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| **Exercise 5.3.2b Possible Responses** |

Compare your responses to Exercise 5.3.2b with the examples below. There are no right answers! These are intended only to give you additional ideas and to help you out if you are stuck.

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| **Potential Problem or Thesis Statements** |
| Graduate programs may inadvertently erect barriers to student academic and long-term career success by failing to attend to the struggles graduate students experience managing family, work, and other external demands. |
| By taking a contextualized or systems level approach to understanding the challenges faced by students, graduate programs may be able to increase student retention and success. |
| Given the increased demands on graduate students (e.g., family, financial, and work pressures), the existing organizational structures and expectations of graduate counselling programs may need to be revised. |
| Some graduate students seem to be more resilient and better able to manage the work-life-school challenges inherent in graduate education. |

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| **Potential Problem Statements** | **Research Questions** |
| Graduate programs may inadvertently erect barriers to student academic and long-term career success by failing to attend to the struggles graduate students experience managing family, work, and other external demands. | What do graduate counselling students perceive as barriers to their success both within their own lives and within graduate programs?  To what degree are the barriers to success faced by graduate counselling students a result of student factors versus program factors? |
| By taking a contextualized or systems level approach to understanding the challenges faced by students, graduate programs may be able to increase student retention and success. | What are the specific contextual or systemic factors that impact graduate counselling students who withdraw early or struggle to succeed?  How does the concept of social justice play out in students’ perceptions of the demands and challenges of graduate school? |
| Given the increased demands on graduate students (e.g., family, financial, and work pressures), the existing organizational structures and expectations of graduate counselling programs may need to be revised. | What are the similarities and differences between how students, instructors, and program administrators view barriers to success of graduate students?  What specific structures, practices, or expectations of graduate counselling programs do students identify as being the most difficult to work within or the most challenging to meet? |
| Some graduate students seem more resilient and more able to manage the work-life-school challenges inherent in graduate education. | What personal characteristics, resources, or other factors distinguish successful from less successful graduate students?  How does the phenomenon of resilience play out in the personal and academic lives of graduate students? |