Design Portfolio: Innovation Team Uncharted

Angelina Bartolotta
Grand Valley State University, bartoloa@mail.gvsu.edu

Michael Everix
Grand Valley State University, everixm@mail.gvsu.edu

Chance Colter
Grand Valley State University, colterc@mail.gvsu.edu

Sophia Hall
Grand Valley State University

Kimberly Berry
Grand Valley State University, berryki@mail.gvsu.edu

See next page for additional authors

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Design Portfolio
- Innovation Team Uncharted -

Angelina Bartolotta, Michael Everix,
Chance Colter, Sophia Hall,
Kimberly Berry, Kiernan Pitts, Whitney Veldheer

HNR 313 - Design Thinking to Meet Real World Needs
GVSU Fall 2017
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Thank you for your interest in our team, Team Uncharted, and our work with the Grand Valley State University Frederik Meijer Honors College. At the time of undertaking the task of making the Honors College more “distinctive and distinguished,” we also bore in mind the greater task of creating a better experience and life for all stakeholders. Our ultimate hope is that these efforts radiate through the process and final innovation proposal.

The team working on this project consisted of 7 members: Angelina Bartolotta, Michael Everix, Chance Colter, Sophia Hall, Kimberly Berry, Kiernan Pitts, and Whitney Veldheer. Each member took charge of the tasks within the project most suited to their personality, strengths, and desired areas of growth. This method resulted in a system where work was distributed well and all members contributed to the end product in the way best suited to them. Because of this, the quality of the finished product, we believe, was the best our team could have created.

As a team, we are proud of the accomplishments made toward the common goal of creating a better Honors College at Grand Valley State University. As all of us are students within this College, we were especially invested and eager to develop a strong solution. We hope that in this project our passion and best efforts are evident throughout.

Happy Innovating,

Team Uncharted
Design Brief

Background and Context

The GVSU Frederik Meijer Honors College strives to provide a specialized experience for exceptional students at Grand Valley State University. The program offers students an opportunity to expand their horizons and make their time at GVSU not just an education, but an experience. Currently, there are over 1700 students enrolled in Grand Valley’s Frederik Meijer Honors College, which has grown steadily every year since its debut in 2009, according to the July 2017 Frederik Meijer Honors College Annual Report Executive Summary (Figure 1). For the 2017-2018 freshman class, the incoming high school GPA was 4.957, with an average ACT score of 29 (Chamberlain). These academic indicators are significantly higher than the average non-Honors Grand Valley incoming student, with a mean incoming GPA of 3.54 and ACT score of 23.8 (“Profile,” 2016). Therefore, the Honors College must strive to prepare the best possible educational experience for these academically exceptional students. The Honors College learning community has many opportunities for academically-driven students, offering specialized academic resources and facilities, and segregated student housing (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Honors College Enrollment from 2009-2017

![Total Enrollment](image)

Figure 2: Aerial photo of the Frederik Meijer Honors College and view of specialized classroom

The premiere focus of the Honors College curriculum is team-taught, interdisciplinary, general education sequences for freshman students. The 6 credit, year-long sequence supports meeting university general education requirements. Along with this sequence course, to
successfully complete the Honors program, students must pass one writing class, one mathematical science class, one culture class, two social science classes, two natural science classes, a junior seminar, and complete an individualized senior project. Class sizes are generally 25 students or less. There are additional opportunities for Honors students in leadership development and enhanced financial scholarships as compared to Grand Valley’s non-Honors college experience. Furthermore, the Honors program promotes participation in undergraduate research, international studies and other cultural experiences, and alumni services.

Although Honors College enrollment continues to increase, and maintains a graduation rate higher than the non-Honors population (Figure 3), there is still opportunity to consider evolving the program to have it remain attractive and relevant. Specifically, the Honors College suffers from 1) a lack of general knowledge about the opportunities and achievements of the Honors College Community, and 2) a sharp decline in student participation and opportunities after sophomore year (National Collegiate Honors Council Program Review Report, 2016). Once students meet the freshman-level general education requirements, there is limited continual connection with the program. For the Honors College to continue to flourish, it is imperative that the programming keep expanding and developing in order to retain current and attract potential students. By implementing the design-thinking process, many colleges such as Boston College are innovating their Honors Colleges, and therefore directly improving the lives of its participants (Berrett, 2015). Grand Valley will use this same method in order establish a better experience for all stakeholders involved supporting the GVSU mission of shaping students’ lives, professions, and societies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>GVSU 4-yr</th>
<th>Hon elig 4-yr</th>
<th>Hon 4-yr</th>
<th>GVSU 5-yr</th>
<th>Hon elig 6-yr</th>
<th>Hon 5-yr</th>
<th>GVSU 6-yr</th>
<th>Hon elig 6-yr</th>
<th>Hon 5-yr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>~37%</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
<td>62.6%</td>
<td>~60%</td>
<td>72.4%</td>
<td>81.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
<td>68.9%</td>
<td>87.3%</td>
<td>~67%</td>
<td>73.9%</td>
<td>90.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>64.9%</td>
<td>85.1%</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
<td>71.7%</td>
<td>87.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Graduation Rate for GVSU from 2009-2012

Problem Statement

“We will develop improved marketing strategies to showcase the “New Honors College Curriculum.”

We believe to successfully address the design challenge to make the Honors College experience more distinctive, we need to address the overriding emphasis on freshman-oriented programming, and develop a successful marketing strategy and plan for the Honors College at GVSU. The former could include the challenges that arise from the strong focus on the freshmen curriculum, the sophomore year gap, and the lack of incentive for transfer students and upperclassmen to join the Honors College after their freshman year. The latter addresses the perceived failure of the marketing strategy that the Honors College faces. Many people—both
prospective students and current students—have never even heard of the Honors College at GVSU. There is very little presence on campus; no overt brand development and no general advertising. Honors Students are a bright group who deserve recognition both on and off campus.

Stakeholder Ecosystem

In the Honors College ecosystem, there are many moving parts and individuals that are part of the system. Aside from the obvious groups, that is, Honors students, faculty, and staff, there are subgroups that may be less obvious, yet are still impacted by the happenings and changes made in the Honors College. Some of these include the non-Honors faculty and staff. These individuals experience the Honors College by interacting with Honors students, faculty, and staff and by viewing the things that the Honors College does from an outside perspective. Non-Honors students include traditional students, international students, non-traditional students, transfer students, and students from other schools. Other stakeholders within the university include the various departments and offices (including the Padnos International Center, Career Services, etc.).

All of the stakeholders in the ecosystem are connected through the Honors program, yet they lack a connection to each other. Some of the gaps include the gap between Honors staff and traditional students. Another is between Honors students, traditional students, nontraditional students and international students. Gaps are also evident between the different disciplines and levels of classes. Honors study abroad programs and potential employers is also another, less obvious gap. Honors Faculty and staff and Non-Honors faculty and staff also constitute a rather large gap. Both groups have different approaches to teaching and different experiences with students. Our goal is to help minimize gaps between stakeholders by developing a marketing strategy that is reachable to everyone on every level, maintains interest, and maximizes impact for the long term.

Research Methods

For this project we are using a design thinking approach to address the design challenge of the GVSU Honors College. Design thinking is compiled of 6 elements: Define, Empathize, Re-define, Ideate, Prototype, Test (“Profile”, 2016). In order to truly solve a problem, we really have to understand what is “real,” which can sometimes be quite difficult. Understanding the problem requires seriously empathizing with those who are currently living with the problem and will be influenced by the solutions. We can get such empathy from stakeholders. Our chosen methods for developing this empathy include face to face interviews, and researching other Honors Colleges.

- Interviews
  - Conduct one on one interviews with stakeholders to find out what they see as the strengths and limitations of the current Honors program. Gaining their perspectives will hopefully provide us with a more holistic and complete picture of the Honors College Experience.
● Research other College Honors programs
  ○ This is a great opportunity to learn more about what other colleges offer for their Honors Programs. What are other colleges are doing with their Honors curriculum that we aren’t? Is there a marketing strategy they are employing that we aren’t? Where do we fall short in comparison? How important is “place” to an Honors College?

Constraints

The design process we are using to complete this project includes identifying constraints that could impact the direction and implementation of potential solutions. The first of these constraints is a limited access to resources. Financial, professional, and material resources, while available, are ultimately granted at the discretion of the Honors College and other sources the team is able to obtain. Some other constraints that we are operating with include Honors College staffing, space, financial, time, and communicative constraints. With regards to Honors College staffing, there are only so many existing faculty members. This will be something that we will have to work around if we find that the Honors College could benefit from additional faculty, because there will be no increase in Honors College staffing. Additionally, we only have so many spaces, office spaces, classrooms, buildings, multipurpose rooms, etc. Space will also be a constraint that we must work around if discover that the Honors College could benefit from some extra room, because there will be no additional physical spaces created. Another constraint that our team has identified is a financial one. There will be no increase in the marketing budget for the Honors College, so any marketing strategies will have to be developed with that in mind. The time that we have to complete the project has been identified by our team as another constraint that we must work around. We only have 15 weeks to complete this design thinking process. Most people research for months or years on a topic to completely understand every aspect of it, and we must get such depth of interest and immersion all in 15 weeks. Lastly, the Honors College, along with the rest of GVSU suffers from a severe lack of communication between departments. One significant job that we have during this project is to gain empathy from as many stakeholders as possible, and that is extremely difficult when departments do not communicate with each other, we will have to bridge those gaps in communication as a team to maximize our results with empathy.

Outcomes

The Honors Program is a true hidden treasure of Grand Valley; it offers tremendous value, even challenged by no one seeming to know where, or what it is. Non-Honors students view the Honors College as this mystical, out-of-reach fantasy for them, something that they could never be a part of. This perceived gap is what we are trying to resolve, not just between Honors and Non-Honors students, but with all of our stakeholders. We will present new, innovative ideas for the Marketing and Curriculum of the Frederik Meijer Honors College that draws the attention of everyone who is affiliated with the Grand Valley Community. We will design a program so outstanding and worthwhile that students will want to put their Honors
College Experience at the top of their resume. The Program will be a key recruitment tool to attract new students to Grand Valley, and truly provide them with a life transforming education!

Additional Works Cited

(2016). *Profile of Grand Valley Students* [PowerPoint Slides]. Retrieved from


https://mybb.gvsu.edu/bbcswebdav/pid-4600600-dt-content-rid-40062490_1/courses/GVHNR313.01.201810/Annual%20Report%202017%20executive%20summary.pdf

Stakeholder Map

Before starting research or gaining empathy for our stakeholders, it was important to first define all publics affected by the Frederik Meijer Honors College program. To do this, a stakeholder map was created. It outlines groupings of publics and gives a visual representation of the connections between them. This map was referred to often throughout the research process for the team to determine if all publics were considered. Because of their larger stake in the program, a large part of the research revolved around the top left portion of the map, that is, students, faculty, staff, and their sub-groups.

Figure 4. Stakeholder Map
Affinity Mapping

All of the primary and secondary research was reviewed by the team, and was used to form affinity maps. These affinity maps are comprised of numerous insights from our research which were clustered into categories. From these organized insights, we began to notice patterns in our insights which created our innovation platform. Photographs of our team’s affinity mapping work are presented in Figures 5 through 7:

Figure 5: Affinity Map #1 – Broad Categorization of Insights into Categories such as Diversity, Environmental, “the Student”, Parents, Curriculum, etc.
Figure 6: Affinity Map #2 – Insights that connect to each other and form chains of thought.
Figure 7: Affinity Map #3 – Insights added on by saying “yes, and...” to the statement above it.
Collaborator Debriefs

After assembling all of the team’s research together, we presented at three separate Collaborator Debriefs. In these debriefs we presented our insights, innovations, and initial prototype concepts to the stakeholders and collaborators of the Honors program. Their feedback was an essential part in our design thinking process. All of our stakeholders’ ideas and comments shaped our innovation direction, since they would be directly affected by any potential prototypes ultimately tested. An overview of the insights that were presented, the questions asked, and the information received is presented below:

Collaborator Debrief 1
The first of the Collaborator Debriefs were attended by Honors alumni, Honors Students, the Dean of the College of Interdisciplinary Studies, the director of the Honors College, and a GVSU professor that is also a parent of a student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Challenge Debrief</th>
<th>Problem Statement: We will develop improved marketing strategies to showcase the new Honors College Curriculum.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Insights:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. High achieving students are attracted to an Ivy League experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Grand Valley’s Honors College lacks both an internal and external reputation as a prestigious program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. High achieving students make decisions based on financial incentive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions for the Collaborators</td>
<td>1. What are some qualities that an Honors program should have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Do you have any experience with other Honors programs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. (if yes to previous) What were the standout positive and negative qualities of the program?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. To you, what is the defining line between an Honors College curriculum and a traditional university curriculum.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Capture What’s Meaningful to Advance Effective Innovation

| Instructor | • How would a non-Honors College student answer the question, what should an Honors College possess? What should it have to make you want to join? |
|            | • To truly be the best you, people should want to go to Honors because it provides an opportunity to broaden yourself and your thinking in an in-depth, effective way. |
|            | • There is little to no diversity in the Honors College faculty either. What is really being done beyond just the student base? |

| Class   | • There is no standard for Honors classes in general, they are all incredibly different, require different effort. |
|         | • Diversity has multiple meanings. |

| Collaborator | • Word of mouth is a powerful tool for marketing, but should be more formal |
- The kind of students in the Honors College are what really makes the Honors College what it is.
- The Honors College should move students towards global citizenship. Make students comfortable with the world.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Stakeholder(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Parents of Honors and non-Honors students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- People in administrative positions in Honors (not just professors)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1. Post-Debrief Reflections
Integrate the Feedback & Ideate Next Steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIVERGE: How did the feedback provided <em>deviate</em> from your team’s current insights?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Some of the collaborators viewed the current “word-of-mouth” marketing of the Honors College is enough/more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. There is no standard for the courses in the Honors College curriculum currently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. That some people turn down the Honors Program because they want “the freshman experience” and feel that the Honors College will hinder that typical experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONVERGE: How did the feedback <em>align</em> with and enhance the team’s current insights?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. We need to look at our competitors, specifically MSU.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The financial situation, i.e. lack of funding for scholarships, is a limitation for attracting students to the Honors College.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Interdisciplinary nature is vital in the Honors College experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Non-Honors students feel that Honors isn’t worth the extra workload.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLY: How can you <em>use</em> the feedback provided?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. We can change our dialogue for our interviews, asking more in-depth “why” questions to get more detailed insights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. We can branch further on our stakeholder map and interview outside of direct GVSU Honors College affiliation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT: What are your next steps?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Diversify our stakeholder interviews to reach outside of the realm of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Reach out to parents, and investigate their role when choosing colleges/Honors programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Research how to help students attain “global citizenship” through this program, and how to market this.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collaborator Debrief 2

After the long process of synthesizing all of our data from our research, affinity mapping, and first collaborator debrief, our team came up with a multitude of “needs” statements and innovations. These statements and innovations were then presented to another group of collaborators and stakeholders in a second Collaborator Debrief. These stakeholders and collaborators included faculty involved in marketing and housing, the Dean of the College of Interdisciplinary Studies, Honors and Non-Honors alumni, and the director of the Honors College. An overview of the Debrief, including the questions asked, statements and innovations presented, and information gathered is presented below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Telling the Story</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design Challenge Debrief</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Needs Statements:**

1. We need to utilize the hard-working individuals already in Honors to bring awareness to the GVSU Honors College through human connections.
2. The Honors College needs to build its status as a prestigious institution.
3. The Honors College needs to emphasize connections with Faculty to heighten the student experience.

**Top 5 Innovations:**

1. Have a specific Honors College tour offered for interested students during their regular campus tour.
2. Have an Honors faculty meet and greet/speed dating type event for students to get to know the faculty.
3. Require students to have an Honors faculty mentor, chosen from the meet and greet activity.
4. Create an Honors College video that emphasizes the Honors College’s prestige and high points.
5. Market the hashtag, #HonorsCollegeDifference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions for the Collaborators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What is the most effective way to distribute information to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What do you think are the most effective marketing strategies colleges are utilizing, and what are some examples?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How does GVSU go about expanding to high schools that have never heard of us? Do we have a system for reaching out to students from out of state?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Class | Employers don’t know what Honors means on the resume  
| | Honors Students don’t know that they have a faculty mentor, this should be more widely advertised |
| Collaborator | Word of mouth is the number one way to spread information, no one really cares about videos to be honest  
| | We need to include Holton-Hooker living center in the marketing process  
| | We are a very regionally oriented school  
| | We need to work on keeping the students that are already in the Honors College, not just recruiting more  
| | Market to upper level students, upper level students don’t know about Honors |
| Other Stakeholder(s) | Admissions office  
| | High schools |

**Post-Debrief Reflections**

**Integrate the Feedback & Ideate Next Steps**

**DIVERGE: How did the feedback provided *deviate* from your team’s current insights?**

1. Retention is more important than recruitment.
2. Ideally, marketing would be obsolete eventually; people would just *know* about the program and self-propagate.
3. Video marketing is not usually effective.
4. There *are* some events held specifically for Honors students.
5. Word of mouth is most effective in spreading the word about the Honors College (more so than advertising, events, etc.).

**CONVERGE: How did the feedback provided *align* with and enhance the team’s current insights?**

1. Efforts need to be made to further integrate Holton-Hooker residents with Niemeyer residents/the rest of the Honors College community.
2. Student-faculty relationships need to be emphasized.
3. The current Honors College program is not oriented toward non-traditional or transfer student.
4. The Honors College doesn’t have any distinctive marketing tactics.
5. Modes of external and internal recognition for the Honors College need to be created.
| **APPLY:** How can you use the feedback provided? | 1. Invest in the development of a successful and practical word-of-mouth marketing approach.  
2. Incentivize students to recruit prospective students to the Honors College.  
3. Develop a better connection between the Niemeyer and Holton Hooker communities.  
4. Develop distinctive marketing strategies and tactics for the FMHC. |
| **ACT:** What are your next steps? | 1. Develop a catchy hashtag specified to the FMHC.  
2. Design a program that utilizes current Honors students as a resource in giving tours and answering questions about the FMHC.  
3. Design a program that incentivizes current Honors students to recruit for the Honors College in their previous high school.  
4. Develop a recognizable brand for the FMHC. |
Collaborator Debrief 3

After presenting our Top 5 innovations, we needed to narrow it down to two. We developed a Honors Logo to be used to brand the college and give as a visual as well as word-of-mouth marketing tool, as well as an Honors Student Outreach program where students would go to their high schools as well as others to help spread the word about Honors. An overview of the Debrief, including the questions asked, statements and innovations presented, and information gathered is presented below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Challenge Debrief</th>
<th>Priorities from ideation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. From unpublicized, unknown Honors College to a visual presence on GVSU’s campus and beyond, leading to more students joining and continuing the program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. From unrecognized program to campus-wide recognition for prestige and distinction as a prominent Honors entity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. From limited marketing strategies to fostering program pride on-campus and self-propagating promotion beyond Grand Valley</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Three key insights:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Student marketing and word-of-mouth are the most effective marketing strategies (including Honors College “swag”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. We need to focus on retaining the students already in the Honors College, as well as marketing to prospective students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If we incentivize students to recruit others now, eventually it could turn into a self-propagating marketing system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers Team is Facing:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Limited monetary funds for student marketing incentive programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Possible administrative backlash against new logo implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Unsure how to raise startup costs for new signs, shirts, and other apparel items with this logo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 2 Innovation prototypes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. An Honors Logo/Brand Endorsement Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. An Honors Student Outreach Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary Illustration
Questions for the Collaborators

1. What are the non-monetary incentives that can be offered to student ambassadors?
2. What would be the best way to roll out a new Honors brand? How will this branding effort be perceived by others—should Honors accessories/apparel be exclusive to the college or available campus-wide?
3. What are some problems/barriers that we may be overlooking?

Capture What’s Meaningful to Advance your Prototypes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Friendly competitions with incentives can be used to encourage students to become ambassadors. Examples include: merchandise incentives, meal tickets, parking passes, etc.  
• Consider how wearing a certain “brand” can change how people perceive you. Look at sports teams for examples, they do not come off as elitist, how can we do the same?  
• We are the the “whitecaps” of the laker effect |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
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</table>
| • The hashtag is too “stuffy” and comes off as gimmicky. How can we develop a hashtag that we know will be used by students but also be specific to Grand Valley’s Honors College.  
• Consider creating a “brand guide” to fully understand the message behind our logo and how to best implement it |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaborator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Meal tickets are often used as incentives for student ambassadors in the admission office.  
• Turn the ambassador program into a leadership of mentorship program. |
- Idea for an incentive: create a badge/certificate that you can earn that will show up on your degree/transcript.
- Use leadership opportunities as incentives- these are huge motivators for students.
- Develop a sense of community within the Honors College, but also with the university as a whole.
- One purpose of the logo is that it ties into recruiting from within. We value innovation and intellectual pursuits.
- Live, Learn, Lead is kind of already our brand. How can we build/market a brand based off of this?

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<th>Integrate the Feedback &amp; Decide on Your Best Solution</th>
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<td><strong>DIVERGE:</strong> How did the feedback provided <em>deviate</em> from your team’s current insights?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The current logo may come across as exclusive and elitist, instead of portraying prestige.</td>
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<td>2. The hashtag is too long and maybe unlikable</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. We need to focus on marketing the opportunities offered by the Honors College, rather than the people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. We need to really understand what makes an Honors Student who he or she is in order to create a successful brand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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| **CONVERGE:** How did the feedback provided *align* with and enhance the team’s current insights? |
| 1. We need to use our innovations to create dialogue about the Honors College, since word-of-mouth is the best marketing strategy |
| 2. The message should convey a sense of community within the Honors College, but also inclusivity |
| 3. Students are unable to articulate to employers the skills that they receive because of Honors |
| 4. There is no tour specifically available for the Honors College, and Honors housing, it is up to chance. |

| **APPLY:** How can you *use* the feedback provided? |
| 1. We need to be more intentional in what exactly our logo portrays |
| 2. We need to revisit the hashtag to create something that would realistically be used by students |
| 3. We were given ideas for incentives like the meal ticket option, or electronic badge, or maybe merchandise giveaways. |

| **ACT:** What are your next steps? |
| 1. Create a basic brand guide |
| 2. Interview Mackenzie Prins (admissions counselor) to see how the current general student ambassador program works |
| 3. Survey Honors students to see what they want the official Honors College logo to portray |
| 4. Figure out specifically how to “measure success” with this marketing approach |
Top 5 Innovation Ideas

Create a tour guide program specifically for potential Honors Students

Most campus tours that GV provides only takes the students through the typical freshman north campus and doesn’t go anywhere near the Honors College. Sometimes, if asked to, students will be brought to the Honors College living center and possibly see a dorm if an Honors student is able and available, which sometimes is unlikely. Our goal with this innovation will be to have our own separate button on the potential student page on the Grand Valley Website, and where it says “Schedule a Campus Tour”, there will be a button below it that says “Schedule a Frederik Meijer Honors College Campus Tour”. This program will also encourage current students to keep their connection with the Honors College as tour leaders, which will count for community/volunteer/class credit. This way, a tour of the Honors College will be accessible at all times and student tour leaders can be great advocates for the Honors College and effectively promote enrolling. The students will be taken through Niemeyer, told all about the coursework, events and activities that the Honors Community provides, and brought through the Honors faculty offices to get a good understanding of how close and open to talking these professors are. Then they will be taken to tour the Holton-Hooker living community, and the presence Honors is striving to make on north campus as well. Then they will join or independently tour the rest of campus, such as Kirkhof, the Library, Student Services, the Laker Store, The Recreation Center, etc.

Host an Honors Student-Faculty Mixer

This will be during transitions week before school. It will be for all Honors faculty, faculty that teach in Honors and Honors students, even students not necessarily living/working in Honors facilities. The idea of this mixer will be to give students the opportunity to take advantage of the connections that getting to know faculty can provide. Building good relationships with professors is a key factor in furthering a student’s education. We want to encourage that the entire Honors Community feels like just that, a community. Someplace where everyone is connected and is willing to help one another in any way that they can. The prestigious faculty that are in the Honors College already are full of wisdom and insights, and they are more than willing to open their doors to any and all students. We want to highlight that connection! Through this experience, students will find themselves a faculty mentor that can be
paired with them for the remainder of their time in Honors, maybe a professor in their major or just someone they really get along with, so they always have someone they are comfortable with to talk to. This can be just something that’s a few hours long in the evening with some light refreshments, or it could be a luncheon sort of thing, whichever the students feel would be more beneficial. This mentor can be changed at any time based on the student’s change in interests, but this will build a strong foundation to support the student’s future.

Create an Honors Logo and establish an Honors Color

What we mean by this is that Grand Valley has its logo of the 4 letters G V S U together, and many GV clubs have their own logo as well. For example, Campus Ministry’s, “The Well,” uses a logo on all affiliated “Well” merchandise. When students see others wearing this apparel, they feel a sense of community within the larger Grand Valley population. As such, we will establish a base logo and tag color for the Honors College that will provide a solid foundation for marketing and Honors College merchandise and materials development. This will include an Honors logo that incorporates the theme of Grand Valley and our Laker Pride by using an anchor, but also proudly displaying the name Frederik Meijer Honors College on a banner wrapping around the anchor. In the center of the logo will be the classic GVSU logo so people will not wonder when they look at it what university we are affiliated with. The color of the logo will be determined through polling current Honors students. This will help to establish an Honors College identity, and support the view that the Honors College is a well-developed and serious Honors program.

Create more Honors Gear/Swag

The Honors College wants to make a name for itself, but not much internal advertising is being done! All over campus you see people sporting their own school clubs, or just Grand Valley in general. Everywhere you look you see GV baseball caps, team jackets, club bracelets, sorority t-shirts, and so much more. But the Honors College doesn’t seem to have nearly as much. We currently have one t-shirt distributed during freshman orientation that you can have
for free, but there is no variety in style, and the color is picked by Honors administration. For today’s generation you have to play to individuality and style, so if the Honors College wants to compete for some of the spotlight, they’ve got to market more. Using the new logo/color discussed previously, we will develop a suite of Honors College merchandise. We will carry items like Honors Jackets, sweatpants, mugs, stickers, hats, etc., things that college students use every day. This will spark conversation about the Honors College to support word-of-mouth marketing, and build a sense of pride in the Honors community. As we have found so far with all of our interviews and research, word-of-mouth is by far the best marketing technique, so having the Honors program name/logo out there through merchandise will spark more conversation about the Honors College, and have Honors College students connect through feeling a part of something special and something worth showing-off.

**Market using the Hashtag #FMHCDifference**

Social media is the #1 way to market/advertise not only officially, but through people’s personal experiences. Getting a hashtag, such as #FMHCDifference, or something similar, used and recognized will allow people to feel connected to the Honors College. Being able to take their “first day as a freshman” picture in their awesome dorm with their community behind them and share through #FMHCDifference will build pride. Going to mixers and lectures with prestigious faculty and world-leaders and getting pictures with them to share on #FMHCDifference will build prestigious association with the Honors College. We believe that this hashtag in particular markets the Frederik Meijer Honors College, and emphasizes that being a part of this community makes a *difference* in your life. That *difference* could be through where you live, the friends you make, the faculty you meet, the classes you take, the things you learn, the career paths you consider, and so much more. It’s something that a small team of Honors students could work to develop and OWN, making sure it goes through it is captured in all FMHC marketing materials, and is evergreen in telling the FMHC story. This will tie in with the creation of FMHC merchandise; the hashtag could be featured on some of the merchandise in order to market it outside of social media channels. Students may then be able to share their Honors experience with the rest of the world and be able to showcase what kind of difference it makes in their life as a student at Grand Valley!
Top 2 Innovation Ideas

Develop an Honors Logo and Create Honors Merchandise

This prototype concept really boils down to increasing the visibility of the FMHC. By developing a distinct logo which will adorn merchandise, we are, in effect, creating a whole new brand for the Honors College. This branding will convey the idea of “sophisticated play,” conveying that Honors students we are a strong, intellectual student body that delve into and experiment with ideas and concepts to a depth that is not experienced elsewhere at the university. Effectively conveying these concepts through our brand will allow for a variety of benefits to the Honors College. First, it would create a stronger sense of camaraderie within Honors. Seeing fellow students wearing a brand that represents common ideals will help promote community among students from all classes and disciplines. The freshman and the senior will be able to look at the other and affiliated through the brand. Second, a good logo and branding strategy for the Honors College will help with recruitment from both outside and within the university. As the brand and logo become more widely coveted among Honors Students, prospective students interacting with Honors Students will notice and seek to be a part of the FMHC. Our research shows that the branding needs to be done as a way that represents the sophistication and prestige of the Honors College, while also refraining from seeming snooty or pretentious. This is important because the Honors College and students are part of the greater whole of GVSU and do not want to be perceived as pretentious or exclusive.

Create/Expand Upon Honors Student Ambassador Programs

Currently, the GVSU admissions recruitment and GVSU campus tours for prospective students usually gloss over the Honors College due to time constraints. More haphazardly, if a prospective student specifically requests an Honors tour or conversation, enablement is reliant on specific Honors faculty or advisors being available to provide information to prospective students. This second prototype concept seeks to fix both of these issues. First, our team will create an established Honors-specific tour program that shows off all of the great facets of the FMHC facilities and how this complements the FMHC experience. This includes development of a model dorm in Niemeyer. Second, we will develop an Honors Student Ambassador Program. The Honors Student Ambassadors will be trained in information specific to Honors to be sure
prospective students learn the most about GVSU Honors. In addition to on site engagement, this prototype concept will establish a program for Honors Student Ambassadors to accompany GVSU Student Ambassadors to high-school recruitment visits. There, they will not only serve to increase the visibility of the Honors College, but they will also provide interested students with accurate information about the Honors College, therefore dispelling rumors or misconceptions about the GVSU Honors Program, such as Honors is “a bunch of extra work” or especially difficult. Our research shows that too often students are coming to GVSU not even knowing that the Honors College exists. This prototype concept will help to directly address this issue!

Figure 13: Visual Example of HSBA at work
Final Prototype Concept

Create and Honors Brand Ambassador Program. Currently, GVSU admissions (particularly the high school recruitment division), and GVSU campus tours for prospective students usually gloss over the Honors College due to time constraints. More haphazardly, if a prospective student specifically requests an Honors tour or conversation, it is reliant on specific Honors faculty or advisors being available to provide information to prospective students. Also, the visibility of GVSU Honors is incredibly limited; there is no existing Honors brand, logo, or any sort of merchandise to represent Honors experience and build collegial community. This prototype concept seeks to fix these issues. We will develop an Honors Student Brand Ambassador Program and build the Honors Brand.

Central to both these approaches is the creation of an Honors Brand Store, which will be housed in Niemeyer. The Honors Store will carry Honors merchandise, complete with a newly minted Honors logo! The development of Honors brand merchandise will help build visibility for Honors on campus, and eventually off campus as well through Honors Student Ambassadors. Honors Student Brand Ambassadors will be advocates for Honors on high school recruitment visits showing off the Honors brand by wearing T-shirts or handing out stickers, pens, etc. They will also provide interested students with accurate information about the Honors College, dispelling rumors or misconceptions about the program (such as the Honors College requires excessive workload or is especially difficult). Honors Student Ambassadors will also be leaders for a newly established Honors-specific tour program that shows off all of the great facets of the FMHC facilities and how this compliments the FMHC experience. This tour will be available and marketed both to prospective high school student and students already enrolled at GVSU who may not yet know about Honors. This tour includes the development of a model dorm in Niemeyer, and of course, a visit to the Honors Brand Store! In addition to selling merchandise and fostering program pride, 50% of proceeds from the store will go towards establishing an Honors College Scholarship for Honors students. In this way, the store will invest and give back to the Honors community, which will allow more students to join the program who may not have been able to otherwise. Our research shows that too often students are coming to GVSU not even knowing that the Honors College exists, and that they lack any tangible evidence that connects them to GVSU Honors. This prototype concept will help to directly address these issues in our program.
Team Video Link

https://youtu.be/Cf8il_c26DA
In order to walk you through our innovation, we created Jane. Jane is an Honors Student, and she has stumbled upon a posting on a news board for a job at the Frederik Meijer Honors College Brand Store. She sees the benefits of being hired, which includes $500 off of tuition for each student that she gets to enroll in the program.

Now Jane has been hired, and is working at her job at the brand store, a parent walks up and asks her “What is all this?” “What do you do here?”
Jane then explains that one of the most important parts of her job is going to high schools. Her goal in going to these schools is to talk about the Honors College to prospective students. She would talk about the highlights, including global citizenship, 1:1 with professors, interdisciplinary education, awesome dorms and being surrounded by academically inclined students.
Another aspect of Jane’s job is to give Honors specific tours on campus. This would include a model dorm room in addition to Honors specific information that you don’t get in a traditional campus tour.

After hearing Jane’s explanation of her job, the parent is impressed and interested. He decided to purchase some merchandise and he asks, “where does my money go?”

Then Jane explains to the parent that the money that comes in through the Honors Store gets funneled back into the Honors College into a scholarship fund. 50% of proceeds go to Honors for the scholarship fund and the other 50% goes toward maintaining the store and to the cost of the
products. What this is targeted at is solving a problem in which a lot of prospective students were deterred from joining the Honors College because of the financial burden and lack of scholarships.

This Instagram picture is an example of a potential post from a student that went on one of Jane’s tours. The student took a picture of Jane and posted “Had a great time with my Honors student brand ambassador, Jane!” Essentially saying she is excited to enroll and have a personal connection. We see this as a self-perpetuating word-of-mouth program.
Design Thinking to Meet Real World Needs  
Innovation Symposium Findings

**Call to Action**  
**Envisioning the Future**

**Brief Description of How Your Presentation was Received**
Our presentation, overall, was received well. The attendees loved the idea of the Honors Student Ambassador Program as they thought this would be an excellent strategy to get more students to attend the Honors College. In addition, the idea of marketing and creating a “brand” for the Honors College was extremely favorable as well.

**What was the Teams Specific Call-to-Action**
Our call to action was to get the Frederik Meijer Honors College to develop a brand and through that brand increase the visibility of the College through ways such as merchandise that would be sold at the Honors College itself, pop-up shops, and even the Laker Store. In addition, we want the Frederik Meijer Honors College to create and implement an Honors Student Ambassador Program that directly correlates with the brand/visibility initiative. The Honors Student Ambassador Program creates incentives for students to join the Honors College and fully participate throughout their college career.

**Attendee Questions**
1. Questions were asked about where else we could sell Honors College merchandise (Laker Store, pop-up shops for tour days, etc.)
2. How can the school afford a $500 off tuition for every student that enrolls and stays in the Honors College?
3. How can we cost the Honors College merchandise in a way that pays for the gear itself but also allows us to put some of the revenue into a scholarship fund?

**Innovation Symposium Feedback**

**Verbal Feedback**
The verbal feedback we received was a sort of mixed bag of suggested limitations to our ideas and new, fresh ideas and direction to take our innovation. One great idea that was brought up was where we could
sell Honors-branded apparel and swag. There was a suggestion of having a pop-up booth at admissions activities like tours or orientations. This would help resolve the issue of where to put an Honors apparel store. One of the primary limitations that was brought up was the method of implementing an Honors logo. This was presented as a limitation that lies somewhere in the marketing bureaucracy of GVSU.

**Written Feedback**

In terms of written feedback, again, there was a mixed bag of limitations and suggestion for furthering the innovation. One encouraging note was the reassurance that word-of-mouth marketing is a good direction for future marketing strategies. One interesting limitation for us was the fact that the Honors College needs to develop a "coherent and easy-to-explain curriculum." This was an interesting point because currently, there is a lot of variety in different Honors sequences that it would make it difficult to explain everything that one may run into in the Honors College.

**Visual Feedback**

In regards to our visuals, we unfortunately learned that the logo that we had designed would not be allowed at Grand Valley under their current policies. However, we were told by many of the other stakeholders that they loved the idea of branding to create a more visual presence of Honors. Then for our storyboards, as with the other team’s, we were told that they were beautiful, professional, and extremely helpful in telling our story!
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<tr>
<th>Post-Symposium Reflections</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DIVERGE: How did the feedback provided <em>deviate</em> from your team’s current recommendations?</strong></td>
<td>The Honors College “logo” cannot be called a logo technically. We would have to find a way around the legal aspects to actually use a design to represent the Honors College. The office has already tried selling merchandise but ran into legal problems with the university, so we need to get special permission. A pop-up shop on special event days (orientation, graduation, etc.) may be more efficient/cost-effective than a full-time, permanent store. Consider putting the store in the middle of campus, or somewhere more visible than Niemeyer or Holton-Hooker. Some stakeholders were hesitant about the $500/recruited student idea and thought it would be too expensive to fund.</td>
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<td><strong>CONVERGE: How did the feedback provided <em>align</em> with and enhance the team’s innovation?</strong></td>
<td>The administration believes this would be a very successful marketing campaign to students and parents, who would be proud to wear FMHC swag. We need to determine exactly what we are ‘selling,’ how to brand the Honors College. Word-of-mouth is the best marketing strategy; students are the best ambassadors to form personal connections. Some stakeholders were eager to start a $500/recruited student program and viewed it as a promising investment in future Honors College participants.</td>
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<td><strong>SYNTHESIZE: How can others <em>use</em> the feedback provided?</strong></td>
<td>The stakeholders will need to figure out how to implement this symbol/sales technique within legal means. Consider a pop-up shop over a conventional brand store, and where to place it. Determine the actual “figure” or graphics to put on the Honors merchandise.</td>
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<td><strong>RECOMMEND: What next steps does your team recommend to stakeholders?</strong></td>
<td>Survey the students and determine what kind of “figure” they would want to wear, what they want portrayed about this Honors College. Discuss with Grand Valley’s administration how to implement an Honors “symbol” within legal boundaries. Talk with the university’s financial staff to see if the $500/recruited student is a plausible or desirable solution; otherwise, determine other incentives for Honors Student Brand Ambassadors.</td>
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Appendix A

Primary Research

The following information is a collection of overviews of interviews completed with stakeholders in this project. These include faculty, students, parents, and others that may be affected by our project. This information was used to provide insights for our innovations.

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<th>Stakeholder Group: GVSU Honors College Professors</th>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Age: 50+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender: Male</td>
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<td>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</td>
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<tr>
<td>I was seeking the insights of a FMHC professor. Discovering the perspective of Honors College educators is invaluable due to their position. Professors are the students’ main foray into Honors faculty.</td>
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This reflects on the team’s problem statement because in order to expand any aspect of the Honors College, one must get to know the Honors College that we have already. This includes Honors professors.

Summary of Research:
This interview was very insightful to me. The Professor I interviewed has been working at GVSU for over three decades. He had a very interesting perspective on students and faculty. He brought up the idea of “Honors in the Major” which was a very interesting idea. He said that he would like to see each program have a sequence of three Honors courses. He also noticed that students pressure themselves a lot, mostly due to the transition from high school to Honors. He also proposed revising how faculty in Honors works.

Important insights:
- “Honors in the Major” concept. The idea of each program having a sequence of three Honors courses. He described this as the “next step.”
- Students pressure themselves a lot because of the transition from high school, in which they succeeded, to Honors, which challenges them.
- Revising how faculty works in order to bring in the best.

Dialogue Questions and Response:
“What about teaching in Honors differs from your typical university classes?”
“Honors teaching is student centric and student driven. When I teach in the other programs, very few are student centric. I can count on honors students, almost everybody will read ahead of time. I can count on them to be thoughtful, to be interactive.”
On Honors students in the classroom, “They get this, they’re understanding…”

“Is there a particular type of student you see a lot in Honors”
“Yeah, students who read and critically analyze.”
On the current format of Honors, “I like it, but I would like to see Honors in the major.”

Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?” He had some insights on faculty; “If you become one of the few members of the Honors faculty, you should be recognized nationally as a master scholar, and recognized as a master teacher and be at the senior rank as a professor. I don’t think we should bring in young people and move them through the system.”

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted? Yes. I have a good relationship with this professor and we email casually.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
- I neglected to ask. Time was short in the interview as my stakeholder forgot that he had an obligation to get to.

Possible next-steps:
- Other Honors faculty, particularly newer members of Honors faculty
- Other University professors to see how they view Honors.

Interview 2

Stakeholder Group/Location: Prospective Student

Estimated Age: 17

Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity: To ascertain what college-bound high school students already know about Honors colleges, what they are looking for in colleges, and what would persuade them to consider a specific program.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? The insight gained from this interview will help us design a marketing strategy aimed at high school students and other prospective Honors college participants, as well as create a new curriculum with them in mind.

Summary of Research: This Byron Center High School senior is an academically-inclined, college bound individual. As such, she can definitely be considered a prospective incoming student for Grand Valley’s Honors College. This student knew of Grand Valley’s Honors College and a few others, but not the specific details of each program. The only way she knew these programs existed were due to personal friends attending them. One of the most important aspects to her was the cost of Honors College participation, and the availability of scholarships. She also needed her future college to help her with future endeavors. This includes making her more independent and confident in herself, developing leadership qualities, and adequately preparing her for her professional program she wants to enter after she completes her undergraduate degree.
Important insights:

- Cost is a very influential factor to many prospective students
- Even students who have heard of Honors College programs lack knowledge on the specifics
- The program’s reputation matters to prospective students, as they seek to improve their future applications to jobs or graduate school

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<th>Dialogue Questions and Response:</th>
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<td>• Introduction</td>
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<td>• What is your current academic standing? Are you a freshman, senior, etc.? Senior</td>
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<td>• What is your current GPA? 4.13</td>
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<td>• Have you taken the ACT/SAT? If so, what was your score on it? 32 ACT; 1300 SAT</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What are your plans for the future when you graduate from High School? Attend college for a pre-professional college, then enter graduate school</td>
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<td>• What colleges are you looking at applying for, and what factors are or are going to be involved in your decision making progress? She will apply to Grand Valley State University, Michigan State University, the University of Michigan, and Hope College. Her decision will depend on the cost, the scholarships offered to her, the distance from her home, and their available programs.</td>
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<td>• Why does distance from home matter to you? She wishes to “broaden her horizons” and become more independent, and hopes to accomplish this by living at least 60-90 minutes from home.</td>
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<td>• Have you ever heard of an Honors College? Do you know anybody who is in an honors college, not just at Grand Valley? Yes, she has heard of Honors Colleges at Grand Valley and Michigan State due to friends attending these programs.</td>
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<td>• What kind of traits would you think someone in an Honors College has? “Nerdy,” meaning students of high academic standing, who are considerate of their future, goal-oriented, and set the bar high for themselves.</td>
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<td>• What would you expect to be the benefits of an Honors College, versus the traditional route? Better facilities, including separate rooms and better dorms. Also, this would help strengthen her applications to grad school. Furthermore, she expects an Honors College would offer her first pick on classes, and allow her to skip some prerequisite general education courses. Finally, she believes these communities would allow her to be among smarter peers, giving her more opportunities for personal growth and leadership development.</td>
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<td>• If you had the chance to join an Honors College, what sort of aspects would the program have to have for you to join it? Such a program would have to offer scholarships, as well as have a prestigious reputation.</td>
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<td>• What sort of aspects would make you not want to join an Honors College? She stated the only thing that would deter her from an Honors College program would be if the cost were too expensive.</td>
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<td>• What is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have? She stated I should ask other high school students how many AP classes they have taken, since this would effect if they would benefit from sequence courses.</td>
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<td>• Would you be willing to do another interview in the future if we need to reach out again for more information? How would you like to be contacted if we were to do another interview? Yes; over the phone preferably.</td>
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<td>• Is there anyone else that you think we should talk to? Other high school students, underclassmen, and high school teachers.</td>
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Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”
This student said it would be beneficial to ask other prospective students how many AP classes they have taken in high school. For example, she anticipates she will have completed 7 classes by her graduation. Students with many AP credits will be less inclined by the sequence courses, since they already have many general education classes taken care of by the time they enter college.

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted?
Yes; she would prefer to be contacted over the phone.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
- Less “academically-inclined” high school students
- High school teachers (how do they see colleges being marketed to students?)
- High school underclassmen (when do they start being marketed to, and how?)

Possible next-steps:
- Interview high school students of different academic standings
- Research high school students at locations further away from Grand Valley (outside West Michigan)
- Interview transfer students who could consider joining the Honors College who are not coming directly from high school

Interview 3

Stakeholder Group/Location: GVSU Non-Honors and Transfer Students

Estimated Age: 21
Gender: Male

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
I was aiming to get an understanding of what an outside perspective of the Honors College is. It is easy to identify issues in the Honors College when you are a part of it, but it’s hard to see it with such objective eyes on your own.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
It showcases how the Honors College is perceived by the outside world and our problem statement focuses on changing that perception into something more accurate and positive.

Summary of Research:
From this interview, I received almost exactly what I had anticipated; As a transfer student, this individual had never even heard of the Honors College until they became friends with (not just met) someone who was in the Honors College. They had no knowledge of any of the programs’ goals, requirements, curriculum, etc. When asked if they would ever consider joining the Honors College or would they have applied if they knew about it previously, they responded with things like “Oh no, that’s just for smart people,” and “I don’t think personally that I could do it, it just sounds like a lot of work.” One surprising thing that they mentioned was that they felt like it was tucked into a weird corner of campus, so they didn’t even know where the building was. Overall, they gave the impression that it was some unachievable and unapproachable area of GVSU that they really see no point to be involved with.
Important insights:
- Students that don’t have friends in the Honors College no little to nothing about it
- Upon hearing about it, non-Honors students immediately believe that it is something that they are not capable of being a part of
- The Honors College facilities are in a less trafficked area of GVSU

Dialogue Questions and Response:
- What is your current academic year standing? – Senior at GVSU, transferred from Oakland
  Sophomore Year, HTM Major
- What was your high school GPA? 1.75 ACT? 20
- How many colleges did you apply to and when did you make applications? 5 different schools – GVSU, Oakland, Eastern, University of Toledo, Ferris
- What was involved in your decision making process, and what were some deciding factors that helped you choose GVSU? First choice, got deferred because the application was turned in super late because originally he was set on going to culinary school, but then changed his mind last minute. Loved the location of the school being close to downtown Grand Rapids and loved the environment of it.
- What do you know, if anything about GVSU’s Honors College? – Don’t know anything at all; “I know that smart people are in it.”
- Have you ever seen anything on campus about the Honors College? – Nothing other than the building Niemeyer.
- What comes to mind when you think of an Honors College? “Smart people doing smart things, I don’t think personally that I could do it, it just sounds like a lot of work.”
- Had you known about the Honors College when applying to college, would you have considered it? No because I didn’t think that I’d get in, and I still don’t think I’d get in.
- What would you want to see in an Honors College to make you want to participate in one? More promotion, didn’t even know about it until he became friends with an Honors student, tucked into an odd spot on campus that no one knows about.
- Is there anyone else that you think we should talk to? Incoming freshman or more transfer students.

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted?
Yes, they will be contacted by phone.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
- Students outside of GVSU (Friends from Oakland)
- Other non-Honors GVSU Students
- Employers of GVSU students (Their boss)

Possible next-steps:
- Reach out to his employer and see if having “Honors College” on an application would make a difference.
Interview 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group/Location:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Former GVSU Honors Student – Drop-out</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Age:</th>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My goal was to get an idea of how someone who has been in the Honors College and left it might feel about the Honors Program. Was it the reason they left? Did they feel too pressured? Was it a financial issue? Did the Honors College not have anything to do with it?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It shows the effect of the current Honors Program on its students and how it is viewed by someone who has recently been in it, but is not in it currently.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Research:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After interviewing this student, I felt an overall positive view of the Honors College from their perspective. After talking a bit more in-depth about their experience, I saw that even though they ended up leaving the program, if it had been more cohesive with their life at the time, they wouldn’t have left. Also, when they were an Honors Student, they saw no marketing around campus, and when they brought it up to non-Honors students, they knew little to nothing about it. The program itself was challenging, but not in a way that was too much to handle, it was challenging in a very motivational way.</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important insights:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Honors Students enjoy the program while they’re in it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Outside of the Honors College, students aren’t getting acknowledged by their achievements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● The Honors College doesn’t seem to offer many options to cater to different students</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue Questions and Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>See below for full interview.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Dialogue: Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In interview responses.</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, through team member.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Three more connections this stakeholder provided:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Other Honors Students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teachers in honors
Employment for Honors

Interview 5

Stakeholder Group/Location: GVSU Staff

Estimated Age: 50+
Gender: Male

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
To get a true “design thinkers” view on the design challenge given to my team by the Honors College and to receive insights on our problem statement.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?

Conducting this interview made me look at our team problem statement in a lot of different ways I hadn’t before. For example, when we looked up and read through the design challenge given to our class we focused a lot and emphasized a lot on the word “distinctive” and “experience.” They challenged me to think deeper and harder about my team’s problem statement.

Summary of Research:

Overall, I walked out of this interview with a mind full of new ideas and thoughts stirring in my head. As a staff member of the Provost Office, I discovered that they did not know quite as much about the Honors College as they (and most people) should. When asked about Honors students, they said that they did notice a difference in the Honors students; they stated they are more driven and want more. They also told me that they had never met an Honors student they hadn’t liked.

Important insights:

- The problem statement says “experience more distinctive.” This means that the design challenge is addressing students already in the Honors College.
- The Honors College should create a curriculum that is available only to Honors students.
- Honors Students are more driven, more knowledge hungry.

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted?

Yes they do. By email or by cell-phone.
Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
- Retired dean of students of 25+ years

Possible next-steps:
- Reach out to retired dean of students and set up an interview date and time
- Research “scholars in residence”
- Look closer into the phrase of the design challenge “experience more distinctive”

Dialogue Questions and Response:

I have the entire interview recorded on an audio file.

One observation I have, and openly expressed during the interview, is that the interviewee was not only answering my questions but he was also asking me questions and challenging me on our own problem statement and design challenge. The entire interview was professional, yet casual at the same time.

Interview 6

Stakeholder Group/Location: Other Honors Colleges

Estimated Age: 19

Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
We interviewed a college sophomore currently attending the Honors College at Michigan State University in order to research how other universities engage and incentivize students to join their program, as well as learn about their requirements for enrolling members.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
By learning about other successful Honors Colleges, we can see what marketing strategies are being utilized. Additionally, we can see how other similar programs set up their honors curricula.

Summary of Research:
After interviewing a member of Michigan State University’s Honors College, we realized that they have very similar methods of marketing their program as Grand Valley utilizes. However, since MSU is significantly larger and more established than Grand Valley, they can reach more people with less marketing. MSU students like the chance to be distinguished to further academic and career opportunities; however, there are many constraints with their requirements, and the whole program seems less individualized.

Important insights:
- We need to establish a more aggressive marketing campaign since Grand Valley is less known than Michigan State.
- The main component of most Honors programs seem to be the Honors courses/curricula
- Personal relationships with professors and advisors are very important

Dialogue Questions and Response:
-What was your academic standing in high school? 30 ACT, 4.24 GPA
-How many colleges did you apply to? Michigan State University and University of Michigan
-What made you choose MSU? Large school, many opportunities (academic and social), 90 minutes from home, her dad attended MSU.
-How did you hear about their Honors College? After she was accepted into the general university, she received a letter inviting her to apply to the Honors College.
-How was it marketed to you? As an academic resource that she could go to for advising, study abroad opportunities, and personal relationships with professors.
-Why did you choose to participate? She thought it would make her stand out at career fairs and trying to get a research position on campus. However, she now believes that most professors and post-college job markets really only look at GPA as the main indicator of success.
-What are the main benefits of this program to you? She gets to pick her classes before the other students every year, it appears good on resumes, community of like-minded students as friends.
-What are some of the drawbacks to this program: There are a lot of requirements to graduate with honors, the advisors are not very helpful or personable, and you’re responsible for submitting all the paperwork to ensure your credits go through.
-What are the requirements to graduate with honors? You must graduate with a 3.2+ GPA, get at least a 2.0 in every class, complete 8 honors projects for classes, and take honors-level general education courses. Furthermore, you must submit an Honors College Academic Progress Plan that consists of a Self-Reflection Summary every year.

Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”
She said she feels like this interview covered the majority of her thoughts concerning her Honors College experience so far at MSU.

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted? Yes; she would prefer to be contacted over text, call, or Facetime

For Dialogue: Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
- Other MSU Honors College Students
- MSU Honors College Administration
- MSU Honors Professors

Possible next-steps:
- Talk to Honors College students at other universities
- Determine if we want to include a required progress plan/self-reflection summary in our new Honors College
- How can we make each user feel important and valued in their Honors College experience?
To get insight from a high achieving Honors College student about his experience in the Honors College at GVSU.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?

He thought we should be looking at who we are recruiting because a good Honors College must have good members to be successful, which reflects the marketing part of our problem statement. I also learned that the Honors College put out a hashtag last year: #FMHC, but I had never heard of it. This also reflects the marketing aspect of our problem statement.

Summary of Research:

From this interview I learned that this student felt that a good Honors College has good members, and should foster leadership for students both inside and outside of the classroom. I also found out that he thought that the Honors College would benefit from having more of a community feel rather than an isolated one, and that once a student no longer lives in the Honors College, they no longer feel like a part of it. He mentioned that the Honors College needs to learn to keep its students engaged in Honors outside of living in Niemeyer.

Important insights:
- That the Honors College has a hashtag: #FMHC
- That the students inside the Honors College make the Honors College what it is
- That parents have an important role in decision making for the student

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Introduction

What is your current academic year standing?

Currently I am a senior, academically. 3rd year here.

What was your high school GPA? ACT?

GPA: 4.3 Cumulative

ACT: 30

How many colleges did you apply to and when did you make applications?

Applied to 4 colleges, applied to all of them in the fall of my senior year usually about August or September.

What was involved in your decision making process, and what were some deciding factors that helped you choose GVSU?
Cost, as well as location, also where I felt God was calling me. For me personally I chose GVSU because it felt comfortable felt like home, and I got great scholarships. The cost of 4 years here was the same as 1 at some big university.

What do you know, if anything about GVSU’s Honors College?

I am currently in the Honors College so I know a lot about it and that it helps students successfully engage and become successful leaders at GVSU.

Have you ever seen anything on campus about the Honors College?

Umm, yes I have, last year the Honors College started the #FMHC. I have a pin on my backpack.

Where did you see that?

I was talking to Doctor J, he gave me a pin and I saw things on campus.

Where on campus?

Kirkhof

What comes to mind when you think of an Honors College?

About GV or in general?

In general

When I think of an Honors College I think of smart, engaged student that wants to go above and beyond both inside and outside of the classroom.

Why?

I think Honors College reflects those characteristic. The word Honor means you should be higher than most students.

(for honors students): how do you feel about the Honors College?

The Honors College here at GVSU is a strong Honors College that does a good job at finding things for students to be leaders in on campus. One thing I wish was different is that they helped students become more engaged in the Honors College if you aren't living in Niemeyer. A good Honors College should keep your students around and engaged when they aren't in the building.

(for honors students): If you could change one thing about the Honors College what would it be?

The living situation could be improved, the rooms are nice but it doesn't build a community. We need to have an "open door" community.

(for honors students): What is your favorite thing about the Honors College?
My favorite thing about the Honors College is the other students I’ve been able to meet. I’ve met lifelong friends and role models. I think that comes from the fact that they are also leaders.

(for non-honors students): Had you known about the Honors College when applying to college, would you have considered it?

What would you want to see in an Honors College to make you want to participate in one?

I need to see successful students in the past that have been there. For me that was my sister. I need to see a welcoming environment, where people help you do the things you’re capable of doing and not just focus on themselves. Tradition and Humbleness.

How did you find out about the Honors College?

Through my sister who was a GVSU Honors college alum in 2015.

Did she talk it up? Or did you just see her in it?

Saw her in it, saw what it could do for her, and knew that was something I wanted as well.

What is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?

What makes a good Honors student? What kinds of students do we want to attract?

You want to attract students who not only excel in the classroom but also excel in life as leaders, and people that are engaging in service. I think we do a good job.

I received nothing from the university; I just looked it up an applied. My mom pushed me. She knew if I was going here that it was something I should be doing.

Did you join because you wanted to or because your mom did?

Because I wanted to.

Would you be willing to do another interview in the future if we need to reach out again for more information? How would you like to be contacted if we were to do another interview?

Yes. Text me

Is there anyone else that you think we should talk to?

GVSU Honors Faculty

Thank you for your time, again I really appreciate that you took the time to answer some questions for me.

Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”

What makes a good Honors student? What kinds of students do we want to attract?
Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted?

Yes, texting.

For Dialogue: Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
- GVSU Honors Faculty
- Aaron's Mom

Possible next-steps:
- Maybe refocus our problem statement on changing the Honors College atmosphere rather than the curriculum
- I want to reach out to parents of Honors College students
- I also want to do research by looking around on campus to see if I can find the FMHC hashtag anywhere still

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**Interview 8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group/Location: Parents of Honors Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Age: 40-50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender: Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To see what influence parents have on the decisions of prospective students in joining the Honors College.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?

This reflects our problem statement because part of our question is to figure out how to most effectively market the Honors College to prospective students, and if parents have influence on those decisions, we want to market to them as well.

Summary of Research:

Through this research I discovered that some parents don’t have as much influence on decision making for college students as we initially thought, however there is a sense of pride that this parent felt in her daughter being a part of the Honors College. We also have research showing that the GVSU Honors College offers an experience similar to, if not better than U of M. We learned that parents find out about the Honors College primarily through their children.

Important insights:
- The education at U of M and GVSU’s Honors College are on par
- GVSU offers a more intimate and integrative experience than a big college like U of M

Dialogue Questions and Response:
How did you find out about the Honors College at GVSU?

GVSU contacted us

How?

Don’t remember

What initial response to the contact?

We were excited about the opportunity

What do you know about the Honors College at GVSU?

What did I know then? Nothing

Did you do research?

Nope, I’m sure my daughter did, but I didn’t.
We got invited to the scholarship Honors College thing, so we just signed up to go to that.

How did you first feel sending your daughter/son to the Honors College?

We were excited, of course sad cause I was sending her off to College. But sending her to the Honors College versus any College, but no, the Honors College it was a cool thing.

Why?

Well I mean it’s the Honors College. Having your kid get accepted in to the Honors College is a big deal. The other part of it was that I was a part of the Honors College when I was at university so I knew what it meant for me so I was hopeful it would mean the same thing for her. The learning experience is very different from the gen eds kind of stuff.

What makes it different?

I don’t remember the name of how you guys did it but the collaborative studies piece and the living learning communities both; I knew it would enrich the education for her.

How do you feel now about your daughter/son in the Honors College?

Same
Do you ever talk about your daughter/son’s experience in the Honors College to friends, colleagues, peers, family?

*Um a little bit, I mean it doesn’t come up in conversation a lot, but when I do talk about it we talk about the sequences and the capstone project and how that allows her to integrate things more completely and we talk about that as being a cool thing.*

What are your thoughts about the Honors College at GVSU compared an institution like U of M or the Honors Program at MSU, or Stanford?

*I don’t think they are comparable. I think GVSU is a smaller school. I think the level of education is on par. U of M is big and impersonal and her experience at GVSU has been much more intimate and more integrated is my impression of it from talking to her. To me it’s apples and oranges. I’m a U of M alumni, graduate school, and I mean they aren’t really comparable but quite honestly I’d prefer GVSU.*

What would you like to see your child get out of an Honors College?

*Exactly what’s she’s getting out of it honestly.*

What sort of financial incentives, if any were you offered through the Honors College?

*Nothing besides the scholarship day.*

What would be the best way to get information about the Honors College to you, had you never heard of it?

*Probable old fashioned, like hand mail. U.S. mail, and direct email. When your kid gets invited to a scholarship opportunity or Honors thing, that makes me want to sign up.*

For Dialogue: Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”

*“Um, I don’t think anything.”*

For Dialogue: Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to be contacted?

I didn’t ask because she was tired and didn’t seem like she was in a great mood so I didn’t want to keep her up any longer.

Possible next-steps:
- I want to do more interviews with parents
- I want to talk to more U of M Alumni, or Alumni from other prestigious colleges
### Interview 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group/Location: Office of Undergraduate Research</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Age: 40-50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender: Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To gain insight into the perspective of a professor at the honors college and of someone who spends time with Honors students outside of the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing how Honors students act in and outside of the classroom can lead to insights on what is important to them, and thus can aid in marketing to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Research:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For our research, we wanted to gain a perspective beyond students and full-time professors in the Honors College. By reaching out to the Office of Undergraduate Research, especially to the director if this office, we hope to gain a wider view. The director is also an adjunct professor, so I expect an interesting perspective. I also had her as a professor, so I knew that she would give me great viewpoints. The main insights I gained are that we need to increase diversity in the Honors College and market more towards upperclassmen (particularly seniors) in the Honors College, who are often disillusioned with the Honors College.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important insights:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Students become less involved with the Honors College as their University career goes on. By the time they are seniors, there is little to no interaction with them on the part of the Honors College.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● There is confusion on what exactly the Honors College is. Is it a department, a college, or something else?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Students in Honors tend to be very high achievers who put too much weight into grades and less into learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue Questions and Response:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. How long have you been at GVSU?</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 years. My role has shifted in this time. I’ve been involved in housing residence life and in being an adjunct professor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What do you teach here?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lib 100 and Honors 201.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. What previous experience do you have?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Before here, I was at Kalamazoo College. There, I was involved in residence life and counseling. I also taught freshman liberal studies.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
4. What brought you to GVSU?
The position. I have family, and I wanted a job that was close to Holland. I also like to work in curriculum, residential life, and with students. I want to be able to integrate student’s residential life and academics.

5. Specifically, what brought you to the Honors College?
The undergraduate program. I started working with the Brooks College. Honors is one of the programs that requires research. I was pulled into the curriculum conversation due to being a part of the curriculum committee.

6. Do you see any particular benefits of attending the Honors program?
Honors takes different disciplines and intersects them. The disciplines support and criticize each other. Honors topics are also relevant. The thesis that Honors students are required to do is fluffy right now because it is only 1 credit, whereas the standard is 3 credits. The extra time is needed for research.

7. What about teaching in Honors differs from teaching students outside of Honors?
I’ve found that students not in Honors do not do the readings or come to class prepared. Honors students do the readings and come to class prepared. However, Honors students also hold onto beliefs, even wrong beliefs about knowledge, much more strongly than non-Honors students.
● Why is this?
Knowledge and skills are what made them successful in high school. However, in post-secondary it impedes their learning. If they can make a change in their beliefs, they can become very successful. Success comes from outside the classroom, when they are doing it for themselves.

8. What do you think of students in the Honors College? Is there a particular “type” that you see a lot?
High achievers, folks that have learned techniques that were successful in high school, but not in post-secondary. They don’t question these techniques.
● Why no questioning?
We expect students to put themselves in boxes and they do it happily.

9. What do you think of the Honors College facilities?
They are fabulous. The university invests lots of money into them.

10. What do you think of the current format of Honors?
I worry that there is a disconnect among the classes. Students become more disconnected as they go down the sequence.

11. Do you see any limitations to Honors in its current form?
The biggest is how they see themselves. Is it a college, or a department? There is no set definition of what the Honors College is. I know many that aren’t in Honors.

- Why aren’t they in Honors?
  They didn’t want the burden, or they wanted regular courses. They did Honors in High School.

12. Do students seem to struggle with any particular aspect of Honors?
   They struggle when presented with new information especially contradictory information. There is a need to negotiate failure.
   - Why?
     Because they will fail eventually. They tend to be high achievers. There is a willingness to see creativity all the time to create learning. If they see a B, they panic.

13. Is there a difference in relationships you have with Honors students compared to traditional students?
   Not really. In research, the relationship is sustained. Relationships in Honors varies.
   - How does being an adjunct professor change that?
     If I were full-time, I’d have three classes. Regular Honors faculty are a part of the Honors community.

14. Would you have attended this Honors program were it to be offered to you as an undergrad?
   I wouldn’t have qualified. Who I was at 18 is different from who I am today.
   - Was it self-esteem or grades?
     Both. My grades may have been good enough. School was competitive, and moving from Tennessee to Grand Rapids was difficult. Due to being a minority, I had to take remedial English.

Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”
Diversity. When you look at the population, Honors is very homogenous. This is in race, west side-east side of the state, socio-economic status, whether or not parents went to college.
Why is diversity so important?
Because we are good humans. Part of Honors is leadership, and part of our responsibility is to reach out to the community. Our program is public, not private. Supportive for all.

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted?
Yes. Email, through the office she works in.

For Dialogue: Three more connections this stakeholder provided: None.

Possible next-steps:
- We need to learn about Honors students in their final years of the Honors College
**Interview 10**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group/Location: Parent of College-Bound High Schooler</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Age: ___ 20-30 ___ 30-40 ___ 40-50 ___ 50+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender: Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn more about parents’ role in a student’s decision-making process, and further understand their perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We need to learn more about how colleges market not only to students, but parents as well; furthermore, we need to see their perspective in reconstructing the “new Honors College” because parents want the best education experience possible for their children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Research:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learned that parents play a significant role in students’ college decisions. Parents care primarily about academic opportunities and financial incentives. Obviously, they have invested a lot in their children’s futures, so they want the best possible outcome, one that will prepare them for graduate school and/or their future careers. In addition, they want their children to have friends and be a part of their school community, but worry about their children choosing a school known for “excessive partying.” Parents are more experienced than their children, so they tend to focus on the long-term aspects of college decisions, rather than the immediate effects. Overall, there seems to be a shortcoming in marketing to parents, especially for Honors Colleges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important insights:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Parents usually encourage their children to participate in academically rigorous programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Parents care extensively about their children’s finances, and how that relates to college decisions (tend to think more long-term than their students)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Reputations matter, especially to parents (academics vs. “party schools”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dialogue Questions and Response:</td>
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<tr>
<td>What academic year is your student in?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior year of high school</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is his current GPA, ACT, and SAT scores?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.3, 33, and 1400</td>
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<tr>
<td>What schools has he applied to/plan to apply to?</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSU, U of M, GVSU, Michigan Tech, Western</td>
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<tr>
<td>What major is he considering pursuing?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biomedical engineering.</td>
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<td>How have colleges been reaching out to him?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Letters in the mail with informational pamphlets, emails, school visits, college fairs, tour invitations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What aspects of their programs have they been emphasizing?</td>
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Variety of majors, scholarships/financial aid, facilities, student/staff ratio, student life opportunities.

What “student life opportunities” specifically?
Clubs, study abroad, sports teams, Greek life, volunteering experiences, internships, research opportunities, on-campus jobs, special events like Homecoming week, etc.

As a parent, which of these aspects appeal the most to you?
Probably the scholarships and housing facilities. College is a huge investment, especially for a teenager, to undertake, so anyway this burden can be offset is a nice bonus. I push my child to receive the best grades possible to get merit-based scholarships, since we don’t qualify for need-based ones. This stress can be overwhelming, but it will pay off in the end.

What is important to you in a housing facility/dorm room?
That they are a safe, welcoming, community environment where my student can find friends, preferably other academically-minded students. I know my son would prefer to have his own room, but that doesn’t matter to me as much.

How do you think you are specifically marketed to as a parent?
Most of colleges’ marketing strategies are directed toward the student, but the parents are also recognized to a degree. I receive emails from colleges about their programs, opportunities, and financial aid mostly. In addition, on tours, the guides always emphasize how safe the campuses are, and all the resources available for their students.

Have any Honors Colleges approached you or your student?
No, not until my student was already accepted into the general university. After that, he received letters inviting him apply to the Honors Colleges. The only reason we knew about Honors Colleges beforehand was because my oldest child attends Grand Valley’s.

Would you push your child to join an Honors College?
Yes, especially if he attends GVSU or MSU. I think it is important to stand out on grad school applications and job resumes, and this is a good way to show employers what you are capable of. I also like the community benefits, to help my son make good friends while he’s in school. My son also would love to have his own room, and a lot of Honors programs offer better dorm experiences than traditional students. However, my son is hesitant because most Honors Colleges have specific course requirements for completion, and he is worried he would have to add a semester or a year in order to finish these because of the AP classes he is bringing in.

Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”
Ask about how reputation plays a role in students’ and parents’ decisions; students tend to care more about social aspects more, while parents mostly care about academics and cost. Students care about those, too, of course, but many also look for schools where they can have fun. For example, Michigan Tech is mainly known for its rigorous programs and educational opportunities. On the other hand, some schools are known as “party schools” to parents, so it makes parents wary for their kids to go there, even if they have good education programs as well.

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted?
Yes; by telephone preferably
Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
- Parents of “academically average” high schoolers
- College tour guides
Fathers of college-bound high schoolers- are they marketed to in a different way than mothers?

Possible next-steps:
- Research how Grand Valley markets to parents already
- Research how the Frederik Meijer Honors College accommodates students with high number of AP classes/other credits

Interview 11

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<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group: Employer in Downtown Grand Rapids</th>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Age: 40s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender: Male</td>
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Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
My goal with this interview was to see whether or not the FMHC is creating an impact on the city of Grand Rapids. I wanted to see if having the FMHC on your resume is something that is impacting how you are viewed as a potential employee.

In regards to our problem statement, this interview provided insight as to how well the FM Honors College is marketed to potential employers and how it affects the application process.

Summary of Research:
This interview was extremely beneficial in understanding what the FMHC produces outside of GVSU. It showed me how our status as Honors students isn’t recognized outside of Grand Valley, and while it provides a slightly more intellectual connotation, it doesn’t make a significant impact on your application. When talking about the mission of the Honors College, they were very excited about what I had to say because they had never heard it before, this is what our group is focusing on; The Honors Program has such an amazing goal, and the students are achieving it, but no one is taking notice.

Important insights:
- The concept of interdisciplinary studies and the idea of broadening perspectives even outside of the classroom are intriguing and impressionable on employers.
- Having the Frederik Meijer Honors College on a resume doesn’t provide much; Employers are looking for people with passion and drive and a real sense of dedication to their work.
- The presence of a student and their demeanor is just as important as what school they attended.

Dialogue Questions and Response:
- How many internships does the JW participate in through GVSU? Per year – between 12-16
- How many applications? – way more, anywhere from 50-70.
- How long? – Go by semester, some winter, some summer, majority summer
- Do you know about the Frederik Meijer Honors College? – Aware that it exists, but haven’t gotten any details. Interested to hear more about it.
| **Does the FMHC make a difference on an application?** – It intrigues, it gives the sense that there is a higher level of commitment, a sense of stronger commitment to the individual, but it does not automatically put it in the “yes” pile of interviews. |
| **Do you see it often on applications?** – maybe 25% |
| **What qualities do you look for in interns?** – Passion, points, attitude and drive, outgoingness, where are their values, the objectives of the individual and the hotel mirroring each other. |
| **Can you sense a difference in applicants between Honors and non-Honors?** - Definitely a chance the demeanor is a bit more professional, but have not noticed a significant difference. |
| **The goal of the Honors College** - They are not sharing it very well, only knew the mission through this interview. |

Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”

“How many internships continue on to general employment? We have a lot of interns, but not all of them go well and not everyone stays with the company. All for different reasons, but for those who do end up staying, I think there is a story there.”

**Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted?**

- Yes. This is my general manager and he has already agreed to assist me in other class projects as well. He will be contacted through me by email or in person.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- I neglected to ask. Time was short in the interview as the job of a General Manager consists of an extremely tight schedule (I had to go through his secretary to schedule the interview).

**Possible next-steps:**

- Other Employers that work closely with Grand Valley
- Professors that help secure internships

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**Interview 12**

| **Stakeholder Group/Location:** Honors College Student |
| **Estimated Age:** X 20-30 |
| **Gender:** Female |

**Primary Goal of this Opportunity:**

To receive insights about the Honors College from an Honors College student who is particularly active in the GVSU community.

**How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?**

This work reflects on our problem statement because it addresses one of our key stakeholders and provides us insights on some of the pressing problems within the Honors College and how we can address them and fix these problems.
Summary of Research:

While a lot of the information I gained from this interview was fairly similar to the information we have been seeing from other students, there are some things that I found interesting that set her apart. One being that part of the reason she chose to attend Grand Valley State University was due to the physical aesthetic of its campus. In addition, when asked “what comes to mind when you think of an Honors College” she replied with the term, which I have not heard from another student before, “closed-off community.” I will admit I was a little shocked by her word choice in that response, but in a good way as it provided an insight as to how students are viewing the Honors College. Overall, my interview with this individual was extremely insightful and has provided our team with more information that will help us towards our problem statement.

Important insights:

- Honors College/Students are viewed as a “closed-off” community
- The lack of a fluid advisor makes scheduling issues, advising issues, hard to tackle
- Students like the ability to get started on their major immediately

Dialogue Questions and Response:

What year are you? Sophomore
What was your High School GPA and ACT Score? 3.8; 26
How many colleges did you apply to?
What was the deciding factor? Applied to three colleges, got into GVSU Honors College, chose because closer connections with GVSU professors and overall prettier campus.
How did you hear about the Honors College?
She heard about the Honors College when GVSU emailed her encouraging her to apply to the Honors College.
What do you know/did you know about the Honors College?
Interdisciplinary sequence covered gen eds, allowed her to get right into her major, had knowledge about the junior seminar, Honors study abroad programs, senior projects.
Have you ever seen anything on GVSU’s campus about the Honors College?
No
What comes to mind when you think of an Honors College?
Difficult, heavy workload, closer relationship with other honors students and professors, closed-off community.
How do you feel about the Honors College?
LOVED the sequence, like having the same professors all year, convenience of the live/learn center.
If you could change one thing about the Honors College what would it be?
Change how advisors work. Honors College students require an additional advisor rather than one fluid advisor.
What is your favorite thing about the Honors College?
Community that it creates (Ex. weekly emails)
What would you want to see in an Honors College?
Advanced courses with EXTREMELY helpful professors, great classroom discussion dynamic, flexibility as far as class schedule.

Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”

When asked, she stated that there was nothing that I didn’t say that she thought that I should have.

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted?

Yes, they agreed to further inquiry. She is a friend of mine, so she has told me that I can text her or call her if needed.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
- An additional three more Honors College students

Possible next-steps:
- President of a GVSU Sorority or Fraternity
- Other Honors College students

Interview 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group/Location: High School Faculty/Staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Age:  _√_ 50+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender: Male</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</td>
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<tr>
<td>To learn how High Schools get college information to students that are heading to college.</td>
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<tr>
<td>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our problem statement deals with the marketing aspect of GVSU’s Honors College. We are focused on marketing to prospective students, improving our image to both prospective and current students, and increase our reputation as a prestigious institution, talking to a school principal gives us access to information on most of our questions in our problem statement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summary of Research:</td>
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<td>I discovered that high schools do almost nothing to distribute college information to prospective students, it is all up to the university to provide representatives to speak to students and to send emails or letters to them. I also found out that there is no information about the Honors College that is readily accessible or provided during the few interactions that university reps do have with high school students. The interviewee said he would be happy to have students come and advocate for the Honors</td>
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College. I found out that the presence of a good Honors College is often a large and sometimes deciding factor in a student’s choice to ultimately enroll in a university.

**Important insights:**
- The presence of a prestigious Honors College is often a deciding factor in a student’s choice to enroll in a university or not.
- High Schools do almost none of the work in providing college information to prospective students.
- There are no Honors representatives that work with high schools, and the regular representatives don’t say much of anything about the Honors College.
- High Schools are willing to accept representatives from the Honors College.

**Dialogue Questions and Response:**

*What do you know about the Honors College at GVSU?*

*I don’t know anything about it to be honest, except what an average person who knows some things about universities and how they operate would, but I would guess that it involves a certain level of academic achievement and commitment, and that it involves perhaps a more intimate environment, and there are probably cohorts of students that work through different things within the honors college.*

*How did you find out about the Honors College at GVSU?*

*I knew it existed but I’m not sure why I knew about it, probably heard from another student like you talking about it to me at some point. Could have been an applicant that I had for a job. One of those two ways is probably how I heard about it.*

*What does BHS do, if anything to promote Honors Colleges to the students?*

*I don’t think there is any specific thing that we do to promote any specific Honors Colleges, but I think what does happen or should happen is that the counseling staff are aware of what colleges have special/honors programs and they try to work through and find which will work with students, based on criteria, interest, language etc. Hopefully the counselor knows that this place has a good Honors College and hopefully try to get the info from the GVSU admissions reps, there’s not a ton of other information out there besides from the reps.*

*Honors is a big deal at BHS, it’s surprising to me that Honors isn’t heavily promoted into college.*

*I think college is self-leveling when it comes to Honors, you have your ACT, GPA, courses, all of those things go into your making a decision for college and if you’re accepted or not, if you’re already set on going to a certain college that is less prestigious/challenging, and you can get in to a different school, but your heart is set on that specific less challenging school you might look at the Honors College at that school to up your academic level at the College. The whole search is what fits your academic skill set. In some ways the high school Honors bit is to get into the colleges, and the college Honors bit is the strength that you bring with you into that college. Are certain departments not part of the Honors Colleges? I don’t think they’re universal in how they operate. The more important thing is the major. Maybe integrate them somehow better.*

*Do you bring Honors College representatives to talk to future students?*
Regular rep talks to both students and counselors, not sure how much of their messages is about Honors, counselors go to meetings that these reps. host and they also meet with students. Usually the same rep every year unless the university decides to change them. There are district reps for certain colleges. We definitely don’t pick the reps, they come to us based on what the university sends. We interact with them at college fairs. We send counselors to go see programs that we don’t have reps for. It’s much nicer for the rep to come to the school than to go to someplace to go find the reps. Smart of the colleges and universities to send reps to market, and should be marketing their good Honors College. GVSU has a great reputation now, makes the reps job easier. I’ve never had a student come back and say I hate GVSU. I can’t think of anyone who has come back and said that.

How do you get college information to the students?
Once kids take certain tests (PSAT, SAT) they get info sent to them from these test, it’s the universities that send out mailing email all of that. Most schools don’t do a college fair during their school day, but we do to make sure that kids have a chance to talk to or see college reps.

Have you ever had an Honors Rep? No just the regular college one
Would be opposed to an Honors Rep? Absolutely not, I think it would be smart for a college to send reps from Honors.

Around how many students go to GVSU every year?
If I had to make a wild guess it would be about 20 out of 300.

What are your thoughts about the Honors College at GVSU compared an institution like U of M or the Honors Program at MSU, or Stanford?
That’s tough because you’re not comparing apples to apples, any Honors College, I’ve seen through talking to students, being in the honors college makes a difference in decision making b/c specialization, like-minded kids, small classes. Hard to compare Honors Colleges to Harvard. Honors Colleges make a difference in swaying the decisions of kids when it’s one thing or the other when the decision is close. It can make the difference in whether or not a kid enrolls in that university or not.

We’ve found the education is a lot of times on par with the education at a place like U of M, what are your thoughts?
I would not be surprised if the education is on par. That makes sense, we have kids that could go to these other prestigious schools but they chose GV’s Honors College, they are smart kids, they are naturally going to gravitate towards the Honors College.

What do you think an Honors College should be?
It should be a place that challenges students to think differently and creatively and more holistically about education, their education, so that they become better prepared for what comes after college, which will be different for everyone. They need to become better thinkers’ better analyzers, more creative, because the jobs that people have now will not be the jobs in 10 years so the Honors College needs to teach/prepare people to be able to adapt to a changing world.

What sort of financial incentives is the school informed of about GVSU’s Honors College?
None, I’m sure there are some scholarships, the counselors would know but I don’t know otherwise.

What the reps from the university give us.

What would be the best way to get information about the Honors College to you, had you never heard of it?

Parents night/college night. There’s a panel rep from MSU GVSU, U of M and Kalamazoo maybe, going to these college fairs helps. Parents are overwhelmed by all the college info in the mail, need a personal connection.

What would be a good way for a college that isn’t on your radar to get on your radar?

*Should meet with the counselors and invite them to come to them, lunch visit, see the campus see the people.*

Is there anything I haven’t asked you that you think I should have?

*Nah that was actually pretty thorough, smart companies put together people from different backgrounds, they wouldn’t just put 4 English majors in a group and say fix this, they bring together people who aren’t of the same mind, don’t make the Honors College subject specific keep it different to teach people from different backgrounds to work together.*

What does Honors on a Resume mean to you as an employer?

*It means that that person did something extra to distinguish themselves, it matters because it shows you have a person who is willing to go the extra mile.*

Would Honors be a deciding factor?

*No, I think it could for sure.*

Do you have any suggestions about other people I should talk to

*Superintendent; email first ask if possible, ask about call, district website)*

Would you be willing to do another interview in the future if we need to reach out again for more information? How would you like to be contacted?

*Of course, yeah that’s fine*

For Dialogue: More connections this stakeholder provided:

- School District Superintendent
- School Counselors

Possible next-steps:

- Reach out to this stakeholder again with our word-of-mouth marketing innovation plan
- Reach out to Mr. McDavid
- Reach out to school counselors to see what information they give to prospective students and how they get it to them.
### Interview 14

**Stakeholder Group/Location:** GVSU Student  
**Estimated Age:** X 20-30 _____ 30-40 _____ 40-50 _____ 50+  
**Gender:**

#### Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

My primary goal of this opportunity was to get more inside information on a traditional GVSU student and how they perceive the Honors College/Honors College Students. In addition, to find out if they’ve seen anything, heard anything, or even know of the Honors College in any way, shape, or form.

#### How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?

Conducting this work reflects on my team’s problem statement as the information I received from this interview allows us to develop strategized marketing plans for the Honors College that will help the overall Honors College experience more distinctive.

#### Summary of Research:

This dialogue was especially insightful/importan to me because the person is a close friend of mine so I knew they would not hold back on any of their answers. What I found was that to start off, they chose GVSU based off of location, the overall “look” of the campus, and its outstanding programs. Like most, they know little to nothing about the Honors College. In addition, they haven’t seen anything on campus about it either. If they would’ve seen more/known more they probably would’ve gotten involved in the Honors College right off the bat. Lastly, I found it interesting and noteworthy that they brought up the fact of how an Honors College class should be different than a traditional class. They said how does it “compare to a regular classroom” which is extremely important to the overall Honors experience.

#### Important insights:

- GVSU’s campus is itself a huge attraction for prospective students.
- Views Honors College as “more advanced”
- If Honors College was more well-known, more people would look into it

#### Dialogue Questions and Response:

- □ What is your current academic year standing?  
  - o Senior
- □ What was your high school GPA? ACT?  
  - o High School: 3.5. ACT: 20
- **How many colleges did you apply to and when did you make applications? What was involved in your decision making process, and what were some deciding factors that helped you choose GVSU?**
  - Applied to 2 colleges. Wanted to go somewhere that wasn’t too close to home, but also away so they can meet new people. Decided on GVSU because they had a really good arts program, as well as a lot of their friends go here and loved the campus.

- **What do you know, if anything about GVSU’s Honors College?**
  - Little to nothing

- **Have you ever seen anything on campus about the Honors College?**
  - Nothing at all

- **What comes to mind when you think of an Honors College?**
  - More advanced and challenging classes

- **Had you known about the Honors College when applying to college, would you have considered it?**
  - Probably would have looked into it

- **What would you want to see in an Honors College to make you want to participate in one?**
  - What they have to offer to students and how it compares to a regular classroom.

*Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”*

Nothing that I can think of.

*Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted?*

Yes. Email, text, or in person.

*Three more connections this stakeholder provided:*
  - None

*Possible next-steps:*
- Look at ways to spread the Honors College on campus
- How can we enhance the word-of-mouth talk of the Honors College?

### Interview 15

**Stakeholder Group/Location:** Potential Employer

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<th>30-40</th>
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**Primary Goal of this Opportunity:**

My primary goal for this opportunity was to interview a potential future employer for students. Not only that, but to get an idea of their college experience and what they knew/know about Honors Colleges/Students today.

**How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?**

Conducting this work reflects on our team problem statement because it goes hand in hand with our prior insight on how the Honors College needs to be known and recognized as a prestige institution where students can get an Ivy League experience. In addition, employers need to be able to recognize and distinguish between Honors College students and traditional students.

**Summary of Research:**

The person is the General Manager of a new, successful business in Muskegon, MI. They attended Baker College and received a degree in Food & Bev Management. They did not attend an Honors College, however, they would’ve if Baker had one at the time. When asked about GVSU, they did not know they had an Honors College but is aware that GVSU is an up and coming University. They see Honors students as a great asset and see them as individuals who are able to multitask, able to commit to large goals, and properly time manage. Lastly, when looking at resumes an Honors Student will stand out to them, but students who are members of groups within the community and volunteer amongst different places.

**Important insights:**

- Honors College Student on a resume tells them the individual is able to commit to a large goal
- Honors College Students have a serious personality

**Dialogue Questions and Response:**

Where did you attend college?

Baker College, Bachelors in Food and Beverage Management, Associates in Culinary Arts
Did that college have an Honors College? If so, did you participate? Why or why not?

At the time, no. Not sure if there is one currently. Would have attended the HC if there was one.

On a resume, what does it mean to you when you see they were/are an “Honors College Student”?

Multitask, they are able to commit to a large goal, properly time manage.

When you think of an Honors College Student, what comes to mind? Characteristics, personality, etc.

Serious personality because it entails a lot of hard work.

What do you look for in a person as an employer?

Ability to get along with a team but also work individually, people skills, multitask, ability to follow directions, time management, good personality, real-life experience, school experience, education to go with the position.

How do you suggest a freshly graduated student presents themselves to the professional world? Through interviews? Resume? Etc.?

Research the company you want to work for, even if you don’t get into that company it is a good education to know what you want to work towards; find peers that will help influence you and further your career, network, attend networking events so you can present yourself more professionally down the road.

When looking at resumes, what outside activities catch your attention? Community service, etc.?

Member of any groups that help within the community, volunteer amongst different places, not sports.

Did you know GVSU has an Honors College?

No.

Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”

Nothing she could think of.

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted?

Yes. Phone, text, email, in person.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
• None, but will reach out if she thinks of any.

Possible next-steps:
• How can the Honors College better reach out to employers?
• We want to see how we can make the Honors College better known to people outside of GVSU, especially employers

### Interview 16

**Stakeholder Group/Location:** GVSU Admissions  
**Estimated Age:** __x__ 20-30 _____ 30-40 _____40-50 ____ 50+  
**Gender:**

**Primary Goal of this Opportunity:**
Learn what tour guides know and do not know about the Honors College, as well as how they speak about it and how it is addressed in tours.

**How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?**
Seeing as though our problem statement revolves around awareness and image of the Honors College, it makes sense to have concern about what representatives of Grand Valley are saying to prospective students.

**Summary of Research:**
It cannot be expected that tour guides elaborate extensively on the Honors College unless asked because of the many things about Grand Valley that already need to be put into a single tour. There is also no requirement for guides to have specific knowledge about the Honors College, only where to direct students and parents for more information. There are, however, times designated in each tour when the Honors College is supposed to be addressed but, unless the director happens to have a statistic they want guides to cover specifically, there can be no assurance of how long the subject of the Honors College is discussed or what will be said about it before moving on to the next part of the tour. Typically Honors students delve into the topic much more.

**Important insights:**
• Many Honors students work in admissions and can better explain to prospective students any details they would like to know.
• There is a clear misconception about whether Honors is a building, a program, a residence hall, a separate college, or something else.
• The physical separation of Niemeyer (being on the south side of campus) is a hindrance to tours.

**Dialogue Questions and Response:**
What year are you?
- Senior… Kinda

Want to elaborate on that?
- Yeah, I changed into the major I’m in now pretty late in my college career. I started out undecided then I declared social work and then I made kinda a 180 switch to journalism halfway through my junior year. So, that added another year onto college. But I’m happy with it because it’s the career I want to be in.

Can you describe for me your job with admissions? And how you got into it?
- I didn’t get into it the normal way. Most people start out in the student ambassador program, volunteering and giving tours. For me, it was at the end of Fall 2016 semester and I heard from a friend that they were hiring and I was like ‘Well I want a job on campus,’ so by that point it was Christmas Break and I decided to send her an email. Eventually she said to come in for an interview. I was hired, but not on the schedule very regularly until the summer. Then I had an actual schedule for the Spring and then this Fall now I’m on the schedule regularly.

What I do now is mostly being a tour guide, kinda being the ‘Front door of campus.’ Other times you might be working at the front desk or putting together bags for tour groups. For the most part it is giving tours though.

So for training, what is the process? Is there any sort of standard training that they put tour guides through?
- Yeah, a lot of the non-tour guide stuff is in the moment. They’ll tell the person working that day that you are new and they’ll kinda show you what to do. The front desk stuff though they do have to train you on that. As far as going on tours, you talk over with the director about guidelines and just general stuff, like what to say and what not to say, things to go over, helpful advice. And then what you’ll do is you’ll shadow at least one tour. So I shadowed two, one with somebody I knew and one with someone I didn’t know, just to see how different people did it. It was honestly the most helpful way. It kinda alleviates some of the tension.

So do they tell you standard things you have to say, like a checklist?
- Yes and no. I mean, obviously the more information you get out there the better, the more successful of a tour it was. If you don’t really have anything to say about the building you’re walking through, then it’s not great. But yeah, they do give you like a checklist of things to try to cover. But a lot of it is based on your own, like what you want to say about it. At the same time, there are regulations like things not to say. So recently, every so often we will get an email from the director saying things that they have heard that they don’t want tour guides to be saying

Can you give an example?
- Yeah, like being negative, for example, about traditional style housing. Saying things like “Oh, this is a crappy place to live,” or saying things like that. They were saying some things and being too personal. I guess someone was like “Oh, like I had a rough night last night #College,” or something like that, something really dumb that is not professional.

So do they provide you with any information about the buildings on campus? I know some tour guides use statistics and facts, do they give you those or do they find them on their own?
- They make it available

How do they do that?
They give it on paper and there is a website. You also get it from talking to directors too. Then every so often the person in charge of all the tour guides, if there is a specific statistic or something they wants us to hit on they will send it out in an email. So if there is something really specific they wants us to hit, like a while ago when we weren’t saying enough about academics, they provided us with average class size at Grand Valley and things like that. So I am going to transition a bit into Honors specific but then we will make our way back to how that relates to your job. So, do you remember when you heard about the Honors College?

-It was before I came to Grand Valley. I had a friend who came here and she was a year above me, so I was a senior in high school and she was part of the Honors College.

Did you ever consider joining the Honors College?

-I don’t think I considered it.

Is there a reason for that?

-I can’t really think of a specific one, it just wasn’t really what I wanted to do. I know in Admissions we send out these packages to high schools for all of the people that meet the general Honors College requirements, which just encourages them to apply, talking about some of the benefits of it. I was working on those a couple weeks ago.

So how would you say you know most of the information you have now about the Honors College?

-I would say most of the information I know about the Honors College would just be through, over the years, having numerous friends either live there, or were a part of it, or both. Just through them talking about their experiences, that’s kinda how I heard about it.

How often do people ask about Honors on tours?

-Pretty often. I’d say that if I were to, well most days I work I only give one tour, but if it were a Saturday where I was giving three tours, at least one of those tours is going to be asking about it.

Is it mostly parents or students that are asking?

-Well for the most part it is mostly parents that ask questions anyways. So, mostly parents.

What kinds of questions do they ask?

-They’re usually pretty general, I don’t think I have had too many specific questions about it. Usually they just want some more information on it so I tell them all I know and say if they want any more information aside from that, I can direct you to places you can find that, people to talk to.

So you said that sometimes admissions will give you a list of things to hit, is the Honors College on that list?

-Kinda. It’s a little tricky because the Honors College is all the way on the South end of campus and our tours don’t really go any further south than the library or Kirkhof. So it’s just hard. They do give us some things to say every once in a while. Sometimes there will be bus tours incorporated in the tour so if it is a smaller appointment basis that someone is doing a tour on sometimes there’s a bus that picks us up by the rec center and it will drive through the rest of campus we don’t see on the normal walking tour. That’s where you really get a chance to talk about the Honors College. Other than that, I just try to mention it, well we are supposed to mention it when we are over in housing. We talk about, we mention like “This is freshman land, it’s all freshmen that live here, but there are freshmen that live in other places on campus.” Then we mention Niemeyer, the Honors College, as being one of those other options. Then we mention it again when we walk through Holton-Hooker and there I say “Oh, one of the other main living -learning centers on campus is Niemeyer. That has a lot more of the learning aspect because it has a full computer lab, some more lecture halls,” and stuff like that. Those are like the two chances that I’d say you really get a chance to touch on Niemeyer.
**So I’m going to put you on the spot- I mean I have put you on the spot for this entire interview- but if someone were on a tour and they asked you what the Honors College was, what would you tell them it is?**

-I would say it is a program, it’s a different academic program at Grand Valley and it rewards academic success from high school and it provides opportunities who did particularly well there to have a lot more opportunities here. I might also talk about sequences or something.

*Yeah, so if they asked about the curriculum what do you know, what would you tell them?*

-I don’t know a whole lot about the Honors sequences, you know, because I don’t have to, so I would just point them to how to get that information. You never want to like… guess. If you’re giving information that you’re not sure about it is better to not give it at all.

*Yeah I think I kinda remember my tour guide pointing me somewhere else for information too*

-There’s definitely a couple of tour guides, well, more than a couple… Any tour guide that is in the Honors College obviously would know a lot more. So there’s a guy that I work with on Monday’s and Wednesday’s and he’s part of the Honors College and I’m sure tours he can go off and answer any questions if they ask about it and tell them everything that they need to know.

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**Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”**

-Once in a while, if there is like a Saturday and I don’t have any time commitments after and there’s like one person that’s maybe a transfer student and they’re okay with it on their time, I’ll take them anywhere else they want to check out. So sometimes if they want to go check out Calder or Niemeyer, but that has only happened maybe twice that I have had that opportunity. But once in a while I’ll do that.

-I know when people do small group tours, there’s a presentation that goes beforehand by an admissions counselor. So, during that presentation, they go over a lot of different things and the Honors College is part of that presentation. It is not focused on the Honors College by any means, but it is definitely talked about. It is part of about a 45 minute presentation.

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Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
- Individual in charge of tour guides

Possible next-steps:
- Get in contact person in charge of tour guides
- Find out about Honors student tour program in Niemeyer

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**Interview 17**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group/Location: High School Counselor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Age:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender: Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</td>
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How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
We wanted to see if our prototypes are good ideas to implement in high schools. We also wanted to gain more perspective on marketing techniques that work for high school students.

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<tr>
<th>Summary of Research:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Our prototype for reaching out to students in High Schools is embraced by the administrators there. However, we need to take into account the needs and wants of the students themselves. Some students just are not interested in higher education, some are but have issues that make pursuing higher education a large challenge, and many are ignorant to the options and funding for education. It seems like we need to be personal and honest with these students.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Important insights:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Some students are just not interested in going to college and want to go to the workforce immediately after High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Students often have problems outside of academics that make university a non-option.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Students are somewhat ignorant to universities, especially funding.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Dialogue Questions and Response:</th>
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<tr>
<td>o How long have you been at Wyoming?</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 years.</td>
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<tr>
<td>o What is your title here? What does your position entail?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career and academic advisor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>o What previous experiences do you have?</td>
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<tr>
<td>None, this was really my first major counseling job</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Have you heard about the Honors College at Grand Valley?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes. In fact, just two weeks ago, I was at a meeting that was with the Honors College</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Do you know anything about it? If so, what?</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know about the sequences, and how it’s a very good program for students who want to complete their gen eds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o How do colleges reach out to students at Wyoming? Do you think it is effective?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have trips to colleges around the area. We have our seniors sign up and we take a bus out to the university. We also have a college fair, where colleges set up in our gym and students can come in to ask them questions. Yes, I do think it is effective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o What do you know about Grand Valley? Do you hear any comments, good or bad, about the college?</td>
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</table>
Mostly good. I’m an alumnus of Grand Valley, so I may be a little biased. Since this school is poor, many students at here who want to go to university and college go to either GRCC or Grand Valley, since they are cheaper than state colleges.

- What do students struggle with the most in your experience as a counselor? It varies. A lot of their problems seem to be caused by circumstances outside of education, like their family life, peer pressure. I sometimes have to contact child protective services or even the police in some cases.

- How does the school reach out to prospective MC* students? Has it changed since I was in the program? Same as when you were in the program. We send out letters, have an orientation. We’ve raised our GPA requirement for admission from 2.5 to 3.0. I personally think it should be higher. We do now have former students in this program come in to speak with the prospective Middle College students.

- What sort of students do you see in the Middle College program at Wyoming? It varies. Some are in it just because they get good grades, not because they have the drive to learn. Others are driven to learn and grow. They usually want to go to university after High School.

- Do you have different relationships with MC students versus non-MC students? Yes. I spend a lot more time with MC students, since I am an advisor for the program.

- Do you see students in MC, or other high achieving students, going on to join an Honors College in University? Why? Why not? Yes, all the time.

- Do you think that the student ambassadors would be interesting to students at Wyoming? What would be the best way for us to put this in action? Absolutely, I love that idea. Students listen to other young people, especially those who come from the same school district, more than adults. I think you should go to classrooms themselves, especially the A.P. classes.

- Do you see any flaws in any of these prototypes my team has created? No

*MC: short for Middle College, a program at Wyoming High School where high achieving students can take both college courses and high school courses at the same time.

Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”
We need to change the education system as a whole. We have some major problems when it comes to teaching in America.

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted?
Yes. Email and phone

For Dialogue: Three more connections this stakeholder provided: None.

Possible next-steps:
- We need to revise our prototype to integrate these insights

### Interview 18

**Stakeholder Group/Location:** Potential Employer

**Estimated Age:**
- 20-30 
- 30-40 
- 40-50 
- 50+ (X)

**Gender:** Female

**Primary Goal of this Opportunity:**

My primary goal of this opportunity was to get feedback and insights on my team’s Marketing Strategies and innovations from a woman who has mastered the Design Thinking process and works collaboratively with professional teams all over the country, including Grand Rapids’ very own ArtPrize.

**How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?**

This work reflects on my team’s problem statement as it gave me more ideas and concepts to take into consideration on how we can strategize to market the Honors College.

**Important insights:**
- Honors Students pull up a school’s ranking
- The more people we can pull into Honors, the higher GVSU’s ranking will become
- Will always look at an Honors Student’s resume first

**Dialogue Questions and Response:**

**Notes from interview:**

1. **What is your work?**
   Work with individuals and organizations to improve their emotional intelligence and effectiveness. Works with teams around team process. Essentially helping people become more aware of what their underlying motivation and patterns are and make them more conscious and aware.

2. **Where did you attend college?**
   University of Michigan, Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology
3. Did you know GVSU had an Honors College?
   No

4. How can improve marketing strategies?
   Statistics on the school (#5 in Value, #29 in Regional Midwest)
   The Honors College are the elite among the group at GVSU.

5. What effect does “Honors College” have on a resume
   Likely intelligent and more importantly, know how to apply themselves. Whether it is because they are smart or can work the system. Wants someone who knows how to be successful. Students are committing to maintain that level of excellence.

6. An Honors student is definitely a differentiator. Will always look first at the Honors student application, gives you an extra bump on you resume. BUT must be able to follow up on with your personality, academics, etc.

7. Outside activities?
   Important, but a function of are people doing it because interested or doing it in order to look good on their resume? At this point, colleges expect so much of students they are willing to do stuff that they don’t even like to get in and reach an expectation that they wouldn’t normally reach.

8. Who should I talk to?
   Talk to large, local employer who has a better sense of GVSU. Get contact info for the Vice President of Innovation, etc.

If you look at the bell-curve, Honors College students are at the front of the bell curve. They pull up the ranking. So, the more people you can pull into the Honors College, the higher the ranking it will become. We want GVSU to be a more legitimate, cost effective, local.

Are there internships and elements that are exclusive elements available to GVSU Honors Students? Not only gives students an opportunity, but improves brand of the college.

Improve advisor help at GVSU and coordinating between Honors College → GVSU Traditional

| Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?” | Nothing she could think of. |
| Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted? |  |
Yes. Text, email, phone, in person.

For Dialogue: Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
- VP Trendway

Possible next-steps:
- Interview VP of Human Resources at Trendway
- Consider how introducing an Honors College “brand” can pull students towards the Honors College

Interview 19

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors College Student / Alexis Nagle

Estimated Age: X  20-30 _____ 30-40 _____ 40-50 _____ 50+ 50+

Gender: 

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

My primary goal for this opportunity was to receive further feedback and insights on our top two prototypes for our problem statement.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?

Conducing this work reflects on my team’s problem statement because it gives us direct information on our ideas, how we can improve our ideas, what we should stick with in our ideas, and see how our prototypes would work if they were implemented.

Summary of Research:

Overall, Alexis provided a lot of the similar information we have been receiving from other students. She would definitely consider becoming an ambassador, with/without incentives. She describes the Honors College as calm and inviting, and that is what we should base our brand off of. I like that she said that she has high expectations for herself and other students. She would definitely consider buying merchandise at a fair price, but not sure about her family. Like others, she loved the logo but agreed that the crown should be replaced.

Important insights:
- Students in Honors not only have high expectations for themselves but for their peers as well.
- Honors Students LOVE the shirts they get at orientation.
A brand would be beneficial, as long as it does not make the Honors College appear entitled.

Dialogue Questions and Response (actual dialogue content), or detailed description of Observations or Immersion Activity.

1. As a student, what kind of non-monetary incentives would grab your attention? (Lakerstore discounts, free meals, free GVSU merchandise, etc.)

Free food and free GVSU merchandise (especially T-shirts). Lakerstore discounts especially for the bookstore.

2. Would you consider becoming an Honors College student ambassador if any/some of these incentives were set in place? Would definitely consider being an Honors College student ambassador if these incentives were set in place and said she has already considered it.

3. What kind of work would you think would be equivalent to these incentives as an ambassador for the Honors College? (Honors College tours, high school presentations, prospective student recruitment, etc.)

Giving tours of the campus and presentations about what the Honors college consists of (explaining GPA to stay in good standing, the senior project and junior seminar)

4. If you had to describe the Frederik Meijer Honors College in a few words, what would they be?

Calm, Close-knit and inviting

5. What does being an Honors College student mean to you?

Having high expectations for myself and her peers

6. If Honors College merchandise was created, would you consider purchasing it? Would your family consider purchasing it? Do you think other Honors students would purchase it?

Would purchase it, but doesn’t think family would. Thinks most honors students would purchase it, if priced fairly. Noted that everyone loves their shirts from orientation

7. Do you think developing a “brand” or logo for the Honors College would create a sense of pride and overall better representation throughout campus of the Honors College?

Thinks developing a specific logo would be beneficial in getting the word out about the Honors college and creating a sense of pride within honors students
8. If the Honors College were to re-brand and create some type of logo, what do you think should be included on it? Should it have more of a modern design or classic design?

Likes the idea of a classic design

9. What are your thoughts on the logo shown below? (logo displayed at Debrief 3)

Really enjoyed the logo, but would remove the crown.

Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?” No.

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted?

Yes. Phone, text, email, in person.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- None at the moment, but can provide if asked.

Possible next-steps:

- Continue further design concepts for honors brand.
- Talk to more Honors Students about merchandise and their Honors shirts from orientation.
- Consider looking at printing options and how expensive merchandise would actually be.

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Interview 20

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors College Student / Alexis Wickham

Estimated Age: X 20-30 ____ 30-40 _____40-50 _____50+  
Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

My primary goal of this opportunity was to receive insights and feedback on our top two prototypes from an Honors Student that would be directly affected by these prototypes.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?

Conducting this work reflects on our team problem statement because it is direct research towards our problem statement and how we can reach it. In addition, it gives us direct insights on our prototypes.

Summary of Research:

Alexis provided a lot of useful information for our primary research archive and gave us important feedback on our prototypes. Once again, I found that these incentives she listed along with the ones
we had already come up with would encourage her and other students to become student ambassadors for the honors college. In addition, she said that she would definitely buy merchandise and that she loved the logo, but like our stakeholders, would replace the crown with something else.

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<tr>
<th>Important insights:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Use extra credit as an incentive for student ambassadors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allow prospective students to shadow student ambassadors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expects monetary incentive for any off campus work as an ambassador.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue Questions and Response (actual dialogue content), or detailed description of Observations or Immersion Activity.</th>
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<tr>
<td>As a student, what kind of non-monetary incentives would grab your attention? (Lakerstore discounts, free meals, free GVSU merchandise, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>EXTRA CREDIT, free GVSU merchandise, anything that would be more appealing and grab more attention to their resume for a job to give them a leg up over other candidates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Would you consider becoming an Honors College student ambassador if any/some of these incentives were set in place?</td>
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<tr>
<td>If any of these incentives were in place she would definitely consider it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. What kind of work would do you think would be equivalent to these incentives as an ambassador for the Honors College? (Honors College tours, high school presentations, prospective student recruitment, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doing tours of the Honors College, shadowing a student, and any presentations or other activities should stay on campus. If any of the work that the ambassador has to do is off campus, thinks there would have be a monetary incentive.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. If you had to describe the Frederik Meijer Honors College in a few words, what would they be? Challenging, higher standards, rigorous, more opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What does being an Honors College student mean to you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>It means higher standards to uphold and that, generally, has a better work ethic than students who were not admitted. Has a favorable factor for future job interviews and a more disciplined education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. If Honors College merchandise was created, would you consider purchasing it? Would your family consider purchasing it? Do you think other Honors students would purchase it?</td>
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| Astounding yes! Since it’s more prestigious and a smaller group of students, it's almost like an exclusive club that not many people can say they are a part of. Showing that pride can be a
representation for honors students and showing how proud and motivated they are to other/future students who want to strive for higher standards and get in themselves.

7. Do you think developing a "brand" or logo for the Honors College would create a sense of pride and overall better representation throughout campus of the Honors College?
   Yes

8. If the Honors College were to re-brand and create some type of logo, what do you think should be included on it? Should it have more of a modern design or classic design?
   Should say “Frederik Meijer Honors College,” “Grand Valley State University,” and include an anchor or school logo of some kind, and possibly the school year should be included. Maybe change the year each year. With the year change, we could also consider changing the color every year, etc.. Classic design is more fitting as it would seem more prestigious.

9. What are your thoughts on the logo shown below? (logo designed for debrief 3)
   Really liked the logo. Has a classy look but also doesn’t look too old. Would change the crown and replace possibly with the founding year of the college.

| Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?” |
| Nothing. |

| Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted? |
| Yes. Through email, text, phone, in-person. |

| Three more connections this stakeholder provided: |
| - No other stakeholder’s provided. |

| Possible next-steps: |
| - Continue to ask students about whether they would purchase/wear merchandise or not. |
| - Look at how Honors College students show their pride of being in the honors college now, if at all. |
| - Develop a possible “job description” for an Honors College student ambassador. |

Interview 21

<p>| Stakeholder Group/Location: High School Faculty/Staff |
| Estimated Age: _____ 20-30 _____ 30-40 __√__40-50 _____ 50+ |</p>
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<th><strong>Gender:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>To find out how high schools might react to our prototype ideas. To see if they would be useful and get suggestions for improvement.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Our problem statement deals with marketing which includes and appealing to high school students, so information about how high schools would view our prototypes is valuable.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Summary of Research:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>I found out that word of mouth is still the most important way to get information, and that high schools are open and willing to the idea of an Honors Student Ambassador program. I discovered that counselors struggle with how to get college information to students, it’s all on the student. Videos, emails, texts, they don’t always get through, students don’t pay attention unless it’s important to them. So how do we get their attention? Word of mouth seems to be the most effective way. I also gained valuable information about the types of merchandise that high school students buy/wear.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Important insights:</strong></th>
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| • Counselors are interested in merchandise, having merchandise from a department or school makes them have more knowledge about it and more inclined to discuss it with students.  
• Students wear things like lanyards, t-shirts and sweatshirts mostly. Also phone stickers  
• The reasons that people are so drawn to big schools like U of M and MSU aren’t obvious. |

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<tr>
<th><strong>Dialogue Questions and Response:</strong></th>
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| What do you know about the Honors College at GVSU?  
*I don’t know too much about the honors college at GV, anything I know would be from meeting with a student with a high GPA, and then doing some research about it. Anytime a student is applying to a college who has a good GPA or test school I always suggest to the student to look into whether or not the school has an Honors College.* |

| Why do you push students towards Honors?  
*In my experience with helping kids decide where to go to school, the schools around here are large in size, so students who are doing well in rigorous classes here at high school might be interested in Honors, Honors provides a smaller community and more opportunities.* |

| How did you first find out about the Honors College?  
*The GVSU rep shared with the counselors which we share with kids.* |
Heavily discussed by the reps? Or briefly glossed over?

*The reps job is to talk about all of the things that GVSU has to offer, including Honors, not glossed over but not the only thing they have.*

How do you get college information to the students?

*It varies from student to student, some students seek it out on their own, college is talked about as far back as you can remember, everyone talks about it, it isn’t until spring of junior year that people start to think it’s important and ask questions and pay attention. Fall of junior year we offer meetings with reps and encourage that but it all depends on the students. That’s something the counselors always struggle with, do they read our emails? Do we send texts? Do they pay attention? A lot of times people who want to go to a school have heard of it from a friend or sibling, it often times comes naturally. GVSU also does on site admissions, the rep probably gives info about Honors to those students for the onsite that qualify. Think about your experience, you went because your friend was going there.*

If GVSU had a student ambassador program for the Honors College, where students came to classrooms, or maybe an assembly and talked about the HC, would that be useful for you?

*I was just thinking that as we ended the last question, I have one student now there, maybe during thanksgiving we could have someone come to 11th grade English classes.*

How do I go about setting that up?

*Email me, ask me, we have these students that want to come in November is this something you could help us set up? Target juniors, information from actual students might help them start thinking about it, I’d be happy to help organize that.*

Do you have any suggestions for such a program?

*Prepare in advance the objective, how do you reach that objective? Leave time for questions. Personal stories and experiences, instead of general info.*

Have you ever seen any GVSU Apparel around the High school? What kinds of stuff do you see?

*Yes, I do, I think it’s increased since I’ve been here, phone stickers, lanyards, sweatshirts, t-shirts mostly.*

Have you ever seen any GVSU Honors apparel, or logo? How visible is Honors to you?

*Not on my current students, I have on my student that is there now on her social media and a shirt. GVSU’s website pretty nice easy to find Honors stuff.*

Around how many students go to GVSU every year?

*I can let you know how many kids from last year went there, I’ll email it.*

What are your thoughts about the Honors College at GVSU compared an institution like U of M or the Honors Program at MSU, or Stanford?

*You can get more opportunities at an Honors College than at a big school, don’t discredit smaller less prestigious schools because they have a community to offer that those large schools don’t. I have*
a lot of students that want so bad to get into U of M and they feel like they won’t succeed if they don’t. It’s a hard battle to fight.

What could make an Honors College look more prestigious to a student? What about U of M and MSU make students drawn to it? Is it because of the Alumni? I don’t know what they could do.

What would be the best way to get information about the Honors College to you, had you never heard of it? Through the rep, counselors like free stuff from Honors colleges, pennants, stickers, pens, a logo? Something kids want to wear on their t-shirts

What does Honors on a Resume mean to you as an employer? I think it would mean that they are dedicated to learning, and honors student has put in more or different effort than a student in a general program. I mean it’s an Honor.

How would you feel if your child was in Honors? I would feel proud, I think it would differ from family to family. I want to support them wherever their journey leads them. I would probably buy some Honors something like wear a shirt, maybe not a car sticker though.

Is there anything I haven’t asked you that you think I should have? Nope I think you’ve asked me some good questions.

Do you have any suggestions about other people I should talk to? I don’t but if you decide you want to send students here to talk to students I can talk to people it make that happen.

Would you be willing to do another interview in the future if we need to reach out again for more information? How would you like to be contacted? Just how you did it before email, and yeah I would do that if we need to.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
  - She couldn’t think of anyone else I should talk to, but maintained that she’d be more than willing to talk to her peers and help set up an Honors Student Ambassador test run at the High School.

Possible next-steps:
  - A direction I’d like to go in, is talking to a few high school students and asking what they pay attention to.
  - Asking high school and already enrolled college students what they most like to buy from colleges.
  - Ask students what exactly is appealing about big schools like MSU or U of M and try to create a similar yet distinct image for the Honors College that would be just as appealing.
Interview 22

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors College Student / Elle Madsen

Estimated Age: X  20-30 _____ 30-40 _____ 40-50 _____ 50+  
Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

My primary goal of this opportunity was to receive insights and feedback on our top two prototypes from an Honors Student that would be directly affected by these prototypes.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?

Conducting this work reflects on our team problem statement because it is direct research towards our problem statement and how we can reach it.

Summary of Research:

Overall, the information I received from Elle in her interview was extremely beneficial to our research and our prototypes. As far as the student ambassador prototype, she gave us the idea of giving students the incentive of receiving debit dollars for their work. In addition, she confirmed that she would become an ambassador if given the opportunity. As far as the branding prototype, she stated that it could be extremely beneficial as it would be essentially free advertising for the college. In addition, she stressed that if doing so it is important to make sure that the Honors College brand keeps itself part of the GVSU community.

Important insights:

- Debit dollars could be used as an incentive.
- Offering more information on the Honors College could decrease intimidation of the program and encourage more students to apply to it.
- GVSU’s student body mainly consists of students from surrounding High Schools, so High School presentations at local high schools could be beneficial for recruitment.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. As a student, what kind of non-monetary incentives would grab your attention? (lakerstore discounts, free meals, free GVSU merchandise, etc.)
   a. Anything having to do with on campus food would probably be the strongest incentive for me. There’s so many times when I’m on campus and I’m hungry but I don’t want to spend the money, but I think that debit dollars would be best because those can be used anywhere.
2. Would you consider becoming an Honors College student ambassador if any/some of these incentives were set in place?
   Definitely. Thinks the program has much to offer and she knows when she was a freshman she was really intimidated by the program. Thinks having received more information on it before attending GVSU could have been beneficial. Also have a lot of friends who would have been accepted but didn’t even apply because they didn’t understand what it was.

3. What kind of work would you think would be equivalent to these incentives as an ambassador for the Honors College? (Honors College tours, high school presentations, prospective student recruitment, etc.)
   High school presentations would probably be a top priority, because GVSU’s student body mainly consists of students from surrounding high schools, but think that goes hand in hand with recruitment.

4. If you had to describe the Frederik Meijer Honors College in a few words, what would they be?
   Described the Honors program as being a very thought provoking course load in which students are exposed to ideas and concepts that they may not come into contact with in their major related coursework.

5. What does being an Honors College student mean to you?
   She doesn’t think that being an honors student means that she’s any smarter or will be anymore well equipped for the work force than my peers, but she does think that completing the program shows a lot of initiative because it is a more challenging program in the sense that it’s a lot more open ended so it challenges us as students to not only put forth a little more effort, but also to think creatively.

6. If Honors College merchandise was created, would you consider purchasing it? Would your family consider purchasing it? Do you think other Honors students would purchase it?
   Thinks that the t shirts that freshmen get every year should be offered for sale to upperclassmen. She personally would love to replace her freshman shirt.

7. Do you think developing a “brand” or logo for the Honors College would create a sense of pride and overall better representation throughout campus of the Honors College?
   Thinks that it definitely could. Doesn’t think that creating a logo would do any harm, because at the very least students in the honors college might choose to purchase those t shirts to wear to football games. Also said that if she was taking pictures at those football games and posting them online, it’s free advertisement for the college itself.
8. If the Honors College were to re-brand and create some type of logo, what do you think should be included on it? Should it have more of a modern design or classic design? Definitely an anchor. It’s important to keep in mind that the honors college is a part of the GVSU community so it wouldn’t make sense to create a logo that makes it seem separate from the university.

9. What are your thoughts on the logo shown below? (the logo we designed for debrief 3) Likes the logo a lot.

Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?” Answer was nothing.

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted? Yes. Through email, text, phone, in-person.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
• No other stakeholder’s provided.

Possible next-steps:
• Consider more ways on how we can develop an Honors brand that promotes community within GVSU.
• Develop points and explanations for presentation that touch on the brand and how merchandise/logo enhance and inhibit word of mouth advertisement.
• Look at how student ambassadors can be used to decrease any intimidation that is perceived about the Honor's College

Interview 23
Stakeholder Group/Location: Other Honors Colleges

Estimated Age: _x_ 20-30 _____ 30-40 _____40-50 _____ 50+

Gender: Male

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
Learn more about how other colleges are marketing their Honors Colleges to their students

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
By better understanding how other colleges are utilizing marketing strategies, we can see what methods are the most effective to increase enrollment and retention.

Summary of Research:
Through this interview, I learned more about Ferris’s Honors College; specifically, how they market to students. Although it is only about half the size of Grand Valley, they are also a Division II public university in Michigan, so they are relatively comparable. They have significantly more requirements than Grand Valley’s Frederick Meijer Honors College which help them become connected with their campus and community. If students qualify for Honors College admission, they receive letters in the mail after admission to the general college; this is also marketed with flyers around campus.

Important insights:
- Word-of-mouth is the most impactful strategy
- Flyers also increase visibility
- Required service hours connects students to their community

Dialogue Questions and Response:
What academic standing are you? Junior
What is your major at Ferris? Mechanical engineering
Are you in Ferris’s Honors College? No, but interviewee has many close friends in the program
How does this college market this program? They have flyers around campus, but interviewee mainly knows about due to his friends’ participation in the Honors College. Letters are sent out after admission to general college.
What are the general requirements for this program? At least 20% of completed classes must be Honors (at least 22 credits); complete 15 service hours per semester; join a Registered Student Organization; attend 3 cultural events per semester; participate in Honors community/live in Honors Resident hall during first year; complete a specific “Honors Development” course; complete an accomplishment report each year.
Describe the Honors facilities. Most students are very happy with those dorms; they facilitate intimacy with similar students, they get their own rooms, and there are many housing scholarships available so they are the same or less than the price of normal dorms.
What opportunities does this Honors College offer its students? Early registration for classes, better dorms, special priority consideration for programs and colleges, academic opportunities, Honors conferences/speakers, better scholarships, study abroad programs, service opportunities, leadership development, and cultural events.
Do you think Honors apparel would be popular there? Yes; most of the Honors students and parents are very proud of their accomplishments, and enjoy talking about the program, as they feel it has significantly benefited them. Although there are a lot of requirements, the students find that those help them to take advantage of everything this program has to offer.
Do they have a separate logo from the general school? No; for the most part, they are fully integrated with the general school. Even the Honors dorms are located in separate hallways within ‘normal’ dorm buildings. This program focuses on enriching your college experience, not necessarily creating a distinct one from the general college.

Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?”
How else does their Honors College distinguish themselves from the general college?
They have their own mission statement- The purpose of the Honors Program at Ferris State University is to provide intellectual challenges, resources and support to highly able and motivated students, while encouraging service and leadership for the public good.

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted? Yes; prefer contact over phone

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
- Ferris Honors Students
- Ferris Marketing Department
- Ferris Honors College professors

Possible next-steps:
- MSU Honors College Marketing department- ask about how they advertise, how they sponsored their bill board
- Look into if any other colleges are marketing their Honors Colleges
- Create logo based on what we want to portray about Grand Valley’s Honors Program

Interview 24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group/Location: Past Honors Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Age: 60-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender: Male</td>
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Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
Find what people know about the Honors College/do people know about the Honors College, what people’s problems with the Honors College are, and what would incentivize them to choose a specific Honors College?

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
We will be able to determine where the greatest misconceptions about the Honors College life.

Summary of Research:
The biggest problems with the Honors College currently are that there is a misunderstanding about what it is, the reality of the expectations of Honors students, the increase in price to be in Honors, and the competition from other schools.

Important insights:
- Monetary concerns effect students’ decision to join the Honors College
- Being a part of the Brooks College and having to adhere to General Education requirements limits the Honors College in its initiatives to change.

Dialogue Questions and Response:
- How long have you been at GVSU? How long have you been working as faculty for the Honors College?
  - Worked for 10 years, finished last year
  - So what do you teach here/what have you taught?
    - Was hired into the Honors College as the Director
    - Taught Social Product Innovation Sequence
  - What previous experience do you have?
**Worked at University of St. Francis from the time I obtained his Ph.D. until 2007.**

- “My chief qualification for directing the Honors Program is that I had started an Honors Program and shepherded it through the process…”
- I recruited students

**What brought you to GVSU?**
- It was time for a change. I had worked at St. Francis for a while and wanted to move to a place where I had more opportunity to grow. Likely found the job listing on Chronicle of Higher Education

**Body**

- Do you see any particular benefits of attending the honors program?
- **Sequences**
  - “They did a number of things at once. They ended up fulfilling a part of the role of a good first year seminar course, but they did much more than that… They challenge students to rise high and do a lot their first year, meant that really prepared them well for subsequent academic work.”
  - “They created a pretty close community of students and faculty as well, so you got to know those students.”
  - “Most Honors Programs are looking to do that kind of thing, but they all do it in different ways. So most of them do not have sequences the way Grand Valley does, those are unique to Grand Valley.”
- The Living-learning community
  - Honors specific programming, leadership opportunities
- Honors Junior Seminar
  - You get to do unique things that you wouldn’t get to do as a traditional student
- Senior Project
  - “An opportunity to do something unique that distinguishes you as an individual.”
  - You get to choose what you do

- What do you think of students in the honors college? Is there a certain “type” of student you see a lot?
- Motivation is the main thing that sets Honors students apart, and it was the main thing we looked for in recruitment and selection

- Do you see any limitations to honors in its current form?
  - Felt that there were many restrictions put on innovative curriculum due to the general education requirements
  - Being a part of the Brooks Interdisciplinary College makes processes of change take longer and less likely to be approved
  - Money. Students get offers from other schools that simply offer more money, so we lose them. (Our biggest competitor is MSU, then UofM, then Central & Western). This happens “frequently.”

- If you could add/change one thing about the honors college program, what would it be? How would it benefit the honors college experience?
  - More flexibility and ability to innovate with the program offerings. Less hoops to jump through

- Do students seem to struggle with any particular aspect of honors?
• The workload is a lot. However, the Honors College differs in the support network. Though Honors students have more difficulty, they are also less likely to drop out due to workload than traditional students

• Closing
  • What is the one thing I didn’t ask you that you think I should have?
  • I feel that I explained my opinions well

Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to be contacted?
• Yes, via Skype, email, or LinkedIn

Possible next steps:
• Follow up interview, look into other Honors Colleges to see what their competitive edge is
Appendix B

Research Bibliographies

Reference 1

<table>
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<th>Citation:</th>
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</table>

| Reason for including this source in your work: |
| The article analyzed a reason for choosing a particular university, which may be able to be factored into why students choose Honors. |

| Main argument: |
| The article discussed the impact of facilities on students’ decisions to attend particular universities. It looked at the impact that new facilities, clean buildings with the latest technologies for example, have on the decision to attend a particular university. The article compared this to the reputation and courses offered as other factors. |

| Important ideas: |
| ❖ The idea of the three factors that determine the “fit” of a university for students |
| ❖ Course offerings have a large impact on student choice |
| ❖ Facilities are having a growing impact on student choice |

| Evidence: |
| The article did a survey that wound up being comprised of over 8,000 responses. |

| Notable quotes, terms, and concepts: |
| “Student-university fit.” |
| “Best rated FM-related aspects included environment and academic facilities.” |
| “The availability of a desired course was universally rated as the most important factor in every institution.” |

| Strengths: |
| Robust data with good analysis |
| Weaknesses: |
| The data is really dated. The article itself is from 2003. |

| Connections: |
| ❖ Visibility of the Honors College |
| ❖ Appealing to prospective students |
| ❖ Looking at how the Niemeyer facilities are viewed |

Questions/Concerns:
Could Honors Programs be expanded beyond the current areas? How important are the current facilities to Honors recruitment?

---

### Reference 2

**Citation:**

**Reason for including this source in your work:**
We decided to research Michigan State’s Honors College in order to see how it originated, and how it eventually became one of the most prestigious programs in the state.

**Main argument:**
This essay, published immediately following the formation of Michigan State University’s Honors College in 1956, explores the best way to challenge academically gifted students and benefit their learning careers.

**Important ideas:**
- A “cookie cutter” master plan will not be possible; instead, a successful Honors Program must be flexible and offer unique pathways to students
- The recognition and selection of Honors students must be done as soon as possible in their college careers
- This program was initially curriculum-based, although it has since expanded significantly

**Evidence:**
“[The program] must provide, not simply for one curriculum, however advanced, but for as many curricula as there are Honors scholars” (Izerda, p. 44)
This supports how imperative adaptability and versatile options are for Honors students in such programs.
“[They] live in regular dormitories, fraternity or sorority houses, and participate in extra-curricular programs as much as the rest of the student body” (Izerda, p. 45)
This helps exemplify how simple this Honors College and many others start out: only differing from traditional schooling experiences in curriculum, without influencing other aspects of the college experience.

**Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:**
MSU’s problem statement: “To develop and implement a university-wide program which will recognize, challenge, and stimulate the intellectually gifted student” (Izerda, p. 44).

Definition of problem: “…fundamental to the problem of the superior student is the recognition that, above all, he is different…such a program must go out of its way to guarantee academic flexibility” (Izerda, p. 44).

Ideating: “…the responsible agency can provide for an acceleration either of time spent or of subject matter covered…The faculty committee, however, decided that an Honors Program must be a great deal more than an accelerated ride over the familiar bumps and by-ways required of the average student” (Izerda, p. 44).
**Strengths:**
- Advanced curriculum
- Recognizes how the challenges of Honors students differ from those of traditional students
- Focus on developing critical thinking skills

**Weaknesses:**
- Few benefits beyond class content
- No Honors-specific housing or buildings except for a designated lounge area located in the library
- Students are not eligible to apply beyond the end of sophomore year
- Difficult for non-freshmen and transfer students to enroll

**Connections:**
- This piece shows that MSU’s Honors College started out in the same place as Grand Valley’s: curriculum-based. By researching how they have since innovated their program, we can find inspiration and insight on how to improve ours as well.
- This essay also reiterated how we must find how to sufficiently prepare students for their post-college lives, while also accelerating their learning experiences.
- We must determine how to seek out eligible students through marketing, in order to enroll them in this program early in their college careers to overall enhance their experience.

**Questions/Concerns:**
- How can we create a program that applies to all Honors students, yet is flexible and adaptable to individual scholars?
- How will we increase the scope of the program beyond curriculum even farther?

---

**Reference 3**

**Citation:**

**Reason for including this source in your work:**
This is an example of a university that has taken a unique approach to reforming their Honors Program.

**Main argument:**
Pforzheimer Honors College, part of Pace University, began in 2003. At their time, they were innovators in new Honors Programs. Their new program offered scholarships, research grants, free laptops, housing stipends, etc.

**Important ideas:**
- Communities are strongly encouraged.
- Honors Colleges should be run like an Ivy League institution.
- Monetary support through scholarships and grants assist student success.

**Evidence:**
Honors students “will have many of the benefits associated with an Ivy League education. They will be able to live with peers in special Honors Halls, will get scholarship awards of at least $9,000 a year and ranging up to full tuition, will receive free laptop computers, will get $1,000 research stipends for independent work with a faculty mentor or for independent study and research off campus (including travel abroad), and will participate in special seminars - including one taught by the University's president.”

**Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:**
- “Caputo [University President] said: "The Pforzheimer Honors College is the epitome of opportunity at Pace - a community of talented undergraduate scholars studying under the tutelage of a great university."
- “Unlike many Honors Programs, which are confined to the liberal arts, the new Pforzheimer Honors College will let its 160 members study in any of the undergraduate areas the University offers - arts and sciences, business, computers, nursing and education.”
- “An unusual curriculum for Pforzheimer members will include a Leadership Development program offering internships with executives in business, government, and the nonprofit world.”

Strengths:
- The school was an innovator
- The program was successful
- This source will be a good springboard to further research

Weaknesses:
- The source is from 2003
- The source is specific to one university

Connections:
We will develop improved marketing strategies to showcase the “New Honors College Curriculum.”
- This resource explains how a school implemented a new Honors College curriculum.
- This resource has examples of mindsets used to reform an Honors College.
- This resource includes ways to connect different stakeholder groups.

Questions/Concerns:
- This source requires a follow up source, as it is relatively short; however, this should be easy to acquire.
- What mindsets may be adopted that are similar to that of Pace University?

Reference 4

Citation:
http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1076&context=nchchip&sei-redir=1&referer=https%3A%2F%2Fscholar.google.com%2Fscholar%3Fhl%3Den%26as_sdt%3D0%262C23%26q%3DHonors%2Bcollege%2Bmarketing%26oq%3DHonors%2Bcollege%2Bmark#search=%22Honors%20college%20marketing%22

Reason for including this source in your work:
It provides good insight to our question about what an Honors College really is or should be.

Main argument:
This article was about the future of the “Honors College.” It begins by describing what an Honors College is, distinguishing it from an Honors Program. It is not an extra thing needed for graduation, it is a “site” for developing leadership, citizenship, problem-solving skills, and collaboration. The essay outlines what the authors believe should be the future of Honors, and it includes things like service-learning, group based projects, study-abroad, and “distinguishing ourselves’ on campus,”

Important ideas:
- “Recruiting will move toward active outreach” This means recruiting students who weren’t previously considering the school, rather than just sending a letter to the top students who already applied.
The future Honors curriculum will be heavily oriented around project based work and collaboration.

- Service-learning is critical.
- The goal of a new curriculum is readiness, teaching students to be able to respond to new situations and problem solve, rather than just memorizing situations that have already occurred.

**Evidence:**
- 1994 survey of Honors Colleges in NCHC database by John Madden
- NCHC’s summer workshops on assessment and evaluation

**Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:**

> “We see Honors Colleges moving away from being defined by specific problems or disciplinary approaches and heading instead toward missions that convey flexible problem-solving skills, and these require project-based classes.”

> “With this mission, “Honors” becomes understood as a site rather than a certain kind of student or class or faculty member.”

> “The goal is to develop citizen-scholars, capable of carrying out research, collaborating with others, leading when necessary, and embracing the public square as a locus of action that is as important to them as their work and family lives.”

> “…increasing emphasis on student-generated content as students mature each succeeding year, rather than a distributive approach, in which honors is an extra activity in departments or in departmental courses beyond ordinary requirements for graduation.”

> “The goal is readiness, the ability to respond to new situations rather than rehearse old scenarios.”

> “Because highly-able and motivated students are rare, competition in recruiting is intense.”

> “By 2025, we expect Honors Colleges to be sites of intense community service led by citizen-scholars.”

> “The NCHC-approved Basic Characteristics documents speak of “distinguishing ourselves” on campus.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths:</th>
<th>Weaknesses:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It provides a good idea of what an Honors College should be.</td>
<td>Lack of evidence supporting this vision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Connections:**

- Our problem statement outlines the “New Honors College” and this does a good of providing a picture or structure for what that new Honors College might look like
- It provides interesting curriculum suggestions
- It provides interesting recommendations on the way faculty should interact with students
- It points out important characteristics that an Honors College hopes to develop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions/Concerns:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I want to look more into NCHC’s summer workshops on assessment and evaluations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do we go about “distinguishing ourselves on campus”?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a small pool of desired honors students, how do we reach out to those students effectively?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Reference 5**


This particular article was an analysis of Honors students as they relate to traditional students. The article focused on traits of perfectionism in both categories of students.
Main argument:
The article took a sample of both Honors and typical students from various demographics and analyzed each group for traits of perfectionism. The idea was to see if Honors students exhibited more perfectionist traits compared to their typical counterparts. The results were compared to a different study that looked for perfectionism in 6th graders that were categorized as “gifted” compared to other 6th graders. The study found not much difference between the 6th graders, but a considerable amount of perfectionist traits in Honors students compared to typical college students.

Important ideas:
❖ Perfectionism was measured by concern over mistakes, personal standards, parental expectations, parental criticism, doubts about actions, and organization
❖ The statistics consisted of students from all classes (freshmen to seniors), various annual family incomes, and various family structures.
❖ Honors students scored consistently higher when tested for perfectionism, although typical students still scored high
❖ Perfectionism can have its pros and cons.

Evidence:
The researchers did a statistical analysis of 185 students, 90 Honors and 95 typical, and subjected them to a test to measure traits of perfectionism. The scores were broken down to their individual components (concern over mistakes, personal standards, etc.) and then culminated in a Total Perfectionism Score. The total for Honors students was an 89.24 while typical students scored a 77.66.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:
❖ “The results, presented in Table 4, indicate that in all four cases the statistical significance of the models was produced by statistically significant differences between the Honors College and typical groups.”
❖ “Eligibility for Honors College membership is based upon high test scores (Presidential Scholars, National Merit finalists, National Achievement finalists) or a combination of above average admission scores (SAT or ACT) and above average grades.”
❖ “…normal perfectionism is not only non-pathological, but is also desirable, for it is a component of achievement needs and self-actualizing tendencies.”

Strengths:
The article provides good, thorough statistical analysis of the students surveyed. The students had a good variety of socioeconomic backgrounds.

Weaknesses:
The article was lacking in that it was an analysis on students from one university. Additionally, the study lacked very much racial diversity. Less than 10% of the students surveyed were black students.

Connections:
❖ This gives insight on bridging any gaps between Honors and the rest of the university
❖ This could help give us an idea of how Honors students are viewed. Heavy perfectionism could be seen as annoying to other students.
❖ Maybe noting the perfectionism in students can help faculty and staff to work with students more effectively or assign better designed work.

Questions/Concerns:
❖ Could this be used to help better identify potential Honors students in prospective high schoolers? Maybe look at perfectionism in high school students.

Reference 6
Citation:

Reason for including this source in your work:
This article examines the primary facets of what makes an Honors College an Honors College. It provides insight on what the FMHC may be doing well and what it needs to improve on.

Main argument: Basically, this article provides an overview of the commonalities found amongst Honors colleges in terms of organizational structure, structure and resources, and educational opportunities.

Important ideas:
❖ Honors Colleges vary greatly, both in terms of physical size, and in program.
❖ Not all institutions that say they have an Honors program have an Honors college. Some institutions will use the term “Honors” as a marketing ploy in order to attract students.
❖ A primary function of all Honors Colleges surveyed is to attract and recruit “stronger students”
❖ Honors Colleges benefit students as well as faculty. Students in many Honors Colleges obtain a more personalized or student-centered educational experience. It is this experience that has increased the demand for Honors programs.

Evidence:
The authors of the article surveyed 35 Honors Colleges nation-wide with a twelve page questionnaire about their Honors College.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:
❖ “The desire for increased visibility for honors, internally and externally, drives the transformation from program to college, and we expect that the transformation in name should be physically embodied on campus.”
❖ “The recruitment rhetoric of most honors colleges often invokes the image of “the best of both worlds.” And what worlds are these?—typically a comprehensive research university and a small, four-year liberal arts college.”
❖ “We should, nevertheless, demand more substance behind the gloss of a new brochure. More should be expected from the students, and more opportunities should be provided to them.”

Strengths:
The article was very professional and described a broad range of topics. The article examined seemingly every facet of what constitutes a good Honors College.

Weaknesses:
The article’s sample size was low, which severely limited the responses related to budgetary concerns.

Connections:
❖ This article really gets at the meat of what an Honors College is. This can be compared to what we are currently doing at the FMHC.
❖ What are we good at and what are we not so good at? Where are we strong and where is there room for improvement in the Honors College?
❖ We should see how the FMHC developed into what it is. How did we start?

Questions/Concerns:
❖ Where do we go from here? Does the FMHC meet these criteria? How can we further develop what it already is?

Reason for including this source in your work:
I included this article in my research because it is relevant to understanding Honors Students’ place at GVSU and also understanding the unique struggles of Honors students.

Main argument: This article’s aim was to analyze the variance of academic achievement, academic self-concepts, general self-concepts, educational aspirations, and careers aspirations among both college students and Honors students of various class standings. The article looks to analyze the “Big Fish Little Pond Effect” as well as look at how Honors programs can increase retention of students.

Important ideas
- The idea of the “Big Fish Little Pond” suggests that Honors students, who are used to being advanced and top of their class, get a rude awakening upon entering an Honors program in which the vast majority of students are achieving academically. This is seen to potentially have a negative effect in freshmen in terms of academic self-concept.
- The general idea that this study tested was the idea that academic self-concept increases throughout Honors programs.
- The study found that seniors actually had lower academic self-concepts than juniors, but had higher career aspirations.

Evidence:
- The author of the article conducted a study on 298 Honors college students and tested them for levels of academic achievement, academic self-concepts, general self-concepts, educational aspirations, and careers aspirations.
- These students were analyzed by class standing with freshmen being compared to sophomores and juniors to seniors.

Quotes:
- “Most research consistently indicates an increase in college students’ general self-concept throughout the college years”
- “Honors students “offer positive peer effects for their classmates,” “influence the school’s appeal to faculty members,” and “their successes in the labor market contribute to the outcomes one often uses to judge the effectiveness of an educational program”
- “Upon graduation, honors students indicate higher satisfaction with their jobs than non-honors students, are more likely to complete graduate or professional school than non-honors students, and experience gains in the liberal arts, science, and technology”

Strengths:
The article is thorough in what the particular study is looking for. The article is very in depth on the individual aspects being tested.

Weaknesses:
The study itself did not have a good sample size of upperclassmen. Because of this, the article was limited to comparing freshmen to sophomores and juniors to seniors. Additionally, the article only examined traditional students.

Connections:
- This study was great at giving insight into how we can better the honors experience both for incoming freshmen, and for upperclassmen so as to reduce any hit to academic self-concept.
- This resource can help not only in figuring out better ways to retain honors students, but also in how to bring in more, and also maybe from different class standings.
- This article also said that Honors students can “influence the school’s appeal to faculty members,” which is important in order to provide superior educators to the university.

Questions/Concerns:
What can be done to increase academic self-concepts and career aspirations early on? Can patterns of high levels of academic self-concept in high school students be useful for recruiting new Honors students?

Reference 8


Reason for including this source in your work:
As the title suggests, the article delves into what the National Collegiate Honors Council sees as the future of Honors. This is important for figuring out what we can do to potentially improve our Honors College.

Main argument: The article is not argumentative, however it outlines the hopes for how Honors Colleges will evolve by 2025. The article outlines individual aspects of Honors Colleges that are likely to evolve. These aspects include mission, curriculum, assessment/accreditation, and recruiting. The article notes that many of these hopes for the future are already present in some Honors Colleges, but the hope is that they become more widespread.

Important ideas:
- The “mission” for Honors Colleges seems to be leaning toward applying interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving. Using these skills to solve real world problems.
- Article calls for an increased emphasis on student-generated content as the students’ progress.
- Emphasis on the ability to respond to new situations instead of rehearsing old scenarios.
- Recruiting should be more active outreach, rather than just relying on standardized test scores.

Evidence:
The article references various articles about the aspects of Honors Colleges. The article is a product of the National Collegiate Honors Council, an organization with over 900 member institutions.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:
- “…the curriculum from one honors college to the next will come to resemble an integrative approach, with stand-alone, interdisciplinary courses and increasing emphasis on student-generated content…”
- “The core value, freedom of inquiry, requires transparency of method and assumptions as well as participation in a peer community through publications and presentations; students read and review publications of others, past and present, and attend oral presentations of their contemporaries, whether student, faculty, or guest.”
- “Assessment of scholarship will be difficult; the challenge ahead is naming and defining skills we want students to learn, not confusing skills with their outcomes.”

Strengths:
The article provides a thorough assessment of where the NCHC sees Honors Colleges going.

Weaknesses:
The article did not cite any experiences from specific Honors Programs. It would have been nice to see some Honors Colleges compared to others.

Connections:
- This article can help provide direction for innovation. It gives insights into what the NCHC sees as the future.
- The article’s emphasis on collaboration and problem solving in students is interesting. Perhaps we can do more of this.
The ideas of citizen and leadership could be explored. These have a greater impact on the real world.

### Questions/Concerns:
- How can Honors programs greater foster citizenship and leadership?
- How can Honors professors be both educators as well as mentors/coaches?

### Reference 9

**Citation:** Long, Bridget Terry. "Attracting the Best: The Use of Honors Programs To Compete for Students." (2002).

**Reason for including this source in your work:**
This article focuses on the role of Honors Colleges in university recruitment. This is relevant if our team wishes to pursue any sort of revisions to the current marketing strategy.

**Main argument:**
The article argues that the establishment of an Honors College is used as a tool by the university to attract high achieving students. High achieving schools already attract high achieving students, but in order to get the best of the best, these universities create Honors Colleges. Less competitive universities don’t usually have any Honors programs because the universities don’t usually appeal to high achieving students.

**Important ideas:**
- Merit-based scholarships are another tool used to attract high achieving students.
- Most Honors Colleges provide special housing for Honors students and are more likely to provide special scholarships to Honors students.
- Schools have an incentive to improve quality while keeping price constant. This attracts higher achieving students while also keeping the price at the same rate.
- Honors programs allow universities to allocate funds toward higher achieving students without having to drastically alter the structure of the university.

**Evidence:**
The author looked at the date from the 1997 and 1999 editions of *Peterson’s Honors Programs*. This is the official guide of the National Collegiate Honors Council. It also gathered data from the National Center of Education Statistics.

**Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:**
- “For states, Honors program offer a way to combat brain drain while still fulfilling the public mission of providing a post-secondary option for all residents regardless of ability.”
- “Several articles in the popular press have chronicled how students offered admission to places like Harvard University have instead chosen cheaper institutions with honors programs.”
- Another New York Times article describes the resentment of non-honors students who must deal with being shut out of classes and taught by incompetent teaching assistants.

**Strengths:**
There is an absolutely massive amount of data supplied in tables toward the end of the article.

**Weaknesses:**
The article is a bit dated, having been published in 2002.

**Connections:**
- The attitudes of non-Honors students toward Honors students is a topic I feel needs to be explored further.
- Look into the incentives that GV offers to potential Honors students beyond the nice housing.
- Look more into the Honors Colleges place at GV. What effect does it have?
Questions/Concerns:
❖ Does GV’s Honors College take away resources from non-honors students? In other words, do we take all the good stuff (faculty, funding, etc.) and detract from the education of others?
❖ Are there more incentives we can offer to prospective Honors students?

Reference 10

Citation: Freyman, Jay. "What is an honors student?." (2005).

Reason for including this source in your work:
This article delves into the deeper aspects of Honors students beyond that assessed in the Scholastic Aptitude Test. This is significant in that this article adds another perspective to Honors students beyond the academic.

Main argument:
The deeper aspects that define Honors students go beyond academic proficiency. The article shows how other aspects such as communication skills, patience, self-awareness, etc. The article says that first-hand communication, in the form of an interview, is the best way to identify the deeper traits that are desired in Honors students.

Important ideas:
❖ Students are able to grasp more abstract concepts. Like the idea that life is more than just physical existence and is about living over just existing.
❖ Students are able to be self-aware and understand rights, responsibilities, and privileges. Students are able to differentiate between them.
❖ Students appreciate diversity of people and ideas and see the value that diversity brings.

Evidence:
The article is not very heavy with hard evidence, but relies on the fact that the author was the Director of his university’s Honors College and his insights from that position.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:
❖ “An Honors student appreciates the difference between the concepts of “concrete” and “abstract”; she or he knows that an idea can provide as potent a motivation to action as physical force does.”
❖ An Honors student should have the patience to defer, if need be, the satisfaction of wants and the patience, at all times, to listen to and to consider seriously all sides of an issue.
❖ They should be serious, in a way in which many other students are not, about taking intellectual advantage of the opportunities afforded by college. They should be willing and eager, for the time they are in college, to become professional students; being students is what they are doing for a living.

Strengths:
The article gave a fantastic perspective on Honors students that I had not considered. It is a deep and thorough analysis.

Weaknesses:
Lack of statistics or hard evidence. Not a very long article; could have been fleshed out more.

Connections:
❖ The notion that Honors students are very different on a level beyond academic achievement.
❖ Differentiating between types of communicators, someone good at oral communication may not be a good writer. Should they be faulted for that?
❖ The difference between a student that can write well because of class, and a student that did not have these same opportunities, but shows deep thought and eloquent personal presentation.

Questions/Concerns:
❖ How can we efficiently tap into the deeper aspects of potential honors students?
How can we manage to see beyond the ACT or SAT scores and really know the Honors applicant?

Reference 11


Reason for including this source in your work:
This article analyzes the role of technology in the classroom and how it works in an Honors program. This not only shows how Honors is different from traditional university, but also gives an idea of how laptops and mobile learning can work to the students’ benefit.

Main argument: The article explains the concept of a constructivist-structures class and how it may be conducive to laptop use in the classroom. Because many Honors classes are constructivist in nature, (students self-regulate, collaborate, etc.) they may benefit from use of technology in the classroom. The hope for the research is that students that are provided laptops show more satisfaction with their educational experience and also attain higher GPAs.

Important ideas:
❖ Honors classes are considerably more constructivist in nature than their traditional alternatives.
❖ Interestingly, laptop use did not increase constructivist activities in the classroom.
❖ The overall GPA of the laptop group in the study improved, but was not statistically significant. However, they did gain computing skills.
❖ Student satisfaction was actually reduced with the introduction of laptops.
❖ There was less instructor-student interaction with the laptop student.

Evidence:
The authors of the article performed a study on three graduating classes of Honors business students at a large urban university. These classes included students in both laptop and non-laptop groups.

Notable quotes:
❖ “When Honor students were given unfettered access to laptops, they reported an increase in their computer skills, and their GPAs did slightly increase, but the GPA increase failed to reach statistical significance. Nevertheless, all the subjects in this study are highly competent students with very high GPAs.”
❖ “…it appears from student responses that two reasons contributed toward their dissatisfaction: (1) laptop multitasking distraction in class, and (2) poor physical layout of the laptop classrooms.”
❖ “Comfortable, confident professors (in small classes) are more prone to discuss the material as opposed to lecture about the material.”

Strengths:
The data is this article is robust and the discussion of the data gives great insight into technology use and Honors students

Weaknesses:
The data is only from one university and the data is dated. Technology progresses at such a rapid rate that results may be different if the study were conducted today.

Connections:
❖ Technology in the classroom has its pros and cons
❖ Constructivist teaching seems to work well for both Honors students and faculty
❖ Self-regulating students are vital for constructivist education in Honors

Questions/Concerns:
- How can we better integrate technology? Should we even?

**Reference 12**

<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reason for including this source in your work:</strong> This article breaks from the norm of the previous articles in that it focuses on university faculty and how universities can do better at integrating new faculty.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Main argument:</strong> The article argues that new faculty, as well as the university as a whole, can benefit greatly from a mentoring program in which faculty with more experience can mentor newer faculty. A program like this will help a university with faculty cohesion and will benefit everyone involved.</td>
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| **Important ideas:**  
:*Universities currently have a problem with faculty cohesion.*  
:*The growth of electronic communication allowed faculty to build closer relationships with professors far away rather than those down the hall.*  
:*Emphasis on communal, collaborative mentoring rather than a hierarchal relationship.*  
:*A primary function of faculty mentoring is to promote interdisciplinary discussion.* |
| **Evidence:** The article draws on evidence from a variety of studies on faculty development and mentoring. The article then brings these studies together in order to synthesize six primary goals of mentoring programs. |
| **Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:**  
:*“Universities must provide new tenure-track and temporary faculty with a broad information base regarding a university’s policy and culture.”*  
:*“Faculty clubs have become relics in most modern university communities, even as the desire to make meaningful connections among scholars becomes more critical.”*  
:*A goal of the mentoring program at the author’s university is to, “provide opportunities for interactions between junior and senior faculty to facilitate mutual respect and avoid counterproductive divisions between old and young professors.”* |
| **Strengths:** The article provides a good overview of what a faculty mentoring program can and should be. |
| **Weaknesses:** The article lacks statistics showing how mentoring programs help new faculty. |
| **Connections:**  
:*We should look more into the faculty of Honors.*  
:*I know we have Honors mentors for students, but maybe this can be improved.*  
:*How do new professors to Honors adapt to the change?* |
| **Questions/Concerns:**  
:*Do Honors professors need tenure in order to become Honors faculty?*  
:*Maybe a faculty mentor for Honors students?*  
:*Do we have a faculty mentor program?* |

**Reference 13**

| --- |
Reason for including this source in your work:
The article details facts of student involvement as it relates to higher education. This is relevant because Honors is a student-centric program so getting students further involved should be valuable.

Main argument:
This article outlines what it refers to as “the theory of student involvement. Involvement being defined as, “the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience” and argues that it is necessary for students to be more fully engaged in academics and that those who are, tend to do better. The article briefly mentions Honors students as being more likely to be successful and forge closer relationships with faculty.

Important ideas:
- Students who are intensely involved in their academics tend to do better academically, but become more isolated from their peers. These students are less susceptible to peer influences that greatly affect the development of things such as political liberalism.
- Relationships with faculty are the single greatest factor related to a student’s satisfaction with college.
- The most valuable resource for an educational institution is a student’s time. So basically, an educational institution is useless if students aren’t willing to put their time into it.
- Living in a campus residence is positively related to retention.

Evidence:
The article cites various studies done on college students and dropouts as to what factors contribute to academic success and retention of students.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts
- Examples of excessive involvement are the “workaholic,” the academic “grind,” and others who manifest obsessive-compulsive behavior.
- “…honors participation enhances faculty—student relationships but may isolate students from their peers.”
- “Because student personnel workers frequently operate on a one-to-one basis with students, they are in a unique position to monitor the involvement of their clients in the academic process and to work with individual clients in an attempt to increase that involvement.”

Strengths: The article proposes an interesting theory of student involvement and backs it up with plenty of research on a variety of aspects.

Weaknesses: Much of the research that the article draws from is very dated. The concepts, however, do seem to hold up.

Connections:
- Faculty-Student relationships seem to be a prevailing idea through many articles.
- A student centric program seems to be seen as the best for the student, but the hardest to achieve.
- Motivation of students is vital to achievement. This also seems to be difficult to retain.

Questions/Concerns:
- How can Honors better maintain the motivation of its students?
- How can we foster student-faculty relationships? Maybe a program in which students are assigned to faculty to mentor them?

Reference 14

Citation:

**Reason for including this source in your work:**
This article looks at retention of students and uses that to better marketing strategies. This is relevant because it could give insights on how to improve our current marketing.

**Main argument:**
The article did a study on students and what factors contribute most to student retention. Results showed that "academic experience" was the most influential factor.

**Important ideas:**
- Satisfaction is defined as a measure of student contentment, whereas student retention and loyalty is defined as persistence from first year to graduation.
- There is a change of mindset from students being consumers to satisfied and retained customers.
- A variety of teaching and non-teaching elements were influential for student persistence.

**Evidence:**
The article analyzes the results from a questionnaire given to 418 students. These students were half male and half female, and were from a wide variety of majors.

**Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:**
- "...student satisfaction through the various elements of teaching and non-teaching is important for student performance"
- "Of the five composite variables, academic experience was the only dominant and significant factor in predicting students’ retention."
- "The results showed that students were less satisfied with the intern opportunities and support offered to them and preferred the duration of the internship to be extended so that they could put “real life” experience to their academic studies.”

**Strengths:**
The article is interesting and offered good evidence from the survey analyzed.

**Weaknesses:**
The article gathered information from a Malaysian university, so student values may differ.

**Connections:**
- Academic experience in Honors seems like it should be good.
- Integration of more “real life” experience into academic study.
- Students as customers rather than consumers is a more student-centric outlook

**Questions/Concerns:**
- Do we have retention issues in Honors?
- Do we have Honors intern programs?

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Reference 15


**Reason for including this source in your work:**
The article focuses on university recruitment. This is relevant if we wish to look more into marketing campaigns for the Honors College.

**Main argument:**
The article examines the role of student ambassadors in recruiting students to attend a nursing program at a university. The article showed that the ambassador program was successful and even encouraged the author to apply for funding for future recruitment projects. The ambassadors were students in the nursing program that attended events and provided guidance for prospective students.

Important ideas:
- Ambassadors were tasked with replacing inaccurate and negative stereotypes.
- Ambassadors aimed to improve the image of the nursing profession in order to generate interest in the nursing program.
- Ambassador programs don’t work exclusively, they work in conjunction with other recruiting tools.
- Student ambassadors were paid

Evidence:
The evidence of the success of the program is the very fact that the nursing program of the author’s university had improved recruitment. There was a table provided in which all of the ambassadors’ activities were logged, as well as their audiences and locations of the events they participated in.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:
- “Prospective students require support with the application process if the number of successful applications is to be increased.”
- “Student ambassadors provide realistic perceptions of nursing and, therefore, aid informed choice which is likely to increase retention”
- “Prospective students enjoyed and believe they benefited from meeting the ambassadors”

Strengths:
The article provides a great overview of what an ambassador program can do and how it can help students.

Weaknesses:
- It would have been nice to have survey data from prospective students before and after meeting the student ambassadors.

Connections:
- Ambassador programs may be something to look into expanding
- Replacing negative stereotypes is a big issue we seem to run into
- We need to provide realistic perceptions of what Honors is and what kind of work we do

Questions/Concerns:
- Do we have Honors ambassadors? If so, how do we make it better?
- Is financial compensation for student ambassadors a good idea?

Reference 16

Citation:

Reason for including this source in your work:
This article pertains to students’ perspectives on college quality. This directly relates to our team discussion on how the FMHCC is not seen as a prestigious program.

Main argument:
The article seeks to determine the relative importance of the influences that affect student perceptions of college quality. These factors are academic quality, social atmosphere, location of campus, and athletic quality.

Important ideas:
- High school peer groups are highly influential in perceptions of college quality
Current college students can greatly influence prospective students.
High school faculty are big influences in terms of perceived academic and athletic quality in a university.
Guidance counselors rank just below parents in terms of influence.

Evidence:
The article did a survey of 1424 recently accepted applicants to college. These students were asked a variety of questions pertaining to academics, athletics, location, and social quality of colleges as they relate to college choice.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:
- “Admissions programs that introduce prospective students to members of the Colgate faculty or alumni have a positive influence on some perceptions even after separately controlling for the influences due to the significant persons themselves.”
- “…an interview with an alumnus tends to strongly and positively influence perceptions about the campus location but has little influence along the other dimensions of college quality.”
- “A visit by an admissions officer to the high school after controlling for all other factors was not influential”

Strengths:
The article’s data covered a wide variety of topics. There were many dimensions of college quality tested for.

Weaknesses:
The data is dated in that it is from the 80’s. The data also focuses on students that got accepted to one particular college.

Connections:
- Guidance counselors can be seriously influential.
- Word of mouth advertising seems to be effective. Students are influenced in terms of the quality of a college by their peers.
- Informing counselors could be prioritized

Questions/Concerns:
- How can we better inform counselors and faculty in high schools?
- Can we better inform students to improve word-of-mouth publicity?