconscious-reactive
Mark	Teaching faculty, graduate level, professional school. Co-Chair of Campus-Carry Work Group	Subconscious-reactive
Julie	Adjunct faculty, undergraduate level. Coordinator of undergraduate lab courses & teaching assistants	Conscious-active
Alan	Tenured faculty, Honors College	Subconscious-reactive
Becky	Tenured faculty, undergraduate level	Conscious-active
Kim	Tenure-track faculty, graduate level. Member of Faculty Senate	Subconscious-reactive
Pauline	Tenured faculty, undergraduate level	Conscious-active

Table 1: List of Participants

APPENDIX C

Participant Recruitment Message

Seeking Research Study Participants: Faculty Experiences of Campus-Carry Implementation in Texas

Nathaniel Cradit, a doctoral candidate in Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education at Michigan State University, seeks participants for a research study of faculty teaching and research decision-making after Senate Bill 11 (the Texas “campus-carry” law) became effective on August 1, 2016. You are receiving this message because you are a faculty member at [Metropolitan University]. You were identified as a potentially interested participant by a faculty colleague.

This study seeks to identify whether and how faculty decision-making regarding teaching and research have been influenced by the new campus-carry law and the associated [Metropolitan University] policy. If you choose to take part in this study, you would participate in two 45-minute interviews regarding your experiences, or one 90-minute interview session. To be eligible to take part in this study, individuals must be current faculty with a teaching responsibility in the fall, 2016 term. On-site interviews at [Metropolitan University] are currently being scheduled for the period of November 30, 2016 through December 16, 2016.

If you are interested in participating, please visit [URL] to schedule your choice of either one 90-minute interview appointment or two 45-minute interview appointments. If you have questions about this study, please email the researcher at [email] or call [phone].

APPENDIX D

Codebook

1 Future Codes

Ideas of things that have come about partway through the first pass to code for specifically later in a future round.

1.1 Future Codes\SocialPressure

Notations about making sense or decisions based upon social pressures or the expectations of others.

1.2 Future Codes\Defiance/Purpose

Use this code when participants discuss choosing to regain some power in defiant or purposeful ways. E.g., I choose not to be afraid. In some ways, this code is the opposite of Disempowerment.

1.3 Future Codes\StudentDiversity

Use for discussions of the diverse students present in the [MU] environment, or for discussions of [Greenoak's] overall diversity when in reference to [MU] as well.

2 HigherEdGeneral

Used for general discussions about higher education broadly or as a social institution, rather than about specifically the university under study or about things that would fit under code: PHL/Jeffersonian.

2.1 HigherEdGeneral\PHL/Jeffersonian

Used for passages referencing deeper philosophical ideas/ideals of higher education, or the social purposes of education/higher education referenced in Jefferson's work.

3 Politics

General discussion of politics or political ideologies as they relate to the topic, not inclusive of 2016 presidential election, or the TX legislature or SB 11.

3.1 Politics\2016Election

References to the 2016 Presidential election or candidates

4 GunCulture

Use for references to the overarching idea of “gun culture” whether in Texas or elsewhere/nationally.

4.1 GunCulture\Pro-CCarry

Use for participant statements in favor of campus-carry legislation or the concept itself.

4.2 GunCulture\GunCarryGeneral

Use this code for general reference to carrying weapons, especially around the Texas open-carry laws that exist outside of higher education.

5 StudentsGeneral

Use for overall discussions of postsecondary students generally, when one of the three more specific subcodes wouldn’t better fit.

5.1 StudentsGeneral\ButMyStudentsAre

Use this code for participants’ justification of comfort or disinterest in the campus-carry policy that is based on a perceived characteristic(s) or trait(s) of their students. Ex.: “I would be nervous, but my students are in the honors program.”

5.2 StudentsGeneral\Undergrads

Use this code for discussions of the traits of undergraduate students.

5.3 StudentsGeneral\GradStudents

Use this code for discussions of the particular traits of graduate students.

6 Rurality

Use this code for descriptions of life outside of [Greenoak] or other TX urban centers.

7 [Greenoak]City

Use this code for discussions of the unique factors or characteristics of [Greenoak] as a geo-social setting.

8 FacultyLife

Use this code for general descriptions of faculty life and work that don’t necessarily include the associated subcodes.

8.1 FacultyLife\FacultyGovernance

Use this code for discussions of faculty governance generally or at [MU].

8.2 FacultyLife\Syllabus

Use this code for discussions of syllabi and/or decisions regarding modification of syllabi

8.3 FacultyLife\OtherResponsibility

Use this code for discussions of faculty service or other elements of the work that do not fit within teaching and research.

8.4 FacultyLife\Teaching

Use this code for passages that reference teaching, classroom decisions, and the scope of faculty work within the classroom.

9 Disempowerment

Use this code when participants mention feelings of loss of control, disempowerment, or lacking voice, either personally or institutionally.

9.1 Disempowerment\FutureAnxiety

Use this code when the description of disempowerment is anticipatory in nature rather than current or retrospective. For example, when participants discuss potential future legislative developments or concerns thereof.

10 August1NonEvent

Use when participants discuss a feeling of “non-event” regarding the SB 11 effective date, or regarding the first semester after enactment if it excludes a justification based around no violent incidents having yet occurred.

10.1 August1NonEvent\NothingYet

Use when participants justify their ambivalence toward the law upon a belief that no violent incidents have yet occurred.

10.2 August1NonEvent\PriororGeneralAmbivalence

Use when participants describe being disinterested in SB 11 or the associated campus policy prior to its enactment, or disaffected by it since it has gone into effect.

11 [MU]Characteristics

Use for general discussion of the characteristics of [MU] that make it unique in some way.

11.1 [MU]Characteristics\FacultySenate

Use this code to annotate any mention of the Faculty Senate at [MU].

11.1.1 [MU]Characteristics\FacultySenate\TheSlide

Use this code for discussions referencing the slides from Faculty Senate presentation with suggestions for ways faculty could change their behavior.

11.1.2 [MU]Characteristics\FacultySenate\Forums

Use this code for references to the open forums hosted by the Faculty Senate prior to the adoption of the campus policy.

11.2 [MU]Characteristics\SB11Committee

Use for discussion of the [MU] Campus-Carry Work Group (separate from the Faculty Senate), its members, leadership, or activities.

11.2.1 [MU]Characteristics\SB11Committee\Signage

Use for any discussion of exclusion zone signage itself, separate from discussions of the process for determining or requesting exclusion zones.

11.2.2 [MU]Characteristics\SB11Committee\CampusSB11Policy

Use for discussion of the [MU] campus carry policy, the process for drafting it, and its language.

11.2.3 [MU]Characteristics\SB11Committee\ExclZone

Use this code to note discussions of exclusion zones themselves, or the process for requesting/determining exclusion zones, except for signage.

11.3 [MU]Characteristics\Infrastructure

Use this code when a participant discusses physical features of [MU] such as buildings, office or classroom spaces, or the features within.

11.4 [MU]Characteristics\SafetyGeneral

Use for general discussions of safety at [MU] or in the neighborhood surrounding it, or for mentions of [MU] campus police

11.5 [MU]Characteristics\System

Use for discussion of the [MU] system or its other campuses beyond the main campus.

11.6 [MU]Characteristics\History

Use for descriptions of the [MU] history or historical milestones.

11.7 [MU]Characteristics\TownGown

Use for discussions of interaction between [MU] and the [Greenoak] community.

11.8 [MU]Characteristics\CampusLife

Use for general conversation about life on campus at [MU].

12 TexasUnique

Use this code for descriptions of Texas as a place different from other states or parts of the country.

12.1 TexasUnique\OtherInstitutions

Use this code for references to other institutions in Texas, relationships between [MU] and those institutions, comparisons to other institutions, or looking for cues/sensemaking based upon the actions of other institutions at a larger [MU] level.

12.2 TexasUnique\TXLegislature

Use this code for specific references to the Texas State Legislature.

13 StatePolicy

Use this code for general description of state policy and the policymaking process in Texas.

13.1 StatePolicy\Public/Private

Use this for discussion of the disparate implications of SB 11 between public and private institutions.

13.2 StatePolicy\SB11General

Use this code for general descriptions of SB 11 as a matter of state policy.

13.3 StatePolicy\ImplicationsNonSafety

Use this code when participants identify implications for SB 11 or similar legislation that do not fall within the realm of safety or educative implications.

14 Sensemaking

This is a parent code for various aspects of the sensemaking process and should not be used on its own - use a more specific subcode instead.

14.1 Sensemaking\Geographic

Use for descriptions of sensemaking that are based on a socio-geographic understanding, for example if [Greenoak] acts as a filter for how a participant is making sense of the law and its implications.

14.2 Sensemaking\Sensegiving

Use this code for discussion of sensegiving, or when a participant talks about how they try/ied to influence the sensemaking of others.

14.3 Sensemaking\Coping

Use this code when participants describe efforts (or subconscious changes in behavior) to cope with the start of campus carry. This could include avoidance behaviors, justifications of comfort or at least ambivalence, or other strategies to “live with” the law be they implicit or explicit.

14.4 Sensemaking\CampusViolenceElsewhere

Use this code for references to other incidents of campus violence that are influential on participants’ thoughts about campus carry at [MU].

14.5 Sensemaking\InfluentialFear

Use this code when a participant describes a fear related to campus carry that has an influence on their thoughts or behavior.

14.6 Sensemaking\Staff/SA

Use this code to annotate references to administrative staff or student affairs units/personnel.

14.7 Sensemaking\Normalization

Use this code for a discussion of a sense of normalcy related to SB 11 or the [MU] campus-carry policy after its enactment.

14.8 Sensemaking\Decision

Use this code when a participant describes a decision rooted in their understanding or meaning-making process regarding campus carry, such as a decision to change their classroom interaction or office hours.

14.9 Sensemaking\PriorExp

Use this code for discussion of prior experiences, childhood or familial memories, or personal characteristics that seem relevant to understanding how a participant makes sense of the law, even if they don’t explicitly say so. This is different from PersonalBGIntersect in that it is not used for overt statements of prior violent incidents that participants explicitly link to their understanding of campus carry.

14.10 Sensemaking\[MU]Messaging

Use this code when participants discuss taking cues from official or quasi-official

messaging from the University or its upper-level administration.

14.11 Sensemaking\Social

Use this code to identify descriptions of participants taking cues from peers in their environment as sensemaking factors.

14.12 Sensemaking\PersonalBGIntersect

Use this code, differently from PriorExp, for overt discussions of deeply-rooted personal history moments that include guns or gun violence, such as knowing a victim, etc., when those incidents are clearly and explicitly connected to a person's beliefs and understanding of campus carry by the participant.

APPENDIX E

Research Participant Information and Consent Form

1. EXPLANATION OF THE RESEARCH and WHAT YOU WILL DO:

- You are being asked to participate in a research study of your decision-making processes as they relate to the routine conduct of your role as a faculty member, including teaching, research, and associated duties.
- Your participation will take the form of an interview conversation that will be digitally audio-recorded.
- You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this research.

2. YOUR RIGHTS TO PARTICIPATE, SAY NO, OR WITHDRAW:

- Participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You have the right to say no. You may change your mind at any time and withdraw. You may choose not to answer specific questions, to stop participating, or to stop audio-recording at any time.

3. COSTS AND COMPENSATION FOR BEING IN THE STUDY:

- There are no costs to participate in the study, nor will you receive any compensation for your participation.

4. CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS:

- If you have concerns or questions about this study, such as scientific issues, how to do any part of it, or to report an injury, please contact the researcher: Nate Cradit, [address & phone redacted] Additionally, you may contact Dr. Marilyn J. Amey, faculty advisor, at [address and phone redacted].
- If you have questions or concerns about your role and rights as a research participant, would like to obtain information or offer input, or would like to register a complaint about this study, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Michigan State University's Human Research Protection Program at 517-355-2180, Fax 517-432-4503, or e-mail irb@msu.edu or regular mail at Olds Hall, 408 West Circle Dr Rm 207, East Lansing, MI 48824.

5. DOCUMENTATION OF INFORMED CONSENT.

- Your signature below means that you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study, and to have our conversation audio-recorded as described above.

Signature

Date

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