MEANINGS OF 'CARE' IN HIGHER EDUCATION: UNDERGRADUATES' EXPERIENCES

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Certificate of original authorship

I certify that the work in this thesis has not been previously submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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Abstract

Care is an integral component of education. Care at a tertiary level, particularly from the student perspective, is under-researched. University students are adults who have diverse experiences and needs, differing from their pre-tertiary counterparts in that care as nurturing or 'mothering' and 'pastoral care' are less expected or desired. This study sets out to develop a deeper understanding of what care for an undergraduate student might mean in the current university milieu where increasingly students are viewed as 'consumers of educational services'.

Exploring the notion of 'care' is confounded by the pluralistic and contextual nature of the word care in everyday usage. An interpretive approach was utilised to tap into the essences of care evident in a student's experiences in the first few transition years of university. Phenomenological interviews with students undertaking an introductory business course were explored. Automated Leximancer semantic text analysis was used to support iterative systematic interrogation of the interviews, building an understanding of common and uncommon care meanings. Further interpretation of the multifaceted meanings drew on educational and services marketing literatures.

Students said little about the university except in relation to selection of their degree, where reputation and family familiarity played a part in influencing their decisions. Despite being a prevalent topic in the education literature, institutional 'duty of care' was not identified by students as an issue. Rather, students held the institution responsible for providing opportunities to improve their future employment prospects, a form of 'corporate care'. Care in educational relationships was most likely to occur between students and tutors. Lecturers provided 'educational care' through curriculum design and course management. Diversity was also apparent in care-giving and care-seeking activities outside the university in students' 'other lives'.

These findings have brought care in higher education into perspective. Care matters. Though lecturers do not need to know their students personally they do need to demonstrate care through knowledge and passion for their subject and design of effective learning opportunities. Tutors, in the students' eyes, have an important, often undervalued, care role of engaging with students as individuals, knowing and responding to diverse needs. Academics need to be mindful of students' complex lives. Students in turn need a stronger voice in their education. Services marketing principles can help us understand students as 'customers'. It is only through engaging with students that we can begin to appreciate how we as academics might care for and help students *be* students.

Chapter 1
A study of meanings for care in higher education revealed through listening to student experiences

Impetus for my study

A casual talk at the university Coffee Cart with a colleague from my teaching and learning unit about the results of a first-year experience survey was the impetus for this research. The survey threw up an ill-defined finding that students "wanted their lecturers to care". Did they mean to know their names; to provide individual support; or to help them by 'spoon feeding' them? Despite my many years of teaching in higher education, I was unsure what care might mean from the students' viewpoint. Yet, as a marketing academic, I am aware of the importance of understanding the consumer, in this case the student, in the delivery of a quality service. A cursory look in the literature for a clear definition of what care might mean from a university student perspective produced very little. To resolve what care might mean, I was interested to talk with students about their experiences rather than theorise, surmise or guess what they might think. I felt a closer scrutiny of care was warranted given the increasing pressures in higher education to balance teaching and research. Thus my research began.

1.1 The challenge in defining care

A student's desire for their lecturers to care is not unexpected. Care is important in education; it is one of the caring professions (EIDOS 1999). Care matters. However, understanding what care might mean to a student is a challenge, as the term care is 'slippery'[1] and context-related (Collier 2005; Slater 2004), with many meanings even in everyday usage.

Despite care being identified as a "rich and paradoxical usage-field" (EIDOS 1999, p. 21) a paucity of studies in the higher education literature leaves care at a tertiary level an under-researched area (McKenna 2010; Straits 2007; Värlander 2009). The situation is further compounded by the lack of research from a student perspective as to what care or caring is expected or desired. The dearth of formal exploration of care in the context of higher education means this important yet taken-for-granted component of education is ill-defined.

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[1] Hard to get a firm hold of (*OED*, http://www.oed.com, accessed June 2007).

1.2 Aim

The aim of this study is to clarify what care means to undergraduate students.

1.2.1 Scope and key assumptions

The research question asks: *What is the range of meanings of care that can be found in undergraduate business students' experiences of their first few years of university?*

Meanings for 'care' are pluralistic and idiosyncratic (Benson et al. 2009; Gourlay 2009). Given this plurality, direct questioning about the phenomenon of care could restrict the range of possible meanings to notions of care generally discussed in pre-tertiary educational contexts. Therefore, the experiences of undergraduate business students in their first few years at an Australian higher education institution are explored in an open manner rather than through direct probing for issues around care. It will be argued that no single meaning or scale measure explains care in higher education. Rather, this study develops interpretations of care meanings from broader recounts of students' experiences, thereby privileging the student voice (Walsh 2000). Meanings for care and caring that can be found in the student stories are teased out and interpreted. By exploring and locating these in the wider student experience, a clearer picture of what students expect or desire will be built.

An assumption of this study is that care in education matters, and that students' views are important in informing the delivery of educational opportunities. Consequently, the study sets out to explore the phenomenon from the student's perspective, listening to voices that are generally faint in the higher education literature. This chapter will outline background issues, give a brief overview of literature utilised to ground differing interpretations of care, and finally give an overview of the thesis structure.

1.3 Background to care in education

1.3.1 Care matters

An online discussion of the question "To care or not to care – is that the question?" (EIDOS 1999, p. 23) highlighted that care in education can be viewed in many ways. The common sentiment amongst these higher education professionals was that care matters, and that care meanings are contextual. Education, along with health-related organizations, is one of the 'caring' professions, with 'educational care' a given (Owens & Ennis 2005; Sumsion 2000; Vanderstraeten 2004). Caring is a term used to characterise teaching practice, implying that care and caring are inherent to education (O'Brien 2010; Noddings 2003b; Rynes et al. 2012; von Krogh 1998). Caring is also an "educational value ... a unique and indispensible professional virtue" (EIDOS 1999, p. 21) held by teaching professionals. Care can encompass many meanings (Mayeroff 1971), both as a noun and a verb, such as a responsibility for someone or something; to show care for oneself and others; extend kindness; to take care in the process of educating; and to care about outcomes for students.

1.3.2 Higher education context

The context for this study is a research-intense Australian university, a higher education institution. A university is a dynamic organization, in Bourdieu's terms a 'field' (Bourdieu 1988), which has its own unique specialized structure, value system and mode of operation (Barnett 2005b) that have evolved over time. Practice in the 'field' of higher education is shaped by deeply ingrained rules, cultures, values and professional protocols that revolve around the struggle for, and acquisition of, academic capital or prestige (Bourdieu 1988; Naidoo & Jamieson 2005; Naidoo, Shankar & Veer 2011). Most recently, the massification of higher education across the globe (Fitzmaurice 2010; Kolsaker 2008; Love 2008; Lynch 2006) has signalled a shift from educating the elite to educating a more diverse socioeconomic student cohort (Frelin 2007; Hart & Rush 2007; Naidoo & Jamieson 2005; Naidoo, Shankar & Veer 2011). Broadening the student base has been accompanied by university management being guided by neoliberal ideals.

Neoliberal management emphasises income generation and reconceptualises students as customers to be satisfied (Lynch 2006; Naidoo & Jamieson 2005; Naidoo, Shankar & Veer 2011). If students are viewed as consumers, then many of the theories and concepts associated with business, in this context the delivery of education, can help guide largely non-profit universities to respond to increasingly competitive environments (Hart & Rush 2007; LeBlanc & Nguyen 1999; Morley 2011; Nicolescu 2009; Seale 2010). Under a business model, higher education can be characterised as an hedonic service that exhibits emergent, unstructured person-to-person interaction with high credence properties due to the complexity of the service performed (Curran & Rosen 2006; Markovic 2006; Ng & Forbes 2009). New managerialism, in which students become income-generating units, may mean the institution loses sight of both the individual student and academic alike.

Corporatization of academic work arguably puts pressure on academic professionalism and 'good teaching' (Gibbs 2010; Kolsaker 2008; Sumsion 2000). Stressing efficiency and effectiveness sounds eminently sensible, fostering a pragmatic approach to create work-ready graduates. However, a danger emerges that extrinsic reward for performance may reduce the level of interaction between student and teacher, moving away from student-centred approaches and leading to an erosion of intrinsic, 'hard to measure' emotional attributes that contribute to learning (Ball 2003; Naidoo, Shankar & Veer 2011). Characteristics of good teaching include commitment to the pedagogic process, enthusiasm for the subject, and flexibility in dealing with the different needs of, and care and concern for, students (Bain 2004; Kolsaker 2008; Love 2008). Such attributes contribute to educating students as life-long learners who think, are flexible and have developed resilience that enables them to tackle uncertain futures (Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion 2009). Indeed, some have argued that the commodification of learning and reducing opportunities for relationships between individuals removes one of the key underpinnings of education's contribution to society (Brown & Lauder 2001; Hirschmann 1986; Naidoo & Jamieson 2005; Wolfe 1989) – that of developing the whole person.

Accompanying the reconceptualisation of education in managerial and business terms has been the development of a culture stressing the measurement of academic performance and student outcomes, measures such as satisfaction and quality (Fitzmaurice 2008, 2010; Hart & Rush 2007; Wilson, Lizzio & Ramsden 1997) that will be discussed in Chapter 4. Methods of assessing the quality of higher education include the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ; Wilson, Lizzio & Ramsden 1997) and adaptations of service quality measures such as Higher Education Performance (HEdPERF: Brochado 2009; Douglas, McClelland & Davies 2007). The possibility for both effective as well as efficient education in the neoliberal research-intense university is not determined by such measures, but rather by the nature of educational relationships in the institution that these measures tap into.

Higher education institutions are under pressure to compete, most often on the basis of their research performance (Grummell, Devine & Lynch 2009; Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion 2009; Shah & Nair 2010), even though a large part of their revenue comes from the delivery of educational services. Emphasis on business precepts leads to a performative rather than developmental focus for teaching (Hart & Rush 2007; Mitchell, Maher & Brown 2008). Teaching is often seen as separate from research, where research productivity carries more weight than teaching, creating tension for the academic between teaching and research (Åkerlind 2011; Barnett 2011; Brew 2001). Arguably, the role of an academic through caring about their subject is to finesse their research and teaching activities, strengthening the nexus between knowledge generation and knowledge transmission (Brew 2006; Rowland et al. 1998).

The opportunity for academics to enact care, a social phenomenon, may not only be influenced by their other role of furthering knowledge through research, but also by a need to adhere to new teaching contexts. A move to neoliberal management shifts the emphasis of good teaching practice from engendering the moral and social dimensions of traditional higher-education pedagogy to developing a measurable set of academic competencies to deliver an employment-oriented curriculum (van Manen 1994; Barnett 2009: Lynch 2006). Yet care resides in the moral and social sphere and has resisted attempts to

measure it, leaving pedagogic concerns around care and caring displaced by managerial and market ethics. Care becomes part of the hidden work of academics (Lynch 2010). As can be seen from the following quote, care in business-based service is not a given. In business, provision of care has a purely economic motivation.

> The business of business, they say, is business. However 'caring' the language of customer service may be, however reflexive, considerate and supportive, if customer care did not improve business, business would no longer care for the customer (Love 2008, p. 22).

Yet care is an inherent value in the educational 'field', at all levels, including higher education (Gleaves & Walker 2006), and should always be present.

1.4 Views informing the study

1.4.1 Approach to the study

A phenomenological approach, within a broader interpretive tradition, was adopted for this study given that the phenomenon of interest was ill-defined, multi-definitional, contextual and found in the 'life-worlds' of individual students. A focus on the individual accommodates for student diversity. Students coming to university manage the transition and their approach to their studies differently (Benson et al. 2009; Gourlay 2009). The reality of their university life is shaped by their prior experiences, current attitudes, engagement with university life both social and academic and their own idiosyncrasies (Brennan & Osborne 2008). Therefore, students' expectations and desire for care will vary.

Given the challenge posed by the diffuse nature of the phenomenon of interest, it is important to make visible the interpretive research process used in this study. Automated text analysis with Leximancer supported the initial analysis of the interview data. The various software outputs enabled a bottom-up iterative exploration of the conversations (Faranda & Clarke 2004). An empirically derived framework to scaffold the discussion of the meaning variants of care found in student conversations drew on visual exploration of the semantic structures developed through Leximancer text analysis. Since this is a novel adaptation of a phenomenological approach, the steps and interpretation markers will be

described in some detail in Chapter 2 and illustrated within a systematic overview in Chapter 3.

In concert with a phenomenological approach, an open-ended interview method was adopted for data collection. Student views on their experiences emerged during unstructured conversations about university and their lives more generally. Taking a phenomenological approach ensured that the student perspective was fore-grounded. Interpreting meanings of care and caring built on the initial semantic analysis of these conversations with integration of relevant educational and services marketing literature. Given this approach, the thesis integrates literature with discussion of the empirical data rather than as a separate framing chapter. A brief overview of the literature is provided in this chapter and will be revisited to support interpretations of care meanings in the findings.

1.4.2 Taking a student perspective

Exploring the notion of care from the student's viewpoint sits well with student-centred or learner-centred conceptions of teaching (Åkerlind 2011; Blackie, Case & Jawitz 2010; Kember & Kwan 2000; Kember 2009). The current neoliberal approach to higher education institution management (Gruber et al. 2012; Vanderstraeten 2004), where education is viewed as a service, and students as 'customers', also focuses on understanding and responding to student learning needs. To borrow from marketing philosophy, a basic rule of good service delivery is to understand your customer, in this instance the student, in order to more effectively satisfy their needs (Gruber et al. 2012; Lovelock & Wirtz 2010). The views of teachers and students are not always in agreement (Heffernan, Morrison & Jarratt 2010; Seale 2010) "professors and students believe caring and being cared for are important ..., but they show and understand caring in different ways" (O'Brien 2010, p. 111). Exploring the student experience will reveal where care sits in the overall experience, thereby avoiding second-guessing what students might expect, need or want.

1.4.3 Literature addressing care

No obvious single theory or framework will allow care meanings in higher education to be elucidated with precision. Issues around 'duty of care', care theory

and educational services will be singled out in discussing the institution. Relationships, relational pedagogy and issues of ethos, authenticity and trust will be utilised to cast light on the empirical findings of care within higher education relationships. The literature that explains individual differences in higher education is explored. What is apparent from this brief window into discussion of care in the literature is that care is ill-defined.

The focus of care and caring education literature has been on pre-tertiary institutions. However, some ideas on care developed for the earlier years of education are not relevant to the undergraduate learning environment (Gleaves & Walker 2006; McKenna 2010). In the tertiary context, interaction is rarely one-to-one; it is usually one-to-many (Amin 2011). In addition, higher education students, being adults, exercise more control over their learning than pre-tertiary pupils. Individual learner-focused teaching is less prevalent in higher education, where the emphasis is on self-managed rather than teacher-managed learning (Blackie, Case & Jawitz 2010). Despite these differences, all education institutions are responsible for delivering opportunities for education, and therefore discussion of care in schools can help interpret the possibilities for care in higher education.

A range of different theoretical lenses and teacher behaviours or demeanours have been used to frame exploration of this multifaceted construct in pre-tertiary education (Garza 2009). Approaches include critical theorist, racial and ethnic, cultural, multicultural, feminist (Noddings 1984), demeanour and actions, virtue and morals, mentoring and processes (Mayeroff 1971), context and perceptions, trust, respect and relationships (see Garza 2009 for full list of references associated with each approach). Most notable is Noddings' seminal 1984 work, *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics and moral education,* which places an 'ethic of care' as central to governing educational practice. Noddings has had a significant influence on having a philosophy of caring recognised as integral to education. Care theory has resonance in the feminist ideals of relationship, nurturing and equality between teacher and pupil (Gilligan 1982; hooks 2003). The ideals of collective care are embodied in an 'ethic of care', where attentiveness to both the individual and the larger group are important to

notions of fairness and justice (Fitzmaurice 2008; Gilligan 1982; Heuer 2008). Noddings locates educational care in "relational practice" (Noddings 2003b, p. 241), signalling the role the institution plays in setting an expectation for care in teacher-student relationship.

Noddings terms caring as sensitivity to the feelings of those we teach. She describes three care-enabling concepts: engrossment, motivational displacement and receptiveness (Owens & Ennis 2005). Further, Noddings proposes that educators need an ethical commitment to act in a caring manner (Noddings 1984), connecting the provisioning of pastoral care with discipline, specific skills and knowledge. Caring requires that one has an interest and commitment to help someone to exist and develop (Lawrence & Maitlis 2012; Nyberg 1990). Certainly, Noddings' early work *Caring* is accepted as having import. However, extending this work to all teachers and teaching situations has been questioned (Alexander 2013). The relevance of Noddings in the higher education sector is challenged by the impossibility of individualised care "when one is dealing with classes of over 100 students is just beyond the imagination of most of us" (Blackie, Case & Jawitz 2010, p. 642). As will be argued in this thesis, Nodding's notions of care and caring may be impractical in higher education, yet care theory has a role in reminding academe that education is more than just satisfying objective outcomes.

A distinction between higher education and pre-tertiary education is that academics in the main are both researchers and teachers, particularly in a research-intense university. The possibility of care and caring in higher education, in a manner similar to that of pre-tertiary education, is diminished given pressure to publish, compete for resources and address the needs of the wider student cohort (Frelin 2007; Hawk & Lyons 2008; Naidoo, Shankar & Veer 2011). Increasing class sizes, the loss of face-to-face contact, the diversity of the student intake, a relative lack of emphasis on individualised teaching, with a move towards more scripted packaged delivery of education, all lessen the likelihood of care (Barnett 2009; Blackie, Case & Jawitz 2010; Faranda & Clarke 2004; Lawrence 2005; Love 2008; O'Brien 2010). These pressures have led to a declining sense of responsibility to others (Grummel, Devine & Lynch 2009) – a

loss of the expectation for care. However, an 'ethic of care' would suggest that care and caring need to exist, both as a broader institutional philosophy and within higher education relationships.

Even if care is not reciprocated, there need to be constructive relations between student and teacher (Slater 2004). Teachers have certain obligations in their relationships with students (Noddings 1988; Fitzmaurice 2008; Kim 2007). In managing relationships, teachers need moral integrity; integrity consists of "thought (justice), feeling (caring), and action (resolve)" (Brell 2001, p. 24). Intrinsic to caring is a "meaningful friendship" (Brell 2001, p. 26). The "concept of care underlies the role of empathy and trust" (Värlander 2009, p. 149) in relationships between the teacher and the student. Care can be a form of stewardship, or having the authority to take care on behalf of others (Gillespie 2003; Mayeroff 1971). Teacher authority requires significant trust from both student and teacher that their position is not abused (Haig 1987; Seltzer & Bentley 1999). Positive relationships are preconditions for learning (von Krogh 1998) and care is a contributor to building and sustaining educational relationships.

Amin (2011) refers to the work of Atherton (2010), who includes the "subject (discipline/content)" (Amin 2011, p. 277) into the student-teacher relationship, forming a teacher-learner-subject triad. Amin (2011, p.278) identifies the complexity or "fuzziness around the meaning of care" in theorising care, and challenges the notion that emotionally based care can be decontextualised and formed into a universal entity. Amin goes on to support O'Brien's (2010) contention that it is not that university teachers do not care, but rather that they do not communicate this effectively to students.

Whilst Noddings suggests a balance in the dyadic student-teacher relationships, Noblit (1993) rejects the idea of reciprocal relationships in learning at school. Rather, she suggests that the teacher is in control and has "ethical use of power" (Noblit 1993, p. 24) in any interaction with students. Responsibility rests with the teacher; caring in schools is "connection, nurturance, sustenance, dependency and morality" (Noblit 1993, p. 25). This moral authority, to be mindful in their teaching of the benefit for all, is tempered by the need to meet

individual students' differing expectations, skills and commitment to learning. Though Noddings and Noblit see the teaching role in pre-tertiary education differently, both educators indicate the need for a high level of teacher care and involvement in teaching practice.

Caring – care of oneself and taking care of others – is an intrinsic value important in education (Connolly & Penn-Edwards 2005; Creswell 1998; Marx 2011). Teachers need to have certain dispositions and qualities, such as carefulness (Heffernan, Morrison & Jarratt 2010, Mayeroff 1971). Examples of influences beneficial to learning relationships are rapport that includes "approachability, accessibility, personality and empathy" (Faranda & Clarke 2004, p. 274) and comments made by Perl (1996):

> I believe there are four major aspects to our community-making endeavors, each hinging on the notion of care. First, we must care about ourselves. Second, we must become knowledgeable about our students in the specificity in order that we can know what type of care it is they need. We must use the knowledge we gain to practice ethical and responsible care-giving. Third, we need to allow and expect students to care for one another. In fact, we must know when to stay out of their way. Fourth, we must be nurturers of dialogue. We should encourage that the caring continue beyond our own presence at this university. (Perl, 1996, p. 167)

Care is "extolled as a necessary and desirable value", a "discourse of the intellect" (Amin 2011, p. 276). Teaching is more than just a straightforward person-to-person relationship – it needs to include caring for the subject, expertise in the discipline content and processes and an ability to transmit that understanding to those less knowing.

One characteristic of good teaching is kindness. Kindness is the act of showing personal care for someone – giving attentive time, thought and care to others (Kerwin 2011). Kerwin suggests that in the current higher education climate, with the marketisation of universities, little time is available for academics to pay attention to kindness. Kindness is becoming "covertly cherished, overtly undervalued" (Kerwin 2011, p. 29). O'Brien (2010) notes some of the challenges for academics that may inhibit their ability to display kindness, such as the need to research and publish, to provide timely formative student assessment

and to meet student "expectations for 24/7 availability that come with technology" (O'Brien 2010, p. 113). Kindness requires time. In addition, well-intentioned but excessive kindness can smother, and therefore be the antithesis of educational care. Kindness and care are similar. Care, however, can be applied more widely to objects and processes as well as to relationships with people.

Another marker of effective teaching is authenticity or believability. Two dimensions of teacher authenticity are care for the subject, and what is known as being 'true to oneself'. What is important is being sincere, candid or honest, to show care for knowledge, the students, and ongoing interest in engaging students with the subject around ideas that matter (Barnett 2009; Blackie, Case & Jawitz 2010; Kreber, McCune & Klampfleitner 2010). Thus authenticity implies a sharing of oneself, engaging in genuine dialogue and being student-centred (Samuelowicz & Bain 2001). Therefore, authenticity can be seen as a manifestation of taking care of the academic role with honesty and integrity.

Mayeroff's seminal work *On Caring* (1971) describes various conceptions of care and caring that giving meaning to life. For Mayeroff, care is the central core value for life. Someone is "at home in the world ... through caring and being cared for" (Mayeroff 1971, p. 2). Conceptions include caring as knowing the other; as helping or allowing the other [person or idea] to grow; developing through feedback and reflection; trusting the other to learn independently; being open and honest; having hope and courage to tackle the unknown (Mayeroff 1971; Rowland et al. 1998). Similarly, Barnett (2009) supports a perspective that encourages a social philosophy of education creating opportunities for an individual *being* rather than *having*. Barnett (2009) posits that academics and students need to engage with the world around them, to live wisely and *be* in the world, not just concentrate on *having* the degree (Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion 2009; Ng & Forbes 2009) – in other words, to care about being a student.

A traditional view of the student is one where "under the guidance of the academic, the undergraduate had the potential to be transformed into a scholar, someone who thinks critically" (Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion 2009, p. 277). The reconceptualization of higher education as a business around fifty years ago

cast students as "consumers of educational output" (Vanderstraeten 2004, p. 195). Hart and Rush (2007) cite the student-as-customer as an extended metaphor to capture the reality of students in massified higher education systems. Alternative metaphors for students range from students as clients (receiving) educational services to students as citizens with certain rights and obligations to contribute to their own education, to be co-creators of their learning. The world is challenging, so students in higher education need to develop "the wherewithal to keep going, to keep pressing on and to have a dynamic structure of being" (Barnett 2009, p. 437) rather than restrict themselves to being 'consumers' of educational services, who see education solely as a ticket to employment.

Whatever the conceptualization of 'student' adopted, it is important to enable students to develop 'autonomy' – sufficient space and challenge to care for themselves (EIDOS 1999). The opportunity to grow and take ownership of their learning is particularly important for the majority of undergraduate students who are in transition from childhood to adulthood. Becoming graduates is a process wherein the student develops into a knowing, acting or being individual (Barnett & Coate 2005; Noble et al. 2011). This implies that each student will have idiosyncratic outcomes, running contrary to ideas of mass higher education. So listening to individual students is expected to reveal a raft of different stories: "it is often surprising that students can have such radically divergent perceptions of the same experience" (Appleton-Knapp & Krentler 2006, p. 254). The difficulty in tapping into students' views is that it is "impossible to characterise a 'standard' student" (Mitchell, Maher & Brown 2008, p. 44) given the differing past and present "pressures, demands and responsibilities" (ibid.) of higher education students.

The marketing services literature provides insights into higher education as a business. Managing the student experience to engender satisfaction is based on 'expectation confirmation theory' (Appleton-Knapp & Krentler 2006; Gruber et al. 2012; Oliver 1977, 1980; Spreng, MacKenzie & Olshavsky 1996). Satisfaction is experienced when needs are met or exceeded in a service interaction (Lovelock & Wirtz 2010). The recipient has a sense of being cared for, a feeling important for developing continuing engagement with the service.

An understanding of how student expectations affect satisfaction is valuable for educators because they can exert some control in correctly informing students' expectations about a course. (Appleton-Knapp & Krentler 2006, p. 254)

Satisfaction in the early stages of a student's university experience should help to minimise dissatisfaction in the period after graduation, when poor performance in post-experience questionnaires may adversely affect a particular university's government funding and reputation.

A well-established service quality measurement instrument is SERVQUAL (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry 1988). This instrument has five dimensions measuring customer satisfaction from the customer's rather than the service provider's perspective. Johnston (1995) added the construct of care to SERVQUAL. HEdPERF adapted SERVQUAL to higher education (Clewes 2003) by bringing in a performance dimension (Brochado 2009; Douglas, McClelland & Davies 2007). One of the underlying constructs tested was care taken in "understanding the customer" or student (Douglas, McClelland & Davies 2007, p. 24). This care construct was described as encompassing "consideration, concern, sympathy and patience" (Johnston 1995, p. 70). Care would be evidenced to the student through the provision of the following:

A variety of learning methods to accommodate various learning styles. Recognise those students that attend tutorials regularly and remembering and caring about their specific needs.
Showing empathy [and] provide individual attention as appropriate (Douglas, McClelland & Davies 2007, p. 24).

Such cross-sectional measures, devised to assess short-term service encounters, can help to monitor teaching at a point in time but are less able to track how the individual student is developing as a learner over time.

Whilst several scales for care have been developed supporting the link between characteristics of teachers, perceived care and learning (Teven & McCroskey 1997; Thweatt & McCroskey 1998; Teven 2001), these have not become widespread in practice. The components of 'goodwill' – caring, competence and trustworthiness – were found tricky to measure (Teven &

McCroskey 1997). 'Perceived care' has several emotional constructs: empathy, understanding and responsiveness. Whilst emotions may be difficult to measure, they impact on the perception of the education received. This view is in contrast to the classical Cartesian notion that education (scholarly work) is separate from emotional thought and feeling. Scholars acknowledge that caring is 'an essential attribute of most, if not all, human relationships' (Teven 2001, p. 159).

Teaching, an educational service, is increasingly subjected to teaching evaluation surveys (TEFs) such as SERVQUAL and HEdPERF described above. Service delivery monitoring with TEF surveys are implemented to ensure quality and customer satisfaction. There are many institutionally developed TEFs. Onwuegbuzie et al. (2007), in evaluating the efficacy of TEFs, found that students characterising effective college instructors identified a "student-centered" theme composed of "willingness to listen to students" as well as being "compassionate" and "caring" (p. 129). These researchers organised the meta-themes identified into an acronym CARE: Communicator, Advocate, Responsible and Empowering (p. 134). They justify the use of the acronym CARE be drawing on the dictionary definition for care – that of "close attention", "watchful oversight", "charge or supervision", "attentive assistance or treatment to those in need", "to provide needed assistance or watchful supervision" and "to have a linking or attachment" (p. 148). Their developed understanding is dubbed the care-respected model. The 'respected' in care-respected is also an acronym helping to describe good teachers within the CARE categories: responsive, enthusiast, student-centeredness, professional, expert, connector, transmitter, ethical and director. What these researchers clearly demonstrate is that care is a characteristic of an effective college instructor, though multifaceted and not easy to evaluate.

Studies on care have focused on the process of care in relationships, caring as ascribed to the actions of individuals in educational interactions. Also studied were factors encouraging effective delivery of and measurement of student satisfaction in education. Finally, issues relating to the impact of managing higher education along business lines have been included, exploring where care may play a role in managing and monitoring educational services. However, caring "is a personal, subjective topic full of feelings ... it is a powerful, moving dynamic

topic that not many researchers choose to tackle" (Thayer-Bacon & Bacon 1996, p. 256). As these researchers argue in *Caring Professors: A Model* (Thayer-Bacon & Bacon 1996), care is important. Professors may think they are caring; however, this may not be the view of students. They argue that affective issues contribute to successful students, a factor often ignored in approaches to education that emphasise measurement of efficacy in teaching. This thesis will canvass similar issues from the student perspective, supporting the Thayer-Bacon & Bacon (1996) assumption that 'care' and 'caring' matter.

1.5 Outline of the thesis structure

This introduction chapter is followed by Chapter 2, which outlines in detail the approach to the study. The study utilises a phenomenological approach, as it is the student's reality that is of interest (Crotty 1998). It will include an evaluation of the range of semantic meanings evidenced directly (manifest) or indirectly (latent) in the student interview conversations; exploring for *"[i]mplicit conceptions"* (Kreber, McCune & Klampleitner 2010, p. 384, authors' emphasis) of care in the context of higher education. Particular attention is given to explaining the rationale behind the use of qualitative software to support the unfettered analysis of the student conversations, enabling glimpses of the phenomenon of care as essences to be interpreted from the wider student experience. This open approach was instrumental in allowing the focus to remain on what the students said whilst giving structure across the range of care meanings.

Revealed meanings of care are discussed in the three differing contexts that emerged from the data. These are described in the keystone chapter (Chapter 3). The broadest of the contexts, the institution, reports on the relatively infrequent discussion of care ascribed to or associated with the university. The second level of focus highlights issues around the teacher/student nexus, including discussion of care in educational relationships. The third level isolates care in the student discussion found in experiences outside of university. Influences that impact on individual student experiences include prior schooling, family, friends, work and entertainment.

The first of the findings chapters, the institutional chapter (Chapter 4), describes the context of the student experience, explores what students experience at the institutional level and then discusses what is missing from their accounts given what is known about care in the literature. For example, how are the ideas encompassed in 'duty of care' and care theory reflected in what students talk about? This chapter highlights how little of the student conversations can be linked to care associated with the broader institution.

The relational chapter (Chapter 5) addresses a number of different meanings for care. As may be expected given what is known about the importance of educational relationships and learning, this study provides evidence of the frequency of association of many forms of care in teacher-student interactions.

The individual chapter (Chapter 6) presents individual snippets to highlight the richly diverse student experience of higher education. Examples of different pre-university and university experiences will open a small window on the 'other lives' of students. These are issues that impact on their university life, yet would probably for the most part be unknown to their teachers.

The final chapter (Chapter 7) draws together the threads teased out in the empirical findings. It will be argued that care, despite being multi-definitional and highly contextual, is fundamental to successful student outcomes – care, regardless of what guise it takes, matters and is a necessity for 'education' to occur.

1.6 Overview

Higher education learners are transiting to or have reached adulthood. As such, it could be argued that in higher education care needs to be more balanced, that it is not just a one-way giving of care, as might be expected in earlier stages of education. Therefore, the perspective of the student in exploring the notion of care in the higher education experience was the focus of this study. Gaining clarity on possible latent and manifest meanings of care or caring that are part of the student experience helps round out the picture of just what care and caring

might be. Through exploration of the diversity of meanings and contexts, a rich description of where care may or may not reside in this milieu will be provided.

What will be shown is that care matters in higher education, and it should not be taken for granted. After all, to be human is to care (Gibbs 2010; Mayeroff 1971). However, meanings of care are pluralistic, contextual and idiosyncratic. The three different contexts explored allow glimpses of what care may or may not mean. Certainly, the student lens throws a different light on care in higher education by identifying what students expect or desire. From my perspective as an academic what I found to be most powerful were the insights into students' 'other lives'. Whilst I will not argue that we as academics should know all the things going on in a student's life, I would suggest that we could benefit from hearing the students' voices more frequently. Ultimately, in gaining a better understanding of what 'care' might mean from a student perspective, the university community will be in a better position to enhance the student *within-university* experience.

Chapter 2
Approach to resolving the research question

2.1 The Approach

To explore the phenomenon of care from the perspective of the student, an interpretive approach[2] within the qualitative research tradition is utilised. An interpretive paradigm enables the research question to be addressed as it sets out with "a concern for the individual" and to "understand the subjective world of human experience" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2002, p. 22). There is a range of meaning variants of 'care' in everyday usage that may or may not have resonance in an undergraduate's experience. Thus the plurality and "slipperiness" of the phenomenon of care necessitates methods that afford the researcher systematic ways to explore for meanings of care within the diverse and complex milieu of higher education. A greater understanding of the gamut of what care means from a student perspective, what is expected and desired, should help in shaping the delivery of higher education.

This chapter sets out the approaches to data generation and interpretation utilised to develop understanding of students' perceptions of 'care'[3] in higher education. In giving a clear description of the research process, the 'why', 'how' and 'what' of the approach to data generation and data analysis, a claim for quality for the resultant findings can be made (Jones & Diment 2010; Walsham 2006). Initial data generation stages of this research drew on a phenomenological tradition, with exploration of the student experience taken at face value with no reference to any prior conceptions of what care might mean (Groenewald 2004). An open-ended interview process helped foreground what students said. Interpretation was supported with computer-aided semantic analysis utilising the Leximancer software. Although this move to systematic analysis is not strictly in keeping with accepted phenomenological methods, it gave support to and provided structure for the otherwise diverse glimpses of care meanings found

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[2] To avoid confusion in the use of the terms *methodology* and *method,* the term a*pproach* is used in this study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2002; Gephart 2004; Grbich 2007).
[3] The single-quote notation will be used throughout this study to identify a concept or an abstraction of a phenomenon; e.g., 'care'.

across the wider student experience. Initial exploration results are then interpreted in light of education and services marketing literature.

This chapter details the study's methodological rationale, design and methods of analysis and interpretation of meanings of 'care' in higher education. The plurality of care will be discussed. An overview of how phenomenology has informed data generation will be followed with a brief explanation and rationale for the use of qualitative software in the initial analysis phase. In the next chapter, the results of this process will be laid out in detail, giving a window into the computer-aided semantic analysis process that led to the structuring of the discussion of care meanings into three levels of focus or context.

2.2 Rationale

As outlined in the introductory chapter, my interest in care in education springs from my own experience both as a student and an academic in higher education. Many years of teaching in various roles has given me certain insights into what care might mean when a student says they want the lecturer to care. Yet I could not definitively say what care might mean for a student given the difficulties of 'putting yourself in someone's shoes' and given student diversity. Every student's experience is arguably different, their view of and need for care unique (Hawk & Lyons 2008). Student views could range from a lack of expectation of care of any sort; to particular manifestations of 'care'; through to a high level of what they perceive to be care. Similarly, students' experiences prior to and during their time at university vary widely, influencing their attitudes to and expectations for care.

Studying the phenomenon of 'care' is further complicated by the variety of meanings for the word care found in common usage. *Care* as a term has many meanings in everyday language[4]; care can be said to be homographic and meaning-contextual. As can be seen in the visual thesaurus (see Figure 2.1), there are 28 listed meaning variants for care. Possible synonyms for care include: custody; keeping; supervision and trust (*OED*). Worry is also associated with

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[4] *OED*, http://www.oed.com (accessed June 2007).

caring; van Manen (2002b) coins the term 'care-as-worry' to encapsulate trouble, grief and concern for or about someone or something.

> [2.] The word care as a verb can mean: to feel concern or interest (about something or someone); to look after and provide the needs for; to watch over; to like; to be fond of; to provide for.
>
> As a noun care could mean: attention; concern; caution (to avoid damage, risk or error); supervision; management (responsibility); guardianship or stewardship.
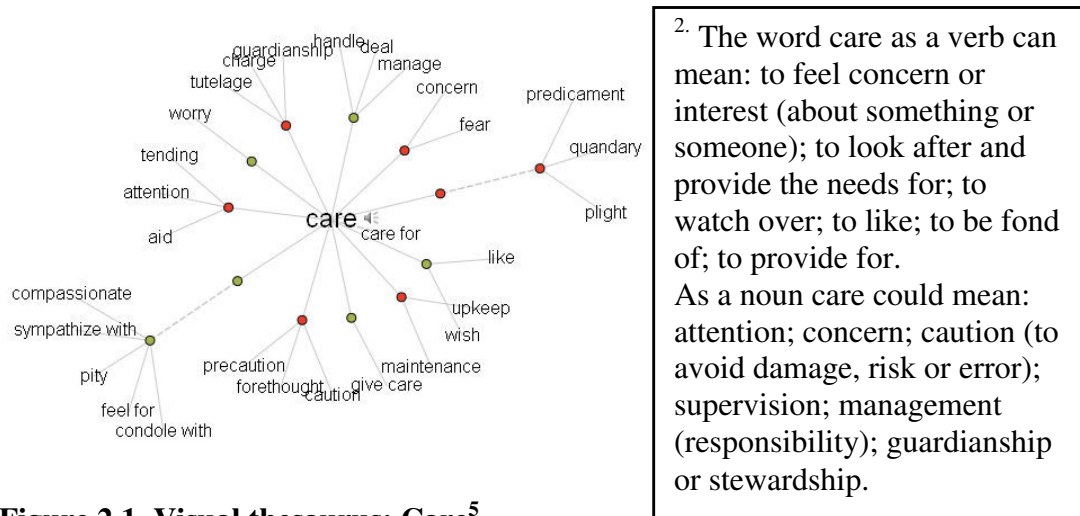
Figure 2.1 Visual thesaurus: Care[5]

Similar diversity of meaning of the term care, or caring, can be found in academic use, highlighting the plurality of likely meanings to be found in the students' experiences. Interpretation therefore needs to be open to the possibilities, allowing for the exploration of "how people think and act in the context of their day-to-day lives" (Smith & Fletcher 2004, p. 55), in this case each individual's experience of university.

Furthermore, care can be viewed as a phenomenon and more than just a word or term. Care is something perceived or experienced in many diverse ways in our everyday lives, differing across "a range of perspectives, contexts and contingencies" (Amin 2011, p. 269). Care becomes particularly important at times when an individual's situation is in flux, such as when moving from school to higher education. In order to elucidate student-relevant notions of care as a phenomenon, the question is: how to tap into the experiences of students in higher education?

The intention of this research is to look at the possibilities for 'care' in the higher education milieu from the perspective of students by adopting an interpretive research design that meets the "fitness for purpose" principle noted in Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2002, p. 73). The three criteria for appropriateness of

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[5] http://www.visualthesaurus.com/app/view.

a research approach applied by Golden-Biddle & Locke (1993) are that of
"authenticity, plausibility and criticality" (p. 595). Authenticity is where the
researcher makes a claim to be in a position to develop understanding. Plausibility
relates to the contribution the research makes to the issues of concern. Criticality
prompts the reader of the research to challenge and reflect on their own
understanding. Walsham (2006) notes that what is all important in a research
outcome is that the results are 'interesting' – in other words, they make a
contribution.

The study reflects the practical interest characteristic of empirical
interpretive research, as it seeks to develop our pluralistic understanding of the
phenomenon of care from an individual student perspective in a way that has
pragmatic validity for academics (Kvale 1996; Schweitzer 2002; Van der Mescht
2004). The intended audience is all those engaged in providing education at a
tertiary level, in particular fellow academics practising in the current climate of
higher education, who to better meet the needs of students need clearer insights
into student expectations and needs.

2.2.1 Interpretive Research Approach

Having accepted that the phenomenon of interest has more than one
meaning or interpretation, a qualitative approach that accommodates plurality was
adopted (Gephart 2004; Frost et al. 2010). Interpretive research is one of two
competing views, "traditional and a more recent interpretive view" (Cohen,
Manion & Morrison 2002, p. 5) with an ontology that is subjectivist (Morgan &
Smircich 1980; Wilding & Whiteford 2005); that is, meaning is subjective and
contextually bound rather than an absolute or given. The interpretive paradigm is
the opposite of emphasising a "scientific method of investigation that deals with
observation, labelling, hypothesizing, and testing" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison
2002; Denzin & Lincoln 2000; Park 2006, p. 41). Openness and flexibility in
letting the data itself speak adds depth and richness to exploration of the research
question.

As such, this study sits within an epistemology of "constructionism"
(Crotty 1998, p. 3) where meaning depends on how individuals engage with their

world. In other words, the research question should generate data that can reveal the students' "orientation towards the world" (Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009, p. 47) – telling something about their understanding of their experiences. The 'essence' of just what care might mean is indirectly sought from the experiences students relate during the interviews. Thus the pluralistic nature of the phenomenon of interest, and the expectation that the perceptions and experiences of care are highly contextual and idiosyncratic, with varied and multiple subjective meanings, dictated this open interpretive approach (Creswell 2003; Crotty 1998; Grbich 2007; Hawk & Lyon 2008; Hoff & Witt 2000). Care is a complex multifaceted phenomenon dependent on each individual's situation.

2.2.2 Phenomenology underpinning my approach

To allow for the openness required in this study, the approach draws on the discovery-oriented philosophical position inherent in phenomenology: to let meanings emerge rather than pre-empt their existence, and to develop an understanding of the 'experienced phenomena' (Giorgi 1985, 1997; Walsham 2006). Phenomenology is a form of observation "exploring, in depth, experiences or texts to clarify their essences" (Grbich 2007, p. 85). Husserl is attributed with beginning the tradition in order to "investigate consciousness as experienced by the subject" (Baker, Wuest & Stern 1992, p. 1356; see also Devenish 2002).

Phenomenology as a philosophy has evolved in several forms (Denzin & Lincoln 2000; Hyde 2005; Lawler 1998) with common ground based on "reflection on the lived experience of human existence" (van Manen 2007, p. 11) and "is oriented to practice – the practice of living" (van Manen 2007, p. 13) by interpreting the whole of the lived experience (Schwandt 2003; Wilding & Whiteford 2005). There are many debates in and around phenomenology as a methodology (Goulding 2005; Van der Mescht 2004). Criticisms arise when phenomenological philosophies are translated into research methodologies – there is no universal acceptance that it is a methodology, nor are there clear guidelines or methodological orthodoxy to draw upon (Devenish 2002; Frost et al. 2010; Giorgi 1985; Goulding 1999; Grbich 2007; Schweitzer 2002; Van der Mescht 2004; Whiteford & Wilcock 2000). Lawler (1998, p. 47) suggests the

attractions of phenomenologies as research methodologies lies predominantly in the extent to which they allow researchers to roam over the rich and fascinating territory of human experience and the ways people find meaning in their lives.

Each form of phenomenology has its own challenges when used to guide enquiry, leading to different assumptions, forms of data capture, analysis and interpretation methods:

There is not *one* phenomenological methodology but rather a variety of methods that all hold to the primacy of the subjective experience. (Riemen 1998, p. 276, italics in original)

Schweitzer (2002) describes empirical phenomenology that "focuses on the meaning human beings make of their experience" (Van der Mescht 2004, p. 2) that does not make claims for truth but rather seeks to provide practical relevance in specific contexts (Giorgi 1985). The aim is to develop a "practical understanding" of the essences that may "lend themselves to multiple compelling interpretations" (Miles & Huberman 1994, p. 9). van Manen (2007) suggests that the phenomenology of practice is "reading and writing that open up possibilities for creating formative relations between being and acting, self and other, interiorities and exteriorities, between who we are and how we act" (van Manen 2007, p. 11). Four fundamental concepts developed by Husserl, intentionality, description, reduction and essence (Alexandersson 1981; Goulding 1999), have become accepted as a guide to exploring lived experience.

Reduction, one of the four fundamental concepts of phenomenology, leads to the uncovering of the essence(s) or essential structure of the phenomenon (Baker, Wuest & Stern 1992), yet no 'rules' exist to help guide this process. There are reservations expressed (Silverman 2005) as to how possible it is to 'bracket' – this first part of the Husserlian reduction step where preconceptions about the phenomenon are put aside or suspended. An example of difference in reduction methods is whether description of an individual's conception of reality is co-produced, or alternatively left to the researcher (Sandberg 1997). Giorgi (1997) in his critique of the Klein and Wescott paper (1994) 'The Changing Character of Phenomenological Psychology' suggests that phenomenology gives a quite specific meaning to 'experience', defining it as intuition about concrete or real objects. This

narrow perspective presents challenges when the phenomenon does not have 'realistic' references. Instead, the 'phenomenon' is broadened to a notion of 'phenomenal meaning' that encompasses intuitions or presences such as care or caring, in addition to concrete and real objects.

In this research, issues of diversity rather than sameness are valued, since deterministic generalisable outcomes are not sought (Goulding 2005). This exploration draws on the sentiments of empirical phenomenology (Moustakas 1999; Van der Mescht 2004), particularly in the approach to data collection with a focus on individual meanings of the phenomenon. The nuanced richness of phenomenal meanings for 'care' is explored in an open discovery-oriented manner in students' experiences.

2.2.3 Influences on methods

Phenomenology informed both the data collection and the initial stages of analysis. The phenomenological tradition (Chronis 2005) allows for data collection methods, such as in-depth interviews and diaries, that "offer a rich, detailed, first-person account of … experiences" (Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009, p. 56). The initial analysis, exploring for underlying semantic structure in the interviews using Leximancer drew on Bayesian principles. Bayesian analysis[6] is consistent with a phenomenological epistemology of letting the data speak (Ng-Krüelle 2006). The models (semantic structures or 'concepts') emerge from the data and are checked for their likelihood and relevance (prior distribution), giving the probability that such structures are unlikely to have occurred by chance. This analysis helped scaffold the exploration of the diverse experiences.

The study diverges from phenomenological orthodoxy in the interpretation and reporting phases (Spiggle 1994). My approach strays from phenomenological research designs in two ways. The first is that it is selected essences rather than the complete lived experience of the student that is the focus of the study.

[6] The distinction between classical analysis (CA), exploratory data analysis (EDA) and Bayesian analysis (Ng-Krüelle 2006, p. 126, original emphasis):
Classical analysis: Problem => Data => **Model** => Analysis => Conclusions
Exploratory data analysis: Problem => Data => Analysis => **Model** => Conclusions
Bayesian: Problem => Data => **Model** => Prior Distribution => Analysis => Conclusions

Secondly, differing meaning themes are used to present the findings rather than hermeneutic stories reinterpreting the phenomenon (Grbich 2007; van Manen 1990). The data itself has dictated the reporting of aspects of student experience.

A second influence on the study stems from being an insider of the university (O'Connor 2004). I am an academic in a business faculty with more than 25 years of experience teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. My view is framed by the business discipline that I teach. A business background helped me to understand issues such as the corporatization of higher education, the classification of students as customers and educational services. While question marks exist regarding the pedagogical soundness of the business model of education (Booth, McLean & Walker 2009; Naidoo & Jamieson 2005), the model does provide an overall framework for exploring student experiences. For example, if we view students as customers then we can draw on services marketing theories (Oliver 1977; Oliver 1980; Spreng, MacKenzie & Olshavsky 1996) that relate student expectations and overall satisfaction with their educational experience.

Interaction with respondents, as well as how I make sense of what they were saying, might have been helped or hindered by my insider status (Grbich 2007). Conversely, the study itself would not have been undertaken had I not been an insider, given that puzzlement about what care might mean to students was triggered by student feedback on their first-year experiences. This potential for bias is handled through the use of the computer-aided qualitative software Leximancer. Rather than coding by the researcher, the words, phrases or vignettes considered indicative of one or more of the guises 'care' were initially extracted using Leximancer. The semantic analysis of linguistic structures or concepts within whole texts is developed independently of the researcher (Baldauf & Kaplan 2010). However, interpretation of the data "comes as a result of lived on-the-job teacher experience" (Hansson, Carey & Kjartansson 2010, p. 285). In later interpretation phases, in line with empirical phenomenology, the researcher seeks meanings that have practical resonance for others through the linking of empirical findings to extant literature. Though I am trying to explore a space to which I do not belong – that of a young undergraduate – I feel that, on balance, my role as an

academic is an advantage, as I have empathy for the challenges that students report as well as insight into the context. As an insider, I am able to sift through and interpret aspects of the student stories that reveal care.

Student-identified issues come to the fore through inductive rather than deductive processes (Elo & Kyngäs 2008; Mitchell, Maher & Brown 2008; Zhang & Wildemuth 2009), privileging the student voice. In implementing an interpretive approach drawing on free-flowing iterative Leximancer analyses, the study creates openness to possible meanings of 'care'. This process is described in more detail in later sections of this chapter.

2.2.4 Supporting qualitative analysis software: Background to Leximancer

Initial analysis of the interviews using Leximancer, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) package, sits very well with a phenomenological philosophy of letting the data 'speak for itself' rather than imposing theory-driven meaning onto the data. Automated machine learning avoids instrumental and quantitative preoccupations.

> [O]ur technological understanding of being produces a calculative thinking that quantifies all qualitative relations, reducing entities to bivalent, programmable 'information'. (Thomson 2005, p. 56)

This stepping back, similar to 'bracketing' (van Manen 2002b), is important to allow a range of meanings to emerge, even those that may be found as traces only. A particular strength of Leximancer over other CAQDAS such as NVivo[7] is that it efficiently allows for the "possibility of having new concepts emerge from the material" (Indulska, Hovorka & Recker 2012, p. 2; Smith & Humphreys 2006).

Since its inception in 2000, Leximancer has been used in a wide range of disciplines to support both case study and phenomenological research (Jones & Diment 2010). Using computer-aided interpretive textual analysis helps systematically identify and tease out the various overt and subtle meanings of care (Kabanoff 1997) found in student conversations about their experiences.

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[7] NVivo is the most-reported qualitative text analysis software in education publications (51.4%), with Leximancer being reported in 2% of studies (Jones & Diment 2010). However, as researchers become more familiar with the strengths of Leximancer, the number of publications is rising rapidly.

Leximancer (2010) provides a researcher-independent semantic text analysis that can be iteratively interrogated in both visual and text form. For a sample of recent business, marketing and education literature explored to develop an understanding of Leximancer interpretation in practice, (see Appendix A: Table A.1). Given the relative novelty of this method, an overview of the software is provided here.

Andrew Smith is credited with developing the Leximancer software released by Key Centre for Human Factors and Applied Cognitive Psychology at the University of Queensland, Australia, in 2000 (Martin & Rice 2007). In the words of Smith and Humphreys (2006, p. 262, italics in original):

> The Leximancer system is a relatively new method for transforming lexical co-occurrence information from natural language into semantic patterns in an unsupervised manner. It employs two stages of co-occurrence information extraction – *semantic* and *relational*[8] – using a different algorithm for each stage.

Leximancer, a powerful data-mining tool, gives "an automated, systematic and objective reading" (Bradmore and Smyrnios 2009, p. 499) of the source documents, supporting unstructured, qualitative textual analysis.

Leximancer acknowledges its foundations in corpus linguistics (McKenna & Rooney 2005; Smith & Humphreys 2006). Linguistics itself is defined as "the study of abstract systems of knowledge idealized out of language as actually experienced" (Widdowson 2000, p. 4). Given that language is a reflection of social relations (Parsons 2008), corpus analysis allows for the "quantitative analysis of text *en masse*" (Widdowson 2000, p. 6, italics in original). Leximancer moves beyond a simple word frequency count to the identification of semantic structures: commonly co-occurring words – 'concepts' – within longer text segments (Conrad 2011; Grewal 2008; McKenna & Rooney 2005; Pakenham, Tilling & Cretchley 2012; Rooney, McKenna & Barker 2011; Stockwell et al. 2009). Leximancer allows for "automated analysis based on statistical properties of texts" (Jones & Diment, 2010, p. 82). Leximancer concept-bootstrapping algorithms use Bayesian probability analysis to determine the likelihood of certain

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[8] Semantic: "co-occurring words reflect categories—concepts—that carry meaning ... the most frequently used concepts within the body of text". Relational: "the *relationships* [co-occurrences] between these concepts" (Leisch et al. 2011, p. 24).

words being commonly associated with other words in text 'chunks' of the transcripts. The concept thesaurus lists words closely associated with the concept (usually named after the most frequently found word) that give semantic or definitional content to the concept (Rooney 2005). These concepts are built without the need for "an external lexicographic reference" (McKenna & Waddell 2007, p. 380). The learned concepts, also called 'entities', are families of weighted terms that tend to appear together in lengths of text defined by the user (e.g., chunks of two or three sentences).

A Leximancer concept is "an association of words that relates to and hence load into each concept" (Richardson 2005, p. 3), common patterns or families of words in text segments (Stockwell et al. 2009). Concepts either associate with text segments that contain terms heavily weighted in the named concept thesaurus (occur quite frequently) or when there are enough of the lower weighted terms to say in all probability that these are indicative of the concept (Ng-Krüelle 2006). This later facility helps identify less obvious or latent expressions of the concept. It is important to remember these concepts are "textual concepts and any correlation with mental states is abductive" (Smith & Humphreys 2006, p. 263), highlighting the need for the original text to be interrogated during interpretation.

After developing the concepts, the Leximancer program defines the interrelationships and co-occurrences between the word clusters, 'concepts', or lexical relationships in the text segments to qualify their status in the text overall (Cretchley, Rooney & Gallois 2010; Smith & Humphreys 2006; Grewal 2008). This *semantic* stage helps sort out words that occur frequently but have relatively little specific association with other words from words that may be found equally frequently but are strongly associated with certain other words in the corpus – thereby having high contextual similarity, and as a result more likely to be of interest. Leximancer

> put[s] singular word definitions, or their nomos-meanings, in a logical relation to a specific context (semantic field) by relating individual meanings of neighbouring words to meaningful clusters. (Hansson, Carey & Kjartansson 2010, p. 287)

The semantic structure is captured by the thesaurus (words commonly associated with the concept), providing definitional content grounded in the empirical data (Conrad 2011). Term-relevance is based on Bayes' theorem (Stockwell et al. 2009). The level of co-occurrence is an expression of the confidence and relevancy of a term to one or more other terms in a specific text segment. A co-occurrence matrix captures the data used to generate the visual output, the Leximancer map (Stockwell et al. 2009; Indulska, Hovorka & Recker 2012), though interpretation is generally based on the map and reading of the original text.

In the second *relational* stage of the machine analysis, groups of word clusters or concepts clump together into themes or "putative patterns" (Rooney, McKenna & Barker 2011, p. 6). At the most fine-grained level of granularity (Aloudat & Michael 2011), each 'concept' (dot) has its own *theme* (circle). As the focus is broadened, concepts coalesce to form themes containing two or more closely aligned 'concepts' (Baldauf & Kaplan 2010). Finally, the theme size can be expanded to include all concepts within just one or two theme circles named after the most prevalent concept/s in the texts, in a bird's-eye view. This facility of Leximancer to visually display the probability of the concept patterns, and to allow interrogation of these interrelationships of concept co-occurrence through a text browser, provides the researcher with a powerful tool to iteratively explore the original data (Cretchley, Rooney & Gallois 2010; Rooney, McKenna & Barker 2011). The researcher is able to identify both common and uncommon sentiments in the text and how they are linked.

In relational analysis, Leximancer is able to identify the centrality of concepts and derive the relative importance or salience of the main concepts to the corpus overall. Further, it enables the researcher to move beyond relatively simple classification or content analysis to find patterns not obvious to human readers (Cockcroft & Stelmaszewska 2010; Pakenham, Tilling & Cretchley 2012), even when these are peripheral to the dominant themes in the discourse. Furthermore, analysis can move beyond the purely lexical level to where higher-order meaning is abstracted by drawing on theoretical frames, leading to development of new theory, such as within the grounded theory tradition (Mankowski, Slater & Slater

2011; Rooney 2005; Stewart & Chakraborty 2010; Todhunter 2009; Zamitat 2006). Relational analysis in this study supported the framing of the findings.

2.2.5 Assumptions and limitations

Assumptions of this interpretive approach are that a student in relating or recounting their experience is able to reveal aspects of care without being directly questioned as to what they understand care to mean; that these revealed aspects are then able to be interpreted by the researcher (sense-making); and that the findings are described in a way contributing to a "practical understanding" (Miles & Huberman 1994, p. 9) of the various meanings of care in students' university lives. The students were not restricted in the topics that they could talk about. A limitation of unstructured interviews is that weak meanings of care are not probed more thoroughly and interpretation is not confirmed with the respondent. It is accepted that in order for respondents to tell their stories they have constructed meaning for their experiences (van Manen 2007); they have "primal impressional consciousness" (attributed to Husserl's 1964 *Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness* in van Manen 2007, p. 15). This is similar to Heidegger's notion of *being* (Lawler 1998) – that they would be unable to talk about their world if they had not in some way already interpreted it.

The researcher then needs to be able to tease out the nuances representing forms of care or caring from the general experience expressed in the transcripts. Analysis of the interviews is predicated on "human activity seen as "text" – as a collection of symbols expressing layers of meaning" (Miles & Huberman 1994, p. 8). Developing understanding within a qualitative paradigm is rigorous, and the use of software to support the exploration of the transcripts provides structure. This process gives a solid foundation to the glimpses of care found in the student experiences, though these insights may not translate to other tertiary institutions.

2.3 Design of the study

In this interpretive study, the research participants were asked an open-ended question about their experiences at university. At times further questions were asked to clarify a respondent's comment with the conversation following

whatever path the participant wished to take. The question about what students think care might mean was only introduced very late in the conversations during debriefing of the research with each student. The broad steps in the process of moving from the interviews, to the transcripts analysed individually and as a cohort, to searching for care meanings and cross-evaluating and interpreting the findings with literature, leading to reporting of essences of care found in what the students said, is pictured in the figure below (Figure 2.2).
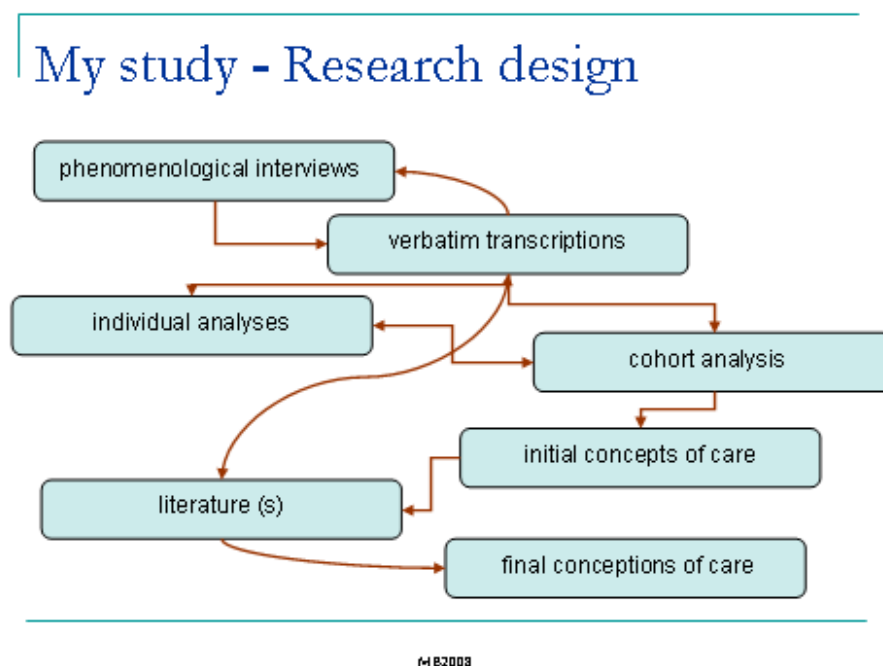
Figure 2.2 Research design

The diagram highlights the iterative nature of the research. Particular to this study approach is the integration of literature after deep-reading of the transcripts – to check the interpretations of care that emerge from data. The method section will address issues of ethics, respondent selection and the processes in transcription. Subsequent sections will deal with analysis, interpretation and reporting.

2.4 Method

The following sections will address more practical aspects of the study: ethics, informant selection, interview approach and text creation.

2.4.1 Ethics

Any research balances the good of gaining understanding for others (beneficence) with the right of participants to privacy and avoidance of exposure to possible risk at the time of the data collection or after (non-maleficence; Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2002; Kvale 1996). Addressing management of ethical issues in conducting this study is important, as ethical dilemmas may arise at any stage in the social research process: the project itself, the context and participants, procedures for data collection and analysis, nature of data collected and data management in terms of security and publication (Creswell 2003; Crotty 1998; Minichiello et al. 1996). Protocols for the university in terms of ethics were followed to minimise any potential for harm.

It was not expected that the nature of this study would in itself be ethically problematic. The context of the study was a higher education institution where respondents were adult (verified before a respondent was accepted into the study) and could therefore be expected to be able to give informed consent. However, data collection with interviews is a technique where close personal contact has attendant issues around the potential for distress, conformity bias and the need for confidentiality to be respected (Kvale 1996; Minichiello et al. 1996). This study was carried out under a protocol approved through the ethics committees of both the University of Technology-Sydney (UTS) and University of New South Wales (UNSW). See appendix B for copies of ethics approval from each institution. Respondent recruitment, consent and data management for anonymity were governed by ethics protocols (Silverman 2005). To ensure there was minimal chance for harm, respondents were recruited from classes I did not currently teach. Informed consent was obtained and close attention to any adverse response of the interviewee was in place. In accordance with the approved study protocol, each respondent was debriefed on the aims of the study in the final stages of the interview. Transcriptions were de-identified, originals stored in a locked cabinet and all subsequent analysis carried out using respondent codes to reduce any possible errors both during analysis and the reporting of findings. Regular reporting of progress was undertaken in accordance with the institutions' research

guidelines. Issues of particular import in this research are discussed more fully below.

2.4.2 Selection of informants

As the research question does not seek to establish representativeness or generalizability, a non-random sampling frame was chosen (Silverman 2005). Respondents were studying at a research intense Australian university – the University of New South Wales (UNSW). The research was limited to a convenience sample of undergraduate students taking an introductory course in the Australian School of Business at UNSW. They were recruited in two batches (A and B), resulting in 28 interviews. The second group were sampled since saturation had not been achieved after the first set of interviews, student experiences were not reflecting sameness in their stories (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Minichiello et al. 1996). The student experience is diverse; therefore a reasonable number of respondents, more than may be indicated by a purely phenomenological approach, were needed. Students were recruited from a student research pool over two semesters from a subject generally taken in the early years of their degree (see Table 2.1, which lists gender, stage, semester, scholarship status and program). Several students were recruited through snowball referral from students who had already been interviewed, stating that they wanted to contribute as they felt research into the student experience was important and wanted to have their say. The criterion for selection was that they were over 18 years of age and willing to participate.

Table 2.1 Overview of respondent characteristics[*]

Respondent code	Gender	Stage of degree/semester	Program (Commerce or other)
ABF	Female	1/2	Commerce
ACF	Female	1/2	Commerce / Science
ADF	Female	1/1	Commerce
AEF	Female	1/1	Commerce
AFM	Male	1/1	Commerce
AGM	Male	1/2	Commerce
AHM	Male	1/2	Commerce / Economics
AIM	Male	1/2	Commerce / Economics
AJM	Male	3/2	Commerce [BIT Co-op scholarship]
AKF	Female	2/2	Engineering [scholarship]
ALF	Female	2/3	Commerce / Economics
AMF	Female	4/2	Commerce / Economics
ANF	Female	1/2	Science
AOF	Female	2/2	Engineering [scholarship]
APF	Female	2/2	Commerce [BIT Co-op scholarship]
BBF	Female	2/1	Commerce
BCM	Male	2/1	Commerce
BDF	Female	2/1	Commerce
BEF	Female	2/1	Commerce / SMTH
BFF	Female	2/1	Commerce
BGF	Female	2/1	Commerce / Arts
BHF	Female	2/1	Commerce / SMTH
BJF	Female	2/1	Commerce
BKM	Male	2/1	Commerce
BLF	Female	2/1	Commerce
BMM	Male	2/1	Commerce
BNF	Female	2/1	Commerce
BOF	Female	2/1	Commerce / SMTH

* Respondent file code: e.g., ABF and BCM. (i) First letter indicates a respondent from first cohort (A) or second cohort (B); second letter is a unique alphabetic code; (iii) third letter indicates male (M) or female (F). The interviewer was identified with tag INT.
BIT: Business Information Technology, co-operative scholarship;
SMTH: Services Marketing,Tourism and Hospitality program (small cohort).

2.4.3 Interviews

Data on the student experience was gathered using open-ended depth interviews (Groenewald 2004; Kabanoff 1996; Kvale 1996; McCracken 1988; Minichiello et al.1996; Schostak 2006), a "key way of accessing the interpretations of informants in the field" (Walsham 2006, p. 323). Interviews were unstructured (Dey 1993, Kvale 1996; Minichiello et al. 1996), starting with a general question about the student's experiences of university to date (Fung

2006). This opening gambit was designed to allow the interchange between researcher and student to settle down into a 'conversation'. The student stories need to be evinced with as little researcher direction as possible in order to accommodate the anticipated diversity of their experiences and to avoid guiding or pre-empting what might be revealed (Kvale 1996; McCracken 1988). The approach resonates with phenomenological methods as interviews were carried out prior to any significant review of care-related literature, allowing for 'non directed' conversations with few prior researcher expectations (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2003; Kvale 1996). Such phenomenological interviews (Bäckström 2011; Fournier 1998; Groenewald 2004; Thompson & Tambyah 1999) provide a way of tapping into the phenomenon of interest through recounting of the respondent's experiences.

2.4.4 Creating texts for analysis: Transcriptions of the interviews

Interviews of around an hour in length were recorded using a digital voice recorder. Verbatim transcriptions were each saved to a separate coded text file (Grbich 2007). Interviews were transcribed to a text format that identified the interviewer (INT) and the respondent by code (see Table 2.1). This format readied the data for input into Leximancer. Transcriptions were completed either by the researcher or a professional transcription service. A limitation inherent in the use of transcriptions of interviews for analysis is that audio recording fails to capture the temporal and nonverbal elements of an interview (Walsham 2006). This is in part addressed by the researcher conducting all of the interviews and being able to carefully listen both during the interviews as well by revisiting the audio during iterative analysis. All transcripts were reviewed and checked back to the audio. Coded versions of the transcripts were kept for reference should any text file become corrupted.

The 28 transcriptions were edited to harmonise how words were recorded (e.g., uni and university were recorded with a capital letter: Uni or University). "Um" and similar sounds were deleted. Editing for consistency was necessary as Leximancer is based on semantic occurrences within text and may miss associations if word substitutes are present. A list of the harmonising conventions is given (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2 Text conventions in respondent transcripts

Text file convention	Original words this represents or replaces:
because	coz, 'cause, cause
blah	Blah-blah-blah
can't	cant
classmates	class mates
COOP	Coop, Co-op (scholarship programme)
duty-of-care	duty of care (as a phrase)
feedback	feed back
GenEd	Gen Ed (general education subject)
group-work	group work
High School	High school, high school
ideal-university	ideal university (as separate from existing university)
kind-of	kind of (an expression)
[laugh]	[removed]
Major	major, capitals for each major; e.g., Marketing
OK	Ok, Okay
online	on line
study-group	study group (different from more general group)
textbook	text book
Um	[removed]
Uni	uni (note University left as original, capital used)
won't	wont
word-of-mouth	word of mouth (an expression)

2.5 Analysis

Analysis is the process of investigating data, in this case what respondents said, in both word and audio form. The process of moving from reading, seeing, hearing or feeling to knowing and understanding is complex and not always easy to make transparent to another (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2002; Crotty 1998; Goulding 2005; Grbich 2007; Spiggle 1994, 2008). Spiggle (1994) describes seven analysis operations involved in interpretation that may occur sequentially or in tandem with analytic processes. Spiggle's steps identify types of activities associated with the "researcher-as-instrument" used in analysing interview data (Chronis 2005; Faranda & Clarke 2004). In this study Spiggle's steps (1994, p. 492) are linked to the processes of Leximancer (see Table 2.3) used to understand the data overall and during identification of care and care meanings.

Table 2.3 Spiggle's classification of qualitative data manipulation operations and their relevance to this study

Classification	Description	This study
Categorization	Classifying and labelling units of data – *text chunks*	Automated in the Leximancer settings. Text chunks can have multiple associated concepts. Researcher to review.
Abstraction	Collapses categories into higher-order conceptual constructs sharing common features – *themes / concepts*	Thematic analysis in Leximancer allows for concepts to be (dis)aggregated, through changing the level of focus (granularity). This allows researcher to explore for unanticipated constructs.
Comparison	Explores differences and similarities (patterns) in the data – *pathway analysis*	Leximancer provides concept co-occurrences and linkages (pathways) between any two selected concepts. Locating files in folders provides a profiling facility for interpretation of similarities or differences.
Dimensionalization	Identifying properties of categories and constructs – *thesaurus*	Leximancer provides a thesaurus of the concepts and closely associated concepts. Researcher to review.
Integration	To build theory	This is not the immediate aim of this research, though connections to existing understanding (literature) will be made.
Iteration	Acknowledges the context of the data – *moving between audio, transcripts and Leximancer output*	This stage is where the Leximancer output is explored to tease out meaning and identify unexpected findings in relation to the extant literature.
Refutation	Subjecting the findings to empirical scrutiny	Thesis examination and peer review of papers.

Analysis of the transcripts is a nomothetic explication of both common and unrelated themes based on semantic structure rather than an idiographic approach, with data being captured as descriptive sub-narrative in student stories (Devenish 2002). An idiographic approach is more in line with a phenomenological method such as interpretative phenomenological analysis, or IPA (Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009; Smith & Osborn 2003) than the empirical phenomenology of this study. Isolating the themes is a form of investigative

semiotic analysis (Grbich 2007) based on Leximancer algorithms. Leximancer affords the researcher a systematic approach for the isolation of and privileging of care-related sections of the transcripts over other sections that talk more generally about the student's broader experience of higher education. The Leximancer output (themes, concepts and maps) helps support the reporting of findings, providing scaffolding for the otherwise 'slippery' and diverse care-meanings evidenced in the open-ended student conversations.

At the analysis and interpretation stages there needs to be researcher openness in identifying both obvious and less obvious expressions of care and caring in these free-flowing interviews or 'conversations' (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2002; Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009). The automated Leximancer analysis results ground the data. Literature was explored after the initial whole-of-cohort analysis was complete, with the results guiding the selection of relevant literature to help elaborate and situate care meanings. Thus broader understanding is driven by what students said, with the aim of enhancing our understanding of the nuanced meanings and possibilities for care in the higher education context.

Leximancer projects, used to iteratively develop an understanding of the experiences of the overall cohort, drew largely on the systematic process of thematic and concept exploration outlined by Baldauf and Kaplan (2010). Carrying out both conceptual (categorization) and thematic (abstraction) analysis (Spiggle 1994) enables the researcher to capture patterns in the data with little researcher intervention such as pre-coding (Cockcroft & Stelmaszewska 2010). Leximancer can be used to carry out conceptual (semantic or thematic) and relational (linked-semantic) analyses (McKenna & Rooney 2005). A Leximancer project if configured in the same way with the same data will reproduce the same results; specific details of how the student conversations were handled will be given in the sections following.

2.5.1 Analysis conventions

Succinctly capturing the richness of understanding developed from the Leximancer analysis is a challenge. The most common form of reporting for Leximancer output has been the Leximancer map, a relational schema of the

concepts (Braithwiate, Travaglia & Corbett 2011). The map is a two-dimensional representation of complex asymmetric multidimensional interrelationships or co-occurrences (Indulska, Horvorka & Recker 2012; Siemieniako, Rundle-Thiele & Urban 2010). The visual artefacts of the Leximancer maps are *themes* shown as circles and 'concepts' shown as dots (Leximancer 2010). *Themes* are named for the most frequently occurring 'concept', with concepts named for the seed word around which the concept entity has been developed during the processing phase. No commonly accepted format exists for reporting Leximancer concepts and themes. The reporting convention adopted in this thesis is to denote *themes* in italics and 'concepts', or named coloured dots, in single quote marks (Caspersz, Olaru & Smith 2012; Leisch et al. 2011); original "text" is indicated by double quotes or indented sections, with the concept name words highlighted in bold and respondent codes in brackets.

An example of a quote annotated with concept naming words:

> They went to other **Unis**, I had like one **friend** but she wasn't like in my **group** of **friends** at **school** (BBF).

Leximancer maps, concept co-occurrences and quotes will be used to anchor the discussion of results. The original data is iteratively interrogated (map ⇔ thesaurus ⇔ co-occurrences ⇔ transcript) to fully understand just what a concept represents - the name alone is only part of the story since concepts are not simply word counts, as in more traditional content analysis. The various maps provided, giving a visual display of Leximancer semantic structures, co-occurrence incidences between concepts, and the summary output tables, are at best a snapshot of what can be gleaned from the information generated. Dialogue between the researcher, the data and the Leximancer outputs is what enables understanding of meaning to develop. Chapter 3 sets out an overview of the overall experiences reported, explaining how the structure emerging from the data itself was used to tease out more fine-grained findings regarding what care might mean (Baldauf & Kaplan 2010; Smith & Humphreys 2006). This chapter will outline in detail the steps taken in the whole-of-cohort analysis project, highlighting the main processes of thematic, concept and source document analyses to add weight to the claim for quality of the study findings.

2.5.2 Leximancer projects

The transcripts of the (28 student interviews) were tagged with a respondent code, checked and placed as de-identified Microsoft Word files in a folder for the whole-of-cohort project. The first project, a whole-of-cohort analysis (ALL), revealed concepts that have a similar semantic makeup across the 28 text sources. A total of 174,350 words were processed, with an average of 6,227 words per file. This project enabled exploration of frequently occurring themes common to the conversations. The second project (ALL Learn from tags) helped in isolating any individual or infrequent issues that may have been raised by only one or two of the respondents as the source files were identified. These projects are reported in Chapter 3 as well as the three findings chapters, Chapters 4 to 6.

Table 2.4 Steps in the Leximancer configuration and analysis process. (Smith & Humphreys 2006; Leximancer 2010)

Configuring the projects

• Each project given a unique name and files added (load data): ABF; ACF; ADF; AEF; AFM; AGM; AHM; AIM; AJM; AKF; ALF; AMF; ANF; AOF; APF; BBF; BCM; BDF; BEF; BFF; BGF; BHF; BJF; BKM; BLF; BMM; BNF; BOF
• Pre-process-stage adjustments:
    Stop list edited. Terms removed: better; coming; doing; example; feel; guess; having; kind of; look; probably; saying; stuff; sure; take; things; thought; trying; use; used; whole. Sentences per block set to 2.
    File tags: ☑
    Dialogue tags: ☑
• At the concept seeds identification stage, plurals and synonyms were merged.
  1) Merged: group/s; High School/school; lecture /s; lecturer /s; people/everyone; person/somebody/someone; student/s; subject/s; University/Uni
  2) Removed: everything; talk; talking; terms

Iterative exploration of output
• Thematic analysis helps in understanding relational structure more clearly. This is where the map is viewed at different levels of focus or 'granularity', from gross (100%) to fine (33%), the default level. • Concept analysis looks more closely at semantic structures identified in the texts, drilling down for evidence words (thesaurus), source contexts from original transcripts and identifying quotes that exemplify the concepts. This also includes exploring the relativity of a concept to the overall conversation (relevance) and linkages between any two concepts (likelihood) from the co-occurrence data. • Pathway analysis reveals the direct and indirect linkages or interrelationships between three or more concepts, further adding to the richness of meaning and understanding of concept relationships.
Reporting results from Leximancer projects
• Discussion of the results is supported with maps, identification of *themes* with the use of italic notation, 'concepts' in single quote marks and original "text" in double quotes with concept name words highlighted in bold.

Both the whole-of-cohort project (ALL) and the source file identified project (ALL Learn from tags) were configured to account for the sentence structure found in interview transcripts. To accommodate spoken language variants, the Stoplist in Leximancer was amended. The Stoplist prevents words that have little semantic value yet are used frequently in conversation from becoming possible seed words, since the seed words act as kernels for concept development during the learning phase of Leximancer analysis. Stoplist words such as 'is' or 'and' are ignored as starting points for the algorithms, driving the learning of the lexicon of closely associated words (Leximancer 2010).

During the pre-processing stage, file and dialogue boxes were ticked to identify the data as interview transcriptions. Adjustments were made for plurals and words representing similar ideas or objects. This is a process of stemming (Indulska, Horvorka & Recker 2012) where concept seeds were merged; for example, 'group' and 'groups'. Some more general concepts were removed, such as 'everything'; 'talk' and 'talking'; and 'terms' (note 'term' in this context was not a synonym of a university semester). The only difference in the settings between the two main projects reported, ALL and ALL Learn from tags, is that the later project is set to learn from the source files that are identified by tags (Chen & Bouvain 2009), in a similar fashion to discriminate analysis.

The Leximancer output allows exploration of the relationships of the developed concepts to the corpus as a whole, as well as to each other. As the map is easy to interrogate and explore, it supports the iterative development of an understanding of what the data is saying, in keeping with the tenets of the interpretive analysis approach of this study (Cretchley et al. 2010). For example, you are able to track back to the original text to read the concept-identified text chunk in the context of the wider conversation. Then you can switch back to the meta-view to trace other connections, making sense of the overall sentiments. This facility of Leximancer to move between the views helps to avoid any premature interpretations of the data, since the text can be revisited through any one concept or combination of concepts. Exploring the concept combinations can reveal the obvious and the less immediately obvious, as well as the unexpected juxtaposition of ideas expressed by respondents.

The Leximancer map is colour-coded and size-coded to reflect the relative prominence of concepts and their encircling themes (see Figure 2.3). The dot size indicates the prevalence of a particular concept, and it takes on the colour of the theme circle that encloses it (Indulska, Hovroka & Recker 2012). Name words such as Marketing are represented in green. These themes circles are "heat mapped" (Leximancer 2010), with the most prominent theme coloured red, *people* named after 'people', and the least-connected theme at the cool end (purple) of the spectrum, *support,* named after its only concept, 'support'.
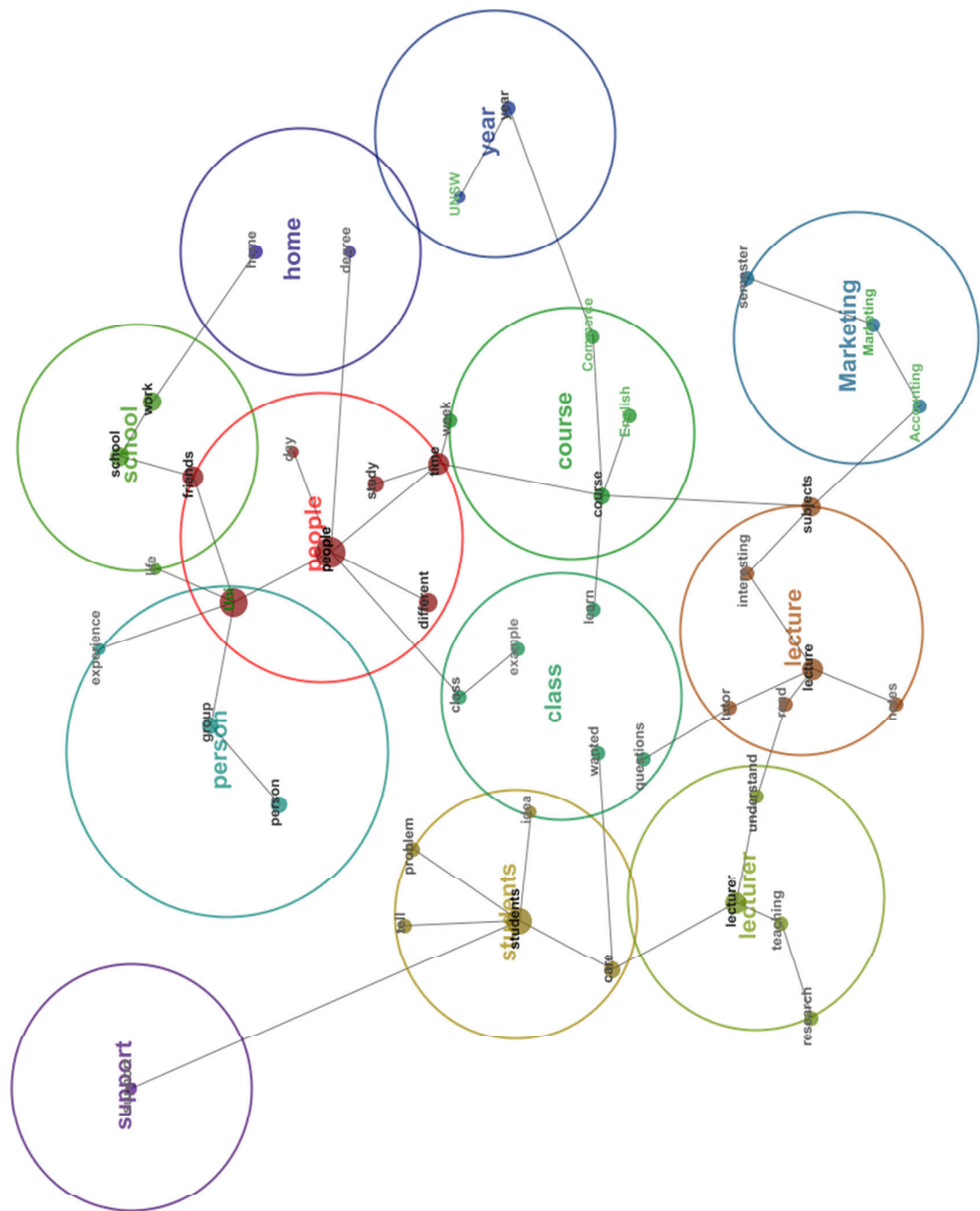
Figure 2.3 Map showing found concepts and themes

There are two different settings or views for the maps: topical and social (Figure 2.4a; Figure 2.4b). The topical map is used to explore the direct relationships between concepts, co-occurrences and themes. The topical map supports the bulk of analysis for this study. The social map, which has a ball-like appearance, was used primarily in the evaluation of source documents. The social map visually emphasises the relationships that bring concepts into similar semantic space.

Figure 2.4a Illustration of topical map view (Tagged for source, no themes)

Figure 2.4b Illustrations of social map view (Tagged for source, no themes)

2.5.3 Leximancer thematic analysis

The first step is to undertake thematic analysis (van Manen 2002a).
Semantic concept clustering or thematic analysis allows for the dynamic
exploration of the main themes present in the conversations (Baldauf & Kaplan
2010). Thematic analysis or distillation is also useful in exploring for any
structural frameworks that may exist amongst the concepts, helping, for example,
to identify if two concepts are possible subcomponents (Neill, Burford & Sinha
2011) of a broader theme, construct or metaconcept.

Semantic relationships, if present in the data, are revealed in changing
theme patterns present in the conceptual space as the analyst moves the focus
from 100% to progressively more focused views. The themes present are captured
manually in a table, listing the presence of a concept at each focus (%) where the
map picture changes – either a new theme circle emerges or themes rearrange

themselves to include new concepts within an existing theme circle – thus disaggregating or coalescing the concepts within (see Chapter 3, Table 3.2). The next step is the development of meaning from exploration of interrelationships among concepts put into the context of the original texts.

2.5.4 Leximancer concept analysis

Automated content analysis looks at both the semantic and relational underpinnings of the respondent conversations (Smith & Humphreys 2006). This form of content analysis is not a simple word count (Krippendorf 2004); rather, it is the reflection of patterns of words travelling together in texts, words that tend to co-exist in text segments more often than not. Leximancer produces consistent response patterns in this automated process (Rooney 2005; Leximancer 2010).

> The most advanced software packages put singular word definitions, or their nomos-meanings, in a logical relation to a specific context (semantic field) by relating individual meanings of neighbouring words to meaningful clusters. (Hansson et al. 2010, p. 287)[9]

Analysis of the concepts developed by Leximancer - individually, in pairs, and through semantic linkage pathways – affords the opportunity to develop a deep understanding of the data (Grimbeek 2010). Co-occurrences, similar to correlation analysis where two or more concepts are associated with the same original text chunk or segment, help to identify and explicate the relative positioning of concepts on the map. Source material is 'associated' with a 'concept' rather than 'coded', as in other forms of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDAS) such as NVivo (Pakenham, Tilling & Cretchley 2012). Thus the researcher can review the original data free from any prior labelling of a text section or chunk.

Chunks of original text can be associated with more than one of the developed concepts. For example, here is a text excerpt that includes words in bold that are associated with the concepts of 'learn', 'lecture', 'read' and 'study'; these concepts are spread across the *people, class* and *lecture* themes (see Figure 3.4):

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[9] *nomos*-meaning of words, *logos*- or background meaning

> With **lecture**s I find that I only **learn** a lot if I **study** beforehand, or if I **read** about the topic and then that would help me a lot more. But then sometimes I'm a bit lazy to do that (BMM).

The fact that in this analytic text chunk four concepts have occurred together will increase the level of interconnectedness found between these machine-developed concepts, influencing the final positioning of these concepts and their enclosing theme circles on the map. The more these words are found together in successive text chunks, the greater the probability that they will become part of a concept's lexicon (thesaurus) and that separate concepts will come under one theme circle (such as 'lecture' and 'read' being grouped in the *lecture* theme).

Interrelationships involving more than two concepts are also explored with the Pathway facility through the Query function, aiding in the exploration of both direct and indirect or latent relationships. The knowledge pathway shows the linking logic of one concept to other concepts through thematic space (Previte & Fry 2009; Jones et al. 2010), even if in the co-occurrence data they do not appear to be associated. For example, an excerpt that includes 'care', 'students' and 'lecturers':

> Yeah they should **care**. It's not always about the **students'** fault sometimes it's about the **lecturers** not delivering it properly and make the **student** confused all the time yeah (AOF).

Such pathway analysis was used to identify the ways that respondents connected to specific concepts, for example to 'care' (see Chapter 3: Figure 3.8). Respondent's individual conversations can also be characterised by exploring source documents in relation to the overall conversations.

2.5.5 Source document analysis

Leximancer profiling of the data documents characterises the individual interviews in terms of the concepts found across the cohort. Respondents will use their own words to talk about their experiences. To explore the individual conversations, maps can be produced to represent profiling projects, where the central *theme* circles capture the 'concepts' that are common and peripheral *theme* circles contain those concepts peculiar to the subgroup's source texts (Darcy & Pegg 2011; Grace, Weaven & Ross 2010; Rooney, McKenna & Barker 2011;

Weaven, Frazer & Giddings 2010). By applying file tags in the pre-processing stage of the Leximancer project, the file itself becomes a concept, and the co-occurrences of this tag with each found concept can reveal the likelihood (conditional probability) of that concept being associated with the particular interview. Social maps are the best format for exploring source documents (Baldauf & Kaplan 2010). The social map (see Chapter 3: Figure 3.8) shows the immediate links of each source document to the concepts in the central area of the map. The co-occurrences can be explored and tabulated to provide a snapshot for each interview. See Chapter 3: Table 3.5 for a sample of these respondent profiles.

Additional respondent analysis was carried out on individual interviews. Selected transcripts were reread and the audio revisited to ensure that nuances were captured. Rereading the transcript gives a sense of the whole. This deep reading is an integral part of both analysis and interpretation. Segments that either explicitly or implicitly reveal expressions of care are identified. These latent or manifest segments revealing aspects of the phenomenon are called meaning units (Baker, Wuest & Stern 1992). Drawing on the capacity of the software to give order to data interrogation helped to manage the interpretive process (Dey 1993). More importantly, utilising relatively researcher-independent software analysis reveals interesting findings that might otherwise be missed, such as the relative isolation of 'support' as a topic of conversation (see Chapter 3: Table 3.4).

2.6 Interpretation

Leximancer provides a consistent, reliable and efficient automated approach, supporting interpretation of meaning by identifying semantic patterns in the text (Indulska, Hovroka & Recker 2012).

> Leximancer is a mysterious and productive interpreter of the data; first because some results appear out of the blue and second because the output is inspiring. (Hansson, Carey & Kjartansson 2010, p. 290)

The researcher translates these found patterns in a way that captures the intended meaning of the speaker (McKenna & Waddell 2006). Leximancer can, moreover, help clarify the text by abstract meaning grounded in the respondent's language. The software makes the various ways respondents express similar ideas more

accessible for interpretation, revealing relationships not immediately obvious to the researcher. The ability to fluidly move from output, to transcript, to original data and back opens interpretation to the possibilities of developing deep meaning iteratively from within the data.

Interpretation is more difficult to describe than analysis since it is intuitive, subjective and contextual in nature. Interpretation can by a synonym for analysis, but more appropriately refers to the development of understanding. It is the interplay between analysis and interpretation in a particular study context that ultimately leads to the construction of meaning, "distilled through an iterative, inferential process" (Faranda & Clarke 2004, p. 273). Explanatory meaning can be as simple as describing, or as complex as conceptualising or theorising (Elo & Kyngäs 2008; Grbich 2007). Meaning, in this instance for differing conceptions of care, will be drawn from an iterative examination of the data – from transcriptions, lexical analysis and the audio capture of the interviews (Goodfellow 1998; van Manen 2007). Ultimately, understanding includes identification of, and sense-making of, the data in a manner that has relevance to those in the field.

Describing how the interpreter has developed their understanding and reassuring the reader as to the value of that interpretation is a major challenge for any researcher. Interpretation results in the translation of the data into something that has meaning or resonance to others - the refutation category of Spiggle's classification (see Table 2.4). Spiggle (1994) talks of interpretation as

> seeing or understanding some phenomenon in its own terms, grasping its essence. (p. 492)

> Interpretation occurs as a gestalt shift and represents a synthetic, holistic, and illuminating grasp of meaning, as in deciphering a code. (p. 497)

The difficulty is in assessing how well the interpretation reflects the reality of the speaker (Widdowson 2000). The process is not always evident, even to the researcher herself. The challenge is to "account for the complex interplay of linguistic and contextual factors" (McKenna & Waddell 2006, p. 6) that confound the process of interpretation. Transparency in reporting the analytical and

interpretive steps helps address a possible criticism of a lack of openness regarding how conclusions were reached in interpretive studies (Cretchley et al. 2010; Dubois & Gadde 2002; Grbich 2007). Therefore, detail is furnished here to allow the reader insight into the process of interpreting undertaken for this study.

In developing meaning that has resonance to others, this study takes account of various literatures as needed. The role of literature in qualitative research is not as clear as in conventional quantitative research (Hallberg 2010). Literature is integrated into a discussion of the findings rather than, as is more traditional, a literature review serving to identify a gap, frame or background for the research. In this study, in a similar vein to grounded theory, literature is examined once the "analytic core of categories has emerged" (Coyne & Cowley 2006, p. 513; Glaser & Strauss 1967). Exploring literature after the data gathering and analysis phases reflects an inductive approach characteristic of both phenomenology and grounded theory (Miles & Huberman 1994). Literature "becomes an aide once the patterns or categories have been identified" (Creswell 2003, p. 31). The student voice is important in building an understanding of care with as few preconceptions as possible.

Integrating the literature at the interpretation stage fostered a continual re-examination of the initial meanings derived from the semantic and relational Leximancer analysis. An emergent framework displays a successive refinement approach to developing understanding (Dubois & Gadde 2002). Sense making happened through "conversing, listening, transcribing, writing, and rewriting" (Perl 1996, p. 72; Smith & Osborn 2003). Thus the study aim of teasing out the diversity of meanings rather than strait-jacketing the interpretation within a particular paradigm was supported. During the earlier stages of the study, I looked out for relevant material that might help or ground the differing student-revealed conceptions of care and put these aside for later review during the interpretive stage (Golden-Biddle & Locke 1997). Of interest were any studies on care and caring, and any research utilising phenomenology or Leximancer in the disciplines of marketing and education. Devenish (2002, p. 1) used the term "applied phenomenology" to describe this approach to sense-making of transcripts generated from interviews. Not 'knowing' that certain forms of care may be

expected or desired in higher education allowed the student perspective to guide the direction the analysis took, giving it credence.

Interpretation is the process of translating empirical data into meaningful guidelines (Bryman & Burgess 1994; Miles & Huberman 1994) or reference points for others to 'see' the data from the same viewpoint. Interpretive description allows for the "subjectivity of experience within the commonly understood" to become clear (Thorne, Kirkham & O'Flynn-Magee 2004, p. 3). Experience is both constructed and contextual and most often expressed in words. Qualitative research generally begins and ends in words. The outcome of phenomenological research is a "*description* of the structures of consciousness of everyday experiences as experienced at first hand" (Grbich 2007, p. 86, emphasis added). The writing of the findings of this study is an act of persuasion that presents extracts and constructs from the data as reflective of elements within the student experience to reveal diverse possibilities for what care might mean.

2.7 How much trust can be put on the findings of this study? Issues of quality

This section sets out to address concerns about quality, trustworthiness and authenticity relating to the form of research adopted, and the findings in relation to the research question (Lakshminarayanan 2010; Spiggle 1994). Since this research is interpretive, positivist quality measures are not appropriate. However, as data analysis draws on a CAQDAS to scaffold the research, then certain validity and reliability claims can be made (Aloudat & Michael 2011). Both reliability and reproducibility are important in content analysis (Crofts & Bisman 2012; Hoff & Witt 2000; Kassarjian 1977). Leximancer is said to have both inter-coder reliability and stability (Cokley & McAuliffe 2011; Cretchley et al. 2010; Gephart 2004; Martin & Rice 2007; McKenna & Rooney 2005; Rooney 2005; Tsang 2011; Verreynne, Parker & Wilson 2011). Reproducibility or inter-coder reliability is demonstrated by consistency of classification of text segments, in this case by the software (Angus-Leppan, Metcalf & Benn 2010; Tan & Wee 2002). Leximancer also claims face validity, correlative validity and functional validity (Smith & Humphreys 2006). Leximancer has been successfully tested for both reproducibility, with comparisons between different (internal) Leximancer

analyses – leading to "similarity in concept network patterns" (McKenna & Waddell 2006, p.7), and correlative validity, with comparisons to other (external) analyses (Indulska, Horvorka & Recker 2012; Rooney 2005; Smith & Humphreys 2005).

A previously stated assumption is that respondents are able to open up during the interviews in a way that enables the researcher to gain insight into their experiences, and more particularly extract from those experiences the essence of what care might mean. Thus the design is based on a belief that the interviews will give open access to student experience (Silverman 2005). In very few instances, the respondents sought guidance from the interviewer as to what they should say. Having been reassured that the interviewer did not have any particular agenda, the respondents relaxed and chatted freely. Any individual reticence is absorbed in the Leximancer analysis of all 28 interviews together. Evidence in the form of quotes is checked in the context of each interview to verify that it reflects the abstracted meaning developed during interpretation of the analysis.

For evaluating interpretive research more generally, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These four aspects for judging interpretive research are themselves interdependent. Overall trustworthiness is best evaluated through the detail, clarity and sufficiency of explanations of the research processes utilised (Elo & Kyngäs 2008). Credibility in this study comes from the consistency of the output from Leximancer analyses, "mathematically limiting the human element in interpretation" (McKenna & Waddell 2006, p. 5). Leximancer analysis supports the notion of trustworthiness through dependability and consistency of the output (Chen & Bouvain 2009). The development of the interpretations follows a systematic, iterative approach with careful interleaving of results with literature. Transferability (Dey 1993) is not something that will be able to be fully evaluated in this study, but every effort will be made to provide insights that resonate with others in higher education.

Stability is found in research when little or no variance in content classification occurs over time (Tan & Wee 2002) within the process of analysis.

This is achieved in Leximancer through its consistency of extraction and conceptualization when the parameter settings are held constant (Smith & Humphreys 2006). Automated analysis provides analyst-independent output (Jones et al. 2010; Kyle, Nissen & Tett 2008). Expectation bias is negated by the algorithms that avoid 'fixating' on any particular anecdotal evidence (Ayoko & Mckenna 2006; McKenna & Waddell 2006; Smith & Humphreys 2006). Leximancer, however, is susceptible to category instability, in the sense that the length of the text units used in exploring data can lead to differently named concepts (though the underlying relationship remain similar). This is managed in this study by using consistent software settings to analyse the interview transcripts, with or without source identification.

A drawback of textual analysis of interviews could be the variation and ambiguity between sources of data, as no two conversations are the same. The speakers may be from differing cultural, educational and language groups. However, the software makers claim that Leximancer analysis is largely language independent (Leximancer 2010). It can handle poor-quality text such as "highly informal spoken language" such as "short and ungrammatical comments" (Campbell et al. 2011, p. 92), making it an ideal CAQDAS for analysis of phenomenological interview data. The software, used well, can provide support for the challenges of qualitative research (Cockcroft & Stelmaszewska 2010; Gephart 2004), as it is systematic, comprehensive and exhaustive.

An overreliance on the machine output from a CAQDAS may well miss findings that might emerge from a more traditional coding approach. The way to avoid being seduced by the "beauty of the software" (Hansson et al. 2010, p. 286) is to combine automatic and manual text analysis. In this study the researcher is involved throughout, during the transcription phase, in configuring Leximancer for specific projects, as well as in deep reading of the texts when exploring for the context of machine-extracted concepts. As an insider with 30 years of experience in both small and large group teaching, a claim for authenticity can be supported (Golden-Biddle & Locke 1993). Thus evolving researcher understanding provides a sound basis for the interpretation of both the automated Leximancer patterns and the source texts, interleaving analysis iteratively with interpretation. Conversely,

any inherent problems in relying solely on researcher coding and interpretation are minimised through the use of the software (Siemieniako, Rundle-Thiele & Urban 2010). What is important in a research outcome is that the results are 'interesting' – in other words, they make a contribution (Walsham 2006). The combination of Leximancer analysis and researcher interpretation helps to make the leap from data to 'knowing' more transparent, and thereby strengthens the trust that can be placed in these study findings.

2.8 Approach in brief

The rhythm of the research has been driven by the research question, the opportunity to gain a small window on the phenomenon through stories students related of their experiences at university, the boundaries dictated by the field and the limitations of the researcher. This is a qualitative study within a constructionist epistemology, and with an interpretive paradigm. A phenomenological interview method was used for data collection (Crotty 1988). Analysis was supported with automated textual analysis to reveal common and uncommon themes and concepts. It will be argued that the meanings of care are best defined at differing levels of focus within a student's experience, leading to the separation of the findings into institutional, relational and individual aspects (see Chapter 3 following). The method outlined above clearly reflects the process undertaken to address the research question. Theoretical issues direct aspects of the method: data collection, analysis, interpretation and writing. The inherent assumption in undertaking this study is that an understanding of care, from an undergraduate student perspective, will 'speak' to our professional lives as academics (van Manen 2007). Overall, the approach chosen allows this study to make a contribution to elucidating the plurality of possible meanings of care to students in their earlier years of higher education.

A macro view of students' experiences: Exploring where 'care' is situated
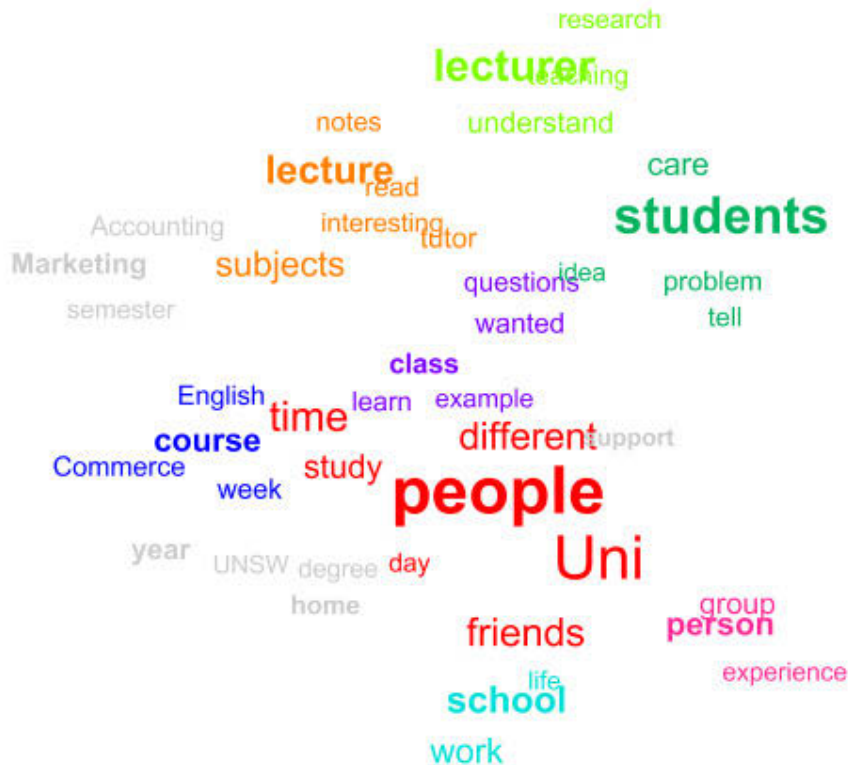
Figure 3.1 Word map of overall students' experiences: A reader-friendly simplified version of the common words found in the interviews

3.1 Introduction

The challenge was to identify and report on latent and manifest meanings of care or caring evident within the student accounts of their experiences at university as meanings of care are pluralistic, contextual and idiosyncratic, and the students' conversations ranged over many topics. The textual analysis of the students' phenomenological interviews shown as a word map (see Figure 3.1) and reported here serves as a bridge between the problematic of the plurality of care meanings and the empirical findings (Fournier 1998; Bäckström 2011). As this chapter describes, the emergent pattern of concepts and themes of their experiences from the whole-of-cohort semantic analysis frames the student conversations into three sections: institutional (the university), relational and individual (see Figures 3.2 and 3.8).
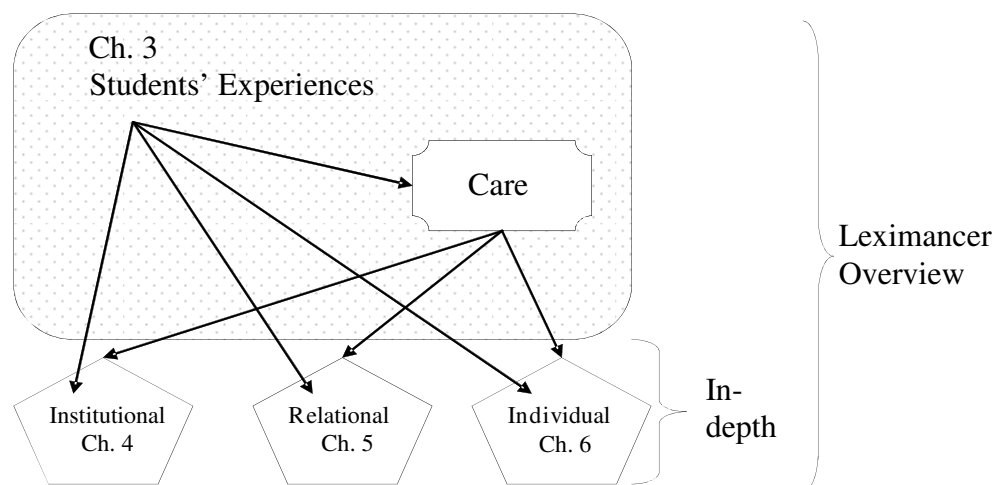
Figure 3.2 Situating 'care'

   The chapter makes visible the systematic interpretation processes underpinning the exploration for care meanings outlined in the previous chapter. The overall nature of conversational elements starts with a discussion of interview themes, followed by an investigation of the concepts associated with each theme. Leximancer map patterning and iterative exploration of respondent[10] and concept linkages locate and contextualise care meanings in the student experiences. Tables, maps and respondent quotes are used to display the various explorations. These thematic and concept expositions provide the foundation for the discussion of care within the three semantic sections.

3.2 Overall themes expressed in the student conversations

   Analysis of the whole cohort (28) of students' experiences grounds the more detailed discussion of care and caring in later chapters. Visually, the semantic patterns in these conversations are captured as themes in both map and table form (see Figures 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6, and Tables 3.1 and 3.3). Map lines or pathways show links between concepts that have strong semantic commonality. In Table 3.1 the level of connectivity across themes is listed and helps in reading the theme circles in the map. The red theme circle for *people* (intense warm colour) signifies a high level of interconnectedness (100%); concepts within the

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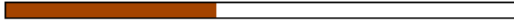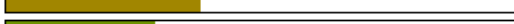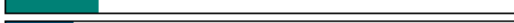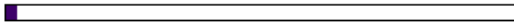
[10] Respondent file code: e.g., ABF and BCM. (i) First letter indicates a respondent from first cohort (A) or second cohort (B); second letter is a unique alphabetic code; (iii) third letter indicates male (M) or female (F). The interviewer was identified with tag INT.

people theme are connected to many other concepts. The theme circle colours grade down from the hot spectrum colours to cool spectrum colours. Themes around the outside of the map are less frequently mentioned and have a relative lack of connectedness (relevance) to other more central themes found in the conversations. Peripheral location does not indicate lesser importance in characterising the conversations, just less connection. For example, *support*, a cool purple-coloured theme, has very few interrelationships (2% connectivity) and is peripheral to other topics.

> Oh, but it's important to make it [counselling] known to the **students**. Some **support** they actually offer at **UNSW** we haven't even heard about it (ALF).

Support is an institutional issue and was a topic rarely raised by students. This observation in itself raises a lot of questions about the implementation of student welfare programmes in universities, though this was outside the scope of this study.

Table 3.1 Connectivity and relevance of themes

Theme	Connectivity	Relevance
people	100%	
lecture	41%	
students	38%	
lecturer	29%	
school	25%	
course	21%	
class	21%	
person	18%	
Marketing	13%	
year	08%	
home	06%	
support	02%	

The three most prevalent themes threading through the student conversations are *people* followed by *lecture* and *students.* The next four themes in terms of level of connectivity are *lecturer, school, course and class.*
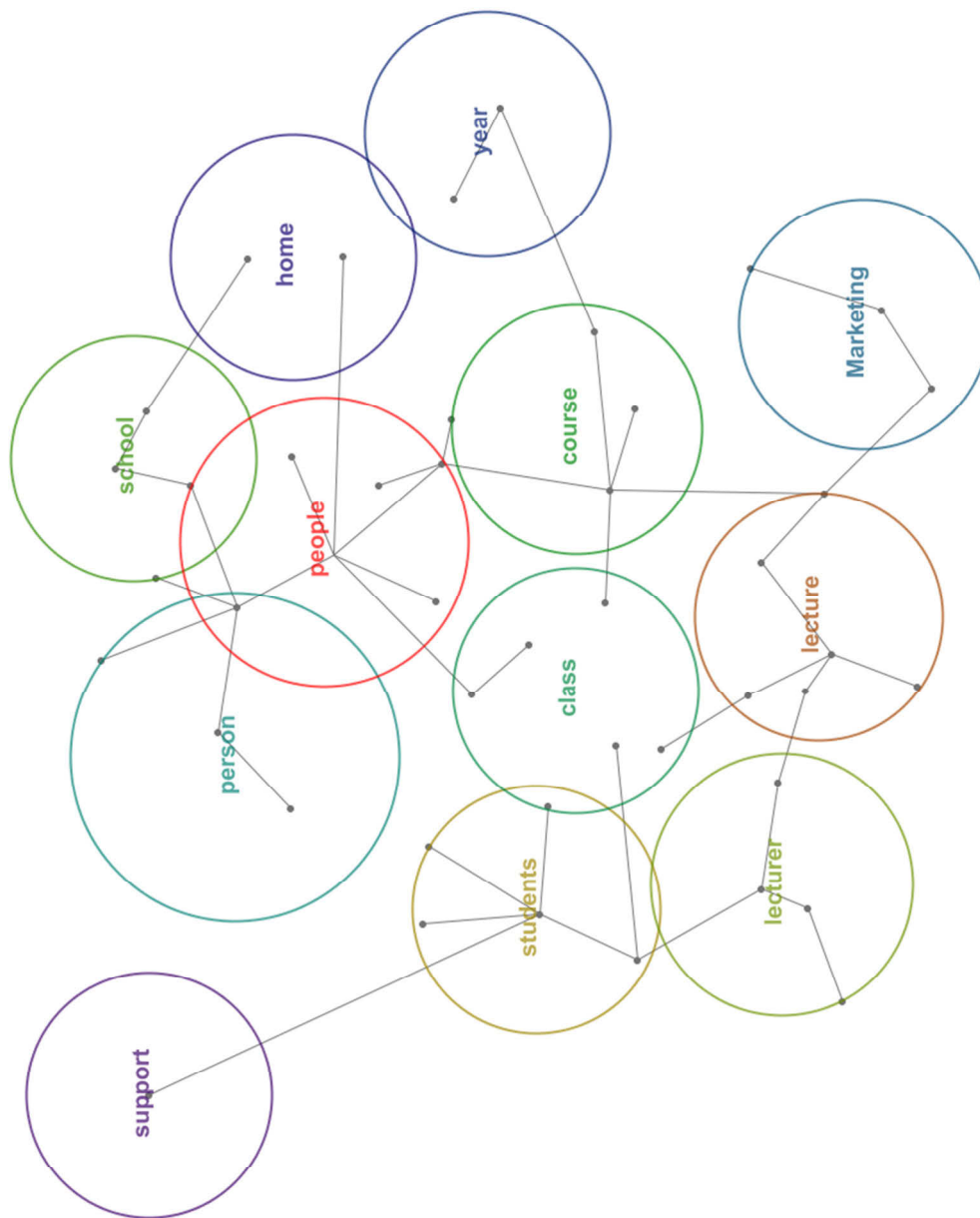
Figure 3.3 Themes from whole-of-cohort analysis

3.2.1 Exploring for thematic structure: Do themes aggregate to form a meta-theme?

To explore for any relationships in the found concepts a thematic analysis was undertaken. This clearly showed that there was little or no aggregation of concept groupings into meta-themes. Thematic analysis (Baldauf and Kaplan 2010) enables exploration for overarching themes within the conversations by

moving the map focus down from 100% towards a level where each theme captures just one or a few concepts (the default setting is 33%). As the map resolution is ratcheted down, smaller unrelated themes are revealed. The focal percentage where there is a change in the visual appearance of the map is noted, and themes present are ticked (see Table 3.2). Themes can move in and out of view. This process applied to the whole-of-cohort conversations shows that no hierarchical aggregation of themes into meta-themes exists (see Figure 3.5 and Table 3.2), indicating that a diverse range of topics was brought up by students in discussing their experiences.

Table 3.2 Pattern of theme emergence/disappearance with decreasing aggregation

Visible at % *Theme:*	100	95	87	80	72	70	68	60	50	48	47	40	39	38	37	33
people	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
support		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Marketing			✓	✓		✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
research				✓												
year					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
lecturer					✓	✓										✓
students							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
subjects								✓								
lecture									✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
home									✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
person										✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Commerce													✓			
course														✓	✓	✓
class															✓	✓
school																✓

Thematic analysis demonstrates that whilst student experience may have some common elements, it is characterised by diversity, not sameness.

3.3 Concepts developed from the whole-of-cohort student conversations

Drilling down to the concepts gives depth to the wide-ranging thematic structure of the student conversations. Each theme encloses at least one concept (dot or dots visible on the map). The concepts are labelled in Figure 3.4 and listed in Table 3.3. The top two concepts – 'people' and 'Uni' (the largest dot sizes seen in Figures 3.4 and 3.5) – belong in the most prominent theme *people*. Infrequently found concepts have smaller dots and are labelled in light (faint) type on the map.

As these concept labels are at times hard to read, a listing of the concepts developed from the conversations is provided (see Table 3.3 and Figure 3.5). The count in the table identifies the number of text segments associated with the particular developed concept; for example, 'Uni' is found in 708 different places across the conversations.
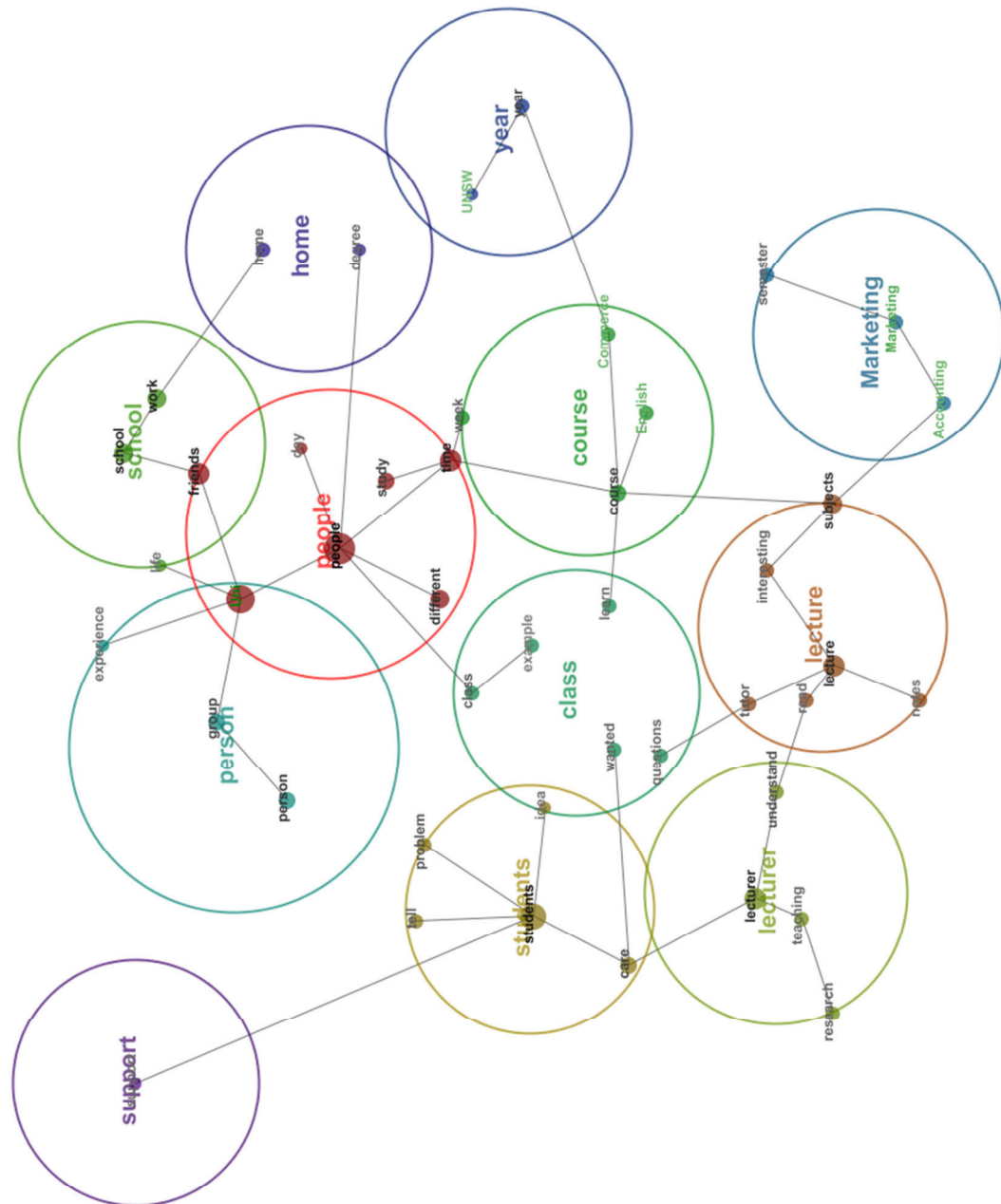
Figure 3.4 Concepts within themes capturing whole-of-cohort analysis

Forty-five concepts are developed from within the text (see Table 3.3). The most prevalent (identified by the size of the dot and the intensity of the type on the map) are 'people', 'Uni', 'students', 'time', 'lecturer', 'friends', 'school' and 'work'.

Table 3.3 Concept occurrences for whole-of-cohort analysis

Ranked Concepts Export

Name-Like	Count	Relevance	
Uni	708	97%	
Marketing	177	24%	
English	127	17%	
Accounting	116	16%	
Commerce	108	15%	
UNSW	88	12%	

Word-Like	Count	Relevance	
people	733	100%	
students	553	75%	
time	408	56%	
lecturer	406	55%	
friends	389	53%	
school	389	53%	
work	350	48%	
lecture	343	47%	
different	312	43%	
subjects	282	38%	
person	276	38%	
course	239	33%	
study	216	29%	
year	209	29%	
care	203	28%	
group	201	27%	
understand	157	21%	
problem	142	19%	
class	127	17%	
week	122	17%	
tell	122	17%	
tutor	119	16%	
research	114	16%	
home	110	15%	
semester	107	15%	
interesting	104	14%	
wanted	101	14%	
teaching	101	14%	
questions	98	13%	
read	96	13%	
learn	95	13%	
degree	95	13%	
experience	90	12%	
support	88	12%	
day	85	12%	
notes	84	11%	
life	83	11%	
idea	81	11%	
example	65	09%	

3.3.1 Whole-of-cohort concept analysis in detail

The in-depth concept analysis below explores the concepts enclosed in the various theme groupings to give a richer picture of the overall student experience. Connections between concepts may be immediate and obvious, such as between 'friends' and 'school', or quite distant, such as between 'notes' and 'friends'. An example of the latter is found in the following text chunk containing two separate though related points.

> ... I read the **lecture notes** and I go to consults. And I have some **friends**, they are in third **year** or fourth **year** in **Commerce**, so I ask them about past papers and stuff (BJF).

Table 3.4 lists the themes and their enclosed concepts (see Figure 3.4). Note the name of the theme reflects the most prevalent concept enclosed in the particular theme circle and is the first concept listed in the table. Theme names mimic the colours in Figure 3.4. 'Care' has been coloured red to identify its associations.

Table 3.4 Themes and their enclosed concepts

Theme (circle) 33%	Connectivity	Concept/s enclosed in each theme circle (listed in order of overall relevance within the whole cohort)					
people	100	people	Uni	time	friends	different	study	day
lecture	41	lecture	subjects	tutor	interesting	read	notes	
students	38	students	**care**	problem	tell	idea		
lecturer	29	lecturer	teaching	understand	research	talking		
school	25	school	work	life				
course	21	course	week	English	Commerce			
class	21	class	wanted	questions	learn	example		
person	18	person	group	experience				
Marketing	13	Marketing	Accounting	semester				
year	8	year	UNSW					
home	6	home	degree					
support	2	support						

To help gain better insight into just what a concept means and how exploring concepts can help to develop a better understanding of the underlying sentiments of the conversations in general, the three most prevalent concepts (i) 'people', (ii) 'Uni' and (iii) 'students' are discussed (see Figure 3.5 with enlarged

font). Quotes are included here to help contextualise these named concepts; linking the single word concept identifiers, '...', back to the student text chunks[11] in the data.
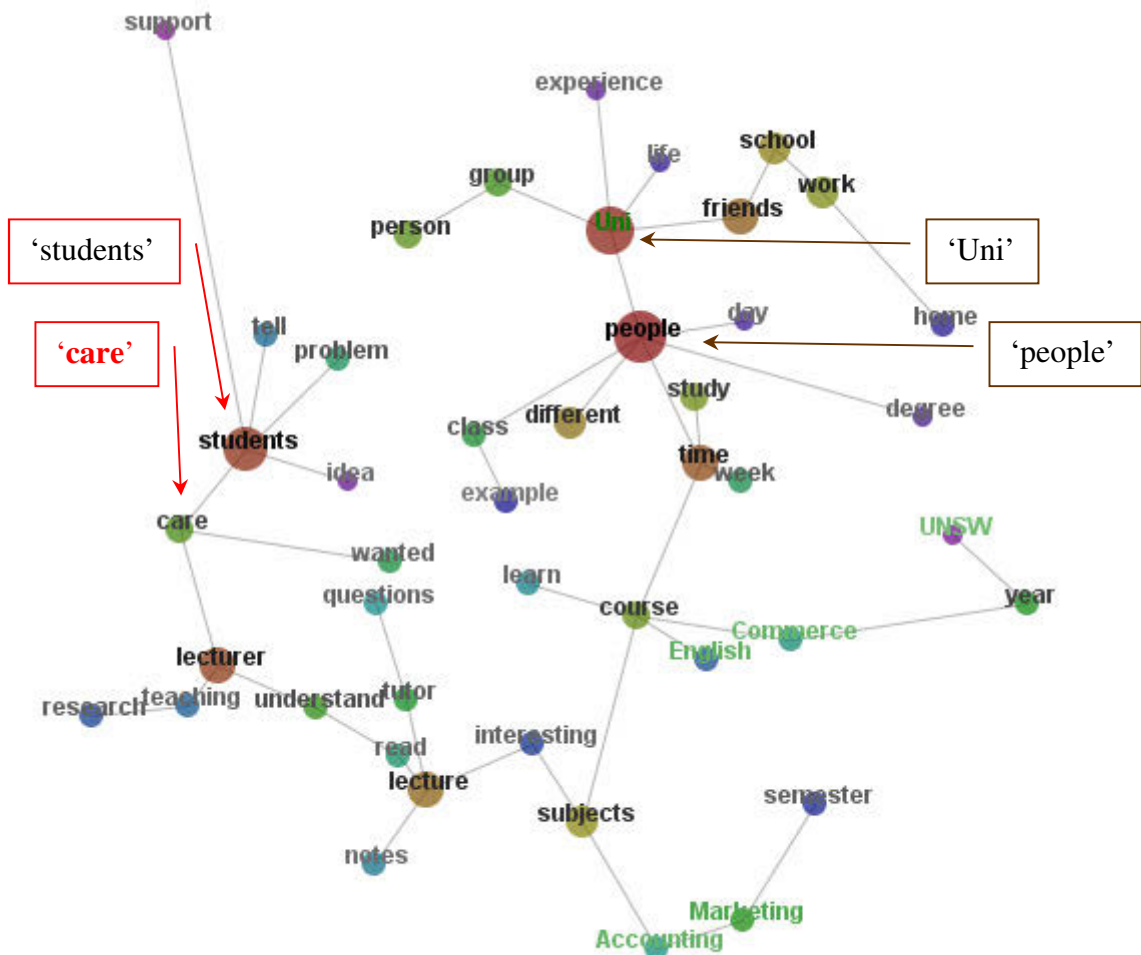
Figure 3.5 Concepts for whole-of-cohort analysis

(i) 'People' is an all-encompassing term used to talk about others in general. 'People' was directly connected to six other concepts (see Table 3.4).

It seems like **people** in my High **School** don't like to **study** (ANF).

[Friends are found in] **class**, mostly in tutorials and some in **lecture**s — but not the sort of close ones [**friends**] because you just see [them] twice a **week** and then you recognise them and the next **semester** you're still doing the same **Marketing**— "Oh, Hi you're doing this **course**?" "Yes, me too." (BLF).

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[11] Text chunks are sections of text isolated during the machine-learning phase of Leximancer and represent the basic unit for concept association.

> What I think about **Uni**? I guess it is a really good place to meet **people**, its kind-of hard though, to become close **friends** with them (BGF).

This area of the map reflects day-to-day issues of life for a student and includes comments about the nature of friendships, study and university, school and home.

(ii) The concept 'Uni' also includes university; these words are used interchangeably and often. 'Uni' closely associates with discussion around 'life', 'friends', 'people', 'experience' and 'group' (see Table 3.4).

> Because it's so hard for them to be **friends** with someone in particular at **Uni**versity because you see that **person** once, you don't see that **person** a second **time** (APF).

> Like, culturally my parents would be a bit strict on the whole going out and partying side. They get a bit uneasy when I am going out with **Uni friends** (ACF).

> Because the thing is I have my **Uni friends** and I have my girlfriend and I have my **friends** who are not at **Uni** (AGM).

> Yes, because **Uni students** are supposed to be like manage their **life** themself. ... Those **problems** I can't solve, I don't know how to deal with. I should [be] able to get someone to help me (BNF).

(iii) 'Students' associated with 'care', 'tell', 'support', 'idea' and 'problem' (see Table 3.4). Again, this was a term respondents used to speak more generally about the student experience. Some illustrative examples are provided.

> I'm guessing those kind of **students** would be looking to recapture the whole relationship they might have had with a **year** twelve kind of teacher. But in terms of the **lecturer** really **caring** about the **student** it is a bit unnecessary really (AHM).

> ... the **lecturers** are more concentrated on the s**tudents** developing themselves rather than helping the **students** (APF).

These comments relate to an academic viewpoint that university is about self-development – students taking ownership of their own learning, an ideal possibly not understood or accepted by all students.

These three prevalent concepts pointed to a pattern of linkages in the data. 'People' and 'Uni' are close together on the map in the upper right, with 'Uni' acting as the pivot for issues outside of the university: 'friends', 'group', 'school',

'work' and 'home'. 'Uni' then has a semantic link to 'people'. 'People' draws in parts of the conversations that deal with 'class', 'study', 'time', 'day' and 'week'. Through 'time' there is a single pathway to 'course'. This effectively isolates the top section of the map (see Figure 3.6) to discussion of an individual's relationships external to university – students' 'other lives'.

'Students', on the left of the map, connects through to 'lecture' and then on to 'lecturer'. These conversational elements focus on relational aspects of the student's academic life: 'teaching', 'understand', 'tutor', 'questions' and 'notes'. Once again a single pathway links 'lecture' to 'subjects' through 'interesting'. 'Subjects' and 'course', on the lower right (see Figure 3.6), are picking up relatively infrequently labelled concepts that relate to broader concepts at a university or institutional level, identifying specific academic subjects they might be taking, their degree and the university itself. Superimposed lines separate these semantic aggregates into zones or sections (section labels have been added for clarity).
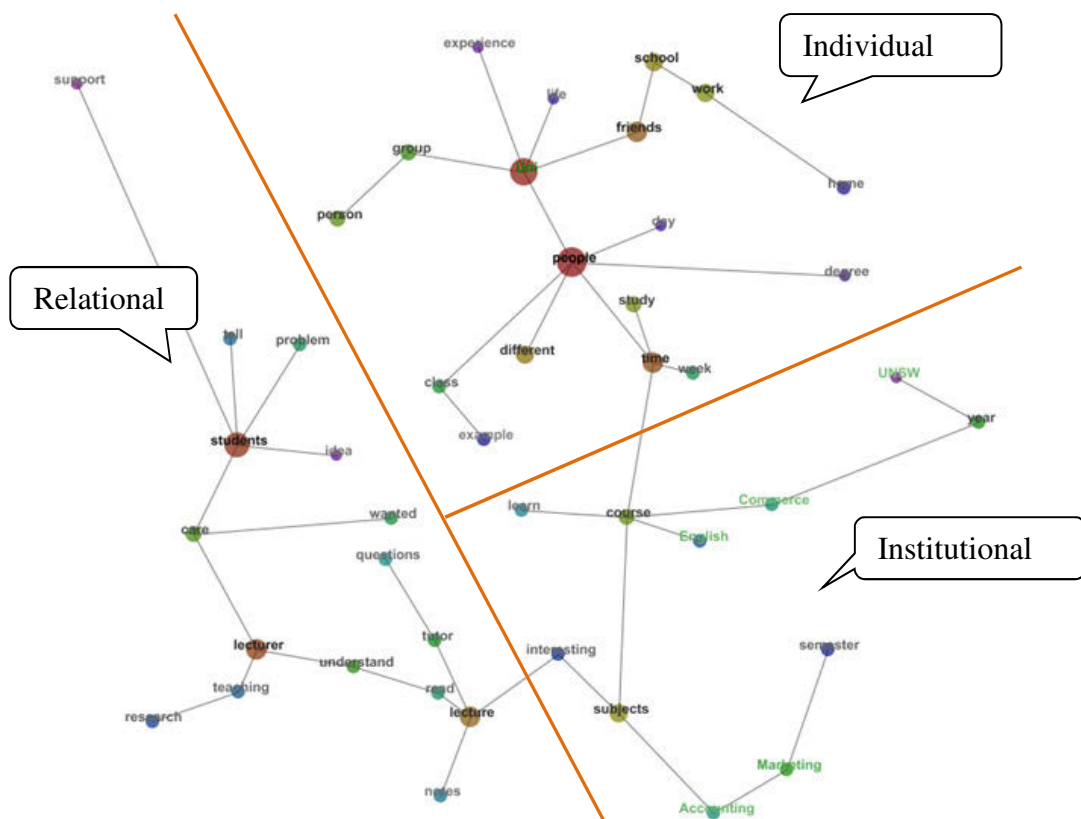
Figure 3.6 Concepts with three conversational zones delineated

The three conversational groupings identified from the Leximancer analyses frame the upcoming findings chapters. The findings Chapter 4 begins with a discussion of the university or institution tasked with setting the strategic and contextual nature of the overall student experience. Less empirical evidence (fewer and fainter concepts) can be found in the institutional zone. Chapter 5 provides a narrower relational examination of the 'in-university' student experience grounded by what students said and based, in part, on customer relationship management literature examining exchange relationships between students and staff (Payne & Frow 2005). Chapter 6 addresses the top right zone of Figure 3.6 with discussion of the individual student's 'other lives'.

Thus the findings chapters frame the location of care meanings in the higher education experience moving from the macro or institutional arena, through to meanings of care in relationships at the level of individuals, both within and outside the university. Discussion in the findings chapters, whilst framed around the three broad conversational sections above, relies heavily on more traditional reading and rereading to develop a depth and richness to the interpretation of care meanings.

3.3.2 Exploring individual respondent conversations

Given the open-ended nature of the interviews, any one individual student's conversation about their experience of university is likely to be very different from their fellow students' experiences. This supposition is born out in a Leximancer analysis in which the source documents are tagged during the preparation phase (Smith & Humphreys 2006). Source document analysis is reported in a social network as well as a table displaying a sample of the respondents' patterns of concepts (see Figure 3.7 and Table 3.5). The social network mode arranges source files around the periphery, which imposes another structural layer to the analysis, altering the patterning from the more usual topical map. No longer is it just the semantic patterns across all conversations; it is also the pattern within each conversation compared to the pattern across the conversations. Adding this analysis gives the researcher another way to drill down into an individual's comments.

Though some clustering of respondents is noted, such as the respondents linked to 'school' and 'lecturer' (see Figure 3.7, dashed lines added), no consistent pattern can be detected once the individual student stories are reviewed as a wide range of concepts are associated with any one respondent..
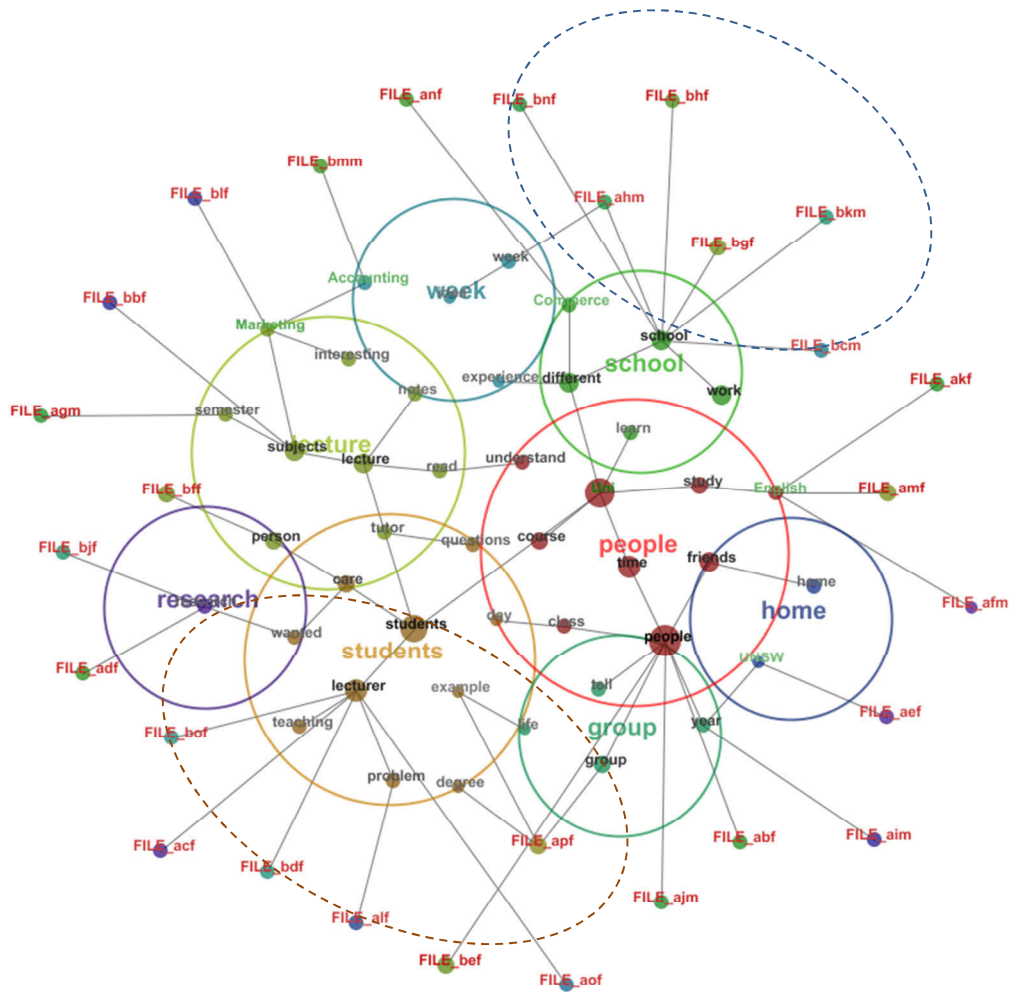
Figure 3.7 Respondents tagged in a social map linking file sources to concepts

No obvious semantic patterns of association between a particular respondent and the range of found concepts can be detected, supporting the wide ranging nature of student experience (see Table 3.5).

Table 3.5 Respondents associated with the overall conversational elements [12]

Concepts (decreasing order)	Source code											
	BEF	AM F	BH F	AG M	AKF	BG F	AN F	BM M	BN F	BFF	AJ M	APF
Respondent Relevance %	67%	65%	63%	60%	59%	58%	58%	52%	52%	49%	47%	47%
people	8	5	5			7				5		6
University (Uni)	5	6	6			5	6			7	5	7
student(s)	5	8			5				6	7		7
lecturer		7			5	5				6		10
High School (school)		5	6				6		5			7
time	6	6				7		5		7	6	
work		5	6	5		6		5	6		5	6
lecture	5	5				9				5	7	
friends		6	5					6	7			7
different		5	6			8	5	5		10		
group	6					8						5
person	7	6	7	6							5	6
subject	5		5	6	6		7					5
course	13		6				5	6				8
study		6			7	5		7		8		
year	7				5	9					7	
care	8	9	8	1	3	5	6	6	4	6	7	4
Marketing		7	5	6		8	5	6		6		7
understand	9	7			8	7	5		7			7
problem		5			5					7		8
class	6	5		6		6		9				
English		9			9				5	7		
tell		7		6	7	7		7				7
week				7		9	5	13				
tutor		8			6	11		5		8		
Accounting	6	5	5			9		13	7	5		
research	9			8	5			9				
Commerce	6	6	5			6	16		8	6		
home	6	6				7		5	6			
semester			5	15		7		7		7	7	
interesting	7	8			10	6	6	7		6		8
wanted	7		8				5					7
teaching	8			7							5	5
questions	7	10			5		9				6	5
read				8				5	5		9	6
learn		6			10	12		6		6		13
degree	6											14
UNSW					5		9			8	5	
experience				6		6			11			8
day	9			5		11					5	
notes		8			7	6					5	
life		5		10	7				5	7		9
idea		10		10		9				9		
example				5					5	8		50
Concepts/respondent (>5%)	23	29	15	18	17	27	14	19	14	22	14	26

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[12] 12 of 28 respondents. For ease of reading, only concept occurrences greater than 5% are noted, except for care (in red), where all percentages are included. Shading used to highlight cells with 10% or more relevance.

3.4 Locating care within the student experience

Exploration for care meanings is based on locating the 'care' concept in the text segments, then tracking back to the transcripts and reading the passages in context. The main text words included in the 'care' lexicon[13] are care, concern, nurture, childhood, income, inherent, and meanings. These words, commonly found in the text segments coded as 'care', by themselves are not sufficient to give definition to the meaning of care expressed in the student conversations, but they do represent a start, guiding more in-depth exploration. There are 203 text segments (see Table 3.3) that are associated with 'care'.

A few students, unprompted, mentioned the words care or caring. An example was ABF, who stated the following within the first few minutes of the interview:

> They [lecturers] don't really **care;** if you don't do the **work** it is your own fault (ABF).

Some respondent conversations were targeted for deep reading as they are coded with more references to 'care' than others (see Table 3.6).

Table 3.6 Respondents for whom 'care' was associated more than expected

Source code	Overall conversational relevance (%)	'Care' (%)	Prominence score[*]
BEF	67	8	1.5
BHF	63	8	1.3
ANF	58	6	1.1
BMM	52	6	1.4
BFF	49	6	1.5
AJM	47	7	1.7
BBF	42	3	2.3
BLF	41	4	1.8

* The prominence score is based on Bayes factor. The score indicates a probability > 1.0 of this respondent source containing care as a concept.

Exploration of co-occurrences of concepts – two concepts occurring in the same text segment – deepens the analysis. Connections to 'care' are listed in Table 3.7. These linkages are a starting point for exploration of the transcripts in a systematic, iterative manner. The occurrences indicate the number of text chunks

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[13] The Leximancer lexicon or thesaurus lists the text words that are more likely to be found close to the concept name in the student conversations.

associated with the concept. The most frequently occurring concept, 'people', is scored as 100% and all percentages are relative to this number; for example, 'students' is 75%. Only those linking to care are included.

Table 3.7 Themes, concepts, occurrences, connectivity and 'care'-related concepts

Theme (33%)	Concepts in descending order	Occurrences-Connectivity relevance (%)	Direct related concepts[*]	No. of links
people	'people'	733 -100%	'class', 'different', 'time', 'degree', 'Uni', 'day'	6
students	'students'	553 -75%	'care', 'tell', 'support', 'idea', 'problem'	5
lecturer	'lecturer'	406 -55%	'care', 'teaching', 'understand'	3
students	'care'	202 -28%	'wanted', 'students', 'lecturer'	3
class	'wanted'	101-14%	'care'	1

* In decreasing order of likelihood (linked by lines; see Figure 3.4 map).

The concept 'care' (see Table 3.7) is directly linked in differing degrees to three other concepts: 'students', 'lecturer' and 'wanted'. The most obvious of these pathways identifies care in the context of 'students' 'wanting' 'lecturers' to 'care'. From the social map it is possible to identify how a respondent's conversation travels through the semantic space to particular concepts.

The connection between the source documents and 'care' is mediated through different pathways (Figure 3.8). On reviewing the pathways shown with red arrows superimposed on the map, three conversational threads can be detected between source documents and 'care'. The first is a direct link, while the second highlights difference to school, and the third the need for care from academics.

(i) Direct link (e.g., BFF on the left side of the map).

> All they **care** about is just giving you the information they need
> to, because they have to. And that's about it. They don't really
> **care** how much you **understand** or not (BFF).

(ii) Link through 'subjects'/'lecture'; 'care' 'different' from 'school' (e.g., BHF, BGF and BMM top right).

> I think what they mean, like when you told about the **care** thing.
> Sometimes in **lecture**s the **lecturer**s are just there to do the, like
> you know, they just want to get it over and done with (BGF).

If they are passionate about what they are **teaching**, and it shows.
If they know what they are talking about it shows that they do
care about their **teaching** and that kind-of thing (BHF).

(iii) Link through 'students' and 'lecturer' needs to 'care' (e.g., AJM, AMF, BEF
on bottom right).

I think we want the **teacher** to **care** about how we're coping with
the **study** (AMF).

They just want to teach what is on the board. And yeah, but I
mean, at the same **time**, I don't think **student**s expect them to
care that intensely because there is so many of you [**students**]
(BEF).
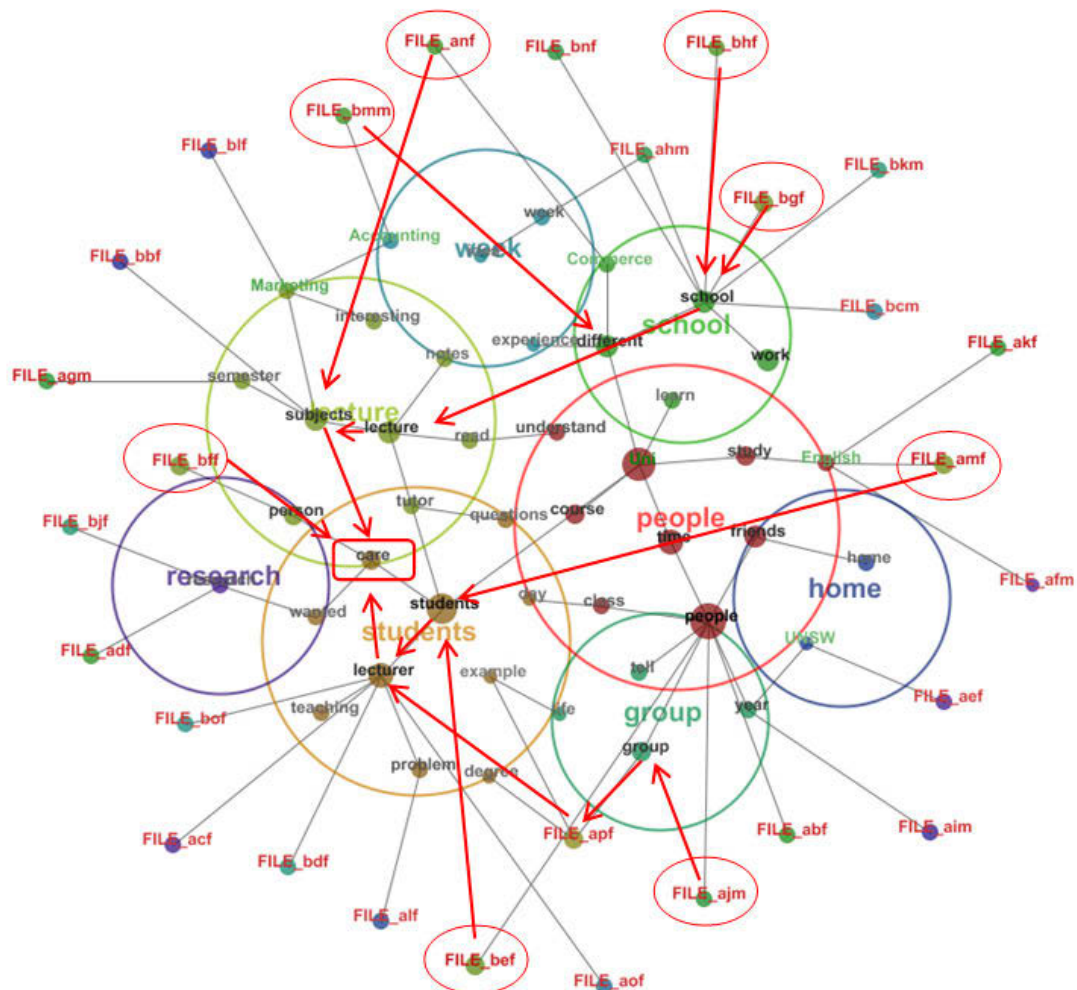
**Figure 3.8 Pathways linking source documents and 'care': Interview files
located around the periphery of the map and lines added to show how
respondents conversations linked to care.**

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3.5 Students' experience in sum

The student conversations about their experiences at university have been explored revealing the plurality of the student experience. Students' topics of conversation range from their choice of course and university and their attendance (or not) at lectures through to the types of extracurricular activities they tap into, both within and outside the university. A sense of the overall pattern emerged based on the automated Leximancer analysis of the whole-of-cohort data. Further iterative exploration helped tease out the nuances of the meanings of care. Care (in any of its possible guises) was seldom explicitly mentioned by the respondents. Three locations for reporting the in-depth exploration of the various meanings of care are identified from the semantic pattern of the data: within the institution, within the learning environment relationships and within aspects idiosyncratic to each student. These differing levels of focus support the analysis of manifest, as well as other less overt, expressions of care – helping to define the 'slippery' notion of care in the context of higher education.

Chapter 4
Institutional possibilities and expectations of care in higher education

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on an exposition of the meaning of care at the university level; exploring the opportunities for, and expectations of, care. Discussion starts with the university, as each higher education institution is responsible for shaping the nature of, and possibilities for, care in their institution. University management has strategic oversight of the educational services provided. The present study highlights the pivotal role the university plays in the student experience. The site of the study is the University of New South Wales (UNSW),[14] a large, research-intense G08 Australian university and an early Unitech that now rivals in reputation the Australian Sandstone universities (Brown & Mazzarol 2009). Institutions such as these have been described as "academically rigorous, prestigious, elite, traditional and theoretical" (Shah & Nair 2010, p. 12). What will be shown is that while there are relatively few student comments that semantically link to the institution, the university plays an important role in determining the possibilities for care that students might experience.

Even though institutional care-related issues are largely latent in the respondent conversations, it is argued here that care in teaching should, and still does, exist, despite the strong emphasis on research in this GO8 university. To locate discussion of institutional issues within the semantic structure of the overall student conversations, this and the following two chapters will each begin with an exploration of the themes identified in the relevant map section (see Figure 4.1). To support the discussion, issues include: the nature of higher education institutions, relevant views on education and institutional influences on delivery of educational services.

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[14] UniTech: formally, an institute of technology created as an applied research and technology centre. Sandstone: older, more prestigious research-intensive institution (Brown & Mazzarol 2009). GO8: Group of Eight Australia, made up of top research universities in Australia (http://www.go8.edu.au/). The University of New South Wales has approximately 50,000 of the highest-performing local students, as well as international students from over 120 countries.

4.2 Student conversations associated with the university

The student conversations are semantically delineated into three map sections (see Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2). The focus of this chapter is the area to the lower right, labelled Institutional, enclosing comments about subjects and courses. As indicated by the small dot sizes and paleness of the concepts found in this section, relatively few comments are associated with this semantic space. The 'course' concept links to 'Commerce' and 'year' (to the right of Figures 4.1 & 4.2). Commerce is the name of the degree that most of the respondents are enrolled in; then the semantic link moves through to 'UNSW,' the higher education institution where this research is undertaken. The names of two of the common first year subjects, 'Accounting' and 'Marketing', connect 'semester' to the more general term of 'subjects'. The concept 'interesting' then links 'subjects' through to the 'lecture' concept that will be discussed in depth in Chapter 5.
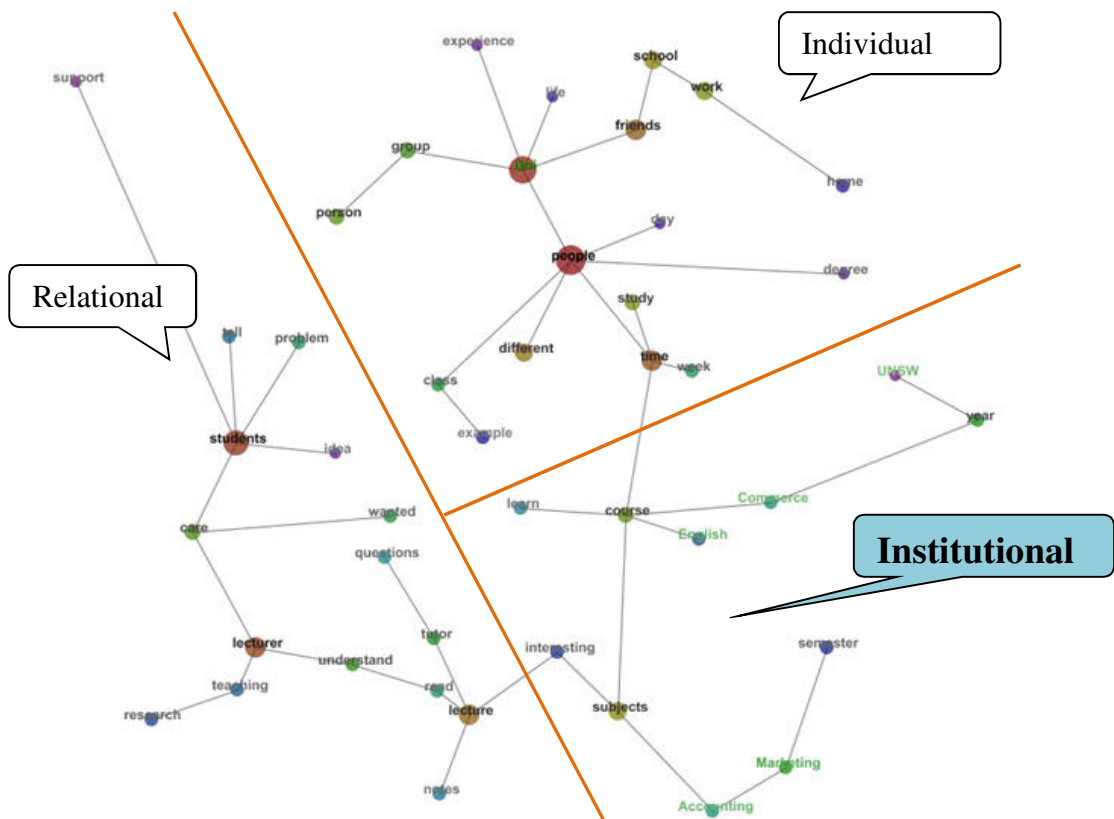
Figure 4.1 Concept map from whole-of-cohort analysis (also Figure 3.8**)**

The institution plays a pivotal role in contextualising student experiences. The lack of direct pathways linking the relational and individual concepts (see

Figure 4.1) emphasises the role of institutions in grounding the student conversations. 'Course' is the point of connection of the Institutional section to 'time' in the Individual section (upper right), whilst 'interesting' connects Institutional concepts through to 'lecture' in the Relational section (see Figure 4.2).
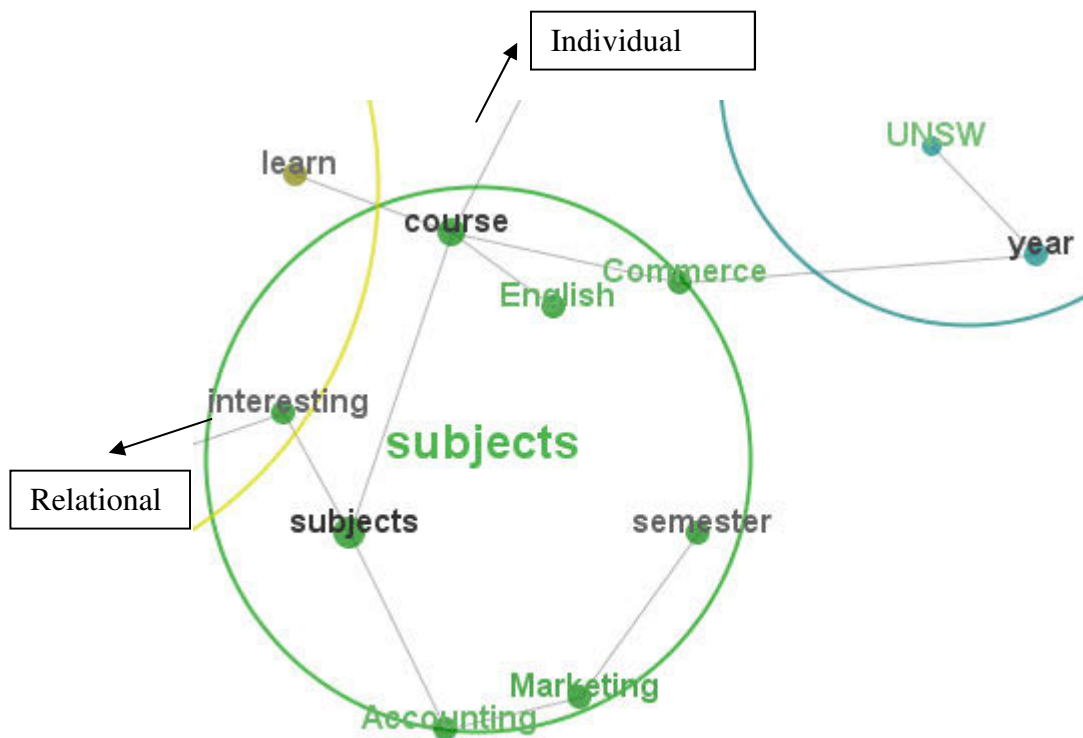
Figure 4.2 Focused section of whole-of-cohort map identified as institutional

Few student comments semantically associate 'care' with the concepts in the Institutional section (see Table 4.1). This differs from the conversations in the Relational and Individual sections, where the concept of 'care' is more frequently found. 'Care' is multiply associated with between 10 and 12 conversational concepts in the Relational and Individual sections (see Tables 5.1 & 6.1). The lack of mention of care and caring, with just three in the Institutional section, signals a distance between the individual student and the institution. Students are less aware of the broader role of the university in providing for their educational experience and more aware of the roles of those they interact with regularly – tutors, teachers and student administrators.

Table 4.1 'Care'-associated concepts and source respondents

'Care' and '...' (from the list below)	Count of text snippets	Likelihood of co-occurrence with 'care'	Expressed sentiment/s	Respondent code[*]
'subjects'	17	6%	Lecturers not caring just giving information about subjects	ACF; ANF
'course'	5	2%	Not worried if you fail the course	AJM; BEF: BHF; BMM
'English'	3	2%	-	INT
'Commerce'	1	1%	-	INT
'learn'	1	1%	More likely to learn if your name if see them more often	BMM
'year'	1	<1%	-	INT

* Respondent file code: e.g., ABF and BCM. (i) First letter indicates a respondent from first cohort (A) or second cohort (B); second letter is a unique alphabetic code; (iii) third letter indicates male (M) or female (F). The interviewer was identified with tag INT.

The institution of the university is at the core of the student experience. From the semantic patterning of the conversations in this study, the institution is clearly fundamental in connecting experiences within the university to influences external to the institution. Yet little in the student conversations can be used to interpret what students may expect or want the institution to care about.

Letting the students steer the open-ended interview negated direct exploration of specific literature-identified care issues. Therefore, after reporting on what students have said, relevant literature is introduced to help explore the 'absences' in the student conversations. Issues such as context, the nature of higher education institutions, the measurement of educational service quality, institution-related aspects of teaching, students as 'consumers', student satisfaction and 'duty of care' are addressed.

4.3 What students said

An overall sentiment expressed by students was that the university was unlikely to care for an individual student. However, some students voiced the opinion that the university should care for the quality and the future value of the education they delivered.

> I would like the **Uni** to **care** for me but I'm not sure it's capable just because there's so much **students** for them to **care** for. Is it possible

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for them to develop a system to do that? ... We kind of depend on the University to sort of set our future path (APF).[15]

In the respondent's eyes, care for the individual was impossible because of the sheer number of students.

Despite an apparent gap between the university and the individual student, the university wants students to develop an attachment to their university, a "psychological closeness" (Bowden & Wood 2011, p. 133) that would mean graduates become active alumni who champion their alma mater with positive word of mouth. Word of mouth is valued by institutions as an important factor in influencing student choice of course and university (Shah & Nair 2010).

> So somehow Sydney **Uni**versity has more reputation than **UNSW** because they [international students] have no idea what is **UNSW**. But if you look at it more deeply and then decide what you're going to **study** you easily find that **UNSW** has a really good reputation in the Business Faculty area or Computer Science, and Sydney **Uni**versity has other reputations with Law or Arts kind of stuff (BFF).

This quote highlights views of two competing universities. Several other respondents chose their university on the recommendation of family and friends who had studied at UNSW, demonstrating the impact of positive experiences.

> My dad came from **UNSW** actually. A lot of my family is from **UNSW**, yeah. We all want to **study** in Australia so they were saying that I don't really have much of a choice (BCM).

For other students, the choice of university was influenced by the availability of certain programmes, work experience, internships opportunities and scholarships. An example of an elite student opportunity is the COOP[16] scholarship program. One recipient comments that the advantage in terms of future employment of being a COOP scholar is that

> [a] lot of **University students** that graduate, undergraduate[s] are lacking in the **experience** they don't have formal corporate training. And that's why it's so important, for **example** when you hand in your resume. **People** ask you "have you had previous work **experience**?"

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[15] Bold denotes a Leximancer generated 'concept' name; italics identify theme names.
[16] The UNSW Co-op Program is an industry-linked scholarship program providing industry training and professional and leadership development to selected undergraduates in Business, Engineering, Science and the Built Environment. (See http://www.coop.unsw.edu.au/index.html; accessed June 2012.)

> Just because I guess for companies they feel more safe employing **people** that do have **experience** and then there'll be less training involved for them. So it proves to be an advantage (APF).

For such students, a very small minority of the undergraduate cohort, it can be argued that they are privileged, with access to a different educational experience than most students, and in receipt of higher levels of institutional care.

For a research-intense university, it was interesting to note that respondents made little or no mention of an expectation for their teachers to be eminent researchers. Students did not report choosing their university on the basis of research renown. Nor did they readily link the value of an academic's research to their own university experience unless it helped provide current relevant examples (Hill, Lomas & MacGregor 2003). Rather, they value a teacher's ability to clearly explain the material the student is expected to learn, as opposed to just reiterating a textbook.

> [If] he or she is good at explaining and introducing new content and information. Then I'm satisfied (BBF).

> If that [research] helps to let them give us more information that would help (BNF).

Yet the case can be made for a strong nexus between research and teaching, the two core elements of an academic's role (Brew 2010). Certainly, up-to-date research-based course material that goes beyond any standard textbook is appreciated by students.

The student expectation is that the lecturer cares about their subject, irrespective of whether they are top researchers. If the students think the lecturer does not care about their subject, then this is very likely to lead to poorer perceptions of the learning experience.

> If they don't **care** they are just going to give information and not really worry if you are going to **understand** it or not. ... if they actually **care** about their **subjects** they give a bit more thought (ACF).

Students also want, though do not always expect, the lecturer to care that they pass the course. Some students perceive that the lecturer is not too concerned if an individual student fails, reflecting the nature of higher education pedagogy (Hawk

& Lyons 2008), in which it is the responsibility of the individual to manage their own learning.

> I said like in terms of **caring** it doesn't bother them if you fail ... They don't **care** how well you do. They will rock up and say generally thirty percent of **people** in this **course** fail (AJM).

In part, this attitude of student self-management of learning relates to the entry requirements for university, where a high level of attainment in past academic performance is required to be accepted into a course, particularly at an Australian G08 institution. Therefore, the implicit assumption on the part of the institution is that students already know how to learn and perform in an academic environment – that is, students are capable of passing as long as they themselves put in the effort.

Students in the main are aware of the research focus of UNSW when making their choice to enrol. Students have little expectation of significant instructional or educational support at university (Shah & Nair 2010). Should they fail, that has been their own (un)doing. As previously noted, the increasing diversification of the student cohort is challenging this assumption. As entry requirements broaden, more students are attending university without a high level of requisite skills or with specific disabilities requiring additional support (Benson et al. 2009), support that may not be readily available in an increasingly performance- and efficiency-based model of higher education.

Students can expect that the teaching environment is conducive to learning. Physical facilities provided by the institution include a library, computers and learning management systems, among others. Small lecture groups and useful course materials along with clearer communication were noted by respondents as desirable.

> I'd like have more frequent **lectures,** but less **people** in each **lecture** because that way you can do more, ask more **questions**, you are more comfortable to ask more **questions**. Also I would like the **course** material to be a lot more specific. For example, everything set up in a way that's more easier to communicate. The main themes, the main ideas, not just everything bunched up together where you have to figure out which one's the main bit, which one's not. If you just have

> it clear and simple, as in what is the main objective of this **class**, this is what we want, this is what you need to know, this is the important bit. So it's easier for the **student**s to focus and revise in the end. Rather than the **lecturer** go through this whole thing and then reflect back, so is this important or is this not important? Because you don't see the relevance, and there's bits and pieces scattered everywhere. I guess more focused **course** material and easier revision in the end, because the objective for everyone is to pass the **course** (APF).

The university is expected to provide a physical and social environment that will create a positive learning environment and afford opportunities for quality education (Fitzmaurice 2008). The physical and social fabric is underpinned by a strong university image and reputation, a university brand that attracts high-performing students as well as research funding. If all these factors meet student expectations, then services theory would suggest that students will be satisfied (Lovelock & Wirtz 2010), further helping to build the brand strength of the university.

4.3.1 Satisfaction as an outcome of expectations being met

Student satisfaction is linked to expectations (Duarte, Raposo & Alves 2012; Lovelock & Wirtz 2010; Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion 2009). Managing the balance between student expectations and experience to generate post-graduation satisfaction is important to an higher education institution, as at the time of this study government funding was linked to satisfaction (Shah, Lewis & Fitzgerald 2011). Satisfaction represents a complex interlinking of prior knowledge and actual interactive performance within study encounters (Clewes 2003; Nicolescu 2009). An individual student's expectations of university are shaped by 'imported' pre-university experience, 'externally' mediated current lifestyle choices and 'internally generated' personal engagement factors in their lives (Brennan & Osborne 2008). Whether the university experience then lives up to expectations will depend both on how students go about engaging with their studies and on how that service is delivered by "service staff (lecturers, secretaries, administrative offices personnel etc.)" (Nicolescu 2009, p. 39). The university shapes the culture that influences the ways in which staff interact with students. Higher education institution management, by setting the vision for the

institution and providing funding, ultimately affect levels of students' post-graduation satisfaction.

Critical comments made regarding large class sizes, how some lecturers approached teaching and that missing classes was commonplace provides some evidence of dissatisfaction among respondents with the educational 'servicescapes'[17] (Bitner 1992).

> Sometimes, in a big **lecture,** if you want to ask an individual **question,** it slows down the whole **lecture** (BKM).

Disquiet about conditions that might affect teaching quality is not surprising. There is also a perception among respondents that the institution is business-like, concentrating more on the financial aspects of the organization.

> The **University** just wants revenue these **day**s. They don't really **care,** I suppose (BGF).

For some respondents, the teaching space itself drew negative comments. Computer facilities that allowed general access during teaching times, for example, disrupt learning.

> Maybe they should be having rooms just for **class**es. Because I can just imagine how frustrating it is for the teachers to do their **class** in there. ... I walk in [to the computer lab] and someone is lecturing, and they say, "Please leave as there is a **class** in here". On my way out, I meet two other **people** walking in. I can just imagine how frustrating it would be as a teacher (AGM).

This comment is interesting, as the student is empathising with the teacher (Noddings 1984), demonstrating 'care for' the challenges the lecturer faces.

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[17] A university 'servicescape' represents all aspects of the university the student interacts with.

4.3.2 What might lead to dissatisfaction for some students?

Some student subgroups are more likely to experience difficulties that lead to discontent and defection or course withdrawal. For example, international students[18] pay different tuition fees than local students, are not in the same position to work part-time and do not have the same access to subsidised transport. One an international student commented:

> That is the **student** fees we are looking at that is more our concern. And as well on all the train tickets, all the fares. That will be more [cost]; we felt that was unjustified (ADF).

> In Taiwan – from what I've been told, because I didn't go to **Uni** there – they always get given discounts if you are a **student**, and the price is usually slightly lower than here. If I'm from overseas, so you don't get a lot of income. Some locals, they do part-time **work,** so they got income, so they don't **care** [about food prices], but to us I think they're very expensive. You feel like it isn't worth it (AMF).

Even though some of the issues facing international students are outside the control of the university, those issues will impact on the satisfaction of such subgroups (Sherry et al. 2004). Universities work with governments to address some of the perceived inequalities of international students, as education is important to the economy more generally.

Another factor leading to dissatisfaction occurs when an international student's plans to use their degree to support application for permanent residence in Australia are jeopardised. They may feel unhappy with their education if granting residency is no longer a possible outcome (Maher, Mitchell & Brown 2009). Any changes to the migration laws have an impact on student numbers and on satisfaction. Again word of mouth this is an area outside of the control of the university, yet it can influence a student's choice to come to a particular university. Preferred migration categories, such as accountants, influence the choice of degree within a particularly university. International students with non-native language skill levels are more likely to need extra time for study than their local counterparts (Kishimoto & Sandretto 2008). In balancing academic study

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[18] Just over 21% of the UNSW student population are international students.

and some part-time work, international students may end up missing a social life, further adding to their vulnerability and need for care.

4.3.3 Dissatisfaction arising from processes and procedures

The university is a large institution where students may experience structural and procedural inflexibility. The student's first year can be particularly difficult to negotiate, as it is so different from secondary schooling (Jaffee et al. 2008; Krause 2005). University is associated with "independence and freedom" (Peel 2000, p. 22), characteristics of transition to higher education that were either welcomed by some or caused anxiety to others. Students generally acknowledge that some previously utilised coping practices cannot be relied on at university. For example, to learn through last-minute cramming is less possible at university given that most courses at this university involve in-semester individual and group assessment tasks.

A spread of assessments over the semester is seen as desirable as it allows the student to pace their work. However, students would prefer there was co-ordination of assessment between subjects during the semester.

> When they set the assessments and the projects and examinations probably you have to be **care**ful about the dates, that they're not too close together, because we're not just doing one **subject.** We're doing like four together (ALF)!

> The **lecturer** didn't cover all the materials [before an exam] so I was thinking if they say that they want the **lecturers** to **care** are they talking about they want them to consider about their timetables and like the time arrangements and as well (ALF)?

This may be unrealistic given the size of the institution; subject combinations are numerous, and even with mandatory core subjects in the first year, it is impossible to co-ordinate assessments.

Also important is attention to the wording of assessments and the timing of teaching material delivery.

> They should be able to word homework and assignment[s] differently, in a way that the **student** is more comfortable. So they don't have to stress (ANF).

Being careful in designing assessment tasks demonstrates care for the student's workload, other demands on their time and their capacity to absorb and understand material before the exams.

The sparse student conversation relating to the institution touched on the lack of expectation for individual care. What will now be explored are issues around what might have been found – the 'absences' from the conversations that may have been discussed had this study started with literature-derived understandings of care and caring, rather than an open approach in which the empirical data reporting what students said guides the findings.

4.4 The university: A higher education institution

The university has a long history of change and evolution (Dall'Alba 2012; Fugazzotto 2010). The modern university or higher education institution, though differing from each other in many aspects, have as a core the development of personal and societal capacities through knowledge generation and sharing.

> The idea of 'the university' has stood for universal themes - of knowing, of truthfulness, of learning, of human development, and of critical reason. (Barnett 2005b, p. 285)

Knowledge is "(e)xperiential, practical, tacit, personal, process and emotional" (Barnett 2005b, p. 789; Blackie, Case & Jawitz 2010), and institutions of higher learning are tasked with "caring for knowledge" (Harland et al. 2010, p. 92). Generating, caring for, and sharing knowledge is an important element of higher education. In supporting knowledge creation, the higher education institution needs to take care of its teachers (O'Brien 2010), enabling them to not only develop knowledge but care for themselves and their students.

Von Krogh (1998) developed the following grid to represent knowledge creation in organizations where there were differing levels of care.

Table 4.2 Knowledge-creation processes[*]

| | | Knowledge | |
		Individual	Social
Care	Low	Capturing 'isolation'	Transacting 'experts' giving
	High	Bestowing 'integration'	Indwelling 'equals'

* Von Krogh (1998), adapted from Figure 1, p. 139.

In educational situations where care is low, the individual may be left to learn in 'isolation', or alternatively lectured to by one who has far greater knowledge, an 'expert'. When care is high, there is greater 'integration' or interaction. When care is generated in a social climate, there is support in ensuring that knowledge is developed through sharing by 'equals'. Opportunities for care, knowledge acquisition and development are defined and shaped by each higher education institution. However, the production of knowledge is not the only aim; other outcomes, such as education, developing a socially responsible individual, are also important.

Higher education not only generates and shares knowledge but has other aims, such as to benefit or change the individual (Biesta 2005). However, education is a "changing, contested and often highly personalised, historically and politically constructed concept" (Harris 1999, p. 1). A view that sits well in higher education is that education "refers to actions or patterns of actions that aim intentionally to influence the development of a person" (Vanderstraeten 2004, p. 196) to "become themselves" (Blackie, Case & Jawitz 2010, p. 641). Therefore, higher education institution academics are teachers who design courses to encourage the development of the individual, with personal growth ideally being driven by both the student and the teacher. There is a question regarding how this is enacted in the contemporary age. Barnett (2004) suggests that several approaches can be identified. The first level is low risk, emphasising fostering student understanding and generic skills within defined curricula that address known needs set down by professional organizations. Students are provided with

resources helping them to assimilate processes and knowledge (Dall'Alba 2009; Love 2008). The second level affords higher-risk approaches, requiring creativity in developing spaces that transform students or indeed allow students themselves to tackle the uncertainty of the unknown. The latter challenges the student to question extant knowledge.

Education, however, is a social rather than just a purely economic activity going beyond transmission of knowledge and skill development (Kezar 2004). Higher education should infuse students with moral precepts and "democratic goals such as learning to live responsibly with and for others" (Frelin 2007, p. 3; Mayeroff 1971). Further, higher education teaching "involves creating and maintaining caring physical, cultural, intellectual, social and moral environments which induce learning" (Fitzmaurice 2010, p. 48), adding to the argument that university education is complex. Pressures on the university sector stem from higher education being offered more widely and the need for higher education institutions to be accountable for performance (Mitchell, Maher and Brown 2008; Ng & Forbes 2009). The current business model for higher education has tended to cast teachers as "interchangeable workers in the academy's market economy" (O'Brien 2010, p. 114), devaluing their role in contributing to student learning. O'Brien (2010) calls for systemic change to address the challenges to academics' ability not only to be good teachers but also to be able to care, thereby moving to a pedagogy that encourages *being* (Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion 2009) critical and reflective thinkers contributing to society.

The current neoliberal climate in higher education places less emphasis on social imperatives, requiring higher education institution administrators to act along business lines (Ceobanu et al. 2008; Harland et al. 2010; Kezar 2004; Love 2008; Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion 2009; Ng & Forbes 2009; Nicolescu 2009; Taylor & Judson 2011) – that is, to take 'corporate care' (Gleaves & Walker 2006, p. 250). The re-conceptualisation of education as business recasts higher education students as "consumers of educational output" (Vanderstraeten 2004, p. 195) and teachers as service providers within educational service organizations (Baldwin & James 2000; Barnett 2005a; Carvalho & de Oliveira Mota 2010; Constanti & Gibbs 2004; Gruber et al. 2012; Iyer & Muncy 2008; Sherry et al.

2004). In the neoliberal approach, emphasis is on the business ideals of efficiency and cost-effectiveness, and cost-benefit analyses may give rise to situations where the needs of the student are no longer paramount (Biesta 2005; Kezar 2004). Additionally, although higher education institutions may be managed in a corporate-like manner, education is arguably not primarily a business activity (Quinn et al. 2009). Rather, as noted above, higher education institutions are social institutions for which aspects of their social charter do not lend themselves to the micromanagement and quality controls characteristic of the business model.

Three main functional groups – academic, administrative and auxiliary or general staff (Quinn et al. 2009) – are involved in the delivery and support of higher education on behalf of society. All three groups act as stewards, governing the experience of students (Gillespie 2003). Implicit in the steward label is a responsibility to take care on behalf of the student, a steward being someone who looks after or manages the needs of others (*OED*, accessed June 2007). The faculty, staff and administrators work in concert, having a "common job, a common responsibility, which is to practice good stewardship" in providing higher education (Gillespie 2003, p. 147). Further, Gillespie suggests that "it is *caring* that joins the fabric of our work into a coherent and beautiful whole" (Gillespie 2003, p. 149). A steward can also be someone who manages property, supervises an event or sees to the smooth running of an organization, roles that mostly reside with administrative and auxiliary university personnel. Academics in their teaching role manage the delivery of courses (largely lecture/tutorial format, with support through online learning management systems) to undergraduate lecture classes of as many as 800, with tutorials capped at around 25. All three functional groups are all under increasing pressures (Gibbs 2010; Kolsaker 2008; Sumsion 2000) that potentially jeopardise the possibility for care.

Under a pure business model, pressure builds as academics strain to balance competing responsibilities to reach mandated performance targets (Grummell, Devine & Lynch 2009). Academics are tasked with teaching, service and research activities that are not necessarily synergistic, nor easily quantifiable. For example, the nature of research activity differs from that of teaching in that research is mainly "investigative" and teaching is "primarily aggregative and

interpretive" (Andresen 2000, p. 25). Many also see the rewards within a research-intense university going to success in research rather than teaching (Chen et al. 2006; Lea & Callaghan 2008), raising the possibility of relegation of their teaching and reduced visibility of care for students in favour of research.

> A **lecturer** just came in, he [the lecturer] say "we are all doing **research work** and **research** is really **important** to the **school**." And you feel like we are being neglected when we hear that as a **student**. But I just felt, like the way he put it, that **research** is more important than us (ADF).

Others argue for the harmonious co-existence of teaching and research (Barnett 2005a; Brew 2006, 2010). Few students seemed aware of these tensions between teaching and research.

Pressure on both academics and the institution also comes from increasing diversification of the student body (Brennan & Osborne 2008; Crozier et al. 2008; Rowe, Muchatuta & Wood 2010; Shah, Lewis & Fitzgerald 2011) with broadened participation from disadvantaged groups and a trend towards internationalization (Barnett 2011). Given the potential for stress among international students studying in foreign climes, the institution usually makes provision for additional support for these students. Fairly naturally, international students express a desire to be taken care of by the host institution (Hellstén & Prescott 2004; Kishimoto & Sandretto 2008; Quinn et al. 2009). Demands for service could range from academic support to the provision of more basic needs for accommodation and food.

> The **Uni** is willing to help you, but as I said, like me, I don't really like to talk to the local **people** or those who don't have the [same] **experience** as you. So Uni **support**, sometimes seems like those who don't really **understand** you [are the ones assigned] to help you (BNF).

The last statement highlights the problem of providing culturally and socially empathetic care for students from the more than 120 countries that make up this multicultural campus.

4.4.1 Education under a business model: Students as consumers

The analogy that a student is a customer sits comfortably within the ethos of the corporatization of higher education management (Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion 2009). Each student is valuable to the organization in economic and reputational terms with education managed as a 'product'. In an educational services approach, the student is a consumer whose needs must be met with student learning based on a continuing set of exchanges or interactions. However, the student is not external to the organization, as a customer is to a business. Rather students are integral to, and internal within, the university. More recent talk of the co-production of learning resonates with service dominant logic (SDL: Vargo & Lusch 2004), which would place students as co-producers or partners in their education (Carvalho & de Oliveira Mota 2010; Gruber et al. 2012; Ng & Forbes 2009). However, if the student were truly a customer, then higher education institutions would need the capability to adjust to, and take care of, each student's individual needs, thereby customising the learning experience. Yet does the student have the ability to know what they need to learn? They become students in order to master what they do not know or cannot do.

Treating students as customers has led to the 'commodification' of learning (Naidoo & Jamieson 2005). Commodification means the student is presented with digestible chunks of knowledge that are scaffolded, adapted and modified in ways that enable that student to be assessed as successful or not in their learning. This standardised approach raises the question – does a good examination mark or assessment performance truly show understanding, or is it just regurgitation on the part of the student? Some may argue that, in fact, assessment performance is evidence of effective learning. However, as education in a Socratic sense "deals with abstraction, critical thought and theory" (Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion 2009, p. 282), the student may be unable to fully comprehend what they have learnt since they are missing a view of the whole. Further narrowing of the curriculum has occurred with a shift towards training students to meet the needs of the commercial world (Naidoo & Jamieson 2005). Businesses are in turn consumers of a significant number of our business school graduates, and rightly should have some input into shaping our educational

'products'. Therefore, the student-as-consumer is a framework that helps higher education manage along business lines, though it challenges educational practices that lead to deeper, more lasting approaches to learning.

Educational services can draw on principles used to manage services more generally (Lovelock & Wirtz 2010). Educational services are high in credence properties, indicating that the service recipient, the student, needs to engage in the service delivery and that they may not be able to fully appreciate the outcome of the service encounter even after the service is performed (Ng & Forbes 2009). Services that are produced and consumed at the same time are "presumption" services, a classification that can be used to describe education (Naidoo, Shankar & Veer 2011, p. 1151). Therefore, as satisfaction is based on perception of the quality and utility of the service encounter, obtaining students' feedback is important in managing service quality both during the program and post-graduation (Duarte, Raposo & Alves 2012). Student satisfaction is an important educational outcome in addition to learning and knowing (Gruber et al. 2012). Surveys are used to gauge the student experience, obtain ongoing feedback to manage quality and to measure satisfaction.

Not all elements of business services translate to educational service settings (Fitzmaurice 2008). For example, mechanisms for service recovery following dissatisfaction with service delivery are difficult to apply in education given the ongoing nature of the service delivery (Douglas, McClelland & Davies 2007; Iyer & Muncy 2008). In addition, the potential for high levels of service quality is generally greater with more personalized one-to-one services and becomes problematic with one-to-many services, as is often the case in early undergraduate courses (Shah, Lewis & Fitzgerald 2011). Notwithstanding these problems, the notion of education as a service and measures of service quality have found their way into educational practice despite lingering questions around their effectiveness (Brochado 2009; Onwuegbuzie et al. 2007).

Education has inherent tensions, if viewed as a business, with the potential to lose sight of both care for the needs of the individual as well as care "to help him grow and actualise himself" (Mayeroff 1971, p. 1).

Personally, I didn't expect a lot from **University**. The quality of **lecture** and tutorial I expect. But in terms of the whole **University**, ... here I feel more like "Oh it's just big society. I'm just little". So I didn't feel I expect something from **Uni,** rather I just go to the **lecture** or tutorial and maybe I expect some quality of tutorial or their help. But in terms of **University**, [I expect] not much (BFF).

The individual is lost among the many. Therefore business-like measures introduced at the university level to standardise quality may run counter to educational efforts to develop individual students with vastly different learning needs into well rounded graduates.

4.4.2 Measuring service quality in higher education

In line with a business approach to delivery of educational services, various service-quality measures have been explored to assess and monitor student response to the educational experience (Brochado 2009; Ceobanu et al. 2008; Ng & Forbes 2009). The quality of the overall educational experience is captured with instruments such as the post-graduation Course Experience Questionnaire, or CEQ (Krause 2005; Patrick et al. 2008; Wilson, Lizzio & Ramsden 1997), as well as adaptations designed to assess quality and inform course improvements before graduation (Patrick et al. 2008). Student satisfaction is the most used experience outcome indicator. Ceobanu et al. (2008) define student satisfaction "as an evaluative summary of direct educational experience, based on the discrepancy between prior expectation and the performance perceived after passing through the educational cycle" (p. 2). In the services marketing literature, there are two scales commonly used to measure service quality and performance: SERVQUAL (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry 1988) and SERVPERF (Cronin & Taylor 1992). A third, HEdPERF, specifically assesses education performance (Abdullah 2006).

The two performance-based scales, SERVPERF and HEdPERF, provide the best measure of broad capability to deliver higher education (Brochado 2009). SERVQUAL is used extensively to measure gaps in service delivery, or what is expected compared to what was experienced (Joseph, Yakhou & Stone 2005; Ng & Forbes 2009; Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry 1988). Service quality elements

evaluated include people, processes and infrastructure as well as tangible service elements (Brown & Mazzarol 2009). Measures of service quality are of interest to this research, since one of the five components evaluated by SERVQUAL and SERVPERF is *empathy*. In the context of higher education, this translates to caring as the individualised thoughtful attention the firm [university] provides to customers [students] (Brochado 2009; Markovic 2006; Quinn et al. 2009). HEdPERF includes scale items that also assess aspects of caring from academic and administrative staff as well as institutional attributes specific to higher education.

Teaching evaluation surveys (TEFs) have been developed and are in widespread use to evaluate effectiveness of individual teachers. Each institution has measures tailored to "specific contexts and needs" (Zaitseva, Milson & Stewart 2013, p. 225). It is interesting to note that early work on developing a scale to measure care in relation to teachers and learning (Teven & McCroskey 1997; Thweatt & McCroskey 1998; Teven 2001) has not been a major influence in teacher evaluation. A further mixed-method approach to developing a means to identify and monitor teacher characteristics indirectly alludes to care (Onwuegbuzie et al. 2007). Characterising teachers will be discussed in Chapter 5, since it is relevant in student-teacher relationships. The danger in the current climate of managerialism with an audit mentality and large student cohorts is that the focus may, of practical necessity, be narrowly focused on the technical aspects of teaching, or *techne*, rather than acknowledging *praxis* and the role moral knowledge has in delivering performative and value outcomes for students (Fitzmaurice 2008). Acumen in both *techne* and *praxis* is needed for delivery of quality educational services in higher education.

As service providers, teachers play an important role in influencing satisfaction with the student's educational experience. Love (2008) succinctly depicts a customer care approach to good teaching, an approach borrowed from services marketing where the focus is on the individual. The customer care approach

> should start with learning rather than teaching and ideally remain
> attentive to the particular needs of individual students;

teaching professionals must be sensitive to the broad context in which effective learning occurs—teaching strategies and materials ought to be aligned to ensure that students are not hindered or alienated in their learning by inappropriate teaching methods, obscurant language or inconducive learning environments;

teachers ought to ensure that students who require extra assistance are accommodated by the institution;

and further,

rather than passively assuming that learning is effective, teachers ought actively to check, or evaluate, that what they are doing works for students;

the views of students ought to be taken into account when trying to develop, maintain or improve educational provision;

if unfair or biased decisions are reached by examiners or boards, there should be a facility for students to seek redress;

finally,

the overall culture of a learning institution should demonstrate that students are valued, rather than tolerated as a necessary evil. (Love 2008, p. 19)

The proposition of a customer care approach to good teaching is that care is both inherent and necessary for learning and needs to be supported by the institution. Notions of customer care for students can guide other actors in higher education, such as administrators and auxiliary staff. In effect, all involved have a responsibility to deliver effective learning outcomes.

4.4.3 Responsibility

Institutional responsibility, or more specifically 'duty of care', would be expected from literature but was not found unprompted in the student conversations. Literature would suggest that responsibility, like support, should be visible and accessible to students (Benson et al. 2009; Nelson et al. 2006). An educational institution has responsibility for students – minimally, to provide an opportunity to learn in an environment that is safe (Barber 2002; Maher, Mitchell & Brown 2009; Sumsion 2000). The notion of a 'duty of care' is associated with the "business concept of 'due diligence' ... placing care within a set of professional requirements or standards" (Clegg & Rowland 2010, p. 725). Clegg

and Rowland argue that this more legal approach reduces the humanity in the teacher-student relationship, yet in care theory humanity is central to leaning.

An 'ethic of care' as espoused by Noddings (2002) identifies the necessity for mutually respectful relationships in which learning comes about through interaction between "the one-caring" and "the cared-for" (Garza 2009; Hawk & Lyons 2008; Kim 2007; Noddings 2002). An 'ethic of care' that is part of care theory supports teaching at a school level more than in higher education given the required closeness of the relationship between teacher and student. The notion of 'ethical caring' better captures care as responsibility in higher education institution (Gleaves & Walker 2006; Garrison 2009; Sumsion 2000), where the student is temporarily under a teacher's care while the teacher bears responsibility for enabling student learning. Alternatively, the notion of "care-as-worry" (van Manen 2002b) can support the efforts of a teacher to ensure that learning has taken place in the absence of more intense relationships. The academic is entrusted with the worry of affording an opportunity for the student to learn, and the wider university in entrusted with creating the possibility for students to access higher education.

4.4.4 Provision of support and non-teaching activities

The university is responsible for the fabric of the student environment, providing a safe and engaging 'place' for learning to occur (Crozier et al. 2008; Fitzmaurice 2008). This not only includes support for learning but also social and emotional support (sport and recreation, student societies, counselling, medical, disability). It is an expression of care for others who may have temporary or more long-lasting need of support for their learning. The university maintains a variety of support services to address the needs of students, particularly to enhance the first-year experience (Kift 2008). Some of the services listed for students at UNSW include (see http://www.unsw.edu.au/students):

- Student assistance programs (student equity and diversity, peer mentoring, the Learning Centre, careers and employment)
- Student resources (wireless Internet, childcare, UNSW library, Student Development International)
- Coming to university (colleges and apartments, scholarships, elite athlete support)

- Administration (Student Central, complaints, MyUNSW – the point of access for all online material)
- Student well-being (counselling and psychological service, university health service)
- Student life (security services, night-time escort service, shuttle bus, a student video channel, media sharing, classifieds, sport and recreation clubs and facilities, religious centre for many denominations, food courts and other food outlets and student bar)

These ancillary facilities, from the respondents' viewpoint, are not very related to the concept of 'support' as depicted in Figure 4.1, being semantically discrete in student conversations.

'Support' is an outlier in the sense that only one concept is enclosed in the theme and there are few, if any, connections to other conversational elements (Caspersz, Olaru & Smith 2012). Students seem unaware of what is available.

> Counselling help? No not aware, we don't know about these facilities. I bet there's a lot of facilities in **Universities** that I still have no clue of or never heard of. Just because we don't sort of go looking for these facilities (APF).

> I knew there was [counselling]. I don't really know who to go to. At that **time** I didn't really **care** enough. Because I was **work**ing so much I was preoccupied with a lot of things (BBF).

> Oh, but it's important to make it [support] known to the **students**. Some **support** they actually offer at **UNSW** we haven't even heard about it (ALF).

In addition, as one student comments, some counselling advice was helpful but insufficient, since other academic issues contributing to their problems were not addressed.

> And then counsellor, I think honestly, I don't really think they give me a lot of help in academic. Because they can't. So many **students** in different faculties, how could they? But then they give positive thoughts – that makes me at least feel slightly better that I'm not so bad at **Uni** or something like that. And they also give me some ways to figure out how to get rid of stress. Or how shall I manage my timetable with studies. So that was helpful, I think, in a way (AMF).

The absence of mentioning support in the respondent conversations is in itself an interesting finding. In most instances, when they sought help, they did so from other, non-university sources (see Chapter 6).

To illustrate a situation for which institutional support was inadequate, the following glimpse of a student in trouble is given. One student interviewed was struggling and arguably at risk of disengaging from his studies. He had problems with language, having been admitted to the university through an accredited overseas diploma programme that meant he did not have to meet the institution's language-proficiency requirements. He was finding that he was struggling with his studies. Although he knew he needed advice, he did not know where to seek the help. He could not discuss this with his family, as it was at their urging he had taken up a university place in a foreign country underprepared. His unhappiness and feeling of isolation became evident as the interview progressed. Consequently, in accordance with the research ethics protocol, he was referred to the counselling unit. He visited six months later to say that he had transferred from his original course to a digital media course that required less English-language proficiency. He reported that he was now doing well. An interesting question for the institution: how many other students are in his position and do not know where to turn to for assistance?

4.5 The institution in sum

This chapter isolates issues concerning the university as institution. The semantic map of respondent conversations reveals relatively few comments directly about the university. The few comments separate into two threads around the focal university and the specifics of subjects taken. This void in the student conversations reflects that students as individuals have little or no expectation that the institution is aware of them personally. That said, there is an implicit assumption on their part that the university is caring by fulfilling its mandate in providing the opportunity for their education. Care and caring is not missing; it is just not obvious to students. To provide a richer context, this chapter has incorporated a brief overview of care in higher education, touching on students as consumers, educational services, service quality, expectations, satisfaction and support. Empty spaces in the student conversations are filled by drawing on the literature around responsibility and 'duty of care'. The chapter highlights the pivotal role the institution plays in the student experience, bridging the

conversations about teaching relationships to be discussed in Chapter 5, and those in Chapter 6 exploring external influences on students.

Chapter 5
Relationships in higher education

5.1 Introduction

Student conversations around higher education institutions (HEIs) discussed in the previous chapter showed that while there were few comments associated with the institution, the higher education institution plays a pivotal role in linking student experiences outside to their experiences within. Respondents make only a tenuous connection between themselves and the institution. There was little or no discussion of issues such as 'duty of care' or care by the institution for them as individuals. However, a basic premise of this thesis is that care is fundamental to education. This chapter will suggest that care resides more visibly in relationships between academics and students than between the institution and students. The discussion will focus on what students say, allowing "what is" to be fore-grounded over "what should be" in relationships. More specifically, this chapter explores the "what" and "how" of care in student relationships. Two meta-themes found in the student conversations relating to in-university relationships are noted: "educational services" (*lecturer/lecture)* and "connections between educational actors" (*lecturer/students)* such as teachers and students, and between peers. Before focussing on care within these two meta-themes, the semantic patterns found in the student interviews will be described.

A significant body of literature acknowledges the importance of educational relationships: notions of relation, pedagogy, andragogy and relational pedagogy. Relationships are important for positive educational outcomes (Barnett 2009; Bingham & Sidorkin 2004; Carvalho & de Oliveira Mota 2010; Fisher & Miller 2008; Kim & Sax 2009; McKenna 2010; Teven 2007). Educational relations are the connections between people, ideas and processes – in this case within the modern university, where being able to show care is at risk.

> The question remains: are we in danger of surrendering the relationship between teacher and student, a distinct social relation with a long and notable history, to a rampant business model? (Love 2008, p. 19)

Relationships support the social and emotional aspects of a student's life that are necessary for learning to take place (Howells & Cumming 2012; Rowe, Muchatuta & Wood 2010), and it is within relationships that care for a person is possible. However, as much of the educational relationship literature looks at care in pre-tertiary education, this literature is insufficient in addressing challenges in the higher education milieu. The nature of relationships in higher education is different from that in pre-tertiary education. What can be concluded from the literature, however, is that relation is necessary at any level of education.

5.2 Student conversation around relationships

The relational section is found to the left of the whole-of-cohort semantic map (see Figure 5.1). The concepts aggregated in this section are semantically linked with the institutional concepts discussed in Chapter 4 through a single pathway between 'lecture' and 'interesting', then through 'subjects' to 'course'. An observation from the semantic analysis is the lack of direct connection between the relational and individual sections of the semantic map. The institution performs a bridging role in connecting internal university relationships and external influences – the student's 'other lives' which will be discussed in the following Chapter 6.
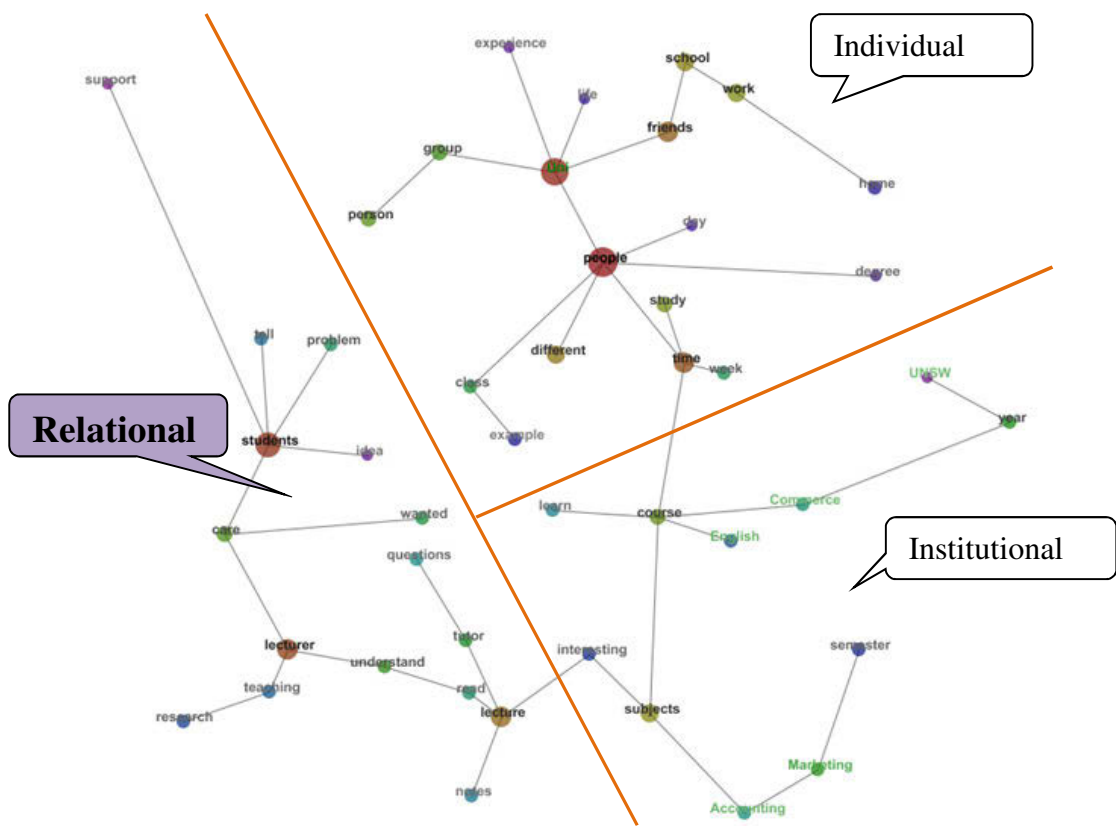
Figure 5.1 Concept map from whole-of-cohort analysis (See Figure 3.8; lines added)

The relational section of the semantic map of the student conversations groups into four broad themes: *students, lecturer, lecture* and *support* (see Figure 5.2). *Support* issues have been discussed in the preceding Chapter 4. This chapter will focus on the meta-themes formed from a merging of *lecturer/lecture* (educational service) and *lecturer/students* (personal interaction of the actors; see dashed circles added in Figure 5.2).

See chapter 4
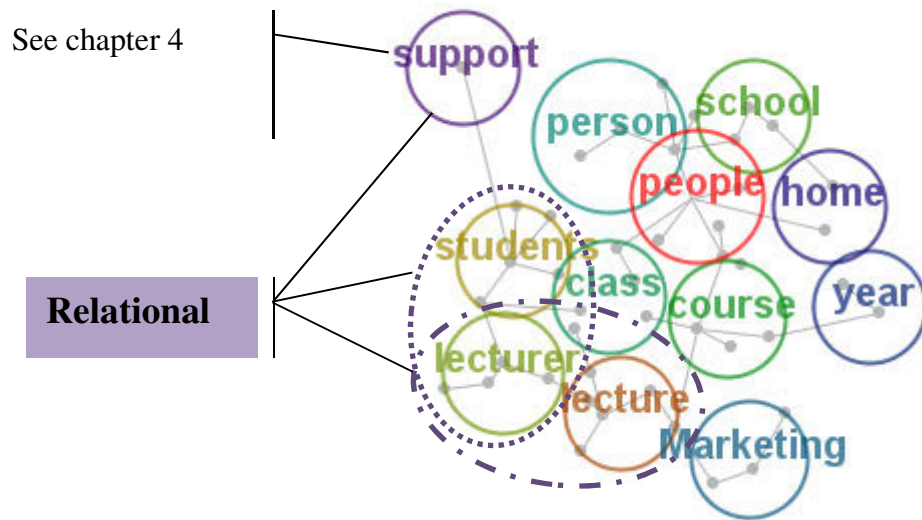
Relational

Figure 5.2 Themes from whole-of-cohort analysis
(Dashed lines highlight the meta-themes: *lecturer/lecture* and *lecturer/student*.)

The Leximancer-named concept 'care' is found in the relational sector being located on a pathway linking 'students' and 'lecturer' (see Figure 5.3). Interestingly, most student conversations had 'care' co-associated with at least one other conversational concept from the relational sector (see Table 5.1), helping to explain its position on the map. This table gives a sense of the conversation snippets that included 'care' and its association with other concepts located in each of the three main relationship themes: *students, lecturer, lecture*.
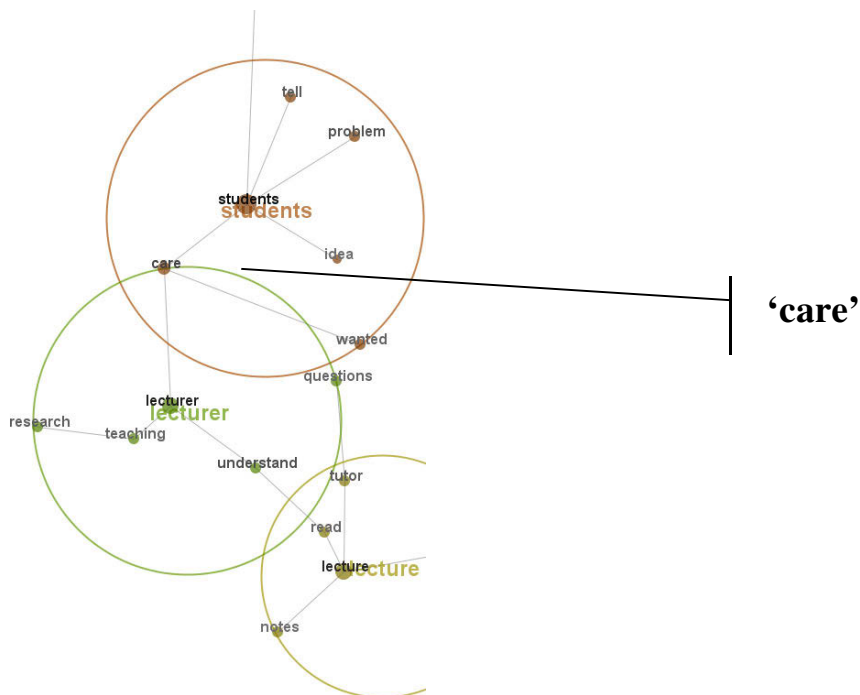
'care'

Figure 5.3 Concepts enclosed by the relational themes, including 'care'

Table 5.1 Relational sector 'care'-associated concepts and source respondents

'Care' & ' ... ' (see list below)	Count of text snippets	Likelihood of co-occurrence with 'care'	Expressed sentiment(s)	Source respondents[*]
Theme: *students*				
'students'	54	10%	Differing student desire for care	ADF; AMF; ANF; AOF; APF; BCM; BEF; BFF; BLF; BNF: BMM
'wanted'	27	27%	What students might want	AHM; BBF; BHF; BLF
'tell'	6		Didactic	BGF; BMM; BOF
'idea'	3	4%	-	INT
'problem'	1	1%	-	INT
Theme: *lecturer*				
'lecturer'	37	9%	Difficult for lecturer to show care	AJM; AKF; ALF; AOF; BEF; BFF; BGF; BKM; BLF; BMM
'teaching'	12	12%	Care about teaching (but not individual)	AHM; BEF; BHF
'research'	12	11%	Not considered relevant by students	INT
'understand'	6	4%	Lack of care about understanding student needs	ACF; BCM; BEF; BGF; BNF
'questions'	3	3%	Difficult to ask	BEF
Theme: *lecture*				
'lecture'	4	1%	Distant in lectures	AJM; BEF; BFF; BGF
'tutor'	2	2%	Tutor more able to care/know student	BKM; BMM

* Respondent file code: e.g., ABF and BCM. (i) First letter indicates a respondent from first cohort (A) or second cohort (B); second letter is a unique alphabetic code; (iii) third letter indicates male (M) or female (F). The interviewer is identified with tag INT.

Each of the three relational themes listed in Table 5.1, starting with *students*, will be characterised individually in the following sections. This section of the map contains the 'care' concept. These thematic overviews help illustrate how the overall sentiments expressed in the student interviews were interpreted. The developed understanding is then reported under the two overarching meta-themes linking *lecturer/lecture* (educational service, education deliverables) and *lecturer/students* (educational actors, personal interaction).

5.2.1 *Students*

The most prevalent theme within the relational sector was *students*. Here the enclosed concepts included 'students', 'care', 'problem', 'tell' and 'idea' (see

Figure 5.3). The pathway connecting 'students', 'care' and 'wanted' raises one of the main conundrums around care – that students may, or may not, want care.

> I'm guessing they probably **wanted** them to **care** about what they are teaching. ... They might want that [to care about the student], but I personally don't. ... I'm guessing those kind of **students** would be looking to recapture the whole relationship they might [have] had with a **Year** Twelve kind of **teacher** (AHM).[19]

The desire for more care was found in relation to international student needs.

> Yeah, they should **care**. It's not always about the **student's** fault, sometimes it's about the **lecturers** not delivering it properly and make the **student** confused all the **time** (AOF).

> I took more **time** to **read** or write compared to other Australian **students** in the first place, but I didn't expect any help from **University**. That's my **problem** (BFF).

> Because we are ashamed or shy, that's our **problem**. But if I design a new **University**, I'll make some active **group** of **people** who really want to help international **students** (BJF).

> A good **idea** for international **students**, who were as lost as I was, would be to have in the first few **week**s a place where you go to do the mandatory homework. This is what they would **tell** you – read [your] book, do **notes** like this, based on this list you get every **week**, then do the tutorial **questions** (AGM).

Forming lasting interpersonal relationships at university, however, is not easy for students (Ng & Forbes 2009). Students commented on the difficulty of getting to know teachers and fellow students. Surviving, particularly in the first year, is "about who you know" (BHF) – in other words being able to form relationships helpful to their study. Other students note:

> When I first came to **Uni,** I did not really like it – because it is so **different** from **High School**. In **High School** there is a lot of **people** that you can get help [from], like close **friends** and **teachers** ... [if] you have got **questions,** you can simply just ask the **teachers**. But when I first came to Uni I found it hard to ask the **lecturers**. ... I can't just go there and ask them when I have **questions** that I don't **understand**. So I found it's really not close. The relationships between **people** are not that close compared to **High School** (ANF).

> And also with **Uni,** I find its harder to make **friends** because you're not as concentrated in a **group**. Because in **High School** everyone's

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[19] Bold denotes a Leximancer-generated 'concept' name; italics identify theme names.

got the same time schedule, and interests, and just **group** yourselves together. But at **Uni** you meet so much **people,** and you don't stick with one **group**. For example, you see this person in this **class**, and you don't see them in the next **class** (APF).

For these students, contrasting with their experience of school is a lack of closeness as well as a lack of time to form supportive connections.

5.2.2 *Lecturer*

The theme *lecturer* sits between the *students* and *lecture* themes. Concepts within the *lecturer* theme include 'teaching', 'research' and 'understand' (see Figure 5.3). 'Understand' is the linking concept between *lecturer* and *lecture*.

> It is kind of like the **lecturers** are there – it is like they want to do **research** and as part of that they have to take a **lecture** for an hour. They do it because they have to (AJM).

> Some **lecturers**, like, they just **teach** us and they go back. They always say what they want to say ... they don't ask, "Do you **understand**?" (AEF).

> Yes, we talk if the **lecturer** is so boring, or we feel she or he didn't prepare much, or there's no point of the **lecture** because it's all from the textbook and we can **read** that, we can **understand** that (BFF).

These comments highlight a perception of a disconnection of the student with the lecturer. There may be many possible factors contributing to such sentiments that cannot be explored from these open interviews.

5.2.3 *Lecture*

The theme *lecture* encloses 'lecture', 'subjects', 'tutor', 'interesting', 'read' and 'notes' (see Figure 5.3) and has a pathway linking across to the institutional sector to the right of the map.

> I suppose that the **lectures** aren't really that compulsory. In some **subjects**, not all of them, there is really no point because – everything is just word-for-word from the textbook, so there is really no necessary point in **lectures** (BHF).

> I have had a few **lecturers** where they've put in a little video case study, and its **interesting** because it gives practical **example**s and all that (AHM).

> Yeah, for **example**, if they put something ... **interesting** alongside of

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the **lectures** ... she [the tutor] would bring in her personal **examples** and then make things more humorous for us, and I actually find it a lot better **learn**ing from her than from the **lecturer** just because she has everything concise. She does it through **examples,** and we **learn** a lot faster and **understan**d a lot better through the way she teaches us compared to how the **lecturer** teaches us (APF).

Comments in this theme focused on practical issues; for example, the why, and why not, of lecture attendance.

These three themes revolve around the day-to-day activities of students at university. The following two main sections will explore the interaction between *lecturers* and *lectures* in the provision of educational services (5.3) and *students* and *lecturers* as educational actors (5.4). 'Care' is on a pathway connecting 'students' and 'lecturer'. The first section, *lecturers* and *lectures*, will draw on ideas around what could be expected in the delivery of educational services. There are many differing philosophies and conceptions of education. Selecting educational services to help structure this analysis is a reflection of the background of the researcher, the site of the research in a business subject and the emphasis on business practices in managing higher education (Joseph, Yakhou & Stone 2005). The second section, *students* and *lecturers*, focuses on the interaction between those delivering and those experiencing educational services. The meta-theme *lecturer/lecture* addresses how educational service might be delivered, how care might be viewed in terms of responsibility, how students and academics interact with discipline knowledge and what specific needs some student groups experience.

5.3 Meta-theme: *lecturer* **and** *lecture* – **as educational deliverables**

In higher education, the lecture/tutorial is a common mode of transmission of educational content in the large early degree courses. Respondents expressed some dissatisfaction particularly with lectures.

But those **lecturers** who just go through the **lecture notes** and the textbook, they don't really provide extra information to you. You can do it yourself, but tutorials really help because they discuss about **questions,** and if the **tutor** doesn't help you can talk to your mates (BNF).

> Because not everything is on the **lecture notes,** obviously. They try to make you come to the **lecture**s (ACF).

> Sometimes the **lecture notes** are really, really good. So if you miss the **lecture** you still know a lot because of the **lecture notes** (BGF).

In practice, the lecture/lecturer model may not be consistent in delivering an adequate service in the eyes of the student.

With the increasing 'marketisation' of higher education there is a significant borrowing of ideas from marketing theory (Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion 2009; Ng & Forbes 2009; Nicolescu 2009; Taylor & Judson 2011) in which education is viewed as a service, a complex process of interaction over time to meet the needs of students and other stakeholders, such as employers (Helkkula 2011; Lovelock & Wirtz 2010; Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry 1985; Yeo 2008). Current marketing philosophies have evolved beyond a simple product orientation, in this context 'a degree', to a marketing orientation where the customer, the student, is the focus for the organization (Vargo & Lusch 2004). Thus, arguably, the core service of the university should be the learning experience of the student centring on strong educational relationships.

Treating education as a service has merit as it resonates with discussion in the educational literature around 'relation'. The higher education experience can be categorised both as an experiential and a credence service (Galetzka, Verhoeven & Pruyn 2006; Lovelock & Wirtz 2010), indicating that the quality of the service is difficult to assess even after the service is experienced (Arnould & Price 1993; Paswan, Spears & Ganesh 2007). Such an experiential credence service calls for co-creation of the learning experience where "the value is emergent, unstructured, interactive, uncertain and with a hedonic dimension" and is dependent on good relations (Ng & Forbes 2009, p. 40). 'Relation' helps define the "studenting-teaching process" (Thayer-Bacon 2004, p. 165) enacted over time through communication between more than one actor and across different educational spaces (Biesta 2005; Bingham & Sidorkin 2004). Relation emphasises that education is the interaction between the educator and the one being educated, and that care within education is both given and received.

From the education literature, Noddings' theory of care (1984) identifies care as an important aspect of educational relationships (Kim 2007). Elaborating on *"care theory"*, Marx (2011, p. 6, italics in original) suggests caring occurs in three distinct phases: "engrossment or mental attentiveness (being fully present), affective engagement or empathy, and a mental imperative to act on behalf of another" (p. 6). The first phase, engrossment or mental attentiveness, describes a state of mind and links to the motivation of individuals to take full advantage of their learning opportunities.

> I feel it very easy to follow my **lecture** because I take full sets of **notes** and critique and review and do all assignments (AEF).

The second phase, a feeling or empathy for someone, refers to thought or concern for someone, seen in discussions of how teachers in higher education structure and deliver learning. As indicated by the reported decline in empathy among American students, the possibilities to feel empathy may be under pressure (Konrath, O'Brien & Hsing 2011). In some cases, students perceive a lack of concern by lecturers for students' needs.

> It is like they want to do research, and as part of that they have to take a **lecture** for an hour. They do it because they have to (AJM).

> Sometimes, in **lectures**, the **lecturers** are just there to do the ... like, you know, they just want to get it over and done with (BGF).

The third phase described in care theory captures care in the sense of having protection or charge of someone, either singularly or as a group, as a task for all those in contact with students in higher education institutions. This is most often visible to students in the lecturer or tutor's ability to enable learning through their approach to teaching. These three care theory constructs help unpack the complexity surrounding student-academic relationships.

Delivery of educational services is primarily the responsibility of academic lecturers and tutors. The lecturer is tasked with creating learning opportunities for the student. The art and science of the creation of learning opportunities, or pedagogy, is a well-developed field in children's education (Hiemstra & Sisco 1990) yet relatively rarely discussed in higher education (Amin 2011). Rather, guides to good teaching indirectly reflect current pedagogical

understanding. In order to educate well, it is suggested that the pedagogue does so in a caring way, with a personal commitment and interest in teaching (Noddings 1984; Fitzmaurice 2008). Pedagogy is inherently relational in nature and links the individual's concern for the student with their teaching (Frelin 2007). Teaching is informed by a relational knowledge understanding of how students experience their world (van Manen 2002a; Macfarlane 2004). Andresen (2000) suggests that 'pedagogy' "represents a form of intellectual caring for the other person" (p. 25). However, the depth of understanding an academic can develop of an individual student is limited by the often-constrained opportunities for student-teacher interaction in higher education.

Recent description of pedagogy can be traced back to the early work of Dewey (1916), who identified education as occurring with "communication of the habits of doing, thinking and feeling from the older to the younger" (Dewey 1916, p. 3 in Ongstad 2003). The emphasis in academic teacher training is oriented more to how to 'teach' more efficiently than on broader philosophical issues – on *techne* rather than *praxis* (Fitzmaurice 2010; Joseph, Yakhou & Stone 2005). Pedagogy, and therefore care, in higher education differs from early educational contexts. Issues such as the need to take into account the maturity of those being educated, technological possibilities for learning and the move towards an expectation of the co-creation of learning, as well as the notion of fostering lifelong learning, shift the debate towards how to best manage the delivery of educational services and away from how to help develop well-rounded members of society (Caspersz, Olaru & Smith 1012). Complicating the role of pedagogy in higher education is the distinction between being a teacher and an academic. A teacher is a specialist in how to teach, and an academic is a teacher and a discipline specialist with research and publishing responsibilities who may have had relatively little training in educational theory.

A further point of difference between academics and school teachers is the nature of the educational relationships that shape care in higher education. Much of school education casts these relationships as similar to that between a parent and their child, with one person more knowing, and bearing more responsibility for caring than the other (Giles 2008; Noddings 2003a). As posited by Amin

(2011), the higher education teacher-student relationship is complex and further complicated by affect or emotion. Relations are not just between people, but may well be between people, processes and ideas. Adding to the complexity is that stewardship and responsibility for caring within higher education involves many actors – administrators, support staff and academics as well as peers (Gillespie 2003) – with much shorter, less continuous interaction time than in school education.

5.3.1 Care as responsibility

The following discussion includes a closer examination of responsibility or a 'duty of care' and care theory (Noddings 2003a), a well as the lecturer as a possessor of knowledge who is skilled in transmission of that knowledge (Sander et al. 2000). 'Duty of care' equates to the sense of care in which it means to have protection, charge or guardianship of, or responsibility for the safety of others singularly or as a group (*OED*, accessed June 2007). Such care or responsibility for the welfare of students is both a formal and an informal expectation of those delivering education. Care theory posits a 'duty of care' that starts with the institution (Clegg & Rowland 2010; Noddings 2003a) and includes care for self, for those who are close, and for strangers, ideals, goals and global others. This is synonymous with a democratic view of education (Frelin 2007; Marx 2011) and acknowledges the broader role higher education has in moulding students for societal good.

Whilst 'duty of care' exists at the institutional level, it is largely carried out by those in contact with students (Mitchell, Maher & Brown 2008). The university, school or department offering a course has oversight over the academics charged with delivering courses, thereby setting expectations for care and caring. Education by its very nature aims to enrich, not damage, a student, and in this sense a teacher takes responsibility in a way similar to that of a parent. However, as most students have reached adulthood, it is a moot point as to whether a parental style of responsibility is appropriate in the shorter duration student-teacher relationships of higher education. The burden of responsibility for student-teacher relationships would appear to be more equally shared in higher education than at school.

The role of the actors delivering education is less narrowly defined in terms of an 'ethic of care' describing how teachers or students interact in a caring way with others or things in the learning environment. An 'ethic of care' is inherent to learning and teaching, as noted by Kishimoto and Sandretto (2008), who found that the "concept of *caring* emerged" (p. 5) even when it was not directly looked for. All parties could benefit from explicit communication of an 'ethic of care' and in nurturing a caring relationship (O'Brien 2010). Whilst little evidence of an expectation of a formal 'duty of care' is detected in this study, it would be reasonable to assume that students hold that an 'ethic of care', where the institution is making their education possible, is a given.

An 'ethic of care' is embodied in teaching practices that strive for standards of professional excellence, take responsibility to care for truth and a display a sense of justice for what is right, encouraging students to hold similar ideals (Besley 2005; Dwyer 2008; Heuer 2008). This moral dimension to education, human agency and human feelings can be lost at times in the immediacy of interaction in the teaching relationship, especially in large classes (Kishimoto & Sandretto 2008). The idea of developing and guiding the student to become a good citizen is consistent with this moral dimension of education (Gibbs 2010; Gillespie 2003). However, little evidence for a longer-term fostering of care in the moral sense emerged from this study's unscripted student interviews.

Academics have a responsibility to provide the opportunity for the student to learn and master a course. Academic responsibility includes care given to curriculum and course and assessment design, as well as to processes for student interaction, such as feedback. For example, the immediacy of feedback and level of engrossment in teaching were identified by students as evidence of care in an online course (Chabaya et al. 2012; Marx 2011). Care includes attention given to being a good educator and in so doing to be

> informed by justice, truthfulness and courage. Justice requires that we treat others fairly and in respect of merit according to appropriate standards and so, assignments from students are assessed according to predetermined criteria and not with regard to a teacher's personal relationship with the student. Care and concern for individuals are

crucial in practice and it is at the heart of the teaching relationship. Also, of importance is the courage to take risks which are necessary along the way and teachers who adapt their teaching to meet the challenges of diverse learners display courage. Truthfulness is really important in student and staff relationships, as it is central to gaining and maintaining the respect of peers and students. (Fitzmaurice 2010, p. 47)

Lecturers are not only responsible for student learning but also for physical and psychological well-being.

I know how important a teacher is. I mean a teacher can just tear your life down or they can give you life, make you so different (ADF).

Teachers and the institution are expected to provide a safe environment "creating and maintaining caring physical, cultural, intellectual, social and moral environments which induce learning" (Fitzmaurice 2010, p. 48). Responsibility for learning is only one part of the overall academic task, though it is the most obvious to students.

5.3.2 Care in knowledge communication

A core component of higher education is the creation and dissemination of knowledge. An academic is a 'knower' skilled in transmission of information and knowledge (Sander et al. 2000). Students expect their teachers to be well versed in their discipline and to care about "giving you the information they [students] need" (BEF) to learn. Interestingly, several students noted that lecturing is more than just knowledge transmission. Some lecturers also care about students' progress in their learning.

If the **lecturer care**[s] about you, they ask you, "Oh, so how you doing?" "Are you coping well with the **study**?" And they [lecturers] actually can talk to you [student] because they [students] knew that you [lecturer] **care** for them. Like you [lecturer] actually **care** what they're [students are] doing and how they're progressing (AKF).

Conversely, others pointed out that sometimes the lecturers "don't really **care** how much [if any] you **understand** or not" (BEF). Mere transmission of information is not sufficient from the student perspective.

Important attributes of a teacher that should help them impart their subject knowledge include approachability, enthusiasm and organization (Gruber et al.

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2012). The 'good' academic can and should create environments that facilitate learning for all (Ballantyne, Bain & Packer 1999; van Manen 2002a; van Manen 2002b). A lecturer is advised to let the student know that they care: "an attitude of caring should be conveyed" (Care 1995, p. 13), as this facilitates engagement. Often the student has only indirect clues as to whether the teacher cares, picking up on emotional indicators, thereby responding to what they perceive rather than what is real.

> I guess just being friendly, enthusiastic and really trying to help you **learn** is really good enough for [a] **teacher** to **care**. That's what I think (BMM).

In some cases, students perceive an absence of care in the transmission of information – "when you look at the teacher, they don't **care**" (BEF). However, a lecturer who anchors their teaching in real-world examples and experiences can be seen to be looking out for the student's long-term welfare – and preparing them for the future (Bain 2004).

> I love this **course**, because he is not very much on marks, he's more on like "I want you to know how to do this when you go out in the field. I want you to just know what is going on kind of thing" (BHF).

Other students expressed concerns about the approaches to teaching that they experienced. Students indicated two areas needing improvement; care in crafting of assessment tasks and care in the transmission of knowledge.

> If they [lecturers] **care** about **students**, then they should be able to word homework and assignment differently, in a way that the **student** is more comfortable. So they don't have to stress (ANF).

The crux of the argument for this thesis is that there needs to be care in educational relationships and 'care' more generally needs to be apparent to students for education to be meaningful. The next section will explore the links between knowledge, the academic and the student revealed in the interview conversations.

5.3.3 Teacher-learner-subject triad: The connections?

The teacher, learner (student) and subject (content) triad visited here under the *lecturer/lecture* meta-theme links to the later section on the dyadic

relationship between the lecturer/student (see section 5.4). Extending notions of relation to include the subject, the teacher-learner-subject triad[20] (Amin 2011; Ongstad 2003) helps to contextualise care for discipline content, given that knowledge is a core component of education. Viewing higher education as a three-way interaction goes some way to explain the apparent lack of expectation of some students for care from their teachers, dyadic care, noted above.

For some students, all that is required is that the teacher is passionate about their subject and works to engage students in the content.

> In the **lecture** he puts an ad [advertisement]. It's just a whole different form of presentation which actually keeps me interested and keeps me like "OK, this is cool. Why are they showing this?" (BHF).

Other students feel the need to have a relationship or some more personal connection with their teacher, even if doing so is difficult given the numbers in class.

> Oh, well, some of them I know manage a lot of classes, and one **lecturer**, what she did was really funny – she took a photo of us all so she can remember our names. Yeah, to know our names, for me it's a nice touch but not really necessary because [at] **University** everyone just seems to come and go. Come, go to lessons and just do their own thing (BMM).

Guilar (2006) talks of dialogic instruction with connections between teachers, students and content (see Figure 5.4), shifting the emphasis from the lecturer to relation between the three elements – teacher, learner and concepts (Gunzenhauser & Gerstl-Pepin 2006). This three-way relationship can be found in the semantic mapping of the student conversations (see Figure 5.4), with the strongest links between teacher and student, and teacher and content. The weakest pathway is between the student and the content. Students are looking for the teacher to know and be passionate about their subject, not necessarily to know them well. Students have a relationship with the content via their teachers. Higher education relies on the students to be self-motivated, engaged and active contributors to their own learning just as much as it needs academics to be

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[20] A mutually systematic phenomenon based on three necessary, constituting, reciprocal aspects (Ongstad 2003).

immersed in their discipline and able to communicate their knowledge and passion for the subject to students.
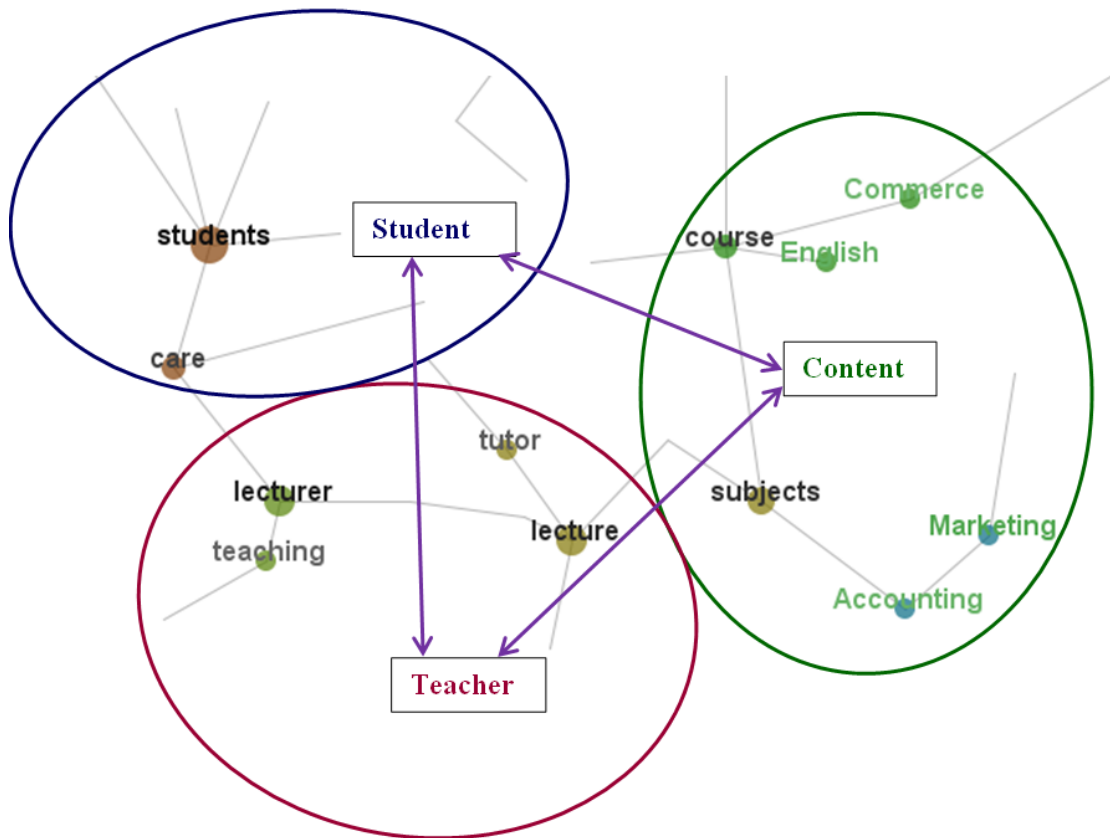
Figure 5.4 Map highlighting the teacher – student – content triad

Over time, many triads have been used to describe educational philosophies and approaches that capture the social dimensions of education (Ongstad 2003). Early Greek and Roman orators were guided by *patos*, *logos* and *ethos*. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the classical triad of *beauty*, *truth* and *goodness* dominated society. Ongstad (2003) suggests that the new complexities of modern times challenge the simplicity inherent in triads, though Dewey (1916) uses the triad of *doing, thinking, and feeling* in explaining transmission from one person to another. Amin (2011) also makes reference to the interdependence of the teacher, the subject (content) and the learner. The teacher-learner-subject triad has merit, since it identifies actors in the relationship, linking pedagogy to process. Ongstad (2003) refers to Künzli's (1998) aspects of teaching, where

the doctrinaire implies that teachers ought to know the subject they teach. The maieutic means, that teachers, like a midwife, in an Sokratesian way, should help others to think. Hence the teachers need knowledge of the student's knowledge, skills, needs, interests and abilities. And, finally, teachers need to see the (ethical) consequences of their doings and interactions. (Ongstad 2003, p. 5)

The academic not only has relationships with students but also needs solid knowledge of their discipline. The study data would indicate that what is minimally expected by students is that the academic has a strong connection to their subject, since students recognise the difficulty in knowing all students well.

5.3.4 Student subgroups: Differing student needs

As the higher education sphere internationalises, universities are accepting more full-fee-paying overseas students (Barnett 2011; Brennan & Osborne 2008; Otten 2003). This is diversifying the range of student needs in higher education. For example, differences in communication and care needs are noted for students from different cultural backgrounds (Kishimoto & Sandretto 2008; Park 2006; Sherry et al. 2004). Approximately one in every four students at UNSW is an international student[21]. Many of these students have had previous schooling experiences in more collectivist cultures (Hofstede 1986; Jin & Cortazzi 2006; Kishimoto & Sandretto 2008; Otten 2003). For instance, in Japan, teachers are noted for being more attentive to student needs (Kishimoto & Sandretto 2008). One student commented about their current university Japanese teachers:

> I'm glad that all the Japanese lecturers are Japanese ... they actually know the **student** quite well in a way ... I think that's good ... I think that's because in the Japanese culture, like Asian culture, the **teacher** has sort of to take **care** of the **students.** ... You're slightly closer to them, then you [the teacher] are worried about "Oh, you sure you've done this part OK?" or "If you have any **questions** feel free to ask me". Of course, all other **lecturers** provide that, but you're not as close as in the Japanese **class**, or maybe that's just smaller **class**es (AMF).

Students may have difficulty in adapting to their new learning environment at university. A student's current experience is influenced by their prior learning

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[21] (see http://www.unsw.edu.au/about-us)

environments. This may be amplified when transferring from a collectivist to an individualist culture such as Australia.

International students often have difficulty in being fully conversant with both written and spoken vernacular language. They may be less able to join in both formal and informal conversations. Cultural mores and language issues may also make international students reticent to speak up in class.

> As an international **student** I want them to speak more – not slowly but clearly, and that's the academic staff. But I want them [to] be more kind to us ... in the tute, or in the **lecture**, they don't give chance to talk for us. So we want to talk, so we want to raise our hand or stuff. But they just look at the Aussie [local] **students** or someone who can speak fluently, because that will help the tute or the **lecturer** to get some ideas and stuff [across]. But we want to talk, and we want them to give some **time** for us, but they don't really give any. Because I think they are treating us equally, but we need more **care** than the others (BJF).

In addition, studying in a different country without friends and family increases an individual's stress.

> Yes ... in terms of the international **students**. Because in Korea even though we've got some problems, there are family. There is always, beside you, old **friends** [and] other **friends**. But here no one is there, and **life** is so unstable (BFF).

Paying more tuition fees than a local student engenders a sense amongst these students that they are entitled to have their particular needs understood and met.

> At least they [the lecturers] should **understand** more information about the international **student**, who they should **care** about (BNF).

> I think they can help us, because while they are helping us they can get the **idea** about how the international **students** are feeling about it. So they can get the **idea** of that **subject**, and we can get help for **English** and all the writings (BJF).

Students who have experienced more direct care in their previous schooling than is afforded in the Australian education system face greater adjustment. Dissatisfaction may be further compounded by language and cultural challenges.

It is not only international students who may experience adjustment problems in attending university (Krause 2005; Peel 2000). Students who enjoyed good relationships with their school teachers may still look to have a close connection with their lecturers, and such relationships may not be as readily available.

> Yeah, I think it is good to have a close relationship with **lecturers**, because normally they can understand a **student's** situation or problem if we can interact with each other (AEF).

> Yeah, I **work** very hard. The environment is very different ... it's more fast-paced and it's more stressful ... there's a lot of intense competition, and you can feel it – the pace of life and everything (BCM).

Students, particularly undergraduate students such as those in this study, are generally in transition, in the process of taking ownership of their own learning and becoming life-long learners.

The term andragogy – the education of an adult – opens up the arena of what instruction of adults might be. Andragogy, or androgogy, was a term made popular by Knowles (1970, 1984). Whereas pedagogy is linked to teaching that is didactic and teacher-led, andragogy reflects the differing capability of students in higher education to help shape and direct their own learning – to take responsibility. On balance, higher education is less likely to expect that the teacher have the same level of responsibility or care as they would in earlier levels of education; it becomes a shared responsibility between the teacher and the student.

Supporting this idea of greater student independence at university is a perception that at school the teachers were more actively looking out for students, helping them to do well.

> Maybe like in **school**, you know your teachers want you to do well. Not that **lecturers** don't want you to do well, but like they [school teachers] **care** if you do well (AJM).

> In High **School** you see **students** always hanging after class, talking to **teachers** for a really long **time**. I guess it's those **students** that require

the **care** because during HSC **teachers** were your best **friends.** You have **students** having consultations with them to help (BMM).

Doing well is something that any teacher wants for their students, though lecturers are rarely aware of an individual's progress during the semester. Tied to this is the expectation on the part of the academic that students are adults and that the student's performance is the student's responsibility.

> Like, before I said about all the extra responsibility we have when we come here. We have to manage everything ourselves, you should know when things are due and that's up to you. If you don't know, then you forgot, it's your fault. I think that's what they mean by **care**. Back in High **School** the **teacher** would always let you know, "OK guys, your thing is due next **week**, get a move on". And then, yeah, like, I think that's what they mean by **caring**. Just to keep you in line and someone to **tell** you something, that even though you could have gone and looked for it yourself but you still want that **person** to **tell** you, just to keep you on check, you know. I think that's what they mean by **care** (BMM).

There exists the need for safety nets for students as they develop, since not all students are the same. Quite a lot of focus on improving the first-year experience and increase student retention has resulted in processes to help student transition from high school to university (Bowles et al. 2013; Krause 2005). However, more might need to be done as quite a few of the study respondents were unaware of where to go when experiencing difficulties and were relatively ignorant of the supports available from the institution. This is addressed in Chapter 4, which looked at support within the university.

5.4 Meta-theme: *lecturer* **and** *students* – **as educational actors**

In the meta-theme of *lecturer* and *students,* the discussion will centre on relationships: what relation might mean in the higher education milieu, which actor/s are important, where care might play a part in enhancing the interaction, what academics may bring to the relationships, and the emerging discussion of transformative education and service dominant logic (Fisher & Miller 2008; Vargo & Lusch 2004) with co-production of the learning opportunity. Ultimately, education reduces to a cumulative set of two-way interactions between the learner and someone, or something (Kilic 2011), transforming the individual into a more knowing being through dyadic relations over time.

5.4.1 What is relation? Dyads as two-way relationships

Teaching is relational. Care theory rests on the premise that successful student-instructor relationships are important for learning: "teachers must build relationships of care and trust" (Noddings 1995, p. 196). Relationships fostered through care allow the student to grow and learn in their own unique way – by enabling, not suppressing or crushing. Mayeroff (1971) as quoted in von Krogh defined care in educational relationships:

> to care for someone is to help them to learn, to help her to increase her awareness of important events and their consequences, and to help nurture her personal knowledge creation while sharing her insights. (von Krogh 1998, p. 137)

Relationships need to be fostered, not only between teacher and student, but also between the students themselves.

Noddings (1988) a seminal care theorist, highlights that care and caring are two-way exchanges between one or more educational actors (Garza 2009; O'Brien 2010). Noddings (2001) theorises that caring occurs reciprocally between what she terms the *one-caring* and the one *cared-for*. Reciprocity of care was shown as important in a study of online instruction (Marx 2011). Reciprocity identifies the need for a two-way relationship in which care is not just given by a teacher to the student, but also given by the student to the teacher (Barber 2002). Teachers are expected to care for students and students to care for teachers, even if the relationship tends to be one-sided given that the balance of power is in favour of the teacher (Noblit 1993). Mayeroff (1971), on the other hand, suggests that context will dictate if care is reciprocated, defining care as a virtue rather than as an act.

In the typical large undergraduate class setting, there may be relatively little personal interaction or identifiable giving of individual care. Rather, there exists a collective need for educators 'to take care' – to tend to someone's needs – to aid them in their learning. The lecturer focuses on addressing longer-term needs for all students rather than giving more immediate attention for any one individual. This distinction is captured in the following quote:

> That is somehow a challenge [for the teacher] ... it's easier to ... individually **care** [as the academic] than more personally **care** [for each individual] (BFF).

Conversely, if individual care for the student is not communicated, then reciprocation in caring for the academic by the student is less likely.

The sentiment from the students interviewed reflected little about them specifically caring for their teachers in higher education. The focus was on passing the subject. Some students did, however, talk about strong connections formed with teachers in their earlier school years.

> If it wasn't something [problem] I could discuss at **home**, I would definitely go to the counsellor or I would even go back to my old **school**. Because they always have old girls back all the **time** (ABF).

Pressure in the current neoliberal environment in higher education may be leaving some academics feeling uncared for (Naidoo & Jamieson 2005; Rynes et al. 2012). Ultimately, anyone needs to receive care in some way or other in order to continue to give care.

A relationship implies a significant connection between two or more people reflecting particular attitudes or behaviours. In the teaching context, relation is seen as something that works positively to improve the learning outcomes of the student (Noddings 1995; Bingham & Sidorkin 2004; Fitzmaurice 2008). Another way of defining relation is the "space where the teacher and the students are communicating with each other" (Kishimoto & Sandretto 2008, p. 11). In a teacher's reflective statements of teaching philosophies, the relational dimension emerged as important (Fitzmaurice 2008). Caring and words such as 'nurturing' and 'thoughtful' are descriptions that can be used to define the student-teacher dyad (O'Brien 2010), particularly in school.

> In High **School** you are a lot more nurtured, I guess. You are younger and you kind of need a lot more guidance, and you look up to your **teacher**s as role models (ABF).

Words students used to describe O'Brien as a caring professor were "availability, openness, and kindness, if not always caring per se" (O'Brien 2010, p. 110).

Though specifically named as such, these characteristics indicate a caring approach to teaching. Thus, many academics have acceptable-to-student characteristics in terms of being a good teacher, despite the lack of closeness in the teacher-student relationships.

5.4.2 What is the nature of the relationship?

If it is accepted that relationships are different in higher education than in other educational spheres, then the nature of such relationships is important when exploring care meanings. Some teachers keep their relationships on a very professional level, maintaining a certain distance from their students. Others strive to reduce the teacher-pupil gap, actually seeking to establish a close rapport with students. Either approach could be successful in engendering learning. In the first, the teacher can inspire and deliver their course in a way that motivates and fosters learning. The second approach helps lecturers to understand each individual, adjusting and responding to their needs. Interestingly, neither approach would necessarily suit the practices of all lecturers, as academics and students alike have differing personalities, concerns, needs and motivations. Care therefore takes on many guises, with no recommended form except to suggest some version of care needs to be evident.

Some students experience particularly heightened anxiety in the transition to university (Krause 2005; Palmer, O'Kane & Owens 2009); for example, increased concerns stemming from the responsibility placed on them to manage their own learning. Students also find themselves in an environment that has different challenges and rules to those previously experienced. The class sizes in higher education are a potential cause for concern for most students – becoming one of many. They rapidly realise that the lecturer, unlike their class teacher, may not know them and is unlikely to be able to care for them individually.

> It's hard for a **lecturer** to **car**e because they've got three hundred **people** in front of them (BKM).

> There are really a lot of **students** out there for the **lecturer**. It's pretty much hard to **care** [for] all **students**, isn't it? (BFF).

> To look at it, like, logistically not when he/she is lecturing to a **class** of two hundred **student**s, like you can't [have a relationship] (AHM).

I understand their concern [students], but as I said, it's really not feasible when you have like thousands of **students** (BCM).

School ... [was] tight knit, where everyone knew each other. To here, which is a huge campus, forty thousand **students**? Like a **lecture** theatre – one of my Accounting **lectures** had seven hundred **people** in it (ABF).

When you're in High **School**, you see that **teacher** heaps, like many **time**s a **week**, like eight hours. But when you're in **Uni**versity you see them once, so you can't really expect the **tutor** to **care** as much. Because if you're seeing them [the teacher] eight times a **week**, of course they're going to recognize you and **learn** your name, but when you're coming for one hour at a **time** you don't really expect them to know you really well (BMM).

For a few students, such conditions could develop as an ongoing concern that may hinder their learning or even their retention at university (Krause 2005). In tutorials, the opportunity to develop deep relationships is becoming increasingly difficult as university funding dictates larger tutorial class sizes and moves to greater online teaching (Deacon 2012). The small group sizes in tutorials still make the tutor the one most likely to be made aware of any individual issues or problems in students' lives.

5.4.3 Factors influencing the nature of care in teacher-student relationships

From the student perspective, a teacher for only one hour a week offers minimal possibility for, or expectation of, care. A personal relationship with the lecturer is not expected, unlike in school or Foundation Studies[22]. Students are much more likely to expect a relationship with their tutor, whom they consider to be in a better position to get to know them.

You can't cater to everyone's needs. I think that's more what you do in tutorial. The **tutor** [is the one] to **care** about us (BKM).

Tutorial people can **care** for **students** (BFF).

Student perception of an encouraging attitude from their teachers is important, even if it is not specific to each individual in a lecture or tutorial class.

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[22] The UNSW Foundation Studies is a university entry program for international students (see http://www.ufs.unsw.edu.au).

An assumption prevails that teachers would not teach if they did not care, given the pressures in higher education (Naidoo & Jamieson 2005). However, it is difficult for an academic to be concerned for each individual student in large undergraduate classes. Marx (2011) in her study of an online-mediated course in which there is no personal contact shows that online exchanges reflecting praise, caring language and concern by the facilitator for the personal situation of the student creates affective engagement and empathy, fostering learning. Not only does the teacher need to care, they need to show or demonstrate it to their students.

5.4.4 Caring (good) teachers

Students report that one of the important factors in choosing a university is good teaching (Shah & Nair 2010). Care is a fundamental component reflected in good teachers, who are described as having "the moral stances of honesty, respect, responsibility, care and compassion" (Fitzmaurice 2008, p. 341). Good teachers are interesting; engaging and help students attain particular academic goals, such as to gain a Pass, their degree or knowledge and skills.

> A good teacher, I think … should be very kind for us. They try to talk to us. Maybe we can be **friends** (AIM).

> ... one **lecturer**, what she did was really funny, she took a photo of us all so she can remember our names. Yeah to know our names, for me it's a nice touch but not really necessary because **University** everyone just seems to come and go. Come, go to lessons and just do their own thing (BMM).

Furthermore, students identify care as an element of teacher quality, care being associated with those "who demonstrate concern and patience, are encouraging and responsible, and relate well to students" (Tam, Heng & Jiang, p. 152). Personal values of kindness, respect and care are 'commonplace', though undervalued in education (Clegg & Rowland 2010; Hawk & Lyons 2008; Heffernan, Morrison & Jarratt 2010). Reputation for good teaching is spread by school advisors, word of mouth and the formal ratings of each university.

Mayeroff's *On Caring* (1971) discusses the "major ingredients of caring" for an educator. These include knowing the individual well, being responsive to the effects of teaching practice, tailoring the teaching approach to future students'

needs, taking an alternating narrow and wide perspective on the efficacy of their teaching, working at a pace set by the student, accepting and working with the capabilities of the learner, trusting that the learner can grow independently, learning from the student, being positive and having courage to take risks (Mayeroff 1971). For the most part, these are virtues similar to those described by Thayer-Bacon and Bacon (1996), encapsulating an ideal of the 'good teacher'. Lecturers, as an ideal, should be trying to make the student as knowledgeable as they themselves are.

> And when they [lecturers] are actually explaining it, they will try to make the end **people** [student] **understand** it as much as they **understand** it themselves (ACF).

> If they **care** about their **subject**, they should teach well (ANF).

Students acknowledge that a lecturer's passion for their subject may spark interest in the topic and translates to the lecturer being perceived as teaching well.

5.4.5 Care as nurturing

Nurturing or looking after others falls into natural care, the looking after one who is in need of nurturing to grow and develop (Noddings 1988; 2001). Care in the form of nurturing or mothering is a positive factor in earlier stages of education. In higher education, where independence from students is expected, it may not be warranted or welcome. Nurturing is increasingly construed as a labour of love rather than a reflection of professional activity. In educational service terms, providing more support than is expected or desirable might be viewed as over-servicing, and therefore does not attract reward. Little sense of the respondents feeling nurtured by their higher education teachers, male or female, was evident.

Nurturing, along with words such as providing, reproducing and sustaining, were noted by Frelin (2007) as "private sphere activities" – feminine values that tend to disappear in workplaces that emphasise business ideals. A body of work exists that takes a gendered view of nurturing (for example Gilligan 1982; Noddings 1988; van Manen 2002b). The coding of nurturing as female leads to a devaluing of the activity. Frelin (2007, p. 1) argues that "professionality entailed in

building educational relationships risks being disappeared as work as it is coded feminine". Caring for the individual student is perceived as a weakness rather than a necessary aspect of education, as posited by Noddings. Caring distracts the academic from other important tasks, such as research and publishing (Frelin 2007; Lea & Callaghan 2008; Rynes et al. 2012). Irrespective of whether nurturing is gendered, there is a real sense from this study that nurturing or mothering plays a minor role, if any, in higher education, as the relationships are more balanced than in pre-tertiary education.

5.4.6 Teacher-fostered climates for care and caring

Relationships in higher education are shaped by both the institution and the academic (Lea & Callaghan 2008). The teacher needs to build rapport and have a connection to students. Rapport has the greatest link to the notion of care exhibited by effective lecturers (Heffernan, Morrison & Jarratt 2010). In some circumstances, it may be difficult for the lecturer to build rapport. The students may not perceive that the lecturer cares.

> Sometimes in **lectures** the **lecturers** are just there ... they just want to get it over and done with. They just speak 'at you', like just **tell** you everything and then get out. Like they don't really **care** if you understand (BGF).

Rapport hinges on the approachability and friendliness of the teacher, and on having empathy and respect for the student (Noddings 2003b; Smart, Kelley & Conant 2003; Voss and Gruber 2006). Fairness can also be deemed an expression of care (Faranda & Clarke 2004), in which each student is perceived as being treated equally. Such characteristics have to be perceived by students (Care 1995) if they are to impact on learning outcomes.

Barnett (2009) talks of human beings having characteristics that reflect engagement with the "world around them" (p. 433). His dispositions and qualities such as carefulness, integrity (ethical behaviour), respect for others, solicitude and generosity signal an underlying notion of care. Students and lecturers alike can exhibit these qualities. Engagement is similar to *being* in the world in a concernful manner (Perl 1996), contrasted with withdrawal or disengagement that may result

from a lack of care or caring. Engagement and involvement in an activity heighten the effectiveness of the interaction.

Care on the part of teachers has its foundations in the Aristotelian rhetorical theory of 'ethos' (Treven & McCroskey 1997), in which caring is part of 'goodwill'. A strong link in education exists between perceived ethos, source credibility and subsequent learning (Thweatt & McCroskey 1998). Students develop perceptions of how the teacher feels about them by both direct and indirect observation and participation in student-teacher interactions. Tapping into the perception of teacher credibility, an 18-item scale composed of three dimensions, "competence, caring[23] and trustworthiness' (Treven & McCroskey 1997, p. 4), was developed. "Perceived caring" (Treven & McCroskey 1997, p. 1) impacts on course and teacher ratings, highlighting the link between care and learning outcomes. It is the interaction between the receiver and deliverer of education that is all-important. It is the perception of care rather than an actual caring ethos that matters.

For some students, the lecturer being mindful of the student's position, demonstrating empathy for students even in very large classes, helps the student in a positive way. In addition, many students, though not all, appreciate lecturers who can refer to individual students by name and develop a close relationship.

> I think it's better if the **lecturer** pay[s] attention to you. You **study** well. Like, you, **care** about what – what they think of you. ... If you know me, for **example**, and you know my name and everything. ... So you're more motivated to **study** if it's like that (AKF).

> As long as they are able to answer your **questions** and help you out, having a kind of a closer personal relationship's not a big deal to me (AHM).

In sum, the teacher can take many caring roles such as: "Nurturing parent, Uncle, Mentor, Lamplighter, and Social worker" (see Table 4, McShane 2006, p. 169). These different approaches to enacting care then define the possibilities for

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[23] Teven and McCoskey (1997) used a nine-attribute bipolar scale to capture 'perceived caring' (positive pole listed): cares about me; has my interests at heart; not self-centred; concerned for me; sensitive; understanding; responsive; understands how I feel; understands how I think.

empathy and care between the teacher and student. Ensuring the student feels cared for is the critical element in fostering a positive learning environment.

5.4.7 Care as avoiding harm

In addition to creating effective learning opportunities, an aim of taking care is to ensure that the student is not at risk. An awareness of the student situation through student feedback is one way to help avoid or reduce harm. Good teachers will seek both formal and informal feedback from students (Ballantyne 1999; Ballantyne, Bain & Packer 1999). Sharing student concerns and identifying aspects of the student's experience that are problematic can guide course and curriculum development. What is apparent from the students in the study is that end-of-course feedback, the UNSW Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI)[24] process is not considered sufficient to help their learning experience. Respondents feel the reports result only in positive adjustments that benefit future students of that course.

> Yeah, I think it was the way he went about doing it. And, probably like, just before we did the CATEI thing, he was like "we actually do **care** about what you guys do say". It was really personal "I want to improve my **teaching**". I know all teachers say that, but he actually – somehow he sounded like he means it more than when other **people** say that. Some say, "Just fill out this survey. I want to improve myself". It is not like that, "No I actually do, so maybe I could change my **example**s if it's not good enough for you guys to **understand**". Like, he suggests ways he could improve in the **lecture**. It shows that he does **care**, then (BEF).

Some teachers seek feedback during the semester, and students appreciate such efforts as it contributes to their current learning experience.

Feedback to students is most often in the form of critique and evaluation of ongoing assessment. Formative feedback is designed to help them improve their efforts. Amin (2011) interrogates the "battle between two discourses of assessment in higher education, namely, care and critique, a context generated binary structure" (p. 268). This highlights that providing assessments that challenge and stretch students, at times beyond their comfort zone, is in fact

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[24] CATEI feedback is sought for the course; large group and small group teaching.

caring, though students may not see it this way. Amin points out that there are hidden aspects in this apparent dichotomy between care and constructive feedback. Dissatisfaction with feedback that was critical was associated with a "perceived lack of care, interest or respect for students by teaching staff" (Rowe, Muchatuta & Wood 2010, p. 219). Lack of care was shown in lengthy turnaround and response times to student requests as well as coded comments that were not understood by some students, particularly those with language difficulties. Drawing on services theory, some of this perceived lack of care associated with assessment feedback can be managed through setting realistic expectations for communications, both to and from students.

5.4.8 Care as emotion

Student experience a range of emotions that can help or hinder learning (Ng & Forbes 2009; Storrs 2011). Caring can promote emotions that encourage engagement (Garza 2009; Howells & Cumming 2012). Care in this sense is a positive emotion – to be passionate, show interest, or have a kind disposition – and is the opposite of negative emotions such as care-as-worry (van Manen 2002b). Positive states of mind among students and teachers can help them to develop relationships and connect with course content. If the teacher is immersed in and enjoys their subject, they enthuse their audience, engaging students in a way that is more likely to lead to learning. The lecturer communicating passion and enthusiasm helps students engage (Ballantyne, Bain & Packer 1999; Hill, Lomas & MacGregor 2003).

> If they are passionate about what they are **teaching**, and it shows. If they know what they are talking about, it shows that they do **care** about their **teaching** and that kind of thing (BHF).

However, teaching in higher education places more emphasis on the cognitive than the affective (Storrs 2011), identifying an area of higher education pedagogy that needs to be addressed, given the emotion inherent in learning.

5.4.9 Lack of concern or caring

As previously mentioned, it is difficult at times for the teacher in higher education to demonstrate care, given their other roles in research and service

(Amin 2011). Certainly the perception is present among respondents that the lecturers do not, or cannot, care at an individual student level, given class sizes and pressures to research and publish. Compounding this are modes of content delivery that are largely one-way: lecturer to student. Efforts to encourage co-creation in learning are problematic when dealing with large undergraduate classes (Amin 2011). In this study a real sense of a 'disconnect' or an imbalance in the relationship between the lecturers and the individual student is found. Yet, arguably, the teacher needs to display care or connectedness to students for better learning outcomes to result.

From the perspective of the lecturer faced with large classes, they understand the impossibility of gauging the degree to which each member of their audience has absorbed what has been said. Some emerging technologies, such as clickers and online instant surveys, provide an ability to monitor the cohort's learning as the lecture progresses. Students perceive that in a lot of cases little effort is made to check if each student has understood: "they don't really **care** if you **understand**" (BGF). Lecturers would expect that students when studying would reflect on what they had not understood and spend time to fill in any of the gaps in their understanding of what was discussed in the lectures or tutorials. A question arises as to whether new technologies and mechanisms for student interaction affect the underlying nature of relationships that are arguably fundamental to engaging students, and in these arenas how can care be communicated to students?

Some students clearly did not wish for the lecturer to care about them. They were not looking for closeness in exchanges they had with the lecturer or tutor. It was intimated by students that close relationships did not always need to occur.

> In terms of the **lecturer** really caring about the **student**, it is a bit unnecessary really. ... You can't really get that close relationship [and it] is unrealistic to think so (AHM).

The increasing commoditization of education, with the lecturer as "commodity producer" and the student as "consumer", means that relationships "become disaggregated" (Naidoo & Jamieson 2005, p. 271). This fits with the idea that

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students are there to obtain a qualification or degree, and not to become scholars, as in a more traditional expectation of higher education.

5.5 Higher education relationships in sum

In this relational chapter, the student conversations separate into discussion of care as responsibility for knowledge – the "deliverable" of educational service – and care as interaction between teachers and students. A basic premise is that relationships with fellow students and teachers help learning. Care is a factor contributing to establishing and maintaining educational relationships. Yet it would appear that an opportunity exists for the university to more actively foster relationships to enhance the student experience and learning. Students look to tutors rather than their lecturers for a personal connection. Some of the gap between the university and the student discussed in the previous chapter is filled by formal structures such as lectures and tutorials, and by interactions with teachers in small-group settings. However, personal aspects of a student's life are not under the control of the university, nor lecturers, yet can play a major role in helping or hindering student outcomes (Brennan & Osborne 2008). It is these external influences, to be discussed in Chapter 6, that fill the remaining gaps in the student experience.

Chapter 6
Student experiences: Meanings of care in their 'other lives'

6.1 Introduction: Locating care in students' 'other lives'

The varied and interesting stories of individual students' experiences were
an anticipated aspect of this research. What was unanticipated was the range of
non-university factors influencing student views of their university experience.
Listening to the diverse stories of their 'other lives' helped make sense of care in
their 'university lives'. After discussing patterns found in the student
conversations, this chapter will discuss glimpses of the diversity of students 'other
lives', giving insights into the 'imported', 'externally' and 'internally generated'
factors[25] (Brennan & Osborne 2008) that ground understanding of care and caring
evident in perceptions of students' university experience.

The argument outlined in Chapter 4 is that the faculty, administrative and
support staff who deliver higher educational services have an implicit 'duty of
care' for students. At a minimum, they provide opportunities for students to learn
and gain qualifications. Less obvious from the student's perspective is just how
the university demonstrates care, or how the perception of care might impact on
an individual student's experience. If care in life is necessary, and it is not being
sought from the institution, then arguably students are seeking it elsewhere.

In Chapter 5, the importance of relationships in the delivery of educational
services and positive student experiences was explored. Within educational
relationships, an element of care between teachers, students and knowledge is
present. A lack of closeness in the student-teacher relationship at university, in
part attributable to increasing numbers in HEIs and the move to a secular
research-driven institutional model for higher education, is evident (Barnett
2011). Conversely, an apparent lack of intimacy may simply be a reflection of the
fact that most students are adults who are able to, and desire to, manage their own
higher education experience (Maher, Mitchell & Brown 2009). Whilst academics

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[25] Diversity in student experience has three aspects: '*imported*' attitudes colouring student's
expectations; '*externally generated*' factors determining student lifestyle choices; and '*internally
generated*' student behaviours and attitudes shaping student engagement with their studies and
other aspects of university life (Brennan & Osborne 2008, p. 180, italics in original).

may only be aware of a small part of a student's life, it is acknowledged that university is "a time of heightened psychological distress" (Rowe, Muchatatu & Wood 2010, p. 223). At times, individual students may need academic or social support (Bewick et al. 2010). Academics as well as the HEI provide support, though what was observed was that most students have their own ways to deal with the challenges of university life and are reticent to tap into, or unaware of, the available university resources.

The findings presented in this chapter cannot be said to be exhaustive regarding the experiences of the student population as a whole. What it gives is a fascinating window into the diverse 'other lives' of students. Individual students cope with the challenges of higher education by taking care of themselves in many different ways (Besley 2005; Foucault 1986). The discussion of care and caring will touch on student choice and decision making, expectations in relation to actual experience and care as a state of mind. Some respondents, such as international students, scholarship-supported students or students in small cohort programs, have particular situations that set them apart as having more overt opportunity for care and support from the institution and their teachers. Exploring the diverse experiences of students provides richness to our understanding of where care is located and how it is interpreted.

6.2 Patterns found in the student conversations

The individual section is found in the upper right of the whole-of-cohort semantic map (see Chapter 3 and Figure 6.1). The concepts aggregated in this section are semantically linked with the institutional concepts discussed in Chapter 4. A single pathway connects 'people' though 'time' to the concept 'course' in the lower-right section of the semantic map.
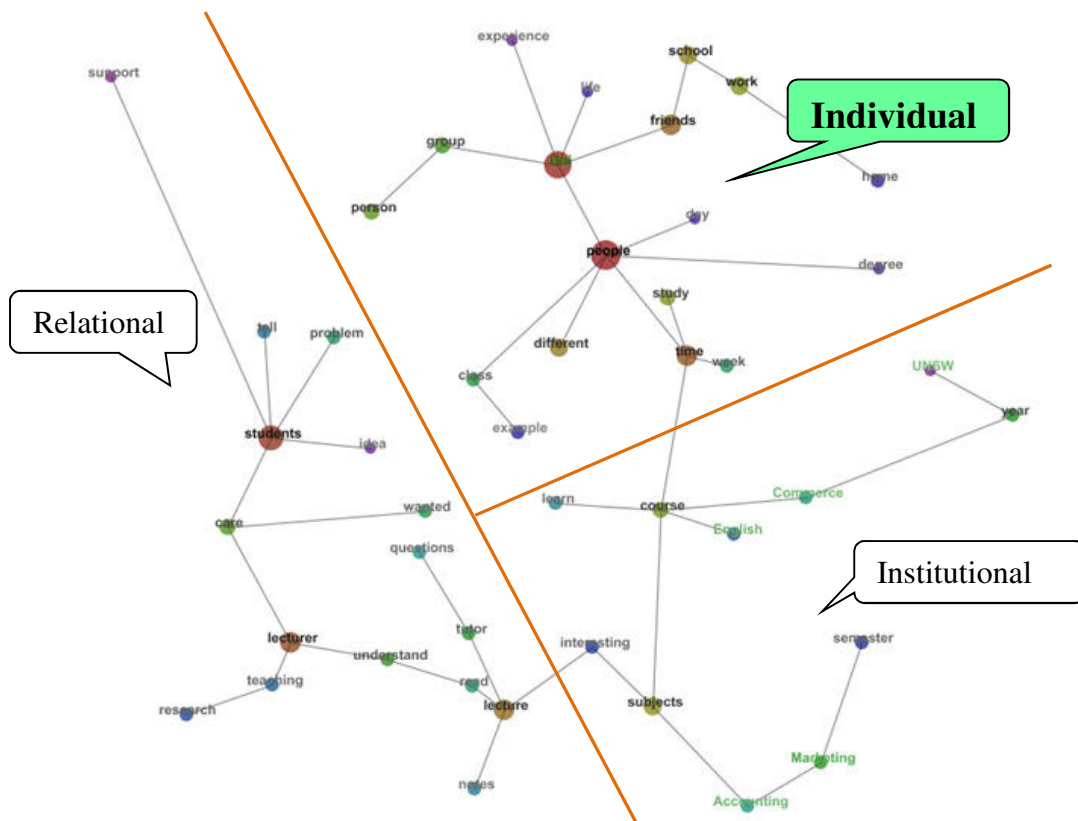
Figure 6.1 Concept map from whole-of-cohort analysis (See Fig 3.8; lines added.)

The conversations (see Figures 6.1 and 6.2 and Table 6.1) reveal the prevalence of comments around 'people' and 'Uni', the main concepts of the broad themes *people/person* and *home/school* (see Figure 6.2). These themes capture influences on the individual's university experience from both their past and present social environments (Brennan & Osborne 2008). In these conversational spaces, students refer collectively to people; groups such as family, school, social and sporting organizations; and activities that they draw on to cope with or enrich their lives whilst at university. The semantic network (see Figure 6.2) connects 'Uni' with their 'friends', 'school', 'work' and 'home'. Links also emerge between 'experience' and 'life' as well as 'people' – a 'person' or as a 'group'. 'People' has connections to conversations around 'time', 'day', 'week' and 'study' as well as 'different'. As can been seen in Figure 6.2, the *people* theme is brighter (red on the map) indicating it is interrelated with many of the other concepts, being a term used widely in conversation.
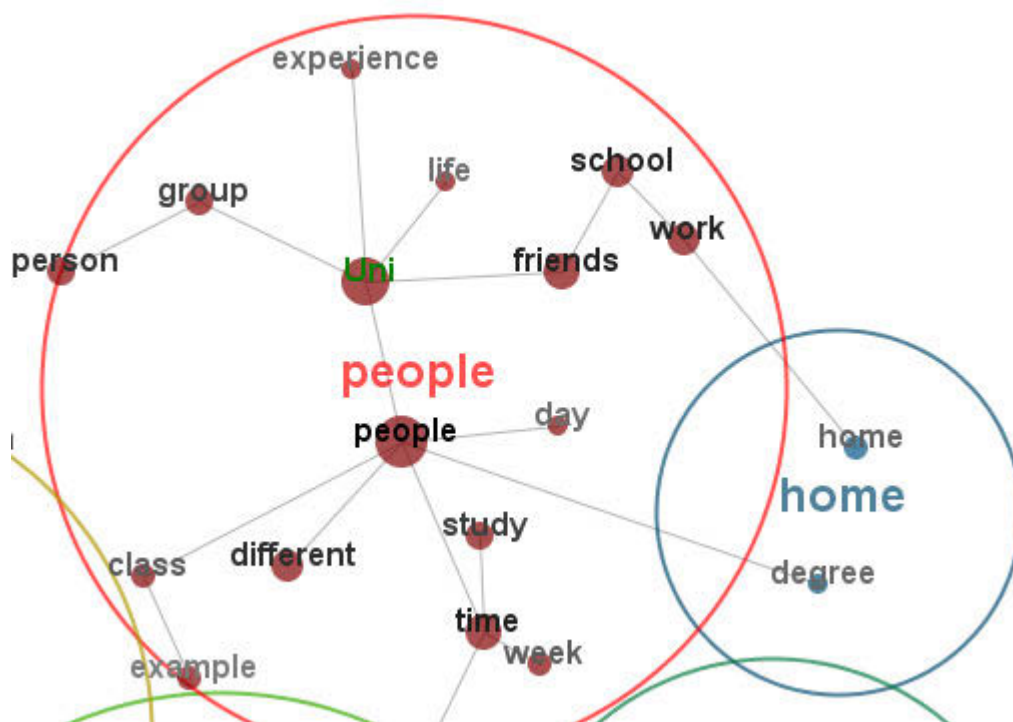
Figure 6.2 Map: Section of whole-of-cohort map identified as individual

The prevalence of 'care' associated with this set of individual section concepts is relatively low, less than 5% (see Table 6.1), highlighting that student conversations focus on their experiences more generally. Care is not a term that students use often when talking about their lives outside of the classroom. Their 'other lives' are where students turn for support and as a steadying influence as they take on the unknowns of university life.

Table 6.1 'Care'-associated concepts and source respondents

'Care' & '...' (see list below)	Count of text snippets	Likelihood of co-occurrence with 'care'	Expressed *sentiment(s)*	Source respondents for quotes[*]
Theme: *people*				
'Uni'	23	3%	University needs to care but not about individual	AMF; APF; BBF; BGF; BHF; BJF; BMM
'person'	9	3%	Someone to help keep student grounded	BHF; BMM
'study'	7	3%	Ask about student and help for student to study	AKF; AMF;
'different'	9	3%	Not all students' needs are the same	AJM; BFF; BGF
'time'	11	3%	Problems in managing time	ALF; AOF; BBF; BEF; BMM
'week'	3	2%	Lack of contact time in a week	BMM
'work'	7	2%	Issues around study and part-time work	ABF; AMF; BHF
'class'	2	2%	Formal meeting time	BLF; BMM
'school'	6	2%	University related back to school experience	ABF; AJM; BBF; BMM
'example'	1	2%	Of where care noted	APF
'people'	11	2%	A term used to generalise	AJM; BEF; BFF; BGF; BKM; BLF
'day'	1	1%	Orientation day as source of information	BBF
'experience'	1	1%	-	INT
'friends'	3	1%	-	INT
'group'	1	<1%	-	INT
'life'	0	0%	-	-
Theme: *home*				
'degree'	2	2%	Benefits of a degree	BBF: BHF
'home'	0	0%	-	-

* Respondent file code: e.g., ABF and BCM. (i) First letter indicates a respondent from first cohort (A) or second cohort (B); second letter is a unique alphabetic code; (iii) third letter indicates male (M) or female (F). The interviewer was identified with tag INT.

6.3 Imported influences that shape university experience

Students attend university from a range of social and educational backgrounds. They bring with them different expectations and hopes for what university will bring. Imported expectations are a factor contributing to the heterogeneity of the student population, creating a challenge for the institution in meeting myriad student needs. Students' reasons for attending a particular university are wide-ranging.

A commonly held student expectation is that the university cares about their long-term future. Students rely on the university to help them in opening up possibilities for success in their life ahead.

> But [from] a personal **student** point of view, we would like the **University** to **care** for me, just because we kind of depend on the **University** to sort of set our future path (APF).

As education is a credence service, students have no way of knowing whether the university is able to provide education that will help shape a positive future for them. So trust in the reputation of the university is necessary. Students have faith that the institution is able to take a strategic view and look after their marketability as graduates, appropriately managing the university image and providing employment-relevant degree options to enhance student prospects. This sentiment is in line with the view of higher education as education for employment (Naidoo & Jamieson 2005), with little emphasis on more traditional views of education, such as education for the development of an individual who will contribute to society.

6.3.1 Choice of university and program

Students' expectations influence decision making when selecting their university or degree (Crozier et al. 2008; Joseph, Yakhou & Stone 2005). Choice options for most students are determined by their university entrance exam score. The student's entrance score opens up, or restricts, their course and university choices. An unanticipated score, higher or lower, may realign the student's goals.

> I was so happy that I got **Uni** at New South because I was expecting UTS or Macquarie (BBF).

Students may have concerns or worries about their choice of university or degree, since it is an important decision often made with less than perfect information (Shah & Nair 2010). For a few respondents, the decision was made solely on the reputation of their preferred institution – positive word of mouth, for others it was on the uniqueness of a particular program or degree.

> My dad came from **UNSW** ... a lot of my family is from **UNSW** ... so they were saying that I don't really have much of a choice (BCM).
>
> I think New South really does offer a really good Exchange Programme (ABF).
>
> ... to see my mum and dad that happy to see their daughter going to **Uni**versity, I think that really made me want to come to **Uni** as well (BEF).

Other decision criteria, indicating what students care about in choosing their university, included opportunities to study overseas on exchange, scholarships, proximity to their home, family and transport availability.

Peers have a strong influence over the decision choices in many spheres (Lovelock & Wirtz 2010). However, decisions around higher education are less peer-driven, with other influences such as school advisors, family, institutional image and reputation coming into play (Shah & Nair 2010). School friends have differing aspirations.

> ... my **friends** from **school** weren't that interested. They didn't really **care** about **Uni** (BBF).

Another student, a boarder in high school, stated that her friends lack of interest in going to university meant that "it [study] was not stressful" (BHF), though she reflected that if she had wanted higher marks then she would avoid boarding as it was a "major set-back study-wise" (BHF).

Parents of international students often have a significant say, not only of university but in course selection.

> I was thinking of doing design ... I didn't do it cause my mum said it's not good for a career ... I am doing Economics ... it is not really what I

wanted to do ... after I finish this **course** hopefully I can enrol in something about design or product packaging (ALF).

Many international students gain university entrance through a university preparation program such as Foundation Studies[26] that include courses to help orient students to the challenges of university study. Students entering through a university preparation program have a more realistic expectation of what university might mean as Foundation courses are delivered in small group university-style lecture tutorials.

6.4 External factors: Aspects affecting students' academic life

Once at university there are many adjustments to lifestyle choices, for example, where they live – family home, shared student accommodation or a residential college, and their pattern of class attendance. Financial considerations and the necessity for most students to work part-time also shape their behaviour and attitudes towards their studies.

6.4.1 Challenging imported expectations

Once at university, students reflect on the differing context of university to that of school (Ceobanu et al. 2008). The close connections they had with teaching and administrative staff at their school, with a sense of being looked after or cared for, are less likely to be experienced at university. The respondents express a doubt that it is possible for there to be individual care given the constraints of large classes and fewer contact hours in which to develop a relationship with the teachers, particularly their lecturers.

> But when you're in **University** you see them once, so you can't really expect the **tutor** to **care** [for the individual] as much. Because if you're seeing them eight times a **week** [at school], of course they're going to recognize you and **learn** your name, but when you're coming for one hour at a **time** you don't really expect them to know you really well (BMM).
>
> There are really a lot of **students** out there for the **lecturer**. It's pretty much hard to **care** for all **students**, isn't it (BFF)?

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[26] UNSW Foundation Studies is a university entry program for international students (see http://www.ufs.unsw.edu.au).

> I don't think **student**[s] expect them [the lecturer] to **care** that intensely because there is so many of you (BEF).

> The **lecturer** – there [are] too many **people** and the information's too general and she or he can't take **care** of **everyone**, yeah (BLF).

> It's hard for a **lecturer** to **care** because they've got three hundred **people** in front of them. You can't cater to **everyone**'s needs (BKM).

As the students above note, large class sizes make knowing someone's name difficult, yet the literature recognises that a teacher knowing a student's name is a precursor to the perception of knowing them as an individual, leading to an increased likelihood of care (O'Brien 2010; Teven & Gorham 1998; Teven 2007). Few students would have experienced being taught in a large lecture environment before. Lectures delivered to large classes challenge the possibility of meeting diverse student learning needs.

> All they (the lecturers) **care** about is just giving you the information they need to, because they have to. And that's about it. They don't really **care** how much you **understand** or not. Although they say "put up your hand and ask **questions**", no one wants to do it. Obviously, maybe **people** feel like they don't **care**. I don't know, most of the time when you look at a lecturer they don't **care**. They just want to teach what is on the board (BEF).

Thus, care in higher education has to do with something other than care for each individual; for example, care for the design and implementation of interesting and engaging courses. Students who have come with prior expectations for a level of care and attention they experienced in school need to adjust to what is possible in large first-year classes.

Students require a level of adaptability in adjusting to the administrative processes of the university. They have to learn how to select subjects, enrol and balance their timetable. They need to care enough to understand the institutional structures and how decisions that may affect them are made at the university, faculty or school level. Understanding these processes is a challenge for many first-year students.

> I think a lot of **students** that they don't know, like First **Year students**; they don't know how [the] **Uni** system works, apart from core **courses** – what else you're supposed to **study**. How do you

choose? How do you do this and that? All I suggest [to them] is that you go and ask your faculty office (AMF).

The timetabling of formal classes and assessment may be perceived as not caring as it may be difficult to accommodate individual student needs. Not all students are able to get the timetable they desire, particularly when they have part-time work to fit around their studies.

> [It would help to] put things [lectures and tutorials] at **different times** so that everything would suit you [the student] (BGF).

A service that delivers a learning experience less than is expected can lead to dissatisfaction (Lovelock & Wirtz 2010). Many 'vote with their feet' and only selectively attend lectures (Larkin 2010).

> I don't go to **lectures** that often, I prefer just, like, doing it in my own **time**, like online. I don't enjoy going to **lectures.** ... And everyone, like **people** sitting there on i-pods, and reading, and doing other stuff (ALM).

Lecture class size and timetabling are issues some students were unhappy with.

Students are more likely to look for care from their tutor than their lecturer. Tutorials in the business degree have class sizes ranging from 18 to 30, with a variety of formats geared to allow greater student interaction than is possible in the large lecture groups.

> You can't cater to **everyone**'s needs. I think that's more what you do in tutorial. The **tutor** [needs] to **care** about us (BKM).

The tutor has a chance to get to know each individual student. It is in tutorials that students report a connection to their tutors and an expectation of individual care and attention, as discussed in the previous chapter. This research has highlighted the important role the tutor plays in caring for students, being someone who is likely to know them by name.

6.4.2 Showing care: Exceeding expectations

A service that goes beyond expectations or a provider who takes especial care in service delivery is said to 'delight' (Gruber et al. 2012; Lovelock & Wirtz

2010). Good teaching needs to communicate passion for the subject as well as forge a connection with students (Fitzmaurice 2008; Heffernan, Morrison & Jarratt 2010; Kember & Kwan 2000; Tam, Heng & Jiang 2009). Regular emails sent by the business school telling students of internships or job opportunities is an example of a service that made one student feel special and cared for.

> Therefore, we would think that the **School** of Business is **caring** for each **student**. We feel that we're valued (APF).

The student saw the business school as helping them prepare for their future, and even though these email alerts were being sent to the whole cohort, this individual felt the communication was targeted at them.

6.4.3 Adjustment to university life

Students may avoid difficulties in the new, challenging environment of university by forming university-based friendships or networks and signing up to activities inside and outside the university (Mayer & Puller 2008). Challenges for first-year students in adapting to university are separation from their friends, the changing nature of relationships with their teachers and the responsibility to manage subject choice and task deadlines (Krause 2005).

6.4.3.1 New university friends

Separating from their friends starts with the decision whether to go to university or not, and what degree and course to study. Many of our students have come to university with at most one or two friends, so they need to build new university friendships, even though they stay close to their school friends.

> But I generally just stay with High **School friends** really (BKM).
>
> Yeah, but I think, I liked it when I first came into **Uni**, because you get to **work** with your **friends** and stuff (BEF).
>
> Well, I came to this **Uni** and it wasn't many **people** from my **school**. On the first day I came early because I thought we had tutes, but no one was there. So I had to wait five hours and I didn't know anyone, so that was pretty bad. Bad first day, but yeah, it's not too bad (BKM).
>
> They [other students] are **different** from my **school friends** (BFF).

But if you want to expand and meet new **people** in **different year**s and **different course**s, then you really have to get out and make a lot more of an effort (ABF).

And just the good thing is that I can mix with a lot of **friends.** I know if I go to Korea I have a **friend** in Korea because I met them here. If I go to Taiwan I have somebody there. So I really love this type of culture (ADF).

And also with **Uni** I find it is harder to make **friends** because you're not as concentrated in a group. Because in High **School** everyone's [**people**] got the same time schedule and interests, and just group yourselves together (APF).

It is not unusual that students know no one when they first arrive, so making a few friends has a strong influence on "student intentions to stay" at university (Krause 2005, p. 60). Friendships may be solely based on university interaction and not extend into the student's wider circle of existing friends.

You get quite friendly with people in your **classes** but [not] really strong friendships, because I probably spend a bit of a minimalist time here [at university] (AHM).

I guess it is a really good place to meet **people**. It's kind of hard, though, to become close **friends** with them. Because everyone is on a surface level—I reckon (BGF).

The relationships between **people** are not that close compared to **High School** (ANF).

These university friendships are needs-based and form through meeting up in lectures or tutorials and through various university activities and societies.

Students in unfamiliar surroundings tend to set out to find like-minded people, individuals who are similarly socially situated. The theory of homophily posits that "people with similar traits, attributes, and demographic characteristics are more likely to associate with one another than they are with others" (Jaffee et al. 2008, p. 58). This is especially apparent when there are numbers of international students from one country, though the phenomenon, while not always noted, will occur amongst most students.

Yeah, I choose my **group**. The **group** is mostly made up of Asians. But for the Research one [subject] this one [group is] Australian. But for the other one, the Consumer Behaviour one, one is Korean and the other one is Indonesian (BDF).

> I've got a cousin who has got a really close relationship with me. I'm living with him. His dad is my dad's brother and his mum is my mum's sister. So we are cousins but really close (BNF).

Students from similar cultures and backgrounds gravitate to each other by joining country of origin student clubs. On balance the fostering of student relationships, even if they do tend towards cultural groups, could be seen as positive rather than detrimental.

Many students form their own self-study groups that have both an academic and social function. In listening to the students I found these particularly interesting, as prior to this study I had been unaware how prevalent they are.

> Actually, I made **study group**. It is not just the four **people**. I ask my **friends** to have **study group**. If we **study** together and every **week** we allocate each part, then they **study** individually, then they are going to know and explain it to us. We have got twice a **week** that **study groups**, and it is very helpful (AEF).

Students sought out other students to review that week's tasks or lectures, to talk with each other, to do any of the set tasks together and invariably to help reduce the uncertainties in their academic lives. It goes some way to explain the speed at which both correct, and at times incorrect, information transmits through the student grapevine. Such activities are supported through the provision of numerous small group study areas in the library, the various faculty buildings and even outdoor seating.

Student self-study groups represent a form of care through information sharing among friends and avoidance of harm from missing something crucial to success in the subject. The self-study groups represent one way that students set about looking after themselves and managing the balance between learning, health and well-being (Mitchell, Maher & Brown 2008). If they are not aware before they come to university, they rapidly become aware of the need to stand on their own two feet and take care of themselves given that the level of academic oversight is not the same as in school.

6.4.3.2 Taking care: Responsibility

Some respondents reported that they expected care from their school teachers since they were close to them. They even went so far as saying that "during HSC **teachers** were your best **friends**" (BMM).

> Yeah. But it is **different** – **School**, they **care** ... in **school** you know your **teachers** want you to do well. Not that **lecturers** don't want you to do well, but like they [teachers] **care** if you do well (AJM).

A perceived distance develops between the student and their university teachers, reducing the opportunity for students to be aware of care taken by academics. The common structuring of knowledge transmission with a large formal lecture and smaller tutorial makes care and caring less evident than in the school situation. The approach to teaching in higher education tends to a one-size-fits-all model that is at odds with the diversity of the student population, meaning that some student needs are not being met. A distinction between personal care and individual care can be made. Personal care was something that might be possible in smaller groups such as tutorials, in which a relationship, evidenced by remembering the students' names and particular needs, builds over the semester. To "individually care" (BFF) is more about the lecturer taking care of the whole course, including the students, en masse. As a consequence of caring for all aspects of the course, they look after the needs of students.

> They can **care** [for] the quality of what they give to **students**, they can do that, and probably [be] more active or more clearly deliver the things [lecture material] (BFF).

> But I do find that with **Uni**versities you can't really choose whether you like a style of **teaching**. It's really hard to find a place where you can find answers. Because as my parents say, "They stuff you like a Peking Duck" because they just teach you … the **lecturers** prepare these slides and they teach you everything they want to teach you. They don't really see whether the **students** are able to take it or they fully learned it, or whether their style of **teaching** is really **interesting** (APF).

Some lecturers manage to create flexible adaptive learning opportunities and transmit their concern for individual student learning, while others are less successful.

At university, students need to manage their own study. To avoid failure the student needs to put in the work with little or no prompting from their lecturers. The following quotations give the gist of this expectation.

> Like before I said about all the extra responsibility we have when we come here. We have to manage everything ourselves. You should know when things are due and that's up to you, if you don't know [and] then you forgot, it's your fault. Back in **High School** the **teacher** would always let you know, "OK guys, your thing's due next **week**, get a move on". Just to keep you in line and **someone** to **tell** you something, that even though you could have gone and looked for it yourself but you still want that **person** to **tell** you, just to keep you on check, you know (BMM).

> Whereas at **High School** they were more like, you know, if your grades were dropping or you weren't attending, they would chase after you and say why? But here they kind of, like, we're here to help you get your **degree**. If you don't want it, if you don't want to **work** towards it, then that is your own fault (AEF).

> There's also, if you go into **class** late, there's no teacher on your back saying, "Where were you, how come you weren't there?" (BKM).

The management of assessment tasks and achievement of satisfactory grades mainly falls to the student.

Continuous assessment, with work scheduled over the semester, means previous school-developed study patterns may often not work as well at university – "not like high **school**, [where] you just **work** hard at the end" (AMF). Academics are there to help, though some students perceive this differently.

> They don't really **care.** If you don't do the **work** it is your own fault (ABF).

> But, I don't know, it just seems like you rock up to **lectures** and then they [lecturers] do their thing and walk out. They don't really **care.** It is not that they want you to fail (AJM).

Students do not always appreciate responsibility for their own learning.

> [The lecturer] should worry about a **student'**s mark ... like my **lecturer** say[s], if the mark is low that mean[s] he or she fail[s] as a **lecturer** ... sometimes it [failure] is about the **lecturers** not delivering it properly and make the student confused all the time (AOF).

Other students express the perception that the lecturer is not there to monitor their performance, nor is it the lecturer's responsibility to ensure the student does the work. Students need to juggle time and resources across their courses as well as with any other commitments, such as part-time work. This is in contrast to being at school, where it is a given that teachers more visibly support students to do well, actively encouraging individual performance.

> ...from my First-**Year experience**, I know [the] **Course** Outline has everything you need to know. You don't need any other **person** to **tell** you that this thing is due (BMM).

Some academics will ask how a student is progressing, and this is perceived as caring.

> I think we want the **teacher** to **care** about how we're coping with the **study** (AMF).

> If the lecturer cares about you, they ask you, "Oh, so how are you doing? Are you coping well with **study**?" And they actually talk to you. ... if the **lecturers** pay attention to you, you **study** well. Like, you **care** about what they think of you ... more motivation to **study** (AKF).

Teacher interest is important to the student, as it gives them a sense of connection – of being cared for.

6.4.3.3 Care of self

A central tenet of Heideggerian phenomenology is that "care plays a central role in concrete life situations" (Alvesson & Skoldberg 2009, p. 117; Besley 2005). That care is not only for others but is a basic survival imperative – you need to care for yourself, sometimes to the detriment of others (Perl 1996). One student noted:

> **people** are selfish ... they'd rather the **care** [was] based towards them [and not others] (BGF).

However, looking after oneself also puts you in a position to look after others (Perl 1996, p. 185). This is one of dimensions of authenticity noted in students' implicit conceptions of teaching; "[b]eing "true to oneself" (e.g., in an individuation or Heideggerian sense" (Kreber, McCune & Klampfleitner 2010, p. 394). These students, similar to the teachers in the same study, reported that "care

for the subject, students and interest in engaging students with the subject around ideas that matter" (ibid.) were also an important dimension of authenticity. A student needs to be true to themself, to take care; otherwise, the challenges of university will overwhelm them.

6.4.3.4 Resources

Students face challenges in juggling demands on their resources. Time is often spent ensuring that they have sufficient financial support. Many work part-time to help defray living and studying expenses.

> Yeah, I mean they're not major costs [mobile phone and printing]. In terms of ... going out on the weekend or paying for public transport I **work** at a pub ... two or three, maybe four shifts a **week**, and that covers it. So I made a conscious effort try to squeeze all my **Uni** all into a couple of **day**s. So this session, I only have **Uni** Mondays, Tuesdays [and] Thursdays. So you've got those two **days** off or **work** one of the days. At the moment I'm getting regular Sunday night shifts, Friday day shifts and a Tuesday night shift, and I find I can cope enough with the **work**, and it certainly pays the bills (AHM).

Study leaves many students little time to socialise. Many also have part-time work, social and family commitments that at times impinge on their academic work.

> I work – I do **work** and I **study**. I do not have a lot of **time** to **study**. I have a part-time job. I am an instructor – teach the kids swim ... [Saturday] and Sunday. I was a competitive swimmer, two **years**, before I decided to go abroad (AIM).

Students universally need access to computers and other electronic communication devices for Internet access for study as well as to stay in touch with friends. Formal communication from the university is through student email with learning management systems, or LMSs, supplementing more conventional modes of teaching. Increasingly, student submission of work is online and any printing is done by the student.

6.5 Internal factors: Attitudes and perceptions influencing engagement

Often, learning comes from challenging students in a way that takes them out of their comfort zone. Students gaining resilience, coping with uncertainty and

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learning from failure are hallmarks of transition to adulthood. Their experiences, attitudes, willingness or ability to engage both with their studies and with other non-academic activities at university will colour positively or negatively their perceptions of the overall experience.

6.5.1 Concern or worry: Care as a state of mind

A particular state of mind expressed as a care – a feeling of worry, anxiety or concern for achieving something now or in the future – can help or hinder student decision making and learning (Storrs 2011; van Manen 2002b). If expectations of university are unfulfilled, students may suffer cognitive dissonance that diminishes their enjoyment of the university experience. Students may be overwhelmed by the scale and complexity of university processes (Bain 2004).

> It's like I try and have [a] **life**, and then **Uni**'s kind of **life**, so it doesn't become so daunting and I don't become stressed over, you know, little assignments like I did when I was at **school** (BOF).

As with any decision, the wrong university or course might be selected, resulting in dissatisfaction or withdrawal. For most undergraduates, a lack of any relevant experience makes it difficult to select their courses and subjects knowledgably. Particularly in the first few months, many students question their choice of university or course (Ceobanu 2008; James 2002; Nelson et al. 2006; Palmer, O'Kane & Owens 2009). Differing decision influences and processes colour students' expectations and experiences once they are at university, a clear reminder of the diversity of the student experience.

> Well, to me, I think **Uni**'s very **different** from my past **experience**s in High **School** – Secondary **School** – because I came from a **different** country (BCM).

> When I first came to **Uni**, I did not really like it, because it is so **different** from High **School** (ANF).

A wrong choice may mean a change of course, continuing doubt, or at worst a lack of persistence with higher education studies (Peel 2000). For example, one student who chose a course to satisfy a parental desire for them to have a university degree rather than vocational training states her mother said:

> Just get a **degree** and then do whatever you want, I [mother] don't **care** (BHF).

Whilst not completely happy, she is continuing at university to give her time to find what she wants to do; in a sense marking time.

> Now I'm back to square one. I don't know what I want to do. The good thing about **Uni** is I have another, like, three **year**s to really **care**. Like, I don't have to think about that yet (BHF).

This lack of a clear purpose in doing a particular degree is also captured in the following statement:

> I think like, as **time** goes on, I will want to get a job related to my **degree** because so much **time** and money goes into it, but at the start I don't really **care (BBF)**.

The students are, in effect, marking time. However, for others who did not get their preferred course, they may discover their default option is a course they are actually quite interested in – a new direction.

> My background [school subjects] is really Medical. Now I'm starting to really like Petroleum Engineering (AKF)[27].

Serendipitously, she embraced the learning opportunities that the alternate degree provided.

Individual worry can be reduced by sharing concerns with others, whether the institution, fellow students, friends or family, or by attributing difficulties to abstractions such as fate. Some students may have wanted a closer relationship with faculty but found it difficult to approach lecturers.

> When I first came to **Uni**, I did not really like it, because it is so **different** from **High School**. In **High School** there is a lot of **people** that you can get help, like close **friends** and teachers. And [if] you have got **questions** you can simply just ask the teachers. But when I first came to **Uni**, I found it hard to ask the teachers. I can't just go there and ask the **lecturers** when I have **questions** that I don't **understand** (ANF).

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[27] AKF received a scholarship to study Petroleum Engineering.

Some students and student groups, such as international students, have less opportunity to seek help from others.

International students often carry a significant burden of responsibility for being successful in their studies, leading to heightened levels of worry and need for care (Sherry et al. 2004). As one international student tellingly commented:

Sometimes the children finish the dreams of parents (BNF).

This is a very significant impost on the student. Not only are they navigating through an already complicated unknown learning environment, they are also doing so to fulfil the aspirations of their parents, who themselves may have little understanding of the challenges their children face.

6.5.2 Lack of concern

Conversely, not all students will feel concerned or anxious. Many students adjust well to their new environment.

I guess it's a lot more freedom. You don't have to turn up if you don't want to. ... And it's like, **study** on your own (AJM).

For many the experience is liberating – they can be carefree without the strictures of school or the responsibilities of full-time work. Initial reactions during transition can be affected by prior expectations, the ease of gaining entry, disruption to lifestyle and support available. Students expressed differing needs for closeness with their teachers in higher education. Responses ranged from a call for the lecturers and tutors to know students well, to almost the opposite, with students wanting to be an anonymous number in the system. Such students were happy to be away from teacher oversight, since it gave them freedom to manage their own lives.

6.5.3 Need for care and care giving

Differing student needs for care reflect individual past experiences at school and home. Some students have high levels of independence and don't need care, whilst others have been more coddled and may seek help.

I've already had two or three jobs, like part-time **work**, and then there's another cousin who's the same age as me still having her mum tying up her shoe laces and all her mum wants [of the daughter] is "you **study** well" (APF).

At **school** – I know my private **school**, private **school**s are like a lot of spoon-feeding as well, so it [university] is very different in that respect (AJM).

Differences in student personality and needs, and the relative emphasis of the institution on 'pastoral care' add to the complexity in defining care.

In this university, 'pastoral' care is not highly evident. It could be argued that it is not the academic's responsibility to know the personal issues and problems in a student's life and provide pastoral care if needed (Peel 2000). The university provides services where trained staff can give the appropriate support for students with special needs, temporary or more enduring, whilst maintaining a student's privacy. Face-to-face counselling and online support services are provided: there are course advisors at the faculty and school level, as well as learning and teaching support within the faculties and for the university as a whole. Information is also provided through course outlines that carry standard sections on student learning issues. However, students in need of additional support are often unaware of where to seek help or access institutional resources.

I knew there was [a counselling service]. I don't really know who to go to. At that **time** I didn't really **care** enough. Because I was **work**ing so much, I was preoccupied with a lot of things (BBF).

At times of crisis, it would be useful if they had been more familiar with where to get help. Some respondents who were aware of these services expressed reluctance to seek help within the university. They expressed the view that you just get on with it, preferring to turn to their existing support structures such as family and friends.

I would tend to just keep **Uni** for **Uni**. I mean I've got my own local Catholic parish, anything like that I go there (AHM).

Because my sister is here I come to Australia. ... She should [help] because she is my sister. She has a responsibility for me (AIM).

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These views reinforce the notion that even though students may draw support from family, they need to be self-reliant with respect to their university studies.

One student involved in this study was directed to counselling. This student was out of their depth in the course they were undertaking due to a lack of proficiency in both written and spoken English. Their enrolment had been allowed due to an arrangement with an overseas institution. His parents also supported his move from a Singapore diploma to university knowing that he did not have sufficient proficiency in English.

> Actually, my parents doesn't want me to **study** for extra **time** for language only. They want me enter in **University** as soon as possible (AFM).

The student did not know how to address his predicament. Here is some of the conversation about trying to converse with his lecturer.

> Actually, I tried to ask question to the **lecturer** after **class**, actually answered my question, again I can't **understand**. I asked twice. Then I could see the **lecturer** face is not really happy. And then I never ask again. I think that is not good (AFM).

Whilst this is just one example from the sample of 28 students, it does highlight the possibility for a failure of care in the initial enrolment and first semester adjustment period for students.

> Actually first **time** I was very afraid because I just came to Australia to **study** and I think my **English** is not enough. I listen to **lecture** and make my **friends**. After one month, two month, I felt I could enjoy. And some **lecturers** are very patient and help (AEF).

Language is just one issue for international students engaging in learning opportunities.

Some students are themselves in a caring role outside the university, most often of a family member. As the sampled cohort tended to be students straight out of school, it is unlikely, but not unheard of, that they would be parents themselves. However, one international student was "in loco parentis" for a 10-year-old brother sent out to Australia to join her as she had been looking after him in her home country.

> My mum and my dad, they want my brother to be with me because I manage everything for him – the daily stuff, the **study** stuff. My mum doesn't know who's his **teacher** – which **class** he was in Primary, so she found the difficulty when I came to Australia as I used to take **care** of it [school] (BLF).

This student had not let anyone at the university know of her situation, juggling class times and subjects so that she is able to take her brother to and from school each day. In an ideal world, academics should perhaps be aware of such situations, as they could well hinder the student's progress. Accommodating the myriad of individual students' needs would be nigh on impossible, however, and it becomes understandable to treat all students the same.

Some students suffer interruptions to their ability to access or study at university. Temporary care or adjustment for their needs may not be forthcoming or feasible.

> I've got a bad knee now and need a knee construction, which really sucks ... now I got **classes** on one side [of the university] that I could just normally just walk faster to the other side. But now it takes me ten minutes to get from one side to the other, which is a struggle. I would prefer, you know, if **lecture** was there, the tute was next, not like right next door, but just in the same area. But now that I've got two bad knees almost now. I'm going to wait till mid-semester break [for surgery] because I've been on crutches at **Uni** before and it sucks. Like even though they have walkways, it's just the pain of getting to that walkway from across and going down (BKM).

More students with a range of more enduring special needs are gaining access to university. Whilst some accommodations can and are being made, it is not always possible to tailor the learning environment to cater to each individual. However, this is an area requiring care, as inclusion is important.

6.5.4 Social activities at university

University offers more than just academic courses. Extracurricular activities help students add to their experience and help address the initial social gap between new students and their peers. The extent to which a student avails themselves of these opportunities – to connect to their peers and the wider university – will depend on a student's cultural and social background, as well as

their psychological makeup (Benson et al. 2009). Social factors play an important part in students continuing with their studies and showing persistence in completing their studies (Krause 2005). Respondents reported being involved in a range of groups, though some had been dropped after they moved beyond the hype of the first orientation week on campus.

Organised groups on campus such as religious, political, musical or sporting groups provide opportunities for students to find support as well as to connect with people sharing similar interests.

> We have this prayer meeting **group**, society ... only for the Korean **students**. But now it's extend[ed] – to **people**, so everyone can join there and pray for **Uni**versity and the countries that are really poor and stuff (BJF).

> I have a lot of **friends**. Because I like to hang out with them. I can play a lot of things. I can play maybe football, basketball, I can dance, I can sing songs. I can have a lot of **friends** (AIM).

> I mean the biggest thing I got involved in was the **Uni**versity sports. I went up the Gold Coast with the rugby team and a whole bunch of those guys. I met a few kind of very like-minded guys [at the University Games] (AHM).

Extending friendships was the main motivation for belonging to these campus-based activities.

Student activities include less formal opportunities for socialising, such as the student cafes and bars.

> Played a lot of pool. Ha, ha, got very good at pool. Just at UniBar and, yeah, you meet a lot of **people** that way, just challenging **people**, so that's good (BKM).

> Maybe go to park and get some drinks. Maybe go to **friend's home**. Play poker. I am used to being alone, lonely. Always come to **school** by myself, **study** and go back by myself (AIM).

This last student comment from an international student hints at an underlying and largely hidden problem of isolation and loneliness. From these and early student comments the nature of university friendships appears to be superficial, temporal and limited to university.

6.5.5 Activities outside of university life

Social groups and friendships outside of the university play a role in students' lives. As noted previously, school friends are important.

> I mean, most of my **friends** are now still **school friends**, a high percentage (AJM).

> Most of my other mates from High **School** and from travelling last year, a lot of them are at Sydney **Uni** or other **Uni**s or not at **Uni.** And so, kind of at the moment when I come here, it's – I've come here to **study**. Do your **work** and then disappear and you can catch up with mates outside (AHM).

However, these are necessary for a balance in a student's life. At times when university becomes all-consuming, support systems need to exist to ensure the student manages periods of crisis.

6.6 Care in student cohorts

There are both naturally and formally developed subgroups in any social institution (Pike & Kuh 2006). Such subgroups exhibit behaviour and have wants and needs that are more characteristic of the group than of the wider student population. International students represent a large segment of the students enrolled at this university. Other student subgroups form on the basis of the programme being undertaken or their scholarship holder status. Such subgroups have specific support and opportunities not available to other students. These cohorts are arguably in a privileged situation with respect to the average higher education student. Certainly, there would appear to be differences in the reported experiences of students from these groups. The following sections will highlight some of what was revealed by students in the sample. Inclusion of students in the sample was serendipitous rather than purposive; therefore, this discussion cannot reflect all students in these micro-environments.

6.6.1 International students

There are differences in educational service delivery expectations between international and local students (Sherry et al. 2004). International students rate their university experience lower on all five SERVQUAL service quality dimensions (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry 1988). One dimension, empathy,

measures the level of individualised caring attention given to the student. Here the international students have a higher expectation gap between expectation and performance than local students; they expect more then they report receiving. At times during the conversations, students identified expectations and experiences that they, as international students, saw as setting them apart from local students.

> I think they are treating us equally, but we need more **care** than the others. And the **Uni**, they have this Learning Centre or whatever, but they don't really advertise it or they don't really – they don't really approach us to get that service (BJF).

International students also experience more psychological and social problems, such as isolation, than their local peers. Further, they may feel neglected and have little visible support.

International students especially care about their performance, more so than local students, in the eyes of the international student respondents. International students suggest that the lecture should be more than the textbook; that the lecturer gives them something over and above the basics; and that advice and clarification is forthcoming for things they find difficult to understand.

> A lot of Asian kids **care** so much about their marks and academic parts (AMF).

> I just need to show them [international parents] the results. They're don't concern about the programs – they just **care** about the results – as long as we get a good one and that's fine (BLF).

An expressed desire was that lecturers monitor their progress and make it possible for them to succeed. For international students the teaching is often different from their previous experience; they may struggle with language, but would still like to be heard.

> When I am sitting in the **lecture** I can speak Chinese. If that girl can speak Chinese I will sit beside her and talk to her. Because when I use **English** I not feel confident. **People** get confused. They do not **understand** what I say (AIM).

> As an international **student**? I want them [academic staff] to speak more – not slowly but clearly. ... But I want them be more kind to us. ... In the **tute**, or in the **lecture**, they don't give chance to talk for us. So we want to talk, so we want to raise our hand or stuff. But they just

> look at the Aussie **students** or **someone** who can speak fluently, because that will help the **tutor** or the **lecturer** to get some ideas and stuff. But we want to talk, and we want them to give some **time** for us, but they don't really give any (BJF).

These quotes raise quite a few issues: that teacher communication needs to be clearer; that the individual student lacks the opportunity to contribute; that being treated equally is actually not fair given their disadvantage in the teaching situation; and whilst additional institutional support is available, how to access it is not made know to students. The last student intimates that her concerns are shared by other international students.

Changes in teaching style from what international students are used to are not considered uniformly bad: some international students enjoy the different approach. Others recognise that there are different expectations.

> I really used to just sit there and listen. Because in the Korean system you see and then, "OK, I **understand**". You're just nodding, that's it. But here it's like all participating, being encouraged to participate and they ask us our opinions. I was first of a bit worried because it's so different system and cultural stuff, but now I'm kind of enjoying that. They are open and it is really freely talk to each other. Not the **lecturer** here, and the **tutor** here, and the **students** here. It's not like that. It's like all the same. We can talk very easily and freely. I really like that (BFF).

> Yes, more comfortable to ask **question**. Because the **teacher** here are different from my country. In my country I am scared of the **teacher**. Here the **teacher** is very friendly. I feel comfortable to talk to them to ask **questions** (AIM).

> Once you reach **Uni**, in Taiwan its four **years** long, so you'll be having your fabulous moments of [a] golden period of time at **Uni** ... you seriously don't **study** that much, you just enjoy **time** with your **friends** (AMF).

For the last student, studying away from home was a challenge based on an expectation that university would be more of a reward than hard work, had she studied in a home university.

On a more practical level, there are issues raised around visas, accommodation and transport. Access to reasonably priced accommodation is difficult, while apartment sharing and high rents jeopardise their study. For

international students there are visa restrictions on their possible hours of work, as well as limits on access to internships that might help develop relevant local experience. International students pay full transportation costs, since local student fares are not available to them.

> Yes, twenty hours a **week**. I think if you want to find a job you have to have local **experience**. I mean so far I have been asking for retail job but normally the first question asked "Do you have local experience?" Though I work with [a local company] in Singapore but they do not recognise it – only if you work here then they recognise it. So that makes it a little harder for international students to work. Because we don't have **experience**. And we have to concentrate a little bit more on our studies [and have less time to work] (ADF).

All of these add to the need for adequate care and support for international students.

6.6.2 Scholarship groups

There were students from two different scholarship groups among the respondents. The first were in an externally sponsored cohort with a high level of sponsor involvement in their academic careers. The second were part of the university/industry co-operative programme (COOP). These students also received support, but were managed by the university rather than the various COOP programme sponsors. For both groups, the scholarships meant financial support, individualised supervision of their progress and access to business networks that advance their longer-term employment prospects. Such programmes afford students greater opportunity to develop stronger university-based friendships since they have similar interests, socialise, attend functions together and are often scheduled into the same classes.

> Most of my **friends** are now still **school friends**, a high percentage, but my others are from my scholarship **group**. Because of the scholarship you kind of get forced into a **group** that's only like fifteen, twenty **people**, and then, you hang around with them, and you're always doing the same **classes** and stuff, and so it makes it easier (AJM).

> They do trivia nights across all the **years**, and with alumni. And there's like buddy programs with higher **years**, so Third **Years** have buddies with First **Years** (AJM).

Scholarship students experience a different level of care whilst at university. In an ideal world, a similar experience for all students would be desirable.

6.6.3 Specialised programmes

Several of the respondents were part of a sub discipline programme[28] within the Commerce degree admitted through an interview process rather than purely on their end of high school performance. These students were selected on the basis of being confident, industry-experienced, well-rounded individuals. 'Hospo' students share many classes across the years, supporting each other particularly in more challenging subjects. Whilst this cohort may not have the same financial support as the scholarship students, they nevertheless benefitted from membership in their cohort.

> Coming to **Uni**, there was so much more freedom and different people – I loved it. Absolutely, like first semester **Uni**, a lot of my **friends** didn't like Uni, making friends, and that kind-of thing was difficult. Because I do 'Hospo' [a specialist programme], and because everyone is bound to become so close, like I made **friends**, like in my first week I had best **friends** already and things like that (BHF).

Peer groups such as the services marketing program described above give students a cohesive cohort to share experiences with, provide each other with support and to validate their academic identity (Jaffee et al. 2008). Drawing from personal observation, a strong positive benefit for both the lecturer and the students accrues from such student cohorts. The 'Hospo' students, despite their lower university entry scores, perform equally well on graduation as their normal-entry counterparts. One possibility to magnify care, or make care visible in higher education, could be through the fostering of tighter student groups who progress through university together.

6.7 Students' 'other-lives' in sum

This chapter has touched on the diverse and varied 'other lives' of students found in the imported, external and internal factors shaping students' university experiences. What can be gleaned from their comments is that the transition to university is a time of significant change. They have family, rather than peer

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[28] 'Hospo': Hospitality Management and Services Marketing Programme.

group, involvement in their decision making with respect to selection of their university and course. Students are faced with a new situation where they most probably know only a few people. For some this is liberating – allowing them to take control of their lives. For others it is daunting, requiring them to fall back on support from outside the university. At times, respondents faced challenges that hindered their learning. They, for the most part, showed care for success in their studies, though acknowledged that care at an individual level from the institution was not often found. A few students are in a privileged position, with financial and social support at a high level not given to the majority of students. Overall, developing insights into students' 'other lives' has consolidated the finding from earlier chapters that student diversity, coupled with differences at a relational and university level, mitigates against the development of a single definition of the meaning of care in higher education.

Chapter 7
What was found about care in higher education?

Reflection

I liken the foregoing exploration of what care means to students in higher education to chasing tiny droplets of mercury across a shiny surface. There are glimpses of many meanings and contexts for care and caring gleaned from the open interpretive evaluation of student experiences. From the student's perspective, care is most commonly found in 'educational care', in relationships between students, their teachers and knowledge. Other forms of care noted included 'corporate care', enacted by the university in managing future possibilities for students; 'duty of care', in which the institution and teachers have responsibilities to look after students; and 'pastoral care' extended to students with specific needs.

What was less evident to me before this research was the wide variation in desire for, and need for, care among students. Also unexpected was the role students' 'other lives' played in providing support while at university. This study highlights that care in education is not reducible to a measurable entity. Rather, it is best viewed in sociocultural terms, where care is integral to the student experience. The study highlights the fact that care, whilst recognised as necessary in education, is often largely invisible to higher education students. Talking with students about their experiences has broadened my awareness of the diversity of student lives as well as deepened my understanding of what care might mean to students. Ultimately, care is important to me as an educator, and I have very much enjoyed the challenges of exploring the notion of care in higher education.

7.1 Introduction

My interest as an academic, in what care means in higher education, and more specifically what it means from a student perspective has driven this research. The notion of care in higher education is under-researched. A premise of this study is that care matters in education. However, the plurality of meanings for care in everyday usage complicates explication of what care and caring means to students of higher education. In addition, what care means in the context of schools may not translate to care in the higher education milieu. The question explored was:

What is the range of meanings of care that can be found in undergraduate business students' experiences of their first few years of university?

In giving a brief overview of the answer to this question, there will be a discussion of the various expressions of care and caring found in the students' experiences. Then, students' comments are grounded in care issues germane to higher education found in the literature. Generally, the focus of the few studies of care in higher education has been on the institution and teachers, whereas this research foregrounds the student view. This research is sited in one institution and the context and findings may not relate to other higher education institutions. The systematic approach utilised in this study to tap into what care and caring mean to students makes clear the steps in moving from what students said in the open-ended interviews to the interpreted meanings. This in itself makes a contribution to methods of exploring for both manifest and latent meanings in interview data. Limitations of the approach are noted. By consolidating our understanding of what care is expected recommendations could be made for the delivery of care, as well as identification of further research needed to elaborate on this complex and multifaceted phenomenon.

7.2 Care evident in student experiences

In general, the student experiences related in this study were similar to other studies of the first-year experience (Benson et al. 2009; Fung 2006; Krause 2005; Peel 2000; Wilcox, Winn & Fyvie-Gauld 2005). Across the 28 interviews there was a range of differing expectations and situations, both before and whilst they were at university. It is difficult to identify a typical higher education student from these stories. As Brennan and Osborne (2008) noted, student diversity has three contributing factors: influences from their lives before they arrived at university, the choices they make in how they live day to day, and their attitudes and behaviours towards their studies and other extracurricular opportunities available to them. As an example, students mention that family were more likely to have a greater impact on their choice of university than their friends. The variance in influences on aspects of a student's life highlights that care shown, and care needed, by any one student is likely to be different from that of the student sitting next to them.

The institution plays an anchoring role in student lives, providing the context for them being students. Often the institution's image and reputation are

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the main influencing factors in attracting students to a particular university or course. However, students seemed distanced from the broader institution. Once students are enrolled, the role of the institution appears nebulous. The university as an institution is not top of mind for an undergraduate student. Discussion of care from the institution is not prominent in the student conversations. They do not expect the university to care about them as an individual. Rather the institution is tasked with creating and sustaining a learning environment for students, taking 'corporate care' (Gleaves & Walker 2006). Students in this study look to the university to provide opportunities for their future success and to care about creating a strong institutional reputation; work experience or internships; accessible transport and accommodation; suitable teaching spaces with good teachers; and well-respected degrees.

Students talked about the differences between university and school, particularly with respect to the greater closeness between students and teachers possible in the school environment. Familiarity, as indicated by someone knowing a person by name, means they are more likely to care for that person, showing empathy and understanding for the individual's situation. Respondents noted that at university the tutor may know their name, but lecturers, given large class sizes, are far less likely to know them by name. For some students, they are more than happy to be relatively anonymous, to remain a student number, whist others did express a desire to be recognised by their lecturers. Thus, there is no universal expectation of care as familiarity from lecturers.

Whilst there may not be the same closeness between students and teachers as at school, there is still an expectation that the lecturer will care. Such educational care needs to be directed to being an expert in, and passionate about, the subject they are teaching. Care should be taken in designing the curriculum, delivery and assessment in a manner that encourages the student to enjoy and engage with the subject. Empathy for the students' situation in juggling study and work would be considered by students as caring. For students in the study, they noted their uncertainty was reduced if the assessments tasks were well managed and guidance was provided that enabled them to perform well. Care in this form is about objects and processes rather than the care that forms part of relationships.

Another distinction between school and university was the difficulty mentioned by some students in forming friendships at university. The nature of university friendships was reported as different, driven by the need to work together and support each other for a short period rather than develop close social bonds over a long period. Therefore, camaraderie and an expectation that students would care deeply for each other was considered less likely in higher education than at school. Closer friendships were evident when students belonged to a smaller cohort or group of students within the wider student community. For example, in this study students enrolled in small specialist programs, or on scholarships, had opportunities to really get to know both the teaching staff and their peers. In terms of care, I would consider these students privileged. For other, less privileged students, the desire or need for support led to the formation of self-formed self-study groups. Some mentioned that voluntary peer-assisted learning classes provided by the faculty also helped develop their sense of connection to other students. Here care was an expression of a desire for mutual support, what Noddings (1998) would term natural care often found in families.

Further opportunities to find like-minded students and learn important life skills are made available by student societies, religious groups and sporting associations. These were talked about as helping provide social support to students, a form of pastoral care, particularly in their first few months at university. In some cases these were associated with particular cultural or country groups, giving much needed support for international students in adapting to the cultural mores of the university. A few of the international students pointed out that they should receive greater attention and support than their local counterparts given the challenges they face in finding suitable accommodation, language issues, adjusting to differing teaching styles and coping without their normal family support. They are also mindful of the fact that international students pay significantly higher fees than local students subsidised by government funding, and therefore not only need but deserve more resources. Here care will depend on the choices the individual student makes in connecting with extracurricular groups as well as how well the institutions and teachers manage across these diverse cultural groups.

Students in need of support often turned to people outside the university: family, school friends, sporting clubs, religious groups and even their old school teachers with whom they had kept contact. Several were quite lonely and isolated. Some suggested they were reluctant to access support systems within the university, though the reasons for this were not explored in depth. For others, they were unaware that help was available. Care in this situation could take the form of pastoral care or nurturing. Nurturing, or fostering an individual's development, is a strong element in earlier levels of education, though not as expected in an adult learning environment.

Meanings of care identified in the student conversations reside mainly in relationships important to the delivery of educational services – between teacher, student and knowledge. Education is strongly influenced by those delivering the opportunities to learn (Voss, Gruber & Szmigin 2007). The non scripted student interviews did not pick up on some of the care issues found in the literature – such as educational philosophy, educational services and institutional management. These absences in the student comments around care theories and understandings elaborated in the findings will now be mentioned.

7.3 Care issues in the literature: Grounding student comments

The university is under increasing pressure to manage in business-like fashion (Barnett 2005a; Gleaves & Walker 2006; Lynch 2006; Naidoo & Jamieson 2005). There are scarce resources and increasing numbers of students undertaking higher education. No longer are universities the sole custodians of knowledge, though taking care of knowledge, creating and making it available and accessible are still a major responsibility of higher education institutions. To flourish, universities need to build strong reputations for research and teaching in what is now a global marketplace for education. There has been greater diversity among students, with a broader cross-section of local students and increasing numbers of international students who elect to do all, or part, of their studies in a different country. Differing expectations and past experiences challenge teaching staff to deliver educational opportunities that provide for the range of needs among the students, making meaningful care of the individual difficult.

The literature around care and caring in education identifies institutional 'duty of care' as having responsibility for students in the institution (Barber 2002; Fitzmaurice 2010). 'Duty of care', while seldom discussed at this institution, is an implicit expectation of any organization. A 'duty of care' implies a formality or responsibility to not only look after students but to ensure they are not harmed. An 'ethic of care', more broadly, is an overarching institutional philosophy that influences the delivery of education, directing how educational actors, administrators, teachers and students behave with respect to knowledge and to each other (Noddings 1988). Interestingly, students said such responsibility extends post-graduation with an expectation that the education they receive will assist their future lives.

Universities provide various support services to students. Much has been written about transition to university and the first-year experience. It is in the early stages that students may have difficulty adjusting to a learning environment (Jaffee 2008; Wilcox, Winn & Fyvie-Gauld 2005). Managing this transition well can influence student persistence with their studies (Krause 2005). Making clear what is provided, setting realistic expectations regarding the student experience and encouraging students to engage not only in academic life but the social aspects of university are some of the factors that help students to adjust. Another is to give students who need to be cared for individually a sense of connection, that they are not unacknowledged in what must seem a rather overwhelmingly large 'pond' after secondary school.

Business and services marketing theory provide insights into the student as customer, educational services and the notion of student expectation linked to student outcomes, such as satisfaction. The nature of educational relationships can to some extent be explained using the frameworks of services marketing (Clewes 2003; Lovelock 2010; Voss, Gruber & Szmigin 2007). Notions such as student engagement, quality, viewing the student as 'consumer' and managing the balance of expectations to satisfaction are found in the educational literature (Voss, Gruber & Szmigin 2007). Caring by challenging and encouraging students to engage in their own development as learners, equipping them for their future, and

treating them in a solicitous manner are important features of quality higher education (Barnett 2004; Blackie, Case & Jawitz 2010). Given the move to managing higher education along business lines, developing an understanding of marketing theories should help in delivering educational services.

However, as Naidoo, Shankar and Veer (2011) state, "consumerism also promotes passive learning, threatens academic standards, and entrenches academic privilege" (p. 1142). Yet the marketing philosophy that puts taking care of the customer first resonates with student-centred learning educational practices (Blackie, Case & Jawitz 2010; Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion 2009; O'Neill & McMahon 2005). Therefore marketing practices appropriately applied should not be at odds with educational philosophies. There are many common sociological and psychological understandings in both education and marketing literatures though fully exploring these was beyond the scope of this thesis.

The educational concept of co-creation of learning is similar to co-creation of services for consumption (Vargo & Lusch 2004). Co-creation in both business and education hinges on developing relationships in which care, respect and trust are important. Relationships in higher education are not simple dyads. The interaction is not only between the actors, but also knowledge – the teacher-learner-subject triad (Ongstad 2003). Care in a purely business service exchange is contingent – only given if it positively contributes to the overall outcome. However, care in education is not an optional extra. Care is inherent to, and inseparable from, the core purpose of education – the enabling of individuals, teachers or students, to learn and grow into *being*.

Care is an important element shaping the nature of educational relationships. Mayeroff (1971) "suggests that caring is essentially a virtue, a trait of character" (Katz 2007, p. 129) of a teacher. Thus, caring requires empathy for students as well as a developed understanding of their needs and how to enable their learning. It is known that good relations between the teacher and learner will lead to better educational outcomes (Barnett 2009; Bingham & Sidorkin 2004; Carvalho & de Oliveira Mota 2010; Fisher & Miller 2008; Fitzmaurice 2008: Gruber et al. 2012; Kim & Sax 2009; Mayeroff 1971; McKenna 2010; Teven

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2007). To care, in these terms, is a hallmark of a good teacher. There are many other identified characteristics of good teaching in the literature (Barnett 2009; Gruber et al. 2012; Marx 2011). For students in this study, the main requirements were that the lecturer was knowledgeable and passionate about their subject and designed courses that enabled students to learn and be successful.

7.4 Approach to identification of care meanings

The study was able to openly address the question of care as an essence of the student experience in higher education, allowing the data itself to direct the structuring of the findings. Phenomenological interviews, where students discussed their university experiences in general, were explored and analysed for evidence of the phenomenon of care. Transcripts of the interviews were the primary unit for interpretive analysis. The opening question initiated a free-flowing conversation about a student's situation and experiences of university. It was only later in the analysis process that the literature was explored for theories to help elaborate on the student comments.

The analysis process was iterative and drew on Leximancer semantic text analysis, in a manner similar to the steps described by Spiggle (1994). This automated analysis revealed conversational themes and groupings of concepts across the interviews. The Leximancer map interface enabled the researcher to methodically build an understanding of the student experience through in-depth iterative deep 'reading' of the output, as well as the interview transcripts and audio. This solid foundation of systematic researcher-driven analysis, exploring for both manifest and latent evidence of forms of care, is a strength of this study, building trust in the developed understanding. Further interpretation of the nuances of care and caring from within these student experiences drew on relevant theoretical lenses to put student comments into perspective. Given the investigator's background, this naturally reflected a services marketing view as well as more established views from education.

The systematic application of semantic text analysis to help pinpoint glimpses of what care might mean from general conversations around a student's experience makes a contribution to interpretive qualitative research methodology.

The study reflects the practical interest characteristic of empirical interpretive research, since it develops our pluralistic understanding of the phenomenon of care from an individual student perspective in a way that has pragmatic validity for academics (Kvale 1996; Schweitzer 2002; Van der Mescht 2004). The method demonstrates how unstructured interview data can be explored transparently in a fashion that allows for diverse and often faint evidence to be revealed. By incorporating text-mining software, the analysis is replicable and the processes involved in moving from the data to meaning are made clear. Free-flowing, deep, researcher-driven, iterative exploration of both the machine-developed semantic patterns and the student conversations are then interrogated for both manifest and latent evidence of meanings for care. Further research to explore care in more depth will be able to pick up on the emergent, diverse and multilayered meanings of care identified in this research.

7.5 Implications for higher education

The intended audience of this research is those engaged in providing education at a tertiary level, in particular fellow academics needing clearer insights into the phenomenon of care. There is reservation as to how our existing understanding of the role of care in lower educational levels translates to the university environment (Garza 2009). Given the nature of higher education, some even question "whether teachers in higher education should in fact care for students at all, regardless of how that care should manifest itself" (Gleaves & Walker 2006, p. 253). This study would suggest that staff do need to care for students, though not necessarily with the close personal relationships found in pre-tertiary education. This study has demonstrated that students have a need for educational care, albeit in many forms, and that care matters.

If care and caring in higher educational settings resist attempts to be reduced to a simple construct or scale (Clewes 2003; Onwuegbuzie et al. 2007), then other ways of tapping into and tracking the provision of student-appropriate care need to be developed. Education is a credence service largely dependent on sound educational relationships, where care is inherent. Complicating higher education is that, unlike consumer exchanges, education is a series of encounters over a semester that build to an overall experience across the program over years.

Being able to monitor the student experience will inform improvements in the quality of higher education delivery. Students are co-producers of their education and are in an ideal position to provide constructive feedback to enhance their experiences.

Institutions need to afford opportunities for the academic and the student to care (von Krogh 1998). Higher education has a role in contributing to knowledge development and also in graduating people who care and positively contribute to society (Kezar 2004). There is discussion of care as a given in teacher education (Giles 2008); however, in the short teaching preparation course for academics there is little opportunity to explore care as a philosophy, nor its role in fostering educational relationships (Rowland et al. 1998). Demonstrating care to students is important (O'Brien 2010), and the increasing use of technology will furnish new challenges in communicating care to students (Gleaves & Walker 2006).

Students may have unrealistic expectations of what the university experience will be like. The focus of first-year induction programs is on helping students to acclimatise to the challenges of university. Increasing student understanding of the role of the institution in caring for their educational opportunities could reduce development of dissatisfaction and disenchantment with higher education. Here educators can draw on the services literature to better understand the management of service delivery. Those closest to students, for example tutors, need to be well schooled in both the subject content as well as techniques to adjust their teaching to meet differing student needs.

7.6 Further possibilities for exploring care

This study explored care from the perspective of a student in their early years as an undergraduate. Future research could look at changing views on care and caring over time in different faculties and higher education programs. Cross-institutional research could explore the role of the institution in influencing the nature of care, as perceived by their students. Higher education institutions with a religious affiliation may well have a differing philosophy on care.

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Evolving our understanding of educational relationships in the online environment could draw on parallel challenges being explored in the consumer market (Gleaves & Walker 2006). Here there is increasing interest in engagement, involvement and multitasking with online programs. Also being studied is the impact of emotion on decision making. Emotions could well influence the need for care, or result from experiencing care or even a lack of care (Ng & Forbes 2009; Storrs 2011). Anxiety or worry may detract from the student's ability to learn effectively.

7.7 Conclusion

This study situates the phenomenon of care and caring as essential to the overall student experience. The analysis has allowed the various forms of care evident in the student conversations to be identified. It puts into perspective discussion of care relative to the overall conversation about each individual's student experience. It has highlighted that meanings for care and caring are pluralistic. It also reinforces that developing a single measurable construct to capture care in higher education settings is unrealistic, leaving the challenge as to how to monitor and manage care in delivering quality education.

Care in higher education matters. It is a necessary component of education. Without care, there is apathy. Care provides energy and passion to the work of becoming a student and to motivating academics to teach. The challenge now is to keep care in conversations about teaching in higher education and not let it be invisible.

Appendix A: Leximancer studies in Education and Marketing
(see Table A.1 Overview of Leximancer studies in Education and Marketing)

Studies that utilise Leximancer, listed in Table A.1, represent a range of methodologies and methods. These are broadly interpretive in their epistemological foundations and ethno-methodological in their approach (Ayoko & McKenna 2006; Richardson 2005). The most common ways of using Leximancer are for analysing in-depth interviews, content analysis, literature reviews, subgroup profiling, and analysing focus groups.

In-depth interviews have been analysed for their main themes (Baker et al. 2011; Grace, Weaven & Ross 2010; Kyle, Nissen & Tett 2008; Yu 2011) and for differences in subgroups of respondents (Cherney & Chui 2011; Cretchley et al. 2010; Darcy & Pegg 2011; Mathies & Burford 2011; Rooney et al. 2010; Scott, Pachana & Sofronoff 2011; Weaven & Grace 2010). Narratives were explored for specific conceptions, for example (Middleton, Liesch & Steen 2011) study the concept of time amongst executive managers. This Middleton, Liesch and Steen study, where a subelement of the overall experience is the focus, has resonance with my study looking at care within the more general experience.

Leximancer is used increasingly across diverse research domains. For example, Cretchley et al. (2010) moved beyond mere content analysis to seek insights into interactional dynamics detected in conversations. Leximancer has been used to support phenomenographic studies (Penn-Edwards 2010; 2011). In looking at multiple truths apparent in others' lives, Plumb et al. (2011) applied social constructionist epistemology using ethnography as the method. This is a similar approach to that used by Teo and Loosemore (2011) using narrative analysis to explore stories from those involved in community-based activism. Narratives can also be used in the reporting of case method (Aloudat & Michael 2011), where isolated themes emerging from analysis of key informant interviews are captured as stories.

Probably the most prevalent use of Leximancer is as a content analysis tool; see, for example, Larkin, Previte and Luck (2008). Leximancer can develop a simple word frequency count resembling more traditional content analysis methods where manifest content is associated with coded text segments (Kassarjian 1977; Krippendorf 2004). However, Leximancer in automatic mode is

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more than just a word-frequency counter. It bootstraps collections of words that are frequently found in close proximity in the text; it performs latent coding that builds concepts rather than just counts words or phrases (Campbell et al. 2011; Scott & Smith 2005; Travaglia et al. 2011b). Thus Leximancer has a close equivalence to qualitative content analysis, or exploring the underlying meanings of concepts (Zhang & Wildemuth 2009).

Literature reviews have been carried out with Leximancer (Braithwaite 2010; Braithwaite, Travaglia & Corbett 2011; Caspersz, Olaru & Smith 2012; Gurd & Palmer 2010; Poser, Guenther & Orlitzky 2012; Smith & Riley 2012; Stockwell et al. 2009). Evaluation of literature such as academic journals and media includes tracking changes in the discourse over time (Cretchley, Rooney & Gallois 2010; Cummings & Daellenbach 2009; Gasiorek et al. 2012; Hodge & Matthews 2011; Grimbeek et al. 2005; Leisch et al., 2011; Marzano & Scott 2006; Neill, Burford & Sinha 2011; Travaglia et al. 2011a). This is a form of time-based profiling. Profiling is the discovery of one or more target concepts related to certain texts (Smith 2008).

Leximancer has variants of the profiling function; projects can be set to examine textual or semantic similarity as well as dissimilarity to identify concepts that set text groups apart. For example, Rooney, McKenna and Barker (2011) referred to the distinctions they are able to make between their historic literature blocks as a form of discriminate analysis. The profiling function is used to explore groups within different literature (Burford 2008; Chen & Bouvain 2009; Mathies & Burford 2011). Chen and Bouvain (2009) supported their qualitative descriptions with statistical analyses for subgroup differences and regression to establish the strength of relationships. Further examples of content analysis studies evaluating subgroups include Previte and Fry (2009) and Walker, Stanton and Salmon (2011).

In analysing focus groups, Sultmann and Brown (2011) used Leximancer to identify initial concepts and then interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to integrate the ideas into overarching thematic expressions. Focus group analysis was used to support theme or concept cluster identification (Gapp &

Fisher 2012). Alternatively, the analyst can probe for particular theoretical conceptions or dimensions by starting the analysis with user-defined seed words that act as kernels for context-specific concept development (Angus-Leppan, Metcalf & Benn 2010; Denize & Young 2007; Larkin, Previte & Luck 2008). The definitional analysis of concepts (Dann 2009; Poser, Guenther & Orlitzky 2012) using Leximancer's profiling functionality can enable the development of typologies "classifying phenomenon based on similar attributes" (Campbell et al. 2011, p. 96).

Other examples are studies reporting the possibilities for using the patterns identified from Leximancer analysis to support feedback to students (Bulmer & Low 2008; Tsang 2011). These studies report exploration of Leximancer as an assessment tool to encourage reflection and evaluation. These examples demonstrate the versatility of this software to support a range of qualitative methodologies.

In summary, Leximancer supports the systematic exploration of textual data. The brief overview of the studies above clearly demonstrates its flexibility in addressing a wide range of research questions across a variety of discipline areas, giving credence to my approach. More importantly for this study, Leximancer allows for less onerous and richer iterative possibilities for exploration of my data. It reduces bias, since it can run without prior coding or expectations of relational patterns that might be present in the data. It also more clearly explicates the transformation of data into understanding. In supporting the teasing out of the phenomenon of interest – care – from the essences that make up student experience, semantic analysis enables this study to echo a phenomenological stance in its design, freely exploring for nuances in the meaning of care for undergraduate students.

Table A.1 Overview of recent Business, Marketing and Education Literature utilising Leximancer

Authors, area	Study approach used	How Leximancer reported Comments
Aloudat & Michael 2011 Government policy	Narrative, case method. Used researcher-defined phrases; e.g., "location-based services"	Narratives developed through thematic analysis. Theme size % referred to as 'granularity'. Map with both themes and concepts and table linking description with literature. Claim for validity through use of Leximancer.
Angus-Leppan, Metcalf & Benn 2010 Business	Single case study; researcher selected relevant auto-generated seed words for Leximancer to learn from.	Maps and table linking exemplary quotes and theoretical dimensions. Analytical triangulation. Reliability based on stability and reproducibility.
Angus-Leppan, Benn & Young 2010 / Business	Respondent groups analysed and described	Sources (for different groups) tagged on map. Exemplary quotes in a table. Clear on basic elements of Leximancer.
Bradmore & Smyrnios 2009 Education governance	Content analysis of university documents	Table with universities grouped then characterised with most prominent concepts and the related entities (co-occurrences). Assumption that Leximancer provided an automated, systematic and objective reading of the documents.
Braithwaite et al. 2009 Education/directorial learning (medical)	Content analysis of communications within communities of practice	Maps with theme circles and dots. See also other studies (literature analysis).
Bulmer & Low 2008 Education	Content analysis of student reflection	Maps providing snapshots over time. Maps and concept frequency tables.
Campbell, Pitt, Parent & Berthon, 2011 Marketing	Exploratory content analysis of advertising on the Web	Maps of the different groups. They note that Leximancer builds concepts, not just counts words.
Chen & Bouvain 2009 Business/management	Group difference exploration	Maps and supporting statistics on group differences. This Leximancer analysis supported with MANOVA, ANOVA and regression analysis.
Cockcroft & Stelmaszewska 2010 IT Education/library	Content analysis	Maps with associated knowledge pathways used to support findings. Leximancer notes as being similar to correlation analysis.
Colquhoun & Dockery 2012 Education and culture	Textual analysis	Maps, concept, quotes and pathway analysis used to explore responses to separate question on culture and future for indigenous children.

Authors/Area	Study approach/used	How Leximancer reported Comments
Conrad 2011 Higher education	Content analysis of blogs	Differences between media sources tested with nonparametric statistics, and top five concepts explored using maps.
Crofts & Bisman 2012 Accounting	Concept analysis in literature review	Used 'concept' identification. Displayed results as tables and maps.
Cummings & Daellenbach 2009 Business	Longitudinal literature review of long-range planning	Maps used to capture the eras of the journal.
Dann 2009 Marketing	Concept definition	Maps used to explore social marketing definitions to develop an overarching concept.
Denize & Young 2007 Marketing	In-depth interview analysis supporting network analysis	Map of concepts and themes. Reported results where seeded with theoretical constructs. Several analyses used to fully explore data.
Grace, Weaven & Ross 2010 Marketing	In-depth interviews, content analysis	Thematic analysis reporting lists of concepts and two maps representing the gender differences. Automated analysis reduces chance of researcher bias.
Hansson, Carey & Kjartansson 2010 Education/learning	Analysis of teacher experience	Automated and manual text analysis. Software helped create meaningful clusters of neighbouring words.
Hay 2010 Education/statistics	Analysing perceptions	Listing of concepts; pathways shown connecting concepts of interest.
Hume & Mort 2011 Marketing	Exploring perceptions to develop a definition	Map.
Jamieson-Proctor, Finger & Albion 2010 Teacher education	Survey analysis	Map with all concepts and selected pathways.
Jones et al. 2010 Tourism	Analysis of perceptions (survey)	Map with main themes, associated concepts and pathways (linking logic between concepts).
Leisch, Håkanson, McGaughey, Middleton & Cretchley, 2011 Business	Explored evolution themes of a business journal	Leximancer uses empirically validated mathematical algorithms: frequency and relationships between concepts. Face validity, stability, reproducibility, correlative validity and functional validity (Smith and Humphreys 2006). Simple maps with concepts and themes.

Authors/Area	Study approach/used	How Leximancer reported Comments
Mankowski, Slater & Slater 2011 Science education	Inductive, grounded theory	Leximancer used to check prior classifications. Leximancer 2.25 tables with absolute and relative counts.
Mathies & Burford 2011 Marketing	Content analysis	Gender subgroup differences in frontline service personnel attitudes.
Middleton, Liesch & Steen 2011 Business	Narrative	Semantic extraction followed by relational extraction. Maps.
Fisher & Miller 2008 Business higher education	Content analysis	Survey results were analysed. Main concepts and relationships in during-semester feedback identified.
Noble et al. 2011 Education pharmacy	Content analysis	Interpretation using Barnett and Coates (2005) curricular domains of knowing, acting and being.
Penn-Edwards 2010 Education	Phenomenography	Comparison of manual and Leximancer coding. Map with concepts and theme circles.
Poser, Guenther & Orlitzky 2012 Business	Content analysis	Exploring definitions of corporate environmental performance. Represented with tables of concepts and co-occurrences and a map.
Previte & Fry 2009 Marketing	Content analysis for two stakeholders	Maps and pathways represented.
Richardson 2005 Higher education	Content analysis	Maps used to show main themes in feedback from Course Experience Questionnaire.
Rooney et al. 2010 Business	Subgroup analysis of interviews	Overall map with sources tagged. Subgroup concept lists, relative count and associated thesaurus. Discussion with quotes.
Rooney, McKenna & Barker 2011 Business	Discriminant analysis across five time periods	Maps displaying intellectual structure within each group. Stability and reproducibility.
Scott, Pachana & Sofronoff 2011 Education psychology	Content analysis	Exploration of differing prospects.
Siemieniako et al. 2010 Marketing	Conceptual development	Map with researcher-added labels.
Sultmann & Brown 2011 Education	Conceptual development, focus groups., interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA)	Thematic analysis reported in tables form with linked integration.

Authors/Area	Study approach/used	How Leximancer reported Comments
Tsang 2011 Education, Dental	Analysis of reflective discussion	Concept frequencies. Validity and reliability.
Verreynne, Parker & Wilson 2011 Small business management	Exploratory and content analysis	Subgroup and source differences reported with maps and tables.
Wilks & Wilson 2012 Education	Focus groups	Themes and quotes.
Yu 2011 Marketing	Content analysis	Subgroups concepts frequencies.
Zamitat 2006 Education	Content analysis, grounded theory	Literature review over time. Map and concept lists.

Appendix B: Ethics approval letters

University of Technology, Sydney
UTS Human Research Ethics Committee. 18th May 2007.
Clearance number: HREAC ref no 2007-65
"Students' Perspectives of 'Care' in Higher Education".

University of New South Wales
Faculty of Business (incorporating the AGSM) Human Research Ethics Advisory
Panel. 4th June 2007.
Approval No: 07631
Project Title: Students' Perspectives of 'Care' in Higher Education.

18 May 2007

Dr Kitty Te Riele
KG02.02.93
Faculty of Education
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY

Dear Kitty,

UTS HREC REF NO 2007-65 – TE RIELE, Dr Kitty, McKENZIE, Dr Jo (for BURFORD, Ms Marion EdD student) - "Students' Perspectives of 'Care' in Higher Education"

Thank you for your response to my email dated 11 May 2007. Your response satisfactorily addresses the concerns and questions raised by the Committee, and I am pleased to inform you that ethics clearance is now granted for a three year period from the date of this letter.

Your clearance number is UTS HREC REF NO. 2007-65A

Please note that the ethical conduct of research is an on-going process. The *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* requires us to obtain a report about the progress of the research, and in particular about any changes to the research which may have ethical implications. This report form must be completed at least annually, and at the end of the project (if it takes more than a year). The Ethics Secretariat will contact you when it is time to complete your first report.

I also refer you to the AVCC guidelines relating to the storage of data, which require that data be kept for a minimum of 5 years after publication of research. However, in NSW, longer retention requirements are required for research on human subjects with potential long-term effects, research with long-term environmental effects, or research considered of national or international significance, importance, or controversy. If the data from this research project falls into one of these categories, contact University Records for advice on long-term retention.

If you have any queries about your ethics clearance, or require any amendments to your research in the future, please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Secretariat at the Research and Innovation Office, on 02 9514 9615.

Yours sincerely,

Production Note:
Signature removed prior to publication.

Professor Jane Stein-Parbury
Chairperson
UTS Human Research Ethics Committee

4 June 2007

Ms Marion Burford
School of Marketing

Dear Ms Burford

Project Title: **Students' Perspectives of 'Care' in Higher Education**
Approval No: **07631**

At its meeting on 25 May 2007, the Faculty of Business (incorporating the AGSM) Human Research Ethics Advisory Panel recommended to your Head of School/Unit/Centre and the Human Research Ethics Committee that this project, being minimal impact, may proceed. The approval number for this project is 07631. This approval is valid for 12 months from this date.

Yours sincerely

Production Note:
Signature removed prior to publication.

Dr. Aybüke Aurum
(Convenor)
Faculty of Business (incorporating the AGSM) Human Research Ethics Advisory Panel

cc: Professor Paul Patterson
      Head of School of Marketing

      Dr Kitty te Riele
      Supervisor

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