

INTEGRATIVE LEARNING WITHIN TUTORING IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
CONTEXTS FOR CONNECTIONS

A Dissertation
by
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Abstract

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In response to a gap in the literature regarding integrative learning within higher education tutoring services as well as the discursive gap that limits how such tutoring is imagined, this multiple case study explored the ways integrative learning takes place within tutoring in higher education and the tools that enabled or constrained such learning. Six tutor-tutee pairs engaged in regular appointments for the topics of college algebra, psychology, finance, biology, theatre, and history, respectively. During the course of one academic semester, the 12 participants took part in three interviews, and each pair was observed up to four times. In a process grounded in sociocultural activity theory, the transcripts were coded and analyzed to identify examples and mediational means of integrative learning in these cases. This analysis yielded a working definition in which integrative learning in tutoring in higher education takes place as learners create relevance from required coursework by articulating

why the content has value, making connections, and exercising agency. Major tools affecting integrative learning in this study included dialogue, examples, and context. This study provided descriptive data and patterns that could contribute insights into integrative learning, expand the way tutoring is conceived in higher education, and offer models for tutor training and classroom instruction.