# Academic Leadership by Day, Student by Night: Juggling Department Management, Teaching, and a PhD Program as a Minority Woman

Barbara c.g. Green

## Introduction

This tale of caffeine-fueled ambition and identity acrobatics seeks to present my experience as a middle-aged, first-generation Mexican-American woman, wife, and mother of neurodiverse children while contributing to ongoing disciplinary conversations on the benefits and challenges of juggling work-life coexistence, gender, culture, teaching, and leadership experience while pursuing a graduate degree. Applying dual lenses of academic-administrative shapeshifting and pedagogical evolution, I examine the psychological negotiations between authority figure and student, how professional expertise shapes and influences graduate studies, and how the heavy hand of impostor syndrome manifests across these roles.

This exploration challenges traditional notions of academic evolution while illuminating the journey of nontraditional students juggling multiple identities. These identities—as department leader, teacher, student, wife, and mother—are at times competing, at times complementary, but always converging in ways that shape my daily path through academic life. As a department leader who is determinedly pursuing a PhD at an institution separate from my workplace, where both my administrative work and graduate studies occur primarily in online environments, my journey emphasizes the importance of having inclusive, flexible educational environments. Studying at an institution different from where I work adds unique complexity to my identity convergence by influencing how I navigate and work through the challenges and opportunities that arise from existing within multiple, differing roles across different institutional context. By interweaving my personal experiences with broader disciplinary conversations, my goal is to deepen understanding of the challenges professionals returning to student status face and how they can leverage their existing and new expertise as their identities metamorphose. In this symposium piece, I will lead the reader through my personal experiences navigating academic-administrative shapeshifting to illustrate how identity convergence functions in practice, offering examples of both the good and sometimes ugly that emerge from living in a place where administration, teaching, and graduate study come together.

**Situating and Leveling Up Identity Convergence**

Professional work inherently brings challenges in the form of work-life balance, mental health, gender, and cultural dynamics. Academia adds its own complexities, particularly for educators like me who lead departments (such as I do for the English and Rhetoric department of my higher ed institution) and teach while pursuing an advanced degree. This is identity convergence. My specific identity convergence means constantly shifting between roles—starting my morning as a mother, moving into department leadership mode, transitioning to teacher for classes, then shifting into a student for evening coursework. Living at the convergence of these multiple roles creates unique opportunities and obstacles, all of which serve to shape my personal, academic, and professional evolution.

I stand in the middle of this whirling dervish of identity convergence, working valiantly on balancing roles while also working to contribute to existing discourse on professional identity. As part of the leadership team for my department, I help oversee faculty development, curriculum design, and interdepartmental collaborations and initiatives. Simultaneously, I teach or have taught (for the last 20 years) first-term, literature, creative, and business/professional writing courses, while pursuing my PhD in technical communication and rhetoric at a different institution. Because the compositional makeup of role convergence varies significantly depending on whether someone serves as administrator/teacher and graduate student within the same institution or works in one setting while studying in another, making this distinction is crucial. That is why it is important to note that I am a graduate student at one institution and work in administration and leadership, while also teaching at a second institution. This creates not only role convergence but institutional convergence as well, adding layers of complexity to the identity navigation process. This cross-institutional identity convergence shapes how I experience shapeshifting, pedagogical evolution, and imposter syndrome, which is very different from those who are graduate students within their employing institution.

While research on academic identity convergence for those who serve as leaders, faculty members, and students is in short supply, existing dual identity research substantiates the existence of key advantages and challenges. Kiesow et al. (2024) explored professional identity development, finding that individuals living multiple professional roles often evolved increased negotiation capabilities, greater credibility, stronger teaching and mentoring skills, and broader positive impact. Within the field of writing studies, scholars have looked closely at how graduate student instructors navigate similar complexities through their unique workload subsequently shaping their identity.

My own experience echoes this research. The positive effects of identity convergence that Kiesow et al. (2024) identified manifest clearly across the multiple roles I live in. Specifically, the enhanced credibility they describe becomes evident in my position as a

2

department leadership team member who also teaches—faculty are more receptive to my guidance because I understand their classroom struggles firsthand rather than administrating from a distance. Osorio et al. (2021) found that this evolution often comes via grappling with "laborious reality" and an "imagined ideal" of their roles, a tension I feel when working to balance my administrative authority with my teaching experience. This "been there, done that" perspective strengthens both my mentoring capabilities and my effectiveness as a leader. Similarly, my dual role as teacher and student creates a unique dynamic with students who appreciate that I share their academic challenges. Pawlowski and Jacobson (2023) refer to this as being a "learning travelers" who must visit and engage with multiple, overlapping communities, within what they call "landscapes of practice," requiring continuous shapeshifting and evolution to make their different community memberships coexist. They extend greater acceptance and are more willing to receive guidance from someone they perceive as both instructor and peer. Robinson-Zetzer and Smith (2023) take this to the next level by looking at how graduate students in writing center administrative roles also grapple with "embodied praxis," resulting in the need for responsibility and emotional labor to manage multiple roles simultaneously.

However, as with anything that has two sides, these benefits come with weighty challenges. Both academic research and anecdotal accounts highlight struggles with time management, identity conflicts, and increased responsibilities for educators and graduate students alike. Studies by Misra et al. (2021), who examined faculty survey data on gender and race perceptions of workload, and Allen et al. (2023), who examined faculty time allocation disaggregated by gender, suggested that challenges are exacerbated by gender and racial factors. All of this is compounded by what Lambrecht (2021) describes as the difficulty, or inability, to separate student life from instructor and/or administrator roles, which then leads to problems from one role affecting another.

As a middle-aged, first-generation Mexican-American woman who has been married for over two decades and is raising two neurodiverse children (one who is autistic and one who is diagnosed with ADHD), my identity extends beyond my academic roles. Because of this, it is more accurate to say that I embody four distinct roles: department leader, teacher, student, and family member. While the positive effects of identity convergence are abundant, the challenges and struggles are equally present. Juggling these roles as a woman has resulted in a significant increase in my workload and, more intensely, my stress level. As a mother, the pressures of societal expectations for me to be the primary responder to issues and situations that arise with my children feel considerably greater, which compounds an already demanding schedule and makes the workload overwhelming at times. I particularly identify with what Lambrecht (2021) mentioned regarding the difficulty in separating roles, which causes problems from one role to spill into another. When challenges in each role emerge rapidly and simultaneously, it becomes difficult to compartmentalize and address them separately or more fluidly, and quickly jump from one role to another. While I have made considerable progress thanks

3

to the positive aspects of my identity convergence, navigating so many roles as a woman means that imposter syndrome continues to affect my confidence level, from time to time, when it comes to speaking up, suggesting new initiatives, or advocating for change, for example.

The intertwining of my personal and professional experiences contributes meaningful perspectives that contribute to the discourse of how academics manage multiple roles while developing and evolving their identities. My journey not only reflects my individual path, but it also helps to fill a gap in our understanding of identity convergence in academia.

## Shapeshifting Through Academia and Pedagogical Evolution

My goal has always been to keep track of how many times I move from one role to another throughout any given day. This happens frequently. I find myself looking for humor in the workload and stressors of my identity convergence because humor is my primary coping mechanism. I envision myself holding one of those metal clickers that bouncers outside bars use to track admissions, counting how many times I shift roles. Or, because I am a cinephile, I imagine the shapeshifting scenes when a full moon rises in countless werewolf movies, because shapeshifting can be painful and disturbing, or for Marvel's X-Men fans, the villain Mystique, whose mutant power allows her to transform into different people at will. That is why I chose the word "shapeshifting" to describe the constant movement between my roles as administrator, teacher, student, mother, and wife—and back again. This metaphor captures not only the frequency of these transitions but also the fundamental transformation required to navigate each role effectively.

### *Shapeshifting*

The daily navigation of multiple roles in academia requires constant adaptation and being able to fluidly move between positions as leadership, department member, teacher, mentor, collaborator, leader, and follower. Each role demands its own form of authority and collaboration, shaped by complex social dynamics and interpersonal engagement with superiors, colleagues, and students. These interactions create behavioral patterns and adaptive strategies that evolve over time (Marques et al., 2024). As we shift between our converging identities, a feedback loop emerges where experiences in one role inevitably influence our responses in others. Shapeshifting positively influences our responses in various roles, but having multiple roles can also have other benefits. Feng et al. (2021) suggest that accumulating roles facilitates learning adaptability, providing robust experience and knowledge that can yield a bankable skill set while also expanding our connection to professional and social networks. The interplay between professional personas becomes a delicate dance of adaptation and growth.

*Pedagogical Evolution*

As continuous learners, academics naturally progress through transformative moments in classrooms, research, scholarship, and personal development. These experiences fundamentally shape our academic identities in both subtle and profound ways. This evolution becomes particularly nuanced when considering the convergence of our various roles, including personal ones like parenthood. The constant shifting between professional and personal spheres creates opportunities for growth while also presenting challenges. The question becomes: how do we leverage the constant shifting to yield positive pedagogical evolution that could be applied effectively in all roles?

For example, consider a typical Monday morning during the school year. My first role is that of mother—wake the children, negotiate prickly moods, provide breakfast, and encourage them before sending them off to start their day. I might need to shift into strategist or ethnographer (skills that are products of my identity convergence) if I must engage with school personnel about a child's IEP or 504 plan, requiring me to ask probing questions, study body language, and present data effectively.

As I begin my workday, I shift to my leadership role, reviewing emails and addressing faculty concerns before attending a standing meeting with the department chair. Next, I transition into my teacher role to respond to student emails, craft individualized feedback, or engage with discussion board responses. From there, I shift back to leadership to assist faculty and work on department curriculum, training materials, etc., projects. Finally, I must transform into my student role to work on assignments or deliverables due that day or week. And this represents a relatively calm Monday morning.

This brief sequence demonstrates how shapeshifting happens in practice and how each shift offers the opportunity to evolve. As I navigate these shifts throughout the day, each transition becomes more fluid, with experiences in one role either enhancing or sometimes complicating my effectiveness in the next role I must embody. The key takeaway is that, upon self-reflection, I am not fully leaving each role behind. There are residuals or tendrils that remain as I shapeshift throughout the day, and I use these to my benefit or work to understand their negative effects and adapt and evolve accordingly. Understanding shapeshifting as a deliberate practice allows educators and graduate students to recognize that role transitions are not just inevitable interruptions but opportunities for professional growth. By consciously acknowledging these shifts, we can better leverage the skills and perspectives gained in one role to enhance our effectiveness in others. This awareness also helps us identify when role conflicts arise and develop strategies to manage them more effectively.

**The Psychological Negotiations Between Authority Figure and Student**

Looking through the academic-administrative shapeshifting lens, complex power dynamics emerge when leadership roles converge with academic pursuits. The experience of leading without a terminal degree while surrounded by PhD faculty creates an intricate balance of authority and respect. This dynamic becomes even more layered when a leader takes on the additional identity of graduate student, creating a tripartite role as administrator, faculty member, and student.

The traditional power structure creates unique challenges when a member of department leadership enters the PhD journey, as seasoned faculty must adjust to seeing their administrator in a learning role. This shift manifests in my own experience in distinctly different ways. I have been exceedingly fortunate that many faculty members in my department have embraced my educational evolution by stepping into informal mentorship roles. My department chair is a prime example—he championed my pursuit of a PhD and continuously provides opportunities for me to apply and develop my new knowledge while accepting and encouraging ideas based on my studies. Other faculty have enthusiastically offered guidance on research methodologies and readily engage in passionate academic discussions about my dissertation focus.

Conversely, and through a great deal of self-reflection, the line between excited graduate student and professional leader can blur. I can see how my excitement and eagerness to share and apply new knowledge within my department might be perceived as grating or as forcing my PhD knowledge upon faculty through my leadership status. Faculty might feel obligated to entertain my ideas, even when they might not be the best ones. This is where graduate student and leadership roles blur, requiring constant psychological negotiations. I find myself actively seeking to evaluate my ideas and suggestions from a faculty perspective to vet them as thoroughly as possible. I also try to view them from a removed administrator's perspective, hoping to catch potential issues before they negatively affect other faculty or working relationships.

This educational evolution manifests in increased collaborative projects, such as conference presentations, academic writing endeavors, and university-centric initiatives, as well as collective efforts to enhance classroom effectiveness. Collaborating with faculty can sometimes be tricky due to my leadership role—gaining honest, forthright, constructive criticism has the potential to be difficult due to these role differences. This leads me to sometimes wonder if faculty are amenable to my ideas because I am department leadership, not because they are actually good ideas. I hope that this is not the case, yet I must constantly renegotiate these competing roles.

When department leaders pursue advanced education, it can create a unique and opportunistic learning ecosystem where traditional hierarchies blur, leading to more dynamic and reciprocal knowledge exchange. The symbiotic learning environment benefits both the leader-turned-student and department faculty, encouraging an

6

academic setting of collective growth and professional development. This collaborative approach ultimately strengthens departmental cohesion and educational quality, as diverse perspectives come together to create more robust teaching methodologies and academic discussions.

## How Professional Expertise Shapes and Influences Graduate Studies

When examining how professional expertise and experience shapes and influences graduate studies, the transition between leadership and student roles creates unique challenges. Having spent significant time as a department leader, and factoring in my middle-aged status, I have found that expertise and experience can be both assets and obstacles in graduate work. Our professional expertise and experience naturally inform how we approach academic decisions, from how we engage with the professor and course material to how we view program structures.

This same expertise and experience can create resistance to fully embracing the student role—both internal reluctance to assume a learning posture and external skepticism from others—due to the nontraditional nature of being simultaneously an administrator, faculty member, and student. The classroom dynamic can be particularly challenging when one brings significant professional expertise to graduate studies. In certain courses, I candidly acknowledge that I have caught myself slipping into administrative analysis of course design or teaching methods rather than focusing on my own learning journey. The persistent temptation to mentally redesign assignments or restructure course delivery based on leadership and/or teaching experience can interfere with learning that is supposed to be happening. The internal dialogue often becomes "I would do this differently" instead of "What can I learn from this approach?" This tendency is especially pronounced when encountering professors with different levels of professional experience or divergent pedagogical philosophies.

When this internal resistance surfaces, it can inevitably affect my relationships with teaching faculty. When I struggle in my student role, it can add awkwardness in classroom dynamics. Some professors may sense my resistance or feel defensive when they perceive that I'm evaluating rather than engaging with their instruction. Conversely, and thankfully more often, other faculty members have embraced my dual perspective, inviting me to share insights from my administrative and teaching experience during class discussions. The most productive relationships emerge when teaching faculty acknowledge my professional background while still expecting me to engage authentically as a student. This requires ongoing negotiation and mutual respect, with both parties recognizing that my nontraditional status can either enrich or complicate the learning environment depending on how it's navigated.

This cycle of role-shifting, though challenging, ultimately strengthens our ability to serve in all capacities–as leaders, teachers, and learners. When we can set aside our leadership and/or faculty identity enough to fully embrace the student experience, that is

7

where student learning happens and where pedagogical evolution begins. Setting aside our professional roles requires a deliberate effort to quiet that administrative/faculty voice that wants to evaluate and restructure everything. Once we manage this transition, the return to leadership and faculty roles becomes not just easier but more enriching. The experience brings a renewed perspective and deeper understanding of both the student experience and our own roles as educators and leaders.

This amalgamation of renewed perspective and understanding is the fruit of unique challenges born from identity convergence conflicts that demand adaptive strategies, forcing the expansion of pedagogical tools and approaches. Given that my role convergence primarily exists in virtual teaching environments, specific examples of my dual roles emerge via how I approach online course design and delivery. I have learned to refine and streamline my use of virtual breakout rooms when teaching, better understanding how to guide and empower students based on their diverse experiences and knowledge. My experience as a graduate student has reinforced that teaching styles and curriculum delivery must remain flexible to maximize impact for students with different learning styles and varying, often unseen, disabilities.

Most significantly, receiving grading feedback has illuminated the profound impact that both excellent and subpar/minimal feedback can have on student success, motivation, and confidence. Feedback offers subtext that can overtly or inadvertently demonstrate how engaged or invested a faculty member appears to be in a course. While an abundance of feedback is not necessary to demonstrate investment and guide students effectively, nor does minimal feedback necessarily indicate a lack of investment, what matters critically is the student's perception of these elements. This perspective alone has provided invaluable insight and reflection for my roles as both teacher and administrator, whose goal is to guide faculty toward excellence in the service of student success.

The graduate student experience also provides crucial insights into effective leadership. Positive classroom experiences demonstrate how leading thoughtful curriculum development and revision can drive student success and engagement. In contrast, challenging graduate classroom situations inform how to mentor faculty more dynamically, encouraging professional development and strategically guiding struggling faculty back to effective teaching practices. Because my role convergence operates primarily in a virtual environment, I can offer specific examples of how this dual perspective manifests in areas such as effective online course design. Even experienced graduate students can find the experience frustrating when faced with poorly organized online classrooms. Graduate students who embody a convergence of roles have limited time and patience to search for essential course materials, and difficulty locating necessary resources can impact confidence or trigger imposter syndrome episodes. This insight has shaped my focus on user experience as department leadership—ensuring that both faculty and students can engage with the virtual curriculum easily and effectively.

Another significant benefit of my role convergence involves conducting informal ethnographic studies of faculty instruction and student engagement at my work institution. As an administrator who also is a doctoral student elsewhere, I can observe how faculty teach courses in my department and how students in those courses respond and engage, whilst simultaneously experiencing instruction as a student myself in my doctoral classes. This facet of role shapeshifting allows me to gather valuable data that I can apply in my leadership role when mentoring faculty and providing feedback on curriculum design within my department. The combination of leadership and teaching expertise, along with authentic student perspectives, enhances both instructional effectiveness and departmental leadership capabilities, creating a continuous cycle of professional growth and adaptation.

**The Heavy Hand of Impostor Syndrome**

The complexity of navigating multiple professional identities intensifies the relationship between competence and self-doubt, manifesting as impostor syndrome for academics juggling varied roles. As high achievers, academics frequently experience self-doubt despite significant accomplishments and expertise (Bravata et al., 2020). While early research focused primarily on women's experiences with impostor syndrome, subsequent studies revealed that it affects all genders equally (Bravata et al., 2020). Notably, Cokley et al. (2013) found that impostor syndrome correlates more strongly with mental health concerns than with "minority status stress," which refers to the psychological burden experienced by individuals from underrepresented groups in academic and professional settings (p. 91), adding an intriguing dimension to understanding how academics managing multiple roles experience identity convergence.

Imposter syndrome, or impostor phenomenon, manifests across all three roles I inhabit. Wang and Li (2023) content that for doctoral students, imposter feelings are most linked to perceptions of role identity, which provides the foundation through which individuals reconcile and apply their thoughts and actions and make sense of their experiences. As a graduate student, it takes the shape of being surrounded by younger, sharper, more innovative students than I perceive myself to be. It becomes too easy to compare myself as a middle-aged graduate student to the younger classmates who seem further along than I was at their age. Because I am also a seasoned teacher and member of leadership, it feels unnatural for me not to understand concepts or to need clarification or help—after all, I should know the answers, shouldn't I? As a teacher, there are always colleagues with more experience or better instincts, which makes me wonder if I truly belong. As an administrator, I am constantly surrounded by those with more experience. While I do my best to learn from these situations and individuals, I always question whether I truly belong in these spaces.

These examples are exacerbated by the fact that I am a minority woman. For me, Cokley's research is particularly resonant because in my experience, impostor syndrome surfaces most strongly when I lack understanding or confidence in a project or task, affecting my mental health not primarily because of my minority status or cultural expectations, but rather through this uncertainty itself. While minority status undoubtedly plays a role, my self-reflection reveals impostor syndrome more as a manifestation of anxiety and stress.  In my culture, asking for help or displaying anything less than absolute confidence is typically seen as a sign of weakness. Looking at all three roles I embody, this cultural expectation creates a self-perpetuating cycle—like a snake eating its own tail—where the very vulnerabilities inherent in learning and growth become sources of additional stress and self-doubt. In addition, I have found that shapeshifting between roles can invariably bring a hefty dose of impostor syndrome. This is especially true after the initial transition.

Spending extended time in one role makes it more challenging to shift into a new one with the same level of confidence, as self-doubt inevitably creeps in. In my department leadership role, I have engaged in numerous conversations about impostor syndrome's grip on faculty across all genders. I have discovered that shapeshifting, while initially presenting significant obstacles, can offer the benefit of returning to roles that have historically provided self-confidence and mental fortitude. For instance, when struggling with graduate student work, I might temporarily step back into my leadership or faculty role, reframing the stressful situation through my teacher or administrative lens where I generally feel more secure in my expertise–or at least, I do. Through this process, I attempt to transform my experience with impostor syndrome into a form of pedagogical evolution.

This leads us to consider how we might apply a pedagogical evolution lens to the presence and effects of impostor syndrome across our various academic roles. For students, impostor syndrome manifests in seeking validation of their belonging in their school or program (Parkman, 2016). While this affects both undergraduate and graduate students, the graduate student who is also a seasoned faculty member or administrator might find themselves less dependent on external validation.

This is where my personal experience provides insight. Though I struggle with intense impostor syndrome, I have found that graduate coursework is one area where I tend not to let it dominate. In my graduate student role, sitting in a classroom with students full of vigor, fresh perspectives, and wide-eyed passion can be daunting, but my extensive teaching and leadership experience puts me at ease. This is especially applicable when my classmates, many of whom are in their first semester of university teaching, share their frustrations and obstacles. I find myself organically shapeshifting into my leader or faculty role and offering anecdotes and advice from my years of experience. Perhaps I don't seek validation because I receive it through my classmates' undivided attention and eager absorption of my insights. Ironically, while I still experience a hefty dose of imposter syndrome within my faculty and leadership roles, those same roles help curb

10

the imposter syndrome I might otherwise feel as a graduate student. The question becomes: how can we harness and share this experience while applying it to both our graduate work and our various roles?

## Beyond Individual Experience

While my experience might seem unique, casual conversations with colleagues suggest this shapeshifting identity convergence is increasingly common and higher education. Within my own institution, I've had conversations with numerous faculty members and department leaders pursuing advanced degrees while maintaining their professional positions. Through my involvement in an informal graduate student support group, I've witnessed the hunger for spaces where academics/practitioners can discuss the realities of juggling full-time academic or industry work with doctoral studies, often while also managing family responsibilities. These informal conversations, which frequently and naturally get stumbled into, in virtual meetings I have with faculty and colleagues at the institution I work for as well as in graduate course breakout rooms, reveal a shared experience: the palpable energy shift when people find others navigating similar challenges. Beyond my institution, conversations at conferences and within online scholarly communities reaffirm that this convergence of professional and student identities is neither rare nor isolated to academic settings. Many professionals, whether an industry or otherwise, bring serious expertise to their graduate programs, creating similar opportunities for mutual learning and knowledge exchange. How common these experiences are suggests that structured support for academics/practitioners who find themselves in identity convergence could benefit a significant population.

## Recommendations and Applications

Looking ahead, I see two critical areas where we can better support academics who return to student status while maintaining leadership and/or faculty roles:

1. First, graduate programs must create meaningful opportunities for students with substantial professional expertise and experience to both be challenged and share their experiential knowledge. This might mean designing and/or redesigning curriculum to incorporate professional expertise and experience while pushing these students toward evolved theoretical horizons.
2. Second, leader/faculty-turned-students should actively seek opportunities to share their evolving expertise within their departments and the broader university community. In my own journey, I've found success in deliberately seeking opportunities that merge my various roles. For instance, my graduate work focusing on user experience and usability has led to conference presentations and publication opportunities that weave together my roles as leader, teacher, and student.

11

3. Finally, institutions employing leaders and faculty who return to student status should, as Parkman (2020) suggests, create structured opportunities for these scholar-practitioners to share their evolving expertise within their departments and the broader university community. Additionally, institutions can foster this integration through intentional mentorship programs pairing PhD faculty with leaders or faculty pursuing advanced degrees. My experience suggests that such partnerships work best when they emphasize mutual learning rather than traditional hierarchical relationships.

**Conclusions and Future Directions**

The journey through identity convergence in academia reveals unexpected knowledge. While the constant shapeshifting between leadership, faculty, and student roles can initially feel disorienting, I've discovered that the benefits far outweigh the challenges. Beyond the obvious advantage of acquiring new knowledge through graduate studies, the embodiment of these three roles creates a unique triangular learning experience where each role enriches the others.

Even impostor syndrome, often viewed solely as a manifestation of self-doubt, can be reframed as a catalyst for growth when viewed through a learning lens. My experience has shown that this persistent companion can actually drive innovation across all academic roles, pushing us to question assumptions and seek new approaches. When leaders or faculty members return to student status, they gain knowledge and transformative possibilities that can revitalize their departments and institutions.

The ripple effects of these multiple identities extend far beyond individual growth. When institutions create spaces for leader-faculty-students to apply their emerging scholarship locally, they foster environments of continuous learning and innovation. I've witnessed how this approach enhances institutional reputation, boosts student success and retention, and helps professionals like myself navigate the psychological complexities of role-shifting while battling impostor syndrome.

Looking ahead, the key to maximizing these benefits lies in recognizing and supporting the unique value of multiple academic identities. Rather than seeing these roles as separate or conflicting, we must embrace their interconnected nature. This perspective opens new possibilities for institutional growth, professional development, and academic innovation. The future of academia may well depend on our ability to create spaces where such identity convergence can flourish, transforming both individuals and institutions in the process.

# References

Allen, T. D., Miller, M. H., French, K. A., Kim, E., & Centeno, G. (2023). Faculty time expenditure across research, teaching, and service: Do gender differences persist? *Occupational health science*, 7(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1007/s41542-023-00156-w

Bravata, D.M., Madhusudhan, D. K, Boroff, M., & Cokley, K. O. (2020). Commentary: Prevalence, predictors, and treatment of imposter syndrome: A systematic review. *Journal of Mental Health and Clinical Psychology*, 4(3), 12–16.

Cokley, K., McClain, S., Enciso, A., & Martinez, M. (2013). An Examination of the Impact of Minority Status Stress and Impostor Feelings on the Mental Health of Diverse Ethnic Minority College Students. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 41(2), 82–95. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1912.2013.00029.x

Feng, Q., Chen, X., & Guo, Z. (2023). How does role accumulation enhance career adaptability? A dual mediation analysis. *Current Psychology*, 42(12), 10426–10436. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-02304-3

Kiesow, C. W., Mount, G. R., Bunin, J., McMains, K. C., McFate, T., Hartzell, J., & Servey, J. T. (2024). A common trajectory toward a professional identity as a faculty developer. *Family Medicine*, 56(2), 108–114. https://doi.org/10.22454/FamMed.2024.953164

Lambrecht, K. M. (2021). From imposter to "Double Agent": Leveraging liminality as expertise. In Macauley, W. J., Anglesey, L. R., Edwards. R., Lambrecht, K. M. & Lovas, P. (Eds.), *Standing at the Threshold: Working through Liminality in the Composition and Rhetoric TAship* (pp. 134–151). University Press of Colorado. http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1p3xk17.11

Marques, R. M. G., Lopes, A., & Magalhães, A. M. (2024). Academic identities and higher education change: Reviewing the evidence. *Educational Research*, 66(2), 228–244. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131881.2024.2334760

Misra, J., Kuvaeva, A., O'meara, K., Culpepper, D. K., & Jaeger, A. (2021). Gendered and racialized perceptions of faculty workloads. *Gender & Society*, 35(3), 358–394. https://doi.org/10.1177/08912432211001387

Osorio, R., Hutchison, A., Primeau, S., Ubbesen, M. E., & Champoux-Crowley, A. (2021). The laborious reality vs. the imagined ideal of graduate student instructors of writing. *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, *45*(1), 131.

Parkman, A. (2016). The imposter phenomenon in higher education: incidence and impact. *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice*, 16(1), 51–60.

Pawlowski, M., & Jacobson, B. (2023). "Shifting roles and negotiating identities: TA learning in landscapes of practice." Macauley, W.J. et al. (Eds.), *Threshold Conscripts: Rhetoric and Composition Teaching Assistantships* (pp.187–205). WAC Clearinghouse. https://doi.org/10.37514/PER-B.2023.1626.2.07

Robinson-Zetzer, R., & Smith, T. G. "I feel it in my body: WC teaching and administration as embodied praxis." Macauley, W.J. et al. (Eds.), *Threshold Conscripts: Rhetoric and Composition Teaching Assistantships* (pp. 269–280). WAC Clearinghouse. https://doi.org/10.37514/PER-B.2023.1626.2.10

13

Wang, Y., & Li, W. (2023). The impostor phenomenon among doctoral students: A scoping review. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, p. 6. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1233434