



Trust the Process: A Duoethnography of Graduates of a Low-Residency Undergraduate Program

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Abstract: What are the benefits or drawbacks of a low-residency educational delivery model? How does the process of designing one's own study impact the work completed in a distance education program with this form of delivery? As researchers who found success in a low-residency undergraduate program, we engaged in a duoethnographic study to mine our experiences and better understand the advantages and disadvantages of this educational model. We engaged in four recorded conversations over the course of three weeks, with sessions ranging from 35 to 60 minutes each. Between sessions, we journaled in a shared online document, discussing our emerging understandings of the topic, responding to each other's perspectives, and pushing one another to articulate and revisit our stances. Through these oral and written dialogues, we identified six themes featured in the low-residency educational model: reduced stigma for non-traditional students, diversity of community, flexibility, self-designed study, staying connected, and clarity of boundaries.

Keywords: low-residency, distance education, duoethnography, self-designed learning, non-traditional students



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Faites Confiance au Processus : Une Duo-Ethnographie des Diplômés d'un Programme Intensif de Premier Cycle

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Résumé : Quels sont les avantages ou les inconvénients d'un modèle de formation en formule intensive? Comment le processus de conception de sa propre étude influe-t-il sur le travail effectué dans un programme de formation à distance ayant une telle formule ? En tant que chercheurs ayant réussi dans un programme intensif de premier cycle, nous nous sommes engagés dans une étude duoethnographique afin d'exploiter nos expériences et de mieux comprendre les avantages et les inconvénients de ce modèle. Nous avons participé à quatre conversations enregistrées sur une période de trois semaines, avec des sessions allant de 35 à 60 minutes chacune. Entre les sessions, nous avons tenu un journal de bord dans un document partagé et en ligne, dans lequel nous avons discuté de nos compréhensions émergentes du sujet, réagi aux points de vue des uns et des autres, et où nous nous sommes mutuellement poussés à articuler et à revoir nos positions. Grâce à ces dialogues oraux et écrits, nous avons identifié six thèmes qui caractérisent le modèle de formation en formule intensive: la réduction de la stigmatisation des étudiants non traditionnels, la diversité de la communauté, la flexibilité, l'étude auto-conçue, le maintien des liens et la clarté des limites.

Mots clés : formule intensive, formation à distance, duoethnographie, apprentissage auto-conçu, étudiants non traditionnels

Introduction

When the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in 2020, millions of students were faced with an immediate shift to online learning, a process that did not always go smoothly (Moore, 2020). As the pandemic continues, conversations continue about the future of schooling, the best way(s) to deliver education, and what education will and should look like moving forward. Much of the conversation seems to hover around replicating school as it always has been, only in an online format (Hodges et al., 2020). Yet, as Christakis (2020) notes in *The Atlantic*, people are "discovering that many of the problems of remote schooling are merely exacerbations of problems with in-person schooling" (para. 1). This moment in history offers an opportunity to consider alternative delivery methods as well as education that holds fundamentally different aims at its core.

As researchers who found success in a low-residency undergraduate program, a form of distance education (DE) delivery, we engaged in duoethnography to mine our experiences with this delivery model for understanding the advantages and disadvantages of the format. The low-residency model specific to our higher education context involved an eight-day, in-person residency at the start of each 16-week semester, followed by five packet exchanges of work with an advisor—one every three weeks. Through our oral and written duoethnographic dialogue about the low-residency program, we identified six themes specific to this educational format: reduced stigma for non-traditional students, diversity of community, flexibility, self-designed study, staying connected, and clarity of boundaries. Following a brief review of the literature and description of our methodology, we discuss these themes, highlighting our researcher voices in conversation.

Literature

Many schools are now wrestling with how to conduct education safely for their students in the midst of the ongoing pandemic. The current situation may call for a shift

from replicating education as it is delivered face-to-face and force-fitting it onto an online model. Research supports a more substantive overhaul (Christakis, 2020) in how we conceptualize higher education (Hodges et al., 2020) and enhanced consideration of individual student needs. The connectedness of education to the broader society, regardless of spatial restrictions, points to a need to harness DE in creating socially just democratic frameworks that empower students to take ownership of their work and engage in co-creation of knowledge (Tilak & Glassman, 2020). Moore (2020) advocates for the use of heutagogy, also known as self-determined learning, as an instructional approach that "recognizes learners' unique experiences and attempts to integrate those into the learning process" (pp. 382–383). Such an approach empowers students to guide, or self-direct, their own learning.

Most of the literature surrounding DE focuses on online, blended, and hybrid learning, and the use of technologies in its service (Bozkurt, 2019). Originally intended to address disparities in access to education, DE has been aided by developments in technology, expansion of theory in the discipline, and its characterization as "an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary field" (Bozkurt, 2019, p. 502). Due to its flexibility in delivery and schedule, which offers more direct control when fitting studies into life rather than scheduled and rigid meeting times, DE has enabled non-traditional learners and individuals with disabilities to access education they otherwise might have forgone (Kotera et al., 2019; Stephen et al., 2020).

In considering education delivery methods post-COVID-19, Maloney and Kim (2020) briefly mentioned the low-residency model as one option. The format involves both distance and in-person components and attempts to provide both flexibility and connection (Maloney & Kim, 2020). These two components are valued by students, including those who were thrust abruptly into the online format due to COVID-19 (Trout, 2020). The low-residency model of education was developed by Goddard College in 1963

(GraduateGuide, n.d.; Zelon, 2015), sharing DE's intention to make education accessible to individuals who, for a variety of reasons, may not be able to participate in on-campus learning. The programs typically require students to develop, in consultation with a faculty advisor, individualized study plans for the semester, enabling them to focus their work on areas of interest to their own lives, reflecting Moore's (2020) description of heutagogy. Rather than completing a series of online courses, students submit packets of work to their faculty advisor throughout the semester, fulfilling the agreed-upon study plan. The majority of low-residency programs serve graduate students, though there are several institutions offering undergraduate options in this format.

Maloney & Kim (2020) note differences in the delivery of the residency component by institution, including once-per-semester residencies of one to two weeks, once-per-month weekend gatherings, occasional long weekends, and once-per-year summer residencies. Typically, residencies replace synchronous or asynchronous online coursework, with the remainder of the semester focusing on individualized work. Since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, some low-residency programs have shifted their residencies from in-person gatherings to online intensives of the same residency length, with students gathering for synchronous video meetings and having access to video recordings of delivered lectures after the residency has ended. Given the effectiveness of the shift, the ongoing pandemic concerns, and the access this option provides, some universities have committed to offering both in-person and online residency options even once travel and gathering becomes safe and feasible again. With this option, the low-residency model as a form of DE becomes more accessible for individuals who prefer the self-designed curriculum and the opportunities for connection with peers but cannot make the trip to campus for extended residencies due to work, health, family, or cost of travel.

Literature that addresses the low-residency educational model largely focuses on the structure and delivery of the programs over the experience of students within them (see Carr, 2017; Beardall et al., 2016). Carr (2017) noted that, when developed with a rigorous curriculum and the needs of diverse populations in mind, the low-residency model offers the opportunity for participation by students who may be unable to attend residential programs due to various life obligations or poor fit with traditional formats. Beardall et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of face-to-face synchronous meetings, technological support, prompt correspondence, explicit instructions, and effective communication in the delivery of low-residency education. Research is needed to illuminate the experience of low-residency education from the perspective of current and former students.

Methodology and Methods

Operating from a constructivist-critical paradigm (Sawyer & Norris, 2012)—which emphasizes the socially created nature of reality, the co-creation of knowledge through dialogic transactions, and the power dynamics at play in society—this study employed duoethnography to explore the researchers’ experiences in a low-residency, self-directed, undergraduate program. Duoethnography involves two (or more) participant-researchers examining their own contextualized experiences with a phenomenon in order to present multiple perspectives on the topic (Sawyer & Norris, 2012). Each researcher in this study served as a “site” of investigation as well as an instigator to help each other reach new understandings as we engaged in critical dialogue about our subjective experiences in a low-residency program (Garcia & Cifor, 2019; Hogle & Bramble, 2020).

Researcher Positionalities

As researchers, we bring similar and disparate positionalities to our work. Kate is a neurodivergent, bisexual, cisgender, White woman from a middle-class upbringing. She is

a doctoral student focusing on progressive education, inclusion, and arts-based research. Dominic is a straight, cisgender, White man from a working-class background. He is a masters student focusing on writing for children and young adults. Both researchers attended the low-residency undergraduate program as non-traditional students, having each attempted traditional university multiple times prior to enrolling.

As a couple who met at the low-residency program but did not partner until nearly a year after graduation, we bring an overlapping understanding with respect to the school and each other's lives, while also bringing different perspectives from our individual experiences. Garcia and Cifor (2019) noted that "since dialogue requires relational positioning, duoethnography has typically been practiced by research teams who are already deeply familiar with each other" (p. 5). Our comfort with, and trust in, one another enables us to disrupt power imbalances and approach the research from a place of equal footing (Sawyer & Norris, 2012).

The Low-Residency Program

The undergraduate program we attended requires students to be on-campus for an eight-day residency at the start of each semester and for a graduating residency (e.g., a student completing the final two years of full-time undergraduate studies would attend five residencies). The program offers several degree tracks, including various Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Fine Arts concentrations. During the residency, students are assigned a faculty advisor—based on interest, informal interviews, expertise, and availability—with whom they work for the duration of the semester through an exchange of five packets of work, one every three weeks. Over the eight days on campus, the student develops a study plan tailored to their own interests and overall goals for the degree. Additionally, students attend lectures, workshops, and visiting scholar and writer events throughout the

residency, as well as individual and group advisor meetings. The intensive programming lasts from first thing in the morning until late at night.

Once students leave the residency, they begin working toward meeting their individual learning goals. Each of the five packets completed over the subsequent semester requires a letter to the advisor and substantial documentation of learning activities, with the format based on the semester's goals. For example, a creative writing student may submit 25 pages of new creative work, several pages of book annotations, and critical essays on craft; a student studying sustainable business may submit part of a business plan and a critical paper examining sustainable structures. Students must satisfy wide knowledge degree requirements—humanities, social science, mathematics, natural science, and art and creative explorations—though they may do so in individualized ways (e.g., a student might study mathematical patterns in music composition to fulfill the mathematics credit requirements). A review board assesses student progress via a portfolio progress review submission, and determines whether each student's work has demonstrated rigor and has met the criteria for the wide knowledge distributions. The review board then decides whether the student may begin their senior study, which is an extended, two-semester project culminating in a senior thesis. The program emphasizes social justice, contextualizing individual work within the wider social and ecological world, and experiential learning.

Research Questions

Duoethnography does not employ an instrument such as a semi-structured interview script or distributed questionnaire. Rather, duoethnographers approach the research with intentionality and framing questions, recognizing that additional questions will emerge during the process (Sawyer & Norris, 2012).

Three initial research questions guided this duoethnography:

1. *What are the benefits of low-residency education?*
2. *What are the drawbacks of low-residency education?*
3. *How does the process of designing one's own study impact the work completed in the program?*

Data Collection and Analysis

Over the course of three weeks, we engaged in four recorded conversations, ranging from 35 to 60 minutes in length. The first conversation began with the guiding questions, but was not restricted to these prompts, and often veered off in emergent directions; subsequent discussions built on the previous dialogues. After each conversation, Kate transcribed the recordings and posted the transcript to an online folder for subsequent reference. Between sessions, we journaled about the discussions in a shared online document, dialogued with our emerging understandings of the topic and responded to each other's perspectives, pushing one another to articulate and revisit our stances. In duoethnography, "data collection (story telling) and analysis (recursive critique and summary) are intertwined and mutually supportive" (Sawyer & Norris, 2012, p. 41), with a blurring of the two components as they emerge in tandem throughout the research process. Rather than employ a separate coding step, and we read and reread the transcripts after each session, both to identify patterns and to use these emerging themes as jumping off points for subsequent discussions. As such, our data analysis, including identification of themes, emerged from the conversations, journaling, and documenting the findings.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to conducting research, we applied for and received Research Ethics Board approval through the University of Prince Edward Island (Ref # 6009059). The transcribed

conversations and our journal entries were stored as password-protected online documents to which only we had access. Recognizing that our lived experiences include others who did not participate in the research, we took care to frame any direct or indirect references to individuals other than ourselves in such a way as to maintain anonymity of those individuals. Additionally, we committed to taking breaks or stopping the sessions if needed to engage in self-care, as duoethnographic research has the potential to surface uncomfortable feelings or topics.

Validity and Reliability

As duoethnography stems from and builds upon the critical paradigm, the method relies heavily on self-reflexivity to establish validity (Sawyer & Norris, 2012).

Duoethnography requires researchers to "bracket themselves *into* all aspects of their research text" (Sawyer & Norris, 2012, p. 37) to demonstrate that they are engaging in reflection of their subjective experience. By including excerpts from our dialogue in the discussion of our findings, we worked "to make [our] articulations and dialogues accessible...[and] to invite the reader to be a part of the conversation" (Sawyer & Norris, 2012, p. 46). Duoethnography is not intended to be generalizable, but rather to offer two subjective perspectives in conversation that sparks consideration of the topic for the reader (Sawyer & Norris, 2012).

Findings and Discussion

Reflective of duoethnographic practice, our findings are entwined with the discussion in this section. Six overarching themes emerged during the multiple recorded and journaling dialogues: reduced stigma surrounding non-traditional students, diversity of community, flexibility, self-designed study, staying connected, and clarity of boundaries.

Reduced Stigma Surrounding Non-Traditional Students

The first theme to emerge in our dialogue addressed the advantage of the low-residency model for non-traditional students. Dominic, who was 32 when he enrolled in the undergraduate program, referred to "the stigma of sitting in a classroom with a bunch of 18-year-olds" that students face when returning to school at a non-traditional age. With the program's format of eight-day intensive residencies, followed by work completed independently off-campus, the low-residency model helped to address "the discomfort of classroom dynamics" and created a more egalitarian space where students of different ages interacted. This reduction of stigma as an advantage of the low-residency model aligns with literature suggesting DE attracts non-traditional students (Carr, 2017; Stephen et al., 2020).

Similarly, Kate, who enrolled in the program at age 23 after leaving a marriage, already felt disconnected with people her own age, which contributed to anxiety about sitting in a classroom of younger students with whom she might also "feel really out of place." Kate noted that, during the in-person residencies of the low-residency program, the "disparity of ages among students was a celebratory thing...a chance to learn from a whole bunch of different perspectives." Rather than create stigma, the education model encouraged different points of view and the students gathered to discuss their upcoming individual semester projects.

Diversity of Community

The diversity of perspectives extended beyond age demographics and represented a key advantage of the low-residency model. Programming during in-person residencies, combined with curricular requirements that students articulate the social and ecological contexts of their work, reinforced the awareness and celebration of diverse experiences. Kate, who grew up in an economically secure, conservative household in predominately

White locations identified how attending the in-person residencies meant "that for the first time [she] heard a lot of different perspectives that helped [her] grow as a citizen who is more social- and ecological justice-oriented." She noted that the diversity at the school meant a variety of ideas and experiences were shared, many of which were eye-opening and expanded her understanding of others' lives.

Dominic, who identified being one of the most liberal individuals in the places where he lived as an early adult, found he grew in his understanding of "the vast spectrum in liberal thinking...[and] the wide array of thought" represented in the low-residency program. He suggested that the racial, economic, political, and gender diversity among students who gathered for the in-person residencies represented "another remarkably notable benefit of the low-residency program [in that] it's not nearly as tied to geography as traditional programs." Particularly with respect to diversity of faculty, the format encouraged diversity of identities and perspectives as it did not require advisors to reside at the location of the school, thus opening the pool of potential faculty.

Flexibility

Flexibility represented another key advantage of the low-residency model for both researchers. Kate emphasized how her need to work full-time throughout university initially contributed to her desire not to sit in a classroom. The low-residency model meant she "wasn't restricted geographically or to specific class schedules," making it possible to maintain her work. Flexibility is frequently cited in research as a main benefit of DE (Kotera et al., 2019; Stephen et al., 2020), but the particular format of the undergraduate low-residency model offers additional benefits due to its individualized study plans and advising model. Dominic, who worked in restaurants throughout the program, appreciated the flexibility to approach his semester advisor to shift packet deadlines, if necessary. He noted the particular advantage of having "that conversation directly with a

single advisor rather than five different faculty members, as with a traditional semester." For Kate, who identifies as mad and disabled, the low-residency format meant she didn't have "to go...to five different professors with an accommodations form." She found that the flexibility of completing work in three-week packets, during which she controlled the studying schedule, enabled her "to self-accommodate during difficult stretches rather than feel forced into disclosure to attain supports in a rigid system."

Self-Designed Study

Rather than utilize standard courses that meet via online platforms, the researchers attended a low-residency model that operated on a packet-exchange system of self-designed study. Each semester during the in-person residency, students developed a study plan outlining the intended work of the semester, an initial resource list, and a broad idea of each of the five packets of work they would submit. After the residency, students returned home and completed the work, sending a packet every three weeks to their semester faculty advisor. An informal slogan guided the students at the school: *trust the process*. In other words, students are encouraged to allow the experience of designing an individualized curriculum to open up new discoveries. Kate emphasized that, now being enrolled in traditional university, she misses "that ability to get passionate about something and change course mid-semester, and still have it be valued enough for semester credit."

While this freedom to pursue individual interests in the context of undergraduate studies represented an advantage to both of us, we recognized the potential for the model to be overwhelming. Kate appreciated that the approach was "not prescriptive" and instead focused on "getting people to love learning and allowing them to take the general subject areas and apply it to their own lives." Acknowledging that, each semester, some peers in the program appeared worried about planning their studies, she wondered "if

some of that stress stemmed from having had experiences in more traditional models where there isn't flexibility, where you need to get it right." Dominic agreed, suggesting that "people are...really well-trained to do what they're expected to do...[and] to follow the rules, which is totally natural and human." He suggested that the low-residency program is effective at helping to break students out of rigid notions about what counts as education because all people have "work that they're interested in doing, [even if] sometimes it's just harder to envision how that work fits into the academic structure." He suggested that the work of designing and executing a study plan prepared him for graduate studies and represents a key advantage of the low-residency model: learning to do independent, intensive work.

Staying Connected

The discussion surrounding self-designed study led us to consider why some individuals may find the structure challenging. Thinking of literature about the importance of connection in DE (Trout, 2020), Kate proposed that one of the disadvantages to the low-residency model "was that, depending on the advisor, they may be more or less available to you between the packets of work you send," representing an inconsistent lack of connection. Recalling varying degrees of access to her faculty advisors, she suggested that the model might be improved by a "commitment to having check-ins more frequently for students who identify connection as something they need," even if that connection looked more like cohort groups that extended "the sense of community from the in-person residency throughout the semester."

Similarly, Dominic noted that his own experience with advisors varied in terms of communication and access between packet deadlines. When working with a faculty advisor who was new to the model, Dominic found that the communication suffered, which he attributed to the advisor's lack of familiarity with the method of instruction. As

Kate pointed out, the advisors have "to be able to respond to five or six *totally different* semester projects that are ongoing and... have to be adept at responding to work in vastly different disciplines," making the role a challenge. We agreed that there is a need for adequate faculty training in the delivery of the low-residency model, a suggestion that aligns with literature about the importance of engaged and consistent communication from DE instructors (Trout, 2020).

Clarity of Boundaries

Another potential pitfall of the low-residency model that emerged in our dialogue is that defining and maintaining boundaries between advisors and students can be challenging, particularly when students are engaged in deeply personal work. Kate recalled an experience with a professor "who really violated boundaries" after engaging with her work about her experiences with disability and abuse. She suggested that this potential may arise from "doing something so radically different in terms of the delivery" of education, particularly because the "advisors want to enable students to go deeply into their work, so they go there with them," at times serving not only as an advisor, but almost a counselor or close confidante. Dominic argued that some of the issue surrounding boundaries in an undergraduate low-residency program may stem from the model more closely mimicking a graduate thesis supervisor-supervisee relationship, with faculty advisors not necessarily being prepared or compensated for this kind of intense instruction as opposed to classroom or synchronous DE teaching.

Conclusion and Limitations

Inspired by the conversations around educational delivery models sparked by the pandemic, we engaged in a duoethnographic study to examine our experiences in a low-residency undergraduate program to better understand the defining characteristics of the low-residency DE model. Over the course of several weeks and multiple conversations, we

identified six themes specific to the low-residency educational model: reduced stigma for non-traditional students, diversity of community, flexibility, self-designed study, staying connected, and clarity of boundaries. Several of these themes are pertinent to, and reflect the literature on, other DE models, including reduced stigma, flexibility, and staying connected (Bozkurt, 2019; Kotera et al., 2019; Stephen et al., 2020; Trout, 2020), though our discussion of these characteristics diverged slightly in the context of the low-residency model.

Due to its flexibility in delivery and schedule, DE offers non-traditional students access to education that otherwise might be unattainable (Kotera et al., 2019; Stephen et al., 2019). Our findings echo the literature and suggest that the low-residency model of DE provides similar flexibility and access to non-traditional learners, particularly students who previously attempted college, enter higher education after time away from school, work full time, or whose financial considerations prevent relocating for education. Adding to the existing research, we highlighted how the flexibility of curriculum in the low-residency model of DE—the ability to change course mid-semester, to design the semester based on personal interests, and to shift packet deadlines in response to life events—further enables students to fit their studies into their lives. We examined how working with only one faculty member per semester, rather than multiple professors for multiple courses, reduced the time spent on self-advocacy, whether for extensions on submitted work or accommodations for disability. The high degree of flexibility offered by the packet schedule, as opposed to weekly asynchronous classes, holds potential for adaptation by other DE delivery models, particularly if combined with frequent optional check-ins to ensure students retain a sense of connectedness with their peers.

Researchers suggest that maintaining a sense of community is important for students to find success in DE (Hodges, et al., 2020; Trout, 2020) and note that “those who have built online programs over the years will attest that effective online learning aims to

be a learning community and supports learners not just instructionally but with co-curricular engagement and other social supports” (Hodges et al., 2020, para. 11). Our findings suggest that the low-residency model of DE struggles with supporting this sense of connectedness during the non-residency portion of the semester and that additional work should be done to support the social engagement of students in such programs. Careful consideration should be given to maintaining the effective community-building components of an existing DE program when moving to, or adopting some features of, a low-residency model.

The heutagogy-informed structure of the low-residency educational model enables students to design their own curriculum based on their personal context and passions. In line with Moore’s (2020) assertion that heutagogy empowers students, we found that self-designed study helps to build lifelong learners through encouraging students’ connection to broad subject areas through direct application to their individual lives and contexts. While we noted that some students may struggle at first with the freedom of, or lack of parameters in, building their own curriculum, we identified the experience of doing so as preparation for the rigor of graduate study and careers requiring project management skills. In considering this feature of the low-residency educational model in the broader DE context, we suggest that building in a degree of flexibility in the focus of a semester’s— or an individual class’s— curriculum that enables students to choose their focus has the potential to increase buy-in. We recommend additional study into how student choice within DE programs impacts student success.

Our discussion of the low-residency educational model’s ability to expand the pool of potential faculty holds relevance particularly for higher education institutions seeking to employ a more diverse faculty body. By not requiring employees to relocate to within commuting distance to campus, a university may draw advisors from across the world and many different social, cultural, and socioeconomic contexts. This diversity extends to

the student body, as well. Due to the low-residency model allowing for work to be completed *at any time* over each three-week period, we suggest that the format is a particularly accessible option for disabled students who benefit from flexibility in deadlines and the ability to self-accommodate; students who must work full-time, often with inflexible work schedules and last-minute shifts that may prevent synchronous participation; and individuals with caregiving commitments that may be unpredictable.

Maloney and Kim (2020) noted the potentially substantial draw on resources of moving toward a low-residency educational model from traditional in-person formats, not the least of which involves limits on faculty time and training. Preparation to deliver effective online education is substantial (Hodges et al., 2020). Our findings echo this acknowledgement, highlighting how the effectiveness of the semester in a low-residency program may vary widely based on the advisor's experience with the educational format, their responsiveness, and their availability for communication between packet deadlines. Additionally, we noted the potential for boundaries to be crossed when advisors and advisees engage in deeply personal subject matter—a challenge that requires additional faculty training to address. The implementation of features of the low-residency model into other DE delivery models would require support for faculty in moving from a course-oriented teaching role to a supervisor-supervisee facilitation role. From the standpoint of our roles as educators, we find the low-residency educational model exciting for this shift from teacher to facilitator and the emphasis on faculty as advisors who provide both specific expertise in certain fields, as well as the ability to act as generalists who support learners diverging in myriad directions.

We recommend additional research into the low-residency educational model and how its design might be adopted or adapted into other DE program designs, including a potential hybrid of self-designed and faculty-determined curriculum. Research into the experiences of students from diverse backgrounds who attended variations of the low-

residency model (e.g., two-month summer residencies, entirely online semester residencies, individualized curriculum combined with one or more asynchronous required courses) would offer insight into the impact of delivery methods on student engagement and success. We also recommend research into the effectiveness of self-designed curriculum, both in terms of student retention and preparation for graduate studies.

As a form of research predicated on subjective experience, duoethnography highlights individual interpretations of events—thus, the findings should not be taken to represent universal truths, though insight may still be gained from the data. While duoethnography helps to expand self-research through the engagement of multiple perspectives, our backgrounds as researchers are similar and may limit the insight we can offer on the subject at hand. The incorporation of additional voices, particularly those of racialized or marginalized individuals who attended a low-residency undergraduate program, would help to broaden the understanding of the model, and potentially provoke moments of greater dissonance, leading to a fuller picture of the topic.

Despite these limitations, this duoethnographic study delved deeply into two researchers' experiences in an undergraduate low-residency program, identifying several important advantages of the educational model, as well as noting potential pitfalls. Even with the challenge of staying connected to the school community and wrestling with faculty-student boundaries, the flexibility of attendance and curriculum, potential for building a diverse community during residencies, and ability to pursue intellectual passions all represented benefits to the model. As educators, we find ourselves engaging in continued conversations about how these strengths might be applied beyond the postsecondary level, offering teachers a way to engage their secondary students with rewarding, purposeful, and meaningful learning opportunities in distance or in-person formats.

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