

4-2018

Trailblazers: Innovation Portfolio

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Barth, Keegan; Frankhouse, Samantha; Keppel, Taylor; Marckini, Andrew; and Rice, Melaura, "Trailblazers: Innovation Portfolio" (2018). *Undergraduate Research*. 38.

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**TRAILBLAZERS:
INNOVATION
PORTFOLIO**

INNOVATION PORTFOLIO

REDESIGNING THE HONORS COLLEGE CURRICULUM

TEAM TRAILBLAZERS:

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APRIL 24, 2018

A WORD FROM THE INNOVATORS

We are so grateful for your interest in our proposal of redesigning the Frederick Meijer Honors College Curriculum. This journey spanned four months and included countless hours of researching, interviewing, collaborating, ideating, and prototyping. Our portfolio will navigate through the process to provide an in-depth overview of our insights and show how we used Design Thinking to create our final prototype concept.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude toward our professor Linda Chamberlain, fellow classmates, collaborators, and stakeholders who were involved in the process. All of these individuals guided us through the Design Thinking process and allowed us to creatively derive a solution to the challenge we were given.

Sincerely,

Team Trailblazers

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DESIGN BRIEF

“People with creative confidence...are not passive observers...They live in the active voice. They write scripts of their own lives, and in doing so, they have a greater impact on the world around them.”

- Authors Tom and David Kelley, Creative Confidence

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The Frederik Meijer Honors College (FMHC) strives to “inspire and empower motivated students to be intellectually-curious lifelong learners who make positive contributions to their local and global communities, and serve as capable leaders and active global citizens” (Gilles). The FMHC is home to over 1,700 exceptional students with an average high school GPA of 3.957, and an average ACT score of 29 (Chamberlain 2017). Non-Honors students at Grand Valley State University comparatively held an average high school GPA of 3.54 and ACT score of 23.8 (“Profile,” 2017). With the enrollment of 420 new students in the Fall of 2017, the program is experiencing healthy, appropriate growth (Figure 1) in comparison with Grand Valley State University as a whole, which experienced negative growth in the same semester (“Fall 2017,” 2017). As of fall 2017, the retention rate for students in the Honors college was 92%, as compared to 84% for the university as a whole (“11th Annual”).

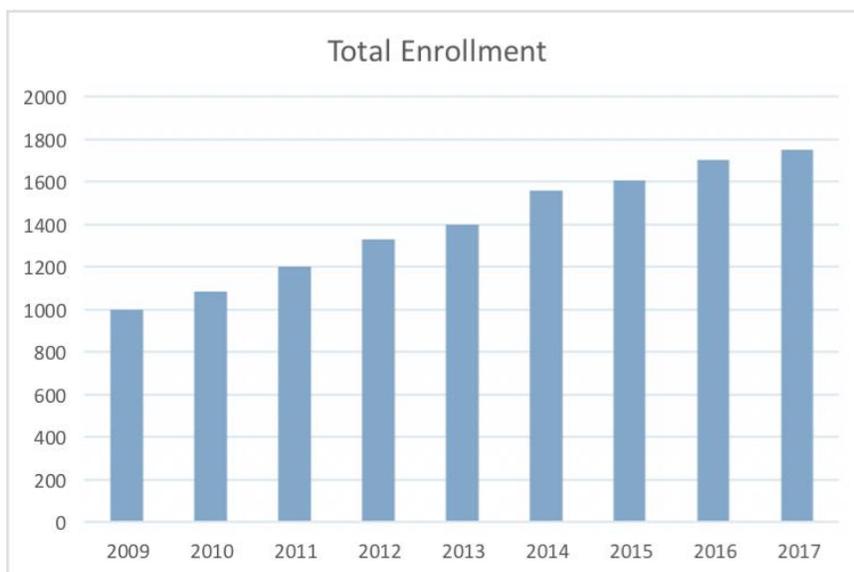


Figure 1. FMHC Enrollment 2009 to 2017

The Frederik Meijer Honors College supports a student body of diverse interests. While nearly thirty percent of students are in the Pre-Med, Nursing, and Health Professions field of study, there is a general balance in seven broad areas of study (Figure 2). Though the FMHC strives for an inclusive and all-encompassing curriculum, complaints have been noted about the lack of curriculum content devoted to students in disciplines that are not based in Humanities.

On-campus living and learning accommodations for Honors students takes form through the Glenn A. Niemeyer Living Learning Center and Holton Hooker Living

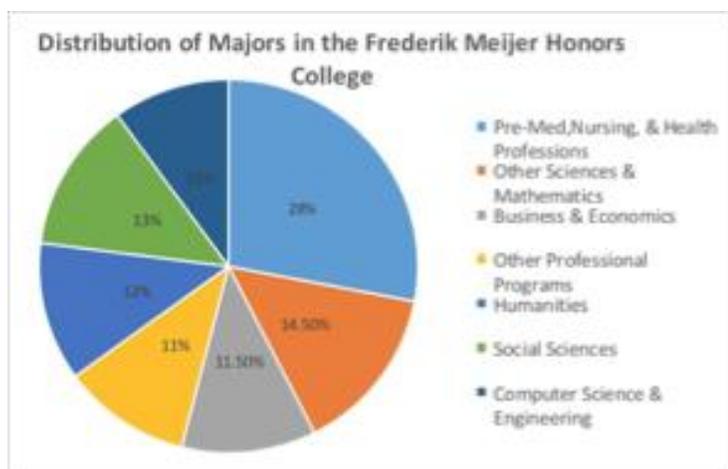


Figure 2. Distribution of Majors in the FMHC, Annual Report 2017

Learning Center. The Glenn A. Niemeyer Living Center boasts housing for students of all class standings, as well as various specialized classrooms, study spaces, and a computer lab. Holton Hooker Living Learning Center devotes an entire floor to freshmen in the Honors College, and includes various study rooms integrated in with housing, classrooms, and a campus dining location. Both options create small communities of Honors students, successfully making them feel more connected to the Honors College.

Generally speaking, the FMHC program serves as an alternative to the general education program that GVSU offers to its non-Honors students. The FMHC program, as it stands today, seeks to combine various academic elements and recognize student achievement prior to enrollment (Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate classes) to reduce the total credit load. Some basic program requirements include a 12-credit year-long Freshman sequence, a topic-specific Junior Seminar, and a student-derived Senior project. These courses lighten the general education credit load for Honors students, making the overall Honors requirement between 16 and 28 credits—instead of the general education demand of 35-41 credits. Thus, the FMHC provides the opportunity for students to jump into their respective disciplinary areas of study more efficiently (Gilles).

Honors students at Grand Valley are described as driven, intellectually curious, and high achieving individuals, both due to the leadership and character they exhibit, and the brilliant environment and resources purported by the FMHC. The FMHC has been successful in its student support, with over 50% of Honors students having declared that the FMHC was “either a pivotal or very important reason that they came to GVSU” (Chamberlain 2017). However, despite an extensive selection of Freshman sequences and a substantial number of Junior seminars to select from, the FMHC presently lacks a way to bind students to the Honors program throughout their academic career of 4 or more years. Exacerbating this disconnect is the recent university decision to allow the FMHC to detach from the general education requirements. With no clear sight of where to take the program in the future, the FMHC looks to the design thinking process to fuel the strong momentum of the Honors College, significantly increasing growth and retention rates through redevelopment of the Honors College curriculum.

OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

During this unique convergence, our team has been given the exceptional opportunity to innovate the FMHC curriculum. As mentioned, we have identified the detachment between the Freshman sequence, the Junior seminar, and the Senior project as the most prevalent and compelling issue within the current FMHC curriculum. As a team of trailblazers, we see a stimulating present-day opportunity for students to bridge the gap between their exciting first-year Honors experience with their last, culminating years of Honors enrollment.

In order to address these issues, *we will construct a liberal arts-based FMHC curriculum that will actively tether students to the Honors Program while simultaneously equipping them with skills that permit real-world application.* In order to construct such pillars for a new curriculum, we will begin to empathize with our main end users: the Honors students. In understanding their demands, their constraints, and their unmet needs, we can build an effective and enjoyable curriculum based on their interdisciplinary areas of study and future career goals. It is a priority for Honors students to escape the pressures of checking the boxes of general education requirements and instead enjoy a challenging, diverse, and liberal base for their Honors education. It is our goal for these students to feel as though the FMHC curriculum is helping their individual studies rather than blanketing the entire Honors population with a generalized program.

We will develop a new curriculum that benefits the FMHC and its students. The new curriculum will give Honors students a more personalized experience, will be more inclusive for transfer students, and will link students to the Honors program throughout their academic career and as alumni of Grand Valley State University. We believe

that the new curriculum will make the Frederik Meijer Honors College a beacon of innovation, progress, and potential within the national Honors College community.

CONSTRAINTS

In order to create a riveting new Honors curriculum, we must understand the constraints that affect college programs. While we are excited to make this program new, unique, educational, rigorous and beneficial for the students, we must understand the boundaries of possibility and avoid creating something that is not possible. We are restricted by university-wide student learning objectives (SLOs). We are limited in location and time, as the core freshmen learning opportunities must be located on the Grand Valley State University campus (either Allendale Campus or downtown campus), and we must take into consideration the time of travel some students deal with daily. While technology may be able to help with this, it is currently unable to solve all of these problems, and face to face contact is preferred anyways. We must also take into consideration the academic rigor that the FMHC is known for; this will not be compromised.

DEFINING THE ECOSYSTEM

As depicted in the simplified stakeholder map below, the stakeholders for this project are all of the people who are affected and influenced by the functions of the Honors College or by the students and faculty of which the Honors College is comprised. For this project, the students of the Frederik Meijer Honors College at Grand Valley State University are the primary stakeholders, as they will be most directly impacted by a new Honors College curriculum. Other secondary stakeholders of this project include GVSU Administration, non-Honors students, the surrounding community, families of students, competing Honors College programs, prospective students, and high school administrations (Figure 3).

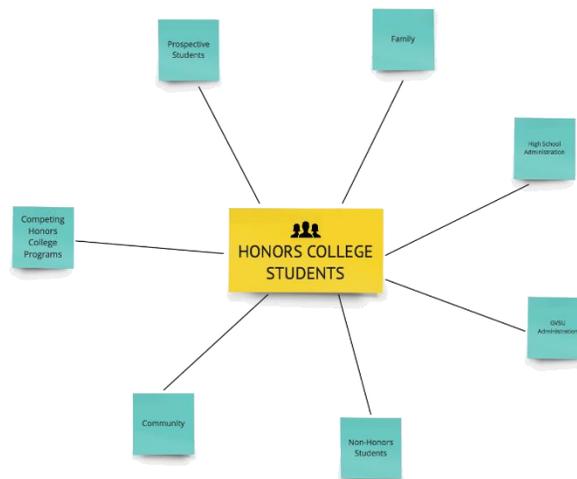


Figure 3. Simplified Team Stakeholder Map

Each of these groups of people will be affected by the creation of a new Honors College curriculum. As a result, it is our duty as designers to view the project from the perspective of each stakeholder, and to develop a plan to best address each entity. We plan to design a curriculum that will benefit Honors College students of all ages, majors, and backgrounds.

RESEARCH METHODS

Deeply embedded in the design thinking process is the concept of empathy. In all steps of our research, our team will seek to empathize. The primary focus of the research, as mentioned, is to empathize with those who we believe are the stakeholders in the end product so that we may create a curriculum that best fits the needs of Honors students. In defining our project ecosystem, we have identified Honors Students, GVSU Administrators, and others (See “Ecosystem” section above for complete list) as those with which we will empathize in the following ways:

→ INTERVIEWS

We will conduct one-on-one interviews with stakeholders. These interviews will primarily be conducted with experts in the field (for example, administration and advising faculty), students - both Honors and non-Honors - and other key stakeholders.

→ INVESTIGATING OTHER HONORS PROGRAMS

A main focus of our secondary research will be to investigate how other Honors Programs are positioned relative to their home university's general education program. We will also seek to understand why they may or may not have sought extensive action to decouple from the general education program.

INTENDED OUTCOME

Our intended outcome is to have an involved and robust curriculum suitable for students from many disciplines. This program will involve the students in the Honors College no matter the students' class standing, attract more talented applicants, and increase retention rates. We aim to create a curriculum that provides a setting for all involved parties to obtain a high-caliber education, compatibility of required subjects, prevent new student fear, improve and publicize the identity of the “Honors College,” and form a zone for innovation and breakthrough ideas for years to come!

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Stakeholder Map

As depicted in the stakeholder map below, the stakeholders for this project are all of the people who are affected and influenced by the functions of the Honors College or by the students and faculty of which the Honors College is comprised. For this project, the students of the Frederik Meijer Honors College at Grand Valley State University are the primary stakeholders. (Figure 4)

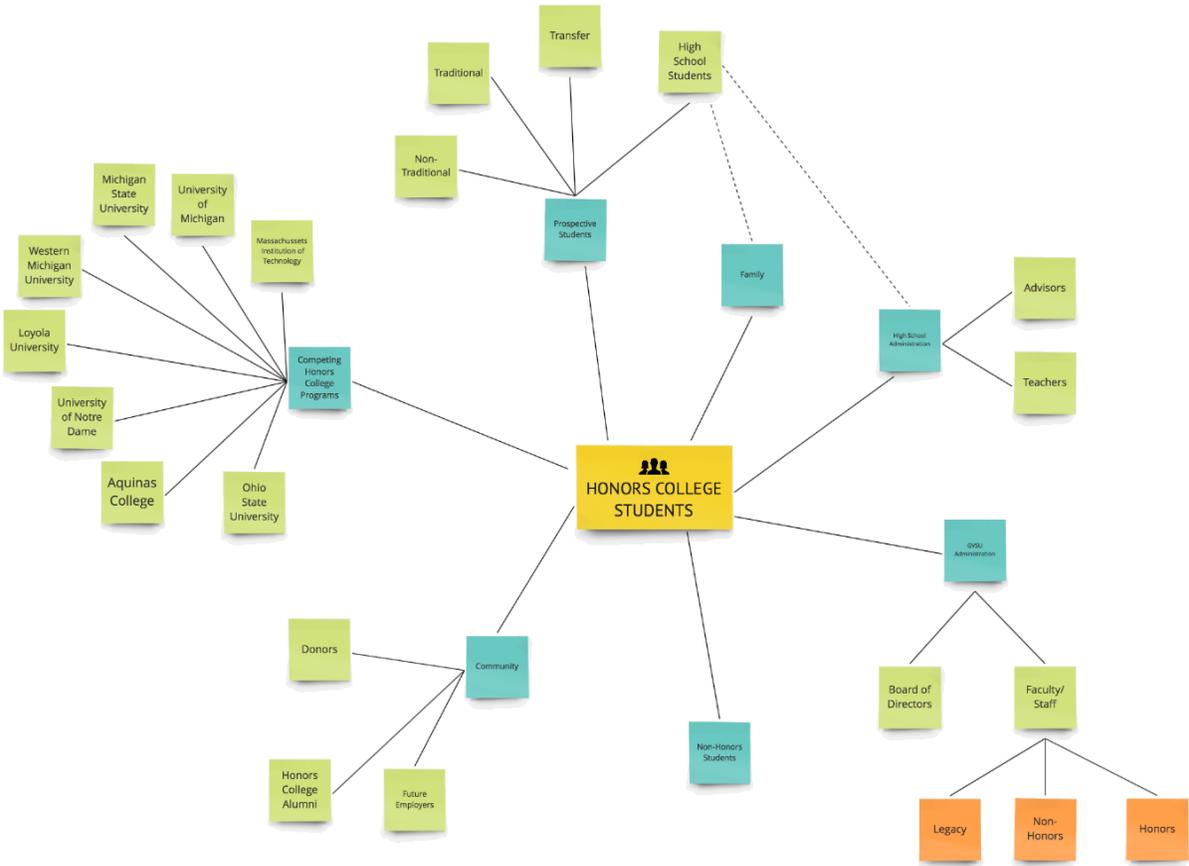


Figure 4. Team Stakeholder Map

Affinity Map

This affinity map gives a complete picture of our early and on-going research and insights from dialogues and research bibliographies. It helps us to gather the insights from our research, brainstorming ideas, opinions, and issues, and organizes them into related groupings. By dividing these findings into categories of professional development, personal development, and filling the gap, we were able to focus on the primary topics identified by our stakeholders where improvement was most needed in the curriculum. (Figure 5)



Figure 5. Team Affinity Map

Collaborator Debrief I

The purpose of the three Collaborator Debriefs was to compile our team’s insights and prototype concepts into a small presentation to share our progress with stakeholders and collaborators. The Collaborator Debriefs were attended by the Dean of the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies, the director of the Frederik Meijer Honors College, GVSU Honors and non-Honors professors, Honors alumni, Honors Students, and other engaged community members. After presenting our problem statement, insights, and questions, stakeholders were then asked to provide feedback. This process was essential for the purpose of gaining valuable information that we may not have had before, as well as enlightening stakeholders of insights gained during interviews and research. The feedback provided by the stakeholders guided the remainder of our innovation development.

An overview of the insights that were presented, the questions asked, and the information received is presented below:

Debrief 1 Articulating and Revising the Initial Vision	
Problem/Opportunity Statement	<i>We will construct a liberal arts-based FHMC curriculum that will actively tether students to the Honors Program while simultaneously equipping them with skills that permit real-world application.</i>
Key Insights	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Big disconnect between Freshman and Junior years 2. Support for non-academic skills, including cultural competency 3. Current and former students feel like the Honors College is not a unique experience
Summary Illustration	<p>FEELING DISCONNECTED</p> 
Questions for the Collaborators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you were to send your child to GVSU Honors College, what are the top three things you would like for them to gain from the experience? 2. How might students be better prepared for future jobs through a new Honors College curriculum? 3. How has the FMHC challenged each of you to grow since you first began your participation? If you believe that it has not challenged you, please explain your thoughts and what specific things, if changed, could have influenced your experience more?

Debrief Feedback Capture What's Meaningful to Advance Effective Innovation	
Instructor	<p>She asked students who had set up their senior project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → No one raised their hands - only one raised their hand to indicate having chosen a potential advisor <p>Workforce development and employability skills</p>
Class	<p>A lot of other majors already require capstone courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Is there a way to combine the capstone with the senior project? <p>On the topic of cultural competence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Diverse activities on campus may be a way to gain cultural competence → Real-world, service-based activities have proven more beneficial than study abroad <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>That is NOT to say that study abroad is not valuable</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>It would help get the FMHC name out into the community</i></p> <p>In response to our third question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The FMHC forced this student to try and to engage with his coursework in college - a complete 180 degree turn from being able to slide by in high school <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Used the example of having to read 14 books in a semester</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → There was a change of mindset; the student realized he had to try in order to succeed, and, as a result, he discovered he was more capable than he had originally thought <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>He developed a passion</i></p>
Collaborator	<p>In response to our third question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The collaborator would want his student to value this opportunity to be surrounded by engaged and ambitious students → The collaborator saw this experience as a way for his theoretical child to find lifelong friends, what he called "the right kind" of friends → The collaborator also said that it is the <i>student's</i> job to make the coursework interesting
Other Stakeholder(s)	<p>On the topic of senior projects (reflecting on the concept of the major-specific capstones):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Someone externally might see value in the senior project and major-specific capstones → Do students see the potential in this project? <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Do they see it as an opportunity to shape themselves and the world around them?</i></p> <p>In response to our first question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → "Intellectual curiosity" → "Having a passion"

	<p>→ They are here to figure out what they enjoy versus what they do not enjoy, what they are good at versus what they are not good at</p> <p><i>They must figure out how to capitalize on the freedom given to them through the FMHC curriculum</i></p> <p><i>These are high-achieving students, but they are not yet professionals - go explore!</i></p> <p>In response to our second question:</p> <p>→ There is a recurrence of cultural competency, and this should be viewed as an opportunity</p> <p>→ Honors students should develop a reflective mindset</p> <p>In response to our third question:</p> <p>→ This stakeholder would want their child to engage with others of other cultures - to understand what these people are up against</p> <p><i>What are others' hopes, dreams, aspirations?</i></p> <p><i>This is all based on empathy!</i></p>
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Post-Debrief Reflections Integrate the Feedback & Ideate Next Steps	
DIVERGE: How did the feedback provided <i>deviate</i> from your team's current insights?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have not had a central focus yet, but we see the topic of cultural competence to be a big divergence from our original problem statement 2. Studying abroad might not be the best or most feasible way for all students to gain cultural competency 3. The FMHC experience is valuable to students who already know how to apply their studies
CONVERGE: How did the feedback <i>align</i> with and enhance the team's current insights?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a disconnect; this might be filled by some additional requirement (like cultural components) 2. There is little guidance on the non-academic aspects of the FMHC 3. Cultural competency is increasingly important, not just within our insights, but also in the insights of the other teams (see "Information and Feedback for Other Teams" section below) 4. There has to be some real-world application for students to derive importance and meaning from their FMHC experience
APPLY: How can you <i>use</i> the feedback provided?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Redirect our focus to the most important stakeholders: Honors College students 2. Incorporate these ideas into our future steps of innovation 3. Explore other Honors College curriculums to see what works for them in terms of how they teach cultural and non-academic skills 4. Consider how the problem of the sophomore gap could be filled by some sort of cultural component

ACT: What are your next steps?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Change our problem statement to encompass the more direct focus on cultural competency2. Do research on what other Honors Colleges do to include cultural and non-academic components in their curriculum3. Narrow down topics of research bibliographies that apply to our main issue of cultural competency and make sure to include questions about this topic in interviews
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COLLABORATOR DEBRIEF II

Debrief 2 Telling the Story	
Team Problem Statement	<i>We will construct a liberal arts-based FHMC curriculum that will actively tether students to the Honors Program while simultaneously equipping them with skills that permit real-world application.</i>
Needs Statements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Honors students need to be culturally competent and active global citizens upon graduation. 2. Honors students need to be encouraged and incentivized to remain positively tethered to the FHMC. 3. The FMHC needs to facilitate a smooth transition for students in each year in the program, in which the students feel constantly connected to, and excited to be in the program.
Top 5 Innovations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Honors students will be required to study abroad for at least two weeks in a country whose official language is not listed as 'English.' 2. Honors curriculum will require students to complete at least 3 service-learning projects while enrolled with the program; however, any of these three projects may be used as a senior project. 3. The FMHC will develop a more in-depth and inclusive speaker series in which various lecturers are not only from different fields of study but are also native to other countries around the world - and students must attend and reflect on a number of these lectures. 4. The FMHC will transition from students independently creating their own senior project to developing a workshop to get things started, in which examples of projects, and senior mentors and faculty will work one-on-one with students in developing their proposals; the control of a senior project will remain the hands of students but will be better supported by faculty. 5. The Honors curriculum will have an increased variety of classes differing in number of credits and term lengths in order to accommodate for incoming students with AP credits, students who seek to pursue diverse and differentiated career paths, and students that prefer fast-paced and intensive learning.
Summary Illustration	

<p>Questions for the Collaborators</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can we ensure that a required study abroad program will be beneficial and applicable to the student's future and career? What is one thing that study abroad should teach students? 2. How can the FMHC provide students with the appropriate skills necessary for their career? What types of non-traditional curriculum and class structures have each of you seen that has contributed to student learning and real-world skill acquisition? 3. How can the FMHC make the senior project more appealing to Honors students, and how might they present the senior project in a more accessible way?
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Debrief Feedback Capture What's Meaningful to Advance Effective Innovation	
<p>Instructor</p>	<p>Asked us to clarify and related our needs statement to our problem statement. We went through and tied each of the three needs statements back to the problem statement.</p>
<p>Class</p>	<p>No feedback or questions from other classmates. Our own group members (not presenting) referred to previous research and findings to support our problem statement and needs statements when asked for more credibility and citation.</p>
<p>Collaborator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Question we asked for clarification from collaborators: <i>What should Honors students gain from the Honors experience that normal students wouldn't get?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>One collaborator thinks the Honors College is a mechanism for spending more resources on Honors students than regular students -- it is an environment in which Honors students can flourish. He thinks that Honors students should learn content in depth.</i> ◆ <i>Another collaborator sees the Honors College as a two-way street: there are massive resources invested in us and they are expecting massive return out of us. The University expects that we give a lot of intellectual feedback to them.</i> → Question from collaborator: <i>Are we just making changes to the Honors program curriculum?</i> To him, it seemed like we are just creating a more external "experience" or extracurricular activities. → Question from collaborator: <i>Is the Honors program really still an alternative general education program?</i> → Suggestion from a collaborator was to consider rephrasing the word "required" in our prototypes with some sort of "want" to become less threatening and more appealing to students. → The collaborators wondered if any of our five current innovations will be combined.
<p>Other Stakeholder(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → A stakeholder wondered about the employers' perspective on what they thought were needed skills for the future (they wanted a citation, and number of employers interviewed for credibility). → On the topic of senior project workshop, they thought that it should be more in the structure of a step-by-step class to guide

	<p>students on the process of choosing and working on the senior project.</p> <p>→ On the topic of study abroad:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>The traveling to a “non-English speaking country” component that we mentioned is really limited. It is not very accessible to all students, and not everyone can afford it (or want to do it). Students can have good cultural-learning experiences even within the English language and even within the country.</i> ◆ <i>Idea from collaborators: a “interim-term” style program for Honors with ranging prices and opportunities.</i> ◆ <i>Cultural competency is hugely intertwined with language learning. GVSU offers many languages and opportunities in the language department.</i>
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Post-Debrief Reflections Integrate the Feedback & Ideate Next Steps	
<p>DIVERGE: How did the feedback provided <i>deviate</i> from your team’s current insights?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For studying abroad, we thought that traveling to a country that did not have English as their first language would be a good idea, but the collaborators brought it to our attention that it is not accessible and realistic for all students. 2. With service learning, the collaborators shared from experience that forcing students to serve can actually be a very negative experience. 3. Collaborators brought up the point that not every student would want to study abroad, nor would they have the means to do it. 4. Honors students are provided with a ton of resources, but they don’t take advantage of all of them. 5. To some collaborators, it seemed like we were trying to create an experience, not a curriculum.
<p>CONVERGE: How did the feedback provided <i>align</i> with and enhance the team’s current insights?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The collaborators liked the idea of having some sort of cultural component being part of the curriculum. 2. The Honors advisor agreed with having some sort of workshop for the senior project, as there has been a lot of negative feedback and confusion around it. 3. Collaborators acknowledged the Sophomore year disconnect. 4. They agree that there should be a smooth transition for students in each year in the program so that the students feel constantly connected to and excited to be in the program. 5. The collaborators liked our creative solutions to the problems to the curriculum and that we were not afraid to try new ideas.
<p>APPLY: How can you <i>use</i> the feedback provided?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rework the restricted idea for study abroad. 2. Consider other options for forceful wording, such as “required.” 3. Continue to consider our team’s and students’ possible constraints when innovating.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Decide if we want the Honors program to feel like a general education alternative or a completely unique experience.
<p>ACT: What are your next steps?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will rephrase the word “required” in our innovations to make it less forceful. 2. We will reconsider the study abroad component to make it more accessible to all Honors students. 3. We will reconsider the idea of service learning and how to make it a more appealing idea rather than a forced service. 4. We will act on revamping the senior project based on the feedback to make it an enjoyable and guided experience for students. 5. Prioritize, combine, and adjust our innovations.

COLLABORATOR DEBRIEF III

Debrief 3 Envisioning the Future	
Team Problem Statement	<p><i>We will construct a liberal arts-based FHMC curriculum that will actively tether students to the Honors Program while simultaneously equipping them with skills that permit real-world application.</i></p>
Two Prototype Concepts	<p>1. Global Classroom Experience: Study Abroad or 'out' / Interim / Service Learning trips We will reconstruct the FMHC curriculum such that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → It strongly encourages students to study abroad — outside of the United States — or to study 'out' — within in the community of Grand Rapids, the state of Michigan, or the United States. → Additionally, our prototype will outline courses with a term of five weeks in which students who elect this interim program will be required to take three per semester and are limited to a maximum of two semesters of this coursework. → Finally, we have outlined that courses must contain at least one service learning or field trip project per term. → It must be noted that this prototype will require these programs to meet the GVSU student learning objectives. <p>2. Honors Pyramid Program: Tiered difficulty / Senior project We will reconstruct the FMHC curriculum to be broken down into three tiers of classes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Tier 1: 1-2 credit classes that require minimal assigned reading and homework (1 to 3 hours weekly). Challenges student world perspectives through in-class discussions. → Tier 2: 2-3 credit classes that require a moderate level (3 to 6 hours weekly) of outside work for the class. → Tier 3: 3-4 credit classes that are heavily research-based (6 to 9 hours weekly). → Senior Project: Required 1 credit Introduction to Senior Project class/workshop followed by a semester-long 1-3 credit Senior Project. <p>It must be noted that this prototype will require this program to meet the GVSU student learning objectives.</p>

<p>Summary Illustration</p>	<p>Global Classroom Experience:</p>  <p>Honors Pyramid Program:</p> 
<p>Questions for the Collaborators</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you envision the difficulty of the tier program to increase or decrease by the year? What current Honors classes would you classify into each of these tiers? 2. In what ways may the Honors College and GVSU Donors financially support and encourage Study Abroad and Study “out” programs?

<p style="text-align: center;">Debrief Feedback Capture What’s Meaningful to Advance Your Prototype</p>	
<p>Instructor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → She asked if the interim classes could be taken over different semester or years <p><i>At the time, we were imagining these classes to be sequential; a student would be required to take three 5-week classes per semester. However, after communicating as a team, we have determined that classes can be taken in different semesters or different years.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Asked about our insights that drove flexibility for the tiered system. <p><i>We received a lot of feedback from current and former Honors students that the Freshman sequences are very unequal in</i></p>

	<p><i>difficulty, in terms of workload and course vigor. To solve this problem and clarify difficulty levels of each course, we created a tiered system with classes assigned within three levels of difficulty.</i></p>
Class	<p>→ Asked if our interim idea was a part of the tiered program.</p> <p><i>We responded that they were separate prototypes, but that we were considering combining them as a part of our final prototype.</i></p>
Collaborator	<p>→ Reminded us that a typical course load for a professor is 9 credits. He questioned how the atypical credit allocation (1-2 credits, 2-3 credits, or 3-4 credits) would suit the professors.</p> <p><i>Our main stakeholders for this project were Honors students; however, we will be taking this feedback into consideration when developing our final prototype.</i></p>
Other Stakeholder(s)	<p>→ We were asked if this program would be getting rid of the Freshman Sequence and Junior Seminar.</p> <p>→ <i>We confirmed that our tiered program prototype would be a replacement for these classes, but that the content, rigor, and inter-disciplining coursework currently present would be integrated into the future curriculum.</i></p> <p>→ We were asked how we define or identify the difficulty of the different courses within the different tiers.</p> <p>→ <i>In defining the difficulty of the classes, we have determined that our tier one classes will challenge the world-perspectives of students through in-class discussion, as well as teaching students how to hold respectful and productive dialogues. Student learning objectives identified in this tier will be critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and oral communication. Tier 2 will be semester-long interdisciplinary classes, similar to the freshman sequences, which require a moderate amount of outside work in order to succeed in the class. Tier 2 will address information literacy, integration, quantitative literacy, and written communication, and students will be required to take two of these classes.</i></p> <p>→ <i>Tier 3 will be research-based classes that involve heavy coursework both in the classroom and outside of the classroom to encourage hands-on, real-world application (for example, the student learning objectives of collaboration, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, oral communication, and problem solving will be addressed).</i></p> <p>→ We were reminded to trace our prototypes back to our insights and our problem statement to realign or reaffirm what our prototypes are rooted in.</p>

Post-Debrief Reflections

Integrate the Feedback & Decide on Your Best Solution

<p>DIVERGE: How did the feedback provided <i>deviate</i> from your team’s current insights?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have always been solving for the Honors students; in this debrief, we were reminded that we have to expand our considerations to include faculty and how they would reach their course load capacity of 9 credits. 2. We received a question from our instructor regarding the sequential nature of the interim coursework and it pushed our team to actually remove this constraint. Students will not be required to take interim classes in a sequential manner - they may take these courses in different years or semesters but will be required to take two. 3. Building off of the previous point, we realized that we had not yet asked professors how they perceived the difficulty of their class to be - and whether or not they intend to make it easier or difficult. 4. Some stakeholders mentioned that they believed students would not want to take an interim course; as such, they did not see the feasibility of filling these classes. However, other stakeholders did not believe this would be a problem.
<p>CONVERGE: How did the feedback provided <i>align</i> with and enhance the team’s current insights?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many stakeholders were receptive to our interim program structure and appreciated the possibility for students to delve into stimulated experiential and exploratory learning courses. 2. The tiered difficulty program was well received by our stakeholders. Additionally, Team Vitality had outlined a similar prototype, which provides our team with verification for the feasibility of the prototype. 3. They asked if our tiered program was replacing the Sophomore year gap, and they were pleased to know that our idea would eliminate the gap and keep students involved all 4 years.
<p>APPLY: How can you <i>use</i> the feedback provided?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We had originally planned interim courses to be five weeks long and to be taken sequentially; however, after receiving some divergent feedback from our instructor, we will be removing the sequential constraint and allowing students to take - at most - two of these interim programs, which have been extended to a term of seven weeks to better align with GVSU’s academic calendar. 2. They liked both of our top two innovations, so we should work to incorporate as many of the ideas as possible into our final prototype. 3. We will take into account the professors’ schedules, while continuing our focus on designing a curriculum that is truly valuable for students, their connection to the FMHC, and real-world applications.

ACT: What are your next steps?

1. We will work toward creating our final prototype - which will be an integration of our best aspects from the two prototypes (the tiered program, senior project support, and the interim course structure).
2. We will be referring back to and focus on our original challenge and problem statement - make sure we are answering them.
3. We will be sure to integrate the student learning objectives into our final prototype in a more transparent and explicit manner.
4. We will ask current Honors professors how they perceive the difficulty of their class to be and how they structure their courses to follow this level of rigor.

SUMMARIES OF TOP 5 INNOVATIONS

INNOVATION 1

Honors students will be strongly encouraged to pursue a study abroad experience that is at least two weeks long or to participate in an alternative breaks trip.

Many students, administrators, parents, working professionals, and research studies have stated that cultural competence is among the top skills necessary for post-education success – in any field, among any group of people. In a globalized world, cultural competence is an equally integral skill to success as being able to write an academic paper or participate in healthy group collaboration. As a result of this, we have ideated that providing an opportunity for study abroad is a viable innovation. Recognizing the expense of study abroad, we have developed this innovation to include the option for students to elect to participate in an alternative program in which they may participate in study ‘out’ programs. For example, they may choose to study outside of the typical GVSU realm - whether in the community, the region, or somewhere within the boundaries of the United States.



Figure 6. Example of a student's study abroad experience

In both parts of this innovation, students will be required to study abroad or study out for a period of at least two weeks (Figure 6). In studying the structure of other programs offered at GVSU and several recommendations from the Padnos International Center, our team has discovered that this time period is the absolute minimum time period necessary to gain cultural competency and common understanding. This time period should support students who are involved in difficult, time-consuming activities or studies, as the study abroad or study out program of two weeks is flexible to the individual student's schedule. However, for those students who want to participate in longer terms abroad or out, this option will be available in the form of semester or year-long programs. All study abroad or study out programs will be conducted in conjunction with the Padnos International Center.

The FMHC will provide students with a senior project advisor within the department of a student's field of study and will also provide a list of other professors willing to be a senior project advisor mentor. Training will be offered for all advisors.

The current guidance for the FMHC senior project is null. Many Honors students have stated that not only are they not actively made aware of the proposal date, they are also provided with minimal, if any, information regarding the plethora of opportunities available.

In creating an efficacious infrastructure for the senior project, our team has determined that providing students with a knowledgeable advisor is the preliminary step needed to get the ball rolling on this capstone-like project (Figure 7). These advisors will be determined by the program to which they belong. A minimum of one faculty member of each program of study will be available to Honors students. Honors students will be responsible for selecting their senior project advisor and may do so through the close analysis of advisors' interests as detailed in the listing of available Honors senior project advisors. Each of these senior project advisors will be trained through a bi-yearly training workshop organized by FMHC program advisors. This workshop shall include training on senior project requirements – such as credit determination, proposal development, grading, collaboration, and effective leading and guiding of an Honors student.

The list of senior project advisors is not limited to professors elected from a particular department and students shall seek out other advisors if they wish to do so. However, any additional and willing professors may volunteer to be placed on a communal senior project advisors list.



Figure 7. Example of senior project advisor meeting

INNOVATION 3

The FMHC will offer a curriculum with a tiered difficulty scale, and students must take one of each difficulty level; however, they may choose to upgrade the difficulty of their classes.

This innovation was driven by three main insights gathered from interviews with current FMHC students. First, many current Honors College students stated that one of their largest issues with the current FMHC curriculum is the inconsistent level of difficulty between similar classes, particularly between the freshman sequence classes. Second, many current Honors students also stated that the lack of a required sophomore class created a disconnect in their Honors College experience. Finally, many students also stated that they are taking their junior seminar or senior project in an earlier semester in order to graduate early or to focus on more rigorous upper-level classes within their major. These three insights led to the ideation of a FMHC curriculum structure that provides flexibility for Honors College students, while simultaneously promoting students to stay connected to the FMHC and maintaining a consistent difficulty level between similar classes.

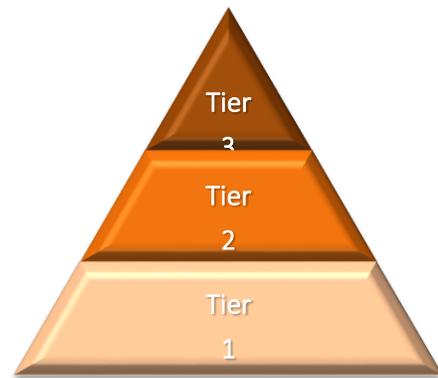


Figure 8. Diagram of tiered difficulty scale

The new curriculum will be broken into three tiers of classes (Figure 8). Tier 1 classes will be 1-2 credit classes that require minimal assigned reading and homework. Instead of challenging students academically, these classes will typically be discussion-based classes designed to challenge the way each student views the world around them. In order to assure that Honors students remain engaged in this tier of their course involvement, as well as the following tiers, this innovation will prompt professors to create the framework of monthly in-class case studies in which students can actively apply their coursework to real-world issues. Tier 2 classes will be 3-4 credit classes that require a moderate level of outside work for the class. This category of classes will challenge students both academically and mentally. Tier 3 classes will be 4-5 credit classes that are heavily research-based. These classes will push students to dig deep into topics and may require a significant amount of outside work. Throughout their Honors College career, students must take at least one Tier 3 class, two Tier 2 classes, and one Tier 1 class. The students must also take at least one course per year but are not limited to a certain order. Students may increase the difficulty level if desired. In other words, students may opt to take an additional Tier 2 or Tier 3 class instead of their Tier 1 class. This can easily be done using myBanner at the point of registration during the winter semester for the following academic year or throughout any point after registration has opened until a class reaches capacity. Finally, to keep classes consistent within their Tier, a review committee comprised of both students and faculty will review each of the courses at the end of each year. The expectation of this inquiry is to assure that each course remains at the appropriate level of difficulty.

FMHC courses will offer service learning trips and field trips as a part of the subject material.

Throughout the course of conducting interviews, our team has heard many comments about the need for the FMHC curriculum to encompass a real-world perspective, tangible applicability, and overall relevance to the individual student and what they are studying. Many of these students who volunteered to be interviewed have thought that participating in community activities or field trips would be an interesting way in which professors can pique their interest in a topic – even if it is not directly applicable to their fields of study (Figure 9).

This innovation has also been derived from multiple research papers – many of which have stated similar things to “the level of satisfaction experienced by faculty and students comes not from increased funding or dedicated facilities, but Honors program success and sense of community” (Owens and Travis, 2013). Additionally, it has become important that Honors programs encourage students to reflect productively on all forms of knowledge and to look outside the bounds of the traditional academically prescribed learning material and systems.

As such, bringing in outside speakers or aligning various service learning trips will allow students to gain a perspective on their knowledge of subject content and will continue to be relevant to their current academic status and their future career prospects. It will also provide the tools for students to develop a new identity as a contributor to the greater community and to become active global participants. In this innovation, our team has ideated that professors will leverage their network of colleagues or will seek alternative connection to develop at least one service learning project or field trip activity per course.



Figure 9. Example of students on a service learning trip

“Interim term” style opportunity.

In thinking outside of the box of typical academic structure, our team is seeking to distinguish the FMHC from general education infrastructure in the most dramatic way possible – to eliminate the standardized 16-week class. Honors students are high achieving individuals who seek academic challenge and intellectual stimulation and typically have high self-concepts about their abilities and aspirations. Many students in the FMHC are able to grasp material more quickly, are capable of determining preferences for material, and are actively seeking new ways to challenge their thinking (Figure 10). Our insights from our team’s secondary research has propelled this innovation into the spotlight. Studies conducted by multiple tenured professors, research institutes, and Honors students themselves have revealed similar results: Honors programs should be diverse in all areas possible, and this diversity should not be limited to just content variability but should rather extend through additional aspects of a course like term limits.



Figure 10. Example of students collaborating and utilizing creative thinking

As such, an interim term opportunity will allow these Honors students to take classes that are no longer tied to the expectations of an alternative general education program. Rather, these classes will be five weeks long, with an exam held in the last week of the class. Students, if they elect to take this interim course, must choose to take three of these courses per semester. Each class will carry between one to three credits and the difficulty will vary depending on the nature of the course. Honors students are limited to one year – or two semesters – of this interim style coursework. The FMHC staff will be required to audit students’ transcripts such that they are not enrolling in more than this limit. Additionally, alumni can take part in these courses, but will be expected to pay for the credits. Furthermore, there will be a cap for alumni involvement at a total of five alumni per course.

SUMMARIES OF TOP 2 PROTOTYPE CONCEPTS

A GLOBAL CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

Many stakeholders have stated that cultural competence is among the top skills necessary for post-education success – in any field among any group of people. As a result of this, we have created an opportunity for Honors students to increase their intercultural competency (Figure 11). This opportunity is in the form of a study abroad requirement in the Honors curriculum.

Recognizing the expense of study abroad, we have developed this innovation to include the option for students to elect to participate in the Grand Valley Alternative Breaks program in which they may go on an educationally focused service trip within the United States. We have also developed an option for students to participate in Grand Valley’s Semester in Detroit program to gain cultural competency at a reduced cost (as compared to study abroad). Both alternative options, as well as the study abroad opportunity, will fulfill the student learning outcomes specified by Grand Valley State University. Students will be required to study abroad for a period of at least two weeks, though a longer period of time is recommended.



Figure 11. Diagram of possible global classroom experiences

In studying the structure of other programs offered at GVSU and several recommendations from the Padnos International Center, our team has discovered that this time period is the absolute minimum time period necessary to gain some level of cultural competency and common understanding. This short time period is intended to accommodate students who are involved in other time-consuming activities, studies, or work. All study abroad programs will be conducted in conjunction with the Padnos International Center. The Semester in Detroit program will be conducted in conjunction with the Brooks College of Integrative Learning, and the educational service programs will be conducted in conjunction with the student organization Alternative Breaks. Integration of Honors students into the Grand Valley community will also destigmatize Honors students within the general Grand Valley population. As our research insights have proven, non-Honors students have a poor perception of Honors students. Students will gain credit towards graduation through the Honors College upon completion of these programs, and credit will be awarded on a case by case basis after FMHC faculty reviews the program.

THE FMHC PYRAMID PROGRAM

The new FMHC curriculum will be broken into three tiers of classes, plus a senior project requirement (Figure 12). Tier 1 classes are 1- to 2-credit classes that require minimal homework. Tier 1 includes 7-week interim style courses. Instead of challenging students with a heavy homework load, these classes will be discussion-based and are designed to challenge each student's worldview, incorporating Grand Valley's Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) of critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and oral communication.

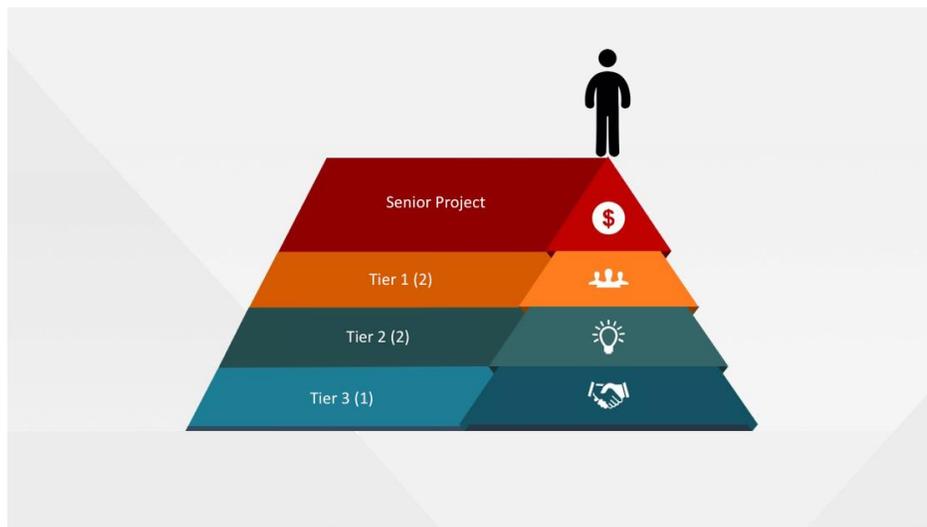


Figure 12. Diagram of the FMHC Pyramid Program

This innovation will prompt professors to create monthly in-class experiences in which students can actively apply their coursework to real-world issues. Examples of this are “reacting to the past” exercises, guest speakers, and special projects. Tier 2 classes are 2- to 3-credit interdisciplinary classes that require a moderate level of homework outside of class and will challenge students mentally while addressing SLOs of information literacy, integration, quantitative literacy, and written communication. This category of classes will challenge students both academically and mentally. This tier includes the one semester sequences and seminars. Tier 3 classes will be 3- to 4-credit classes that are heavily research-based and will cover SLOs of collaboration, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, oral communication, and problem solving. Finally, there is a Senior project requirement, which is the only portion of the curriculum that is specific to a student's class standing. Students will take a 1 credit class their Junior year that will prepare them for developing and completing their senior project. Then, Senior year, students will work to produce a 1 to 3 credit senior project.

Throughout their Honors College career, students must take at least one Tier 3 class, two Tier 2 classes, and two Tier 1 classes and complete the Senior project requirements. The students must also take at least one course per year but are not limited to a certain order, except for the Senior project requirements. Students may opt to take an additional Tier 2 or Tier 3 class instead of their Tier 1 class.

SUMMARY OF FINAL PROTOTYPE CONCEPT

The new FMHC curriculum will be classified into three tiers of classes, plus a senior project requirement (Figure 13). Tier 1 classes are 1- to 2-credit classes that require minimal homework. Tier 1 includes 7-week interim style courses. Instead of challenging students with a heavy homework load, these classes will be discussion-based and are designed to challenge each student's worldview, incorporating Grand Valley's Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) of critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and oral communication. This innovation will prompt professors to create monthly experiences in which students can apply their coursework to real-world issues. Examples of this are "reacting to the past" exercises, field trips, guest

speakers, and special projects. Tier 2 classes are 2- to 3-credit interdisciplinary classes that require a moderate level of homework outside of class and will challenge students mentally while addressing SLOs of information literacy, integration, quantitative literacy, and written communication. This tier includes the one semester sequences and seminars. Tier 3 classes will be 3- to 4-credit classes that are heavily research-based and will cover SLOs of collaboration, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, oral communication, and problem solving. These classes will push students to dig deeply into topics and may require a significant amount of work outside of class. Finally, there is a Senior project requirement, which is the only portion of the curriculum that is specific to a students' class standing. Students will take a 1-credit class their Junior year that will prepare them for developing and completing their senior project. Then, during Senior year, students will complete their designed, 1- to 3-credit Senior project.

Throughout their Honors College career, students must take at least one Tier 3 class, two Tier 2 classes, and two Tier 1 classes, and complete the Senior project requirements. The students must also take at least one course per year but are not limited to a certain order, except for the Senior project requirements. Students may opt to take an additional Tier 2 or Tier 3 class instead of their Tier 1 class. Finally, there is a recommended order of classes for students that is as follows: students will start year one taking one Tier 3 course, second year students will take one Tier 2 class per semester, year three the students will take two Tier 1 classes, and year four students will

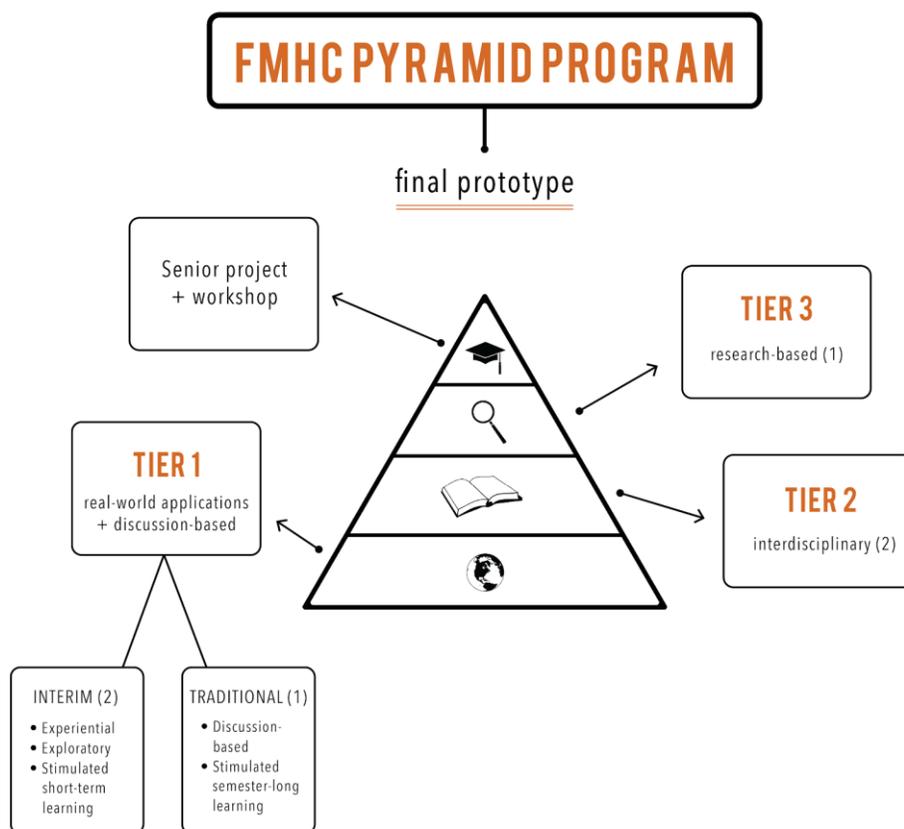


Figure 13. Diagram of the FMHC Pyramid Program

complete their Senior project requirements. This order is recommended because year one the students will be taking mostly prerequisite and introductory classes and will have the time to take a harder class, while year two and three students will be getting into their major courses which will be more intense and a heavier workload.

TEAM VIDEO LINK

VIEW OUR TEAM VIDEO HERE:

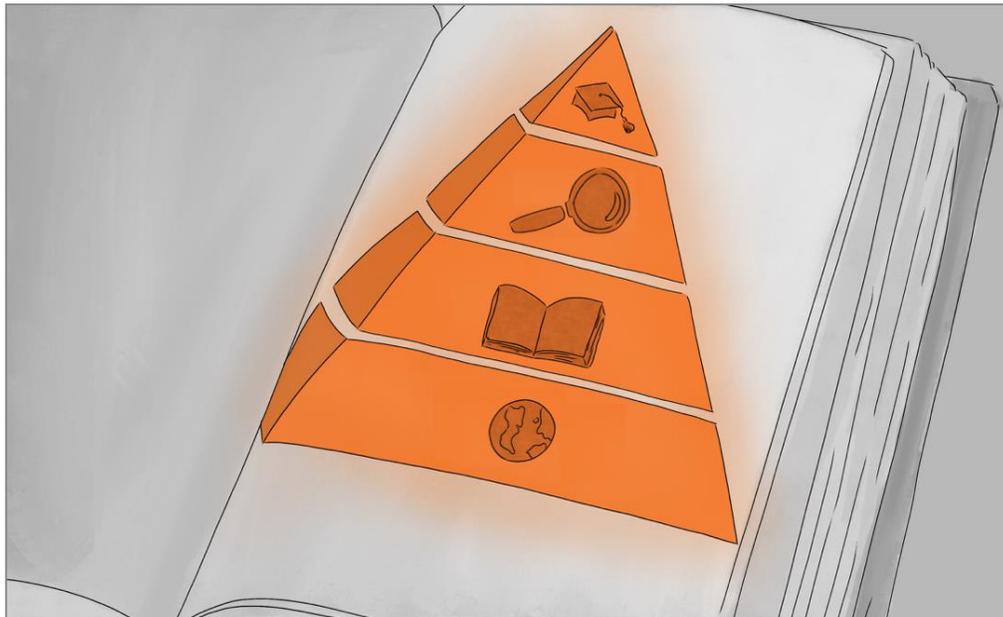
<https://youtu.be/V6whTIG4eBw>



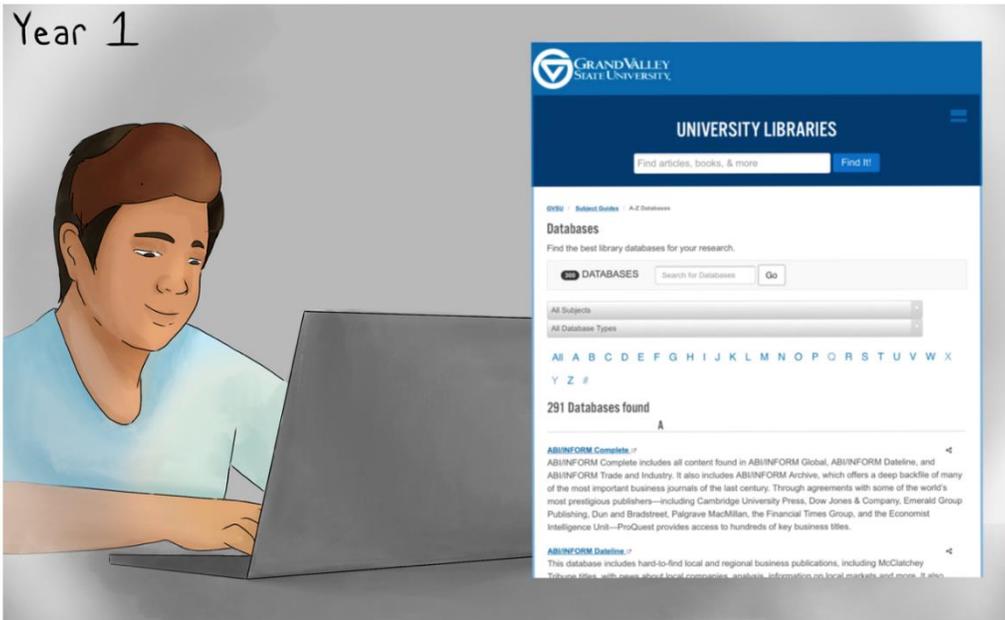
TEAM PRESENTATION



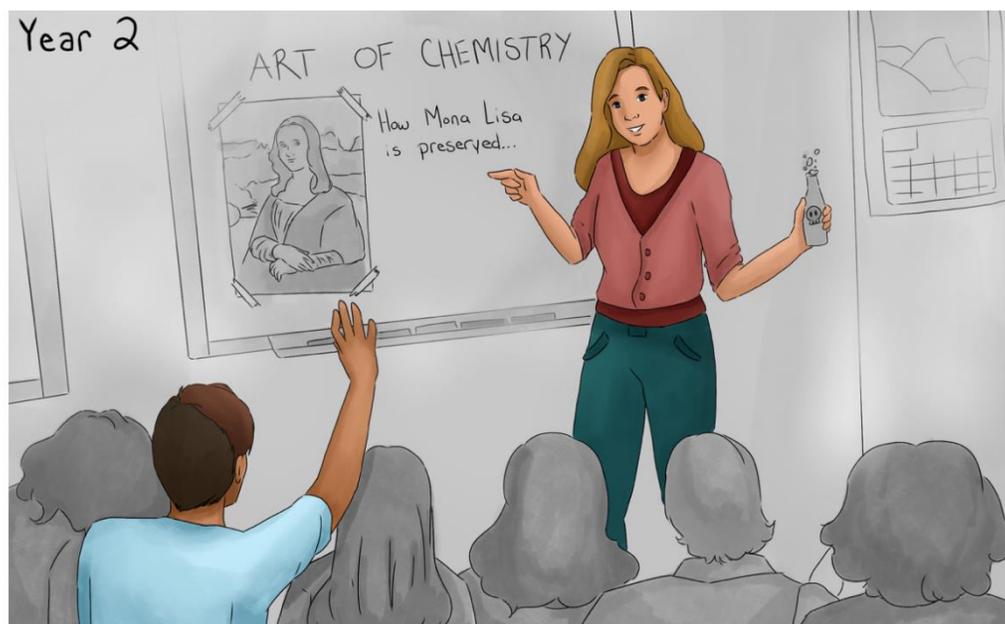
Ricky meets with an advisor...



He flips to a page about the new FMHC Pyramid Program...



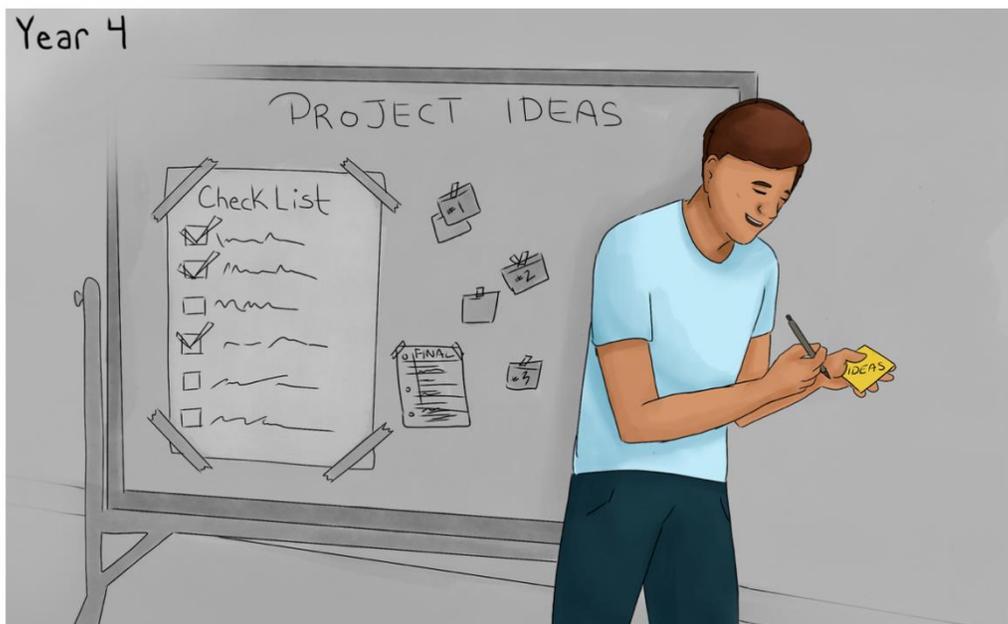
He begins his coursework with his **Tier 3** class...



The new FMHC Pyramid Program boasts **connectivity**...



Year 3 brings an interesting opportunity for **interim** courses...



Ricky is brainstorming for his **senior project**...



After graduation, Ricky is **confident** and **prepared**...

FINAL TEAM PRESENTATION FEEDBACK

Call to Action Envisioning the Future	
Brief Description of How Your Presentation was Received	Overall, the feedback from attendees was very positive and uplifting. They genuinely appreciated our ideas and gave us advice for making the prototype more feasible for the future. We received many compliments on the simplicity of our design, which they said helped to get our point across and will help students to understand the curriculum more clearly in the future.
What was the Teams Specific Call-to-Action	Use the Honors Pyramid Program for the future curriculum of the Frederik Meijer Honors College.
Attendee Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What feedback did you receive from faculty interviews? 2. How many faculty did you interview? 3. How can transfer students be integrated into the program? 4. What is the total Credit range? 5. How will Service learning trips be integrated into the classes? Local versus abroad? 6. Top 2 Innovation of Study abroad/global experience...how does it relate to final prototype? 7. Questioned about the integration with different class standings 8. Afterward - Classics professor asked Team Vitality how their innovation was different from ours.

Innovation Symposium Feedback Capture What's Meaningful to Advance your Innovation	
Verbal Feedback	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreement with how faculty want to see classes that apply to each major. 2. Good: interdisciplinary, shown by diverse interests of team members. 3. Liked flexibility of classes and schedules for students and faculty. 4. Laughed, in good way.

	<p>5. Liked the low risk, stretch class concept.</p>
<p>Written Feedback</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I like the idea of Tier 1 being utilized as a platform to help new students discover potential career interests. 2. Rigor is not the same as credit hours. 3. Faculty workload rules can make instructing 1 and 2 credit courses difficult. 4. The pyramid suggests a bottom-up approach with the bottom being fundamental and foundational courses. 5. Total credit range is 13-18 credits; reconsider the large variability in credits. 6. Think about how you could try to have difficulty of courses be assessed and quantified to insure consistency. 7. It would be nice to see a sample list of classes. 8. Compare your tiered curriculum to the existing Honors program to help others visualize it. 9. Use the term 'current state' prototype versus the 'final' prototype. 10. How will you test this prototype? 11. Investigate any potential added costs to taking trips; <i>How can these costs get added to Honors College budgets to ensure transportation costs are covered by students and the university?</i> 12. It is hard to schedule in faculty workloads. There needs to be a system for this. 13. Are there mentorship opportunities for FMHC students mentoring other FMHC students? 14. Think about how to incorporate transfer students. 15. Think about how many classes and staff would have to be added for Tier 3 classes. 16. Show visuals of what exists today (current state) and contrast that with future state. 17. This is a strong visual: can it be operationalized? 18. Try to create more empathy with the user for your audience.

19. Please address mechanism for transfer students and benefits for professors and students.
20. Explain why particular SLOs are associated with particular tiers. You need to clarify rationale for choices.
21. Consider one and two-credit courses as ways to introduce students to new ideas, not just easier topics. Label this as a low risk stretch.
22. It would be nice to see the contrast to existing FMHC curriculum.
23. Provide a second, different example to highlight flexibility.
24. Really like the idea of a one credit course before the senior project. Consider another one-credit course during the project as well.
25. How might the small credit count impact undecided students?
26. How might the small credit count of the program impact undecided students?
27. Consider how the program could apply for both internal and external transfer students.
28. Please address what would cause an FMHC student to 'drop out.' What would they need to do to be accepted again?
29. Formalize a partnership with high schools, the community, and other colleges so that incoming students know which classes will transfer to FMHC.
30. Could the interdisciplinary courses be co-taught by professors from different areas of study?

Visual Feedback



Post-Symposium Reflections

Integrate the Feedback & Offer Final Recommendations

<p>DIVERGE: How did the feedback provided <i>deviate</i> from your team's current recommendations?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They asked about how transfer students could be integrated into the program. This is something we did not directly address in our prototype, as our main stakeholders were incoming Honors students. 2. One stakeholder addressed the fact that rigor does not correlate with number of credits, and it seems as if we are presenting it that way. 3. A lot of stakeholders addressed the impact on faculty, such as the potential need to hire new faculty. We did not take the number of available FMHC faculty into consideration when creating our innovation. 4. Stakeholders voiced concern for the effect of the credit count on undecided students. We never considered the impact of our credit count on various kinds of students, just the average, decided, 4 year Honors student.
<p>CONVERGE: How did the feedback provided <i>align</i> with and enhance the team's innovation?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They liked the simplicity of the visuals, which really helped to get the overall idea of the pyramid program across. 2. They liked the idea of short, low-risk, stretch classes that allow students and faculty to try new things without being committed long-term. 3. They thought that integrating service learning trips and global or local experiences was a beneficial aspect that would help students as they transition to jobs after college. 4. Many loved the idea of a senior project workshop class.
<p>SYNTHESIZE: How can others <i>use</i> the feedback provided?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a system for transfer students to become involved in the Honors College. 2. Get more feedback from the Honors College faculty to see how they could integrate our ideas in ways that work for them. 3. Identify ways in which the flexibility can be demonstrated to students and faculty. 4. Outline ways in which this program can be better marketed to incoming students - whether through high school partnerships, communication with community colleges, etc. Consider how AP credits and transfer credits could be applied.

RECOMMEND: What next steps does your team recommend to stakeholders?

1. Talk to more faculty members in the Honors College to get their perspective on the pyramid curriculum idea.
2. Speak to more transfer students and undecided students to better accommodate for them in our innovation.
3. Examine economically feasible options for out-of-classroom experiences in tier 1 classes.
4. Operationalize the program in many different ways to test realistic feasibility.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

Our vision for the new and improved FMHC curriculum creates valuable short and long-term effects for future Honors students. From insight to innovation, we valued our main stakeholder of Honors students to develop a solution that will help them to see value in their Honors College education and gain valuable skills that they can utilize in their future after FMHC. This enhanced Honors College curriculum prototype concept is both flexible and purposeful and builds on the current FMHC model.

Thank you for being a part of our innovation journey. We strongly recommend supporting this vision of the Frederik Meijer Honors College Pyramid Program to enhance the current curriculum. Implementation of this prototype will benefit students for generations to come by tethering them to the FMHC and thoroughly preparing them for a successful career.

Sincerely,

Team Trailblazers

APPENDICES

DIAGLOGUE SUMMARIES

DIALOGUE 1

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors Student
Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
Gender: Male
Primary Goal of this Opportunity: Discover areas for improvement in the Honors College and see where Honors students are frustrated with the Honors college. This student is a senior, so we are also seeking to find out where they feel they missed out in their Honors College experience and what could have made it better.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? We are seeking to find ways in which students feel separated from the Honors College, so we can figure out a way to “actively tether students to the Honors program” and which skills they feel they lack, so we can factor that into the curriculum.
Summary of Research: This stakeholder has really emphasized the fact that they do not feel like the Honors College has benefited them in any way, but they also acknowledged that they have not utilized any Honors resources in their time here. They chose to enroll in the Honors College because they felt it was expected of them, not because they saw any benefit in particular. They spoke a lot about the fact that they wished Honors classes were broader in content, and how they wished that Honors courses didn't simply feel like harder versions of pre-existing classes. Finally, they stated that the most beneficial part of the Honors experience to them was the Senior project.
Important insights: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Didn't get much benefit from Honors program● Broader class content with more interdisciplinary focus● Felt disconnected to Honors after Sophomore year
Dialogue Questions and Response: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?

They are a Senior majoring in International Relations and minoring in French and Spanish. They work in Housing and Residence life, and CLAS advising. They hold many leadership roles on campus.

2. *What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?*

Felt like it was expected of them because they were an exceptional high school student.

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College's role in your life? Why?*

5, they feel as if they haven't grown as a student because of the Honors College. They didn't like Honors classes because they were challenging but not beneficial. Senior project was their best experience. Would have preferred general education classes over Honors curriculum. They like being involved with people in other majors in Honors courses. They feel as if they could have gotten more out of Honors, but they haven't utilized Honors experiences fully.

4. *Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors College?*

They don't think college experience would be so different. Getting general education courses out of way was nice, and the senior project was nice.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

They said the senior project was most beneficial because it was practical to their major, and it tied together everything learned in undergrad. Overnight orientation was beneficial as well.

6. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?*

They don't like that the sequences are super focused in one specific area, and they wish they could all be more general like Live Learn Lead. They also mentioned disliking the fragmented teaching style of Honors professors. They wish that the courses did not focus on difficulty, but instead they focused on experiential learning and connecting themes across courses.

7. *How did your freshman sequence in the Honors College affect your freshman year?*

They said it was difficult, and it created stress. Made them rethink priorities (in terms of homework), readjusted their learning style.

8. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within your major?*

They said that the Honors courses they have taken created diversity in their learning experience.

9. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

They perceive it as very important, and value it.

10. How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?

The senior project gave them experience in career-based work, and they thought it was very beneficial. Otherwise, they don't feel like Honors program has done much for them. They mentioned that a lot of people probably participate in the Honors program because it looks good on a resume.

Closing thoughts:

- They didn't think it would be so content specific, thought classes would be more interdisciplinary.
- They said people should place more importance in engaging in the work, because it is more important than simply striving for an A.
- They are not proud of anything they have done in Honors. They feel like they have only done what was expected of them.
- They are not proud of their identity as an Honors student.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

They did not answer with a question, but with certain insights. They said that they hoped Honors students are not making the decision to participate in the Honors program simply because it looks good on a resume, but because they want to go deeper into their education. They also said that they have observed resources for Honors students being under-utilized, and that they personally have not utilized any Honors specific resources. Furthermore, they stressed the importance of giving Freshmen a clear description of sequences because they feel that they went in blind as a freshman. Finally, they expressed the desire for broader, more interdisciplinary Honors courses. Their sequence was very focused on one topic, and they wish they could have taken a course with broader scope.

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

Yes, they agreed to reconnect if needed. They wish to be contacted via email with additional questions.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- An Honors College Office student employee

Possible next-steps:

They recommended reaching out to Honors alumni, and a student who has lived in the Honors community, but did not provide specific connections.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Non-Honors Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Male</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>We are seeking to understand the benefits of a liberal arts education from a non-Honors perspective, as well as to understand the benefits of general education courses. We also hope to gain insight on the perception of the Honors College from a non-Honors perspective.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We want to reshape the Honors curriculum while honoring Grand Valley’s commitment to a liberal arts education, so gaining insights on what is beneficial about a liberal arts education from a non-Honors student is important.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This stakeholder had a lot of great things to say about Grand Valley’s educational model. For the most part, they value learning with people of diverse perspectives about diverse content, but only when it can be tied back to their major. For example, they do not see the liberal arts benefit of science courses for them and view them as a waste of time. They also see a lot of privilege for Honors students. They said they thought Honors students were especially privileged because of the Honors advising office, the Honors building, and special study abroad opportunities for Honors students.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors students have a lot of privileges from the perspective of non-Honors students. • Collaborative learning with students from other majors is valued. • They like major-related content and enjoy liberal arts perspective but only with content that can be tied back to major.
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in?</i></p> <p>They are a Junior Advertising and Public Relations major, with a minor in International Business. They are an RA, a peer advisor in Padnos International Center, the founder of the organization BTW, member of Rotaract, and a member of Sigma Alpha Pi.</p> <p>2. <i>Can you describe GVSU’s educational philosophy? What do you like about this philosophy?</i></p>

They love the focus that Grand Valley places on academics, rather than focusing on athletics. They said that it makes them feel like students are important. They like the small class size at Grand Valley, and personal relationships with professors.

3. *Tell me about the general education classes that you are taking. How do you feel that they have prepared you better for studies in your major?*

The general education classes gave them a broader perspective, but they dislike that they don't always relate to their major. For example, science courses are waste of time for their major.

4. *Tell me about a time where you had to work with students from outside your major. What did you learn from this?*

When they went abroad, they had to work with people of different majors and nationalities. They recognized people's strengths and helped them act on them and grow within them (they let people shine in their area of expertise). They find more benefit out of a group of composed of different majors, because different roles need to be fulfilled.

5. *How do you feel that you could be more connected to your "college" within Grand Valley?*

They are a part of CLAS- School of Communications. They feel that CLAS is not very well organized, the idea of a sub school within the college gets confusing. They feel that CLAS does not help you in specific things related to your major. They feel that they would benefit from meeting other people within college.

6. *What is your impression of the Honors College at Grand Valley?*

The Honors College seems very exclusive and cut off from the rest of campus. They said that it makes them think of pretentiousness. The students have privileges like skipping general education courses and senior project. They like that the Honors College is branching out with housing- like HHLLC. They like the thought of Honors College Students being integrated in classes with the rest of the student population.

7. *If they give a negative response to previous- Tell me about an experience that led to this perception.*

A few personal interactions with students have led to this perception. They feel that certain Honors students act like they are above everyone else.

8. *If they give a positive response- What advantages do you see for students in the Honors College?*

They said that they see a ton of advantages for Honors students, like skipping general education courses, participating in a senior project, and having more flexibility in study abroad.

9. *How would you grow if you had the opportunity to apply what you have learned in your major to a culminating, real world experience? What would your project look like if you had this opportunity?*

The feel like they would grow from experience, but they also feel that being graded or required to make a change doesn't help people grow. Creativity under pressure doesn't help. People need to have flexibility and passion to thrive in a project.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

They did not respond with a question, just additional insights. They said that they felt Honors students had a lot of privileges that other Grand Valley students do not have, like extra advisors within the Honors office, and a special building for them in addition to their other college's spaces.

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

Yes, they agreed to reconnect if necessary. They prefer to be contacted by email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- A freshman Honors student. This stakeholder gave us contact information for this student.

Possible next-steps:

We will reach out to the other connection that this stakeholder provided us with.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors College Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Female</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>We are seeking to gain empathy from the largest stakeholder group, which is Honors College students. This student is a Junior and is a BMS major which is the largest major in the Honors College. We hope to gain insight on how the Honors College curriculum can best benefit the student from the student’s point of view.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We are seeking to find ways in which students feel separated from the Honors College, so we can figure out a way to “actively tether students to the Honors program” and which skills they feel they lack, so we can factor that into the curriculum.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>In general, this student has been very pleased with her Honors College experience. She noted several times that she wished that there was a better way to take into account AP credits that many incoming freshman Honors students have but cannot use. She also emphasized the desire for a greater tie of Honors College curriculum to her major. She stated that her freshman sequence was primarily a literature and history class, which she already had AP credit for, and as a result felt useless. She also felt that she did not have a great understanding of the Honors College or the freshman sequences as an incoming student. She expressed approval of the current curriculum format and that she looked forward to her senior project as a resume booster.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wanted better integration of AP credits ● Still feels very connected to Honors community that makes up a large portion of friends ● Appreciates resources and rigorous environment of the Honors College

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. *Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?*

Biomedical Sciences Major, pre-optometry, e-board member of pre-optometry club and a service club, plays multiple intramural sports with friends.

2. *What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?*

Wanted to be a part of a more rigorous academic environment full of like-minded students. Liked the idea of a learning-living community. Wanted to challenge themselves and gain a resume booster.

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College's role in your life? Why?*

4, The Honors College has provided this student with an abundance of academic resources as well as a large group of friends. However, they have not felt as connected to the Honors community since ending their foundational sequence.

4. *Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors College?*

Would not be nearly as academically motivated due to a lack of like-minded students, and their grades would likely be lower. Also, they would not have been able to find friends with similar life goals as easily.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

Resources available to students. Believes the senior project provides an excellent opportunity for students to gain experience and a resume boost in an area of their interests.

6. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?*

How AP credits are handled. Felt as if their sequence was primarily a writing and history course which they had already taken three AP classes in. Better distribution of credits with respect to AP credits. Better relation between classes and majors or areas of interest.

7. *Describe your ideal curriculum for the Honors College.*

Liked the format and timing of the junior seminar and senior project. Enjoyed the flexibility of the junior seminar course topics and their stronger relationship to majors. Wished the freshman sequence was more directed toward personal interests instead of trying to make up for General Education classes.

8. *How did your freshman sequence in the Honors College affect your freshman year?*

They enjoyed the professors and the people in the class, but again mentioned a disconnect between personal interests and the topic of the class. Allowed them to make new friends in a new environment.

9. *For Sophomores and up- How has the lack of a required Honors course your sophomore year affected your sense of connection to the Honors College?*

They were in a two-year sequence and had a class their sophomore year.

10. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within your major?*

They felt as if their freshman sequence did not apply hardly at all, but that their junior seminar dealt with issues in the medical field, which they found very interesting and important to learn.

11. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

They feel like it is important, but not as important as learning content relevant to their major. If the content is interesting to them, then they said that they do not mind unrelated content at all.

12. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

They look forward to using their senior project as a helpful resume booster in their application for graduate school. They also said that the academic resources provided by the Honors College and the personal connections made will also help them in the future.

13. *For upperclassmen--What would you do if you could start your academic Honors experience over again?*

Get a little more involved with either being a Transitions leader or an Honors mentor.

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

Stakeholder did not have any unasked questions that they feel should have been included.

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

This stakeholder agreed to be available for further contact via their GVSU student email or text message.

For Dialogue: Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors College Student, Statistics Major, Junior
- Non-Honors College Student, Computer Science Major, Junior
- High School AP Biology Teacher

Possible next-steps:

Visit the Grand Rapids high school where the AP Biology teacher works for an interview. Possibly arrange interviews with the high school guidance counselors as well.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors College Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Male</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>We are seeking to gain empathy from the largest stakeholder group, which is Honors College students. This student is a Freshman and is a Mechanical Engineering major. We would like to hear from freshman students who could be impacted by curriculum changes. We hope to gain insight on how the Honors College curriculum can best benefit the student from the student's point of view.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We are seeking to find ways in which students feel separated from the Honors College, so we can figure out a way to "actively tether students to the Honors program" and which skills they feel they lack, so we can factor that into the curriculum.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This student said that they have found their Honors College experience to be extremely important in their freshman year so far. They continuously emphasized that the Honors community and the leaders within it have been very helpful and a reason that they chose to be a part of the Honors College in the first place. They felt that their sequence directly related to their major and will prove to be very helpful in the future. They say that the connections that they have made in the Honors College will be very helpful in their career. They also mentioned several times how nice it was to live in a community of academically motivated student who span all different majors and ages and that they have used these people as resources for homework.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The people and community are the most valuable part of the Honors College ● Honors sequence has been and will be very helpful
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?</i></p> <p>I am a freshman Honors College student in the mechanical engineering major. I am involved in a few extracurricular activities; ANCHOR, a community activities board for Niemeyer, fencing club, American Society of Mechanical Engineering, and am a design mentor for a high school robotics team.</p> <p>2. <i>What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?</i></p>

For me, it was mostly about the community when it came to joining the Honors college. The people I knew I would be exposed to and the opportunities that would come with any involvement therein. Also, personal appeal by which I was accepted into the Honors College and had my application read and replied to. All students deserve that.

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College's role in your life? Why?*

8.5. I feel like it plays a pretty significant role in my college life, and since that is essentially my life as it stands, I'd say I give it a higher score. Without the Honors College, I would have the networking opportunities I do now, I wouldn't be surrounded by the leaders I am, I wouldn't be where I am credit-wise right now, and I certainly wouldn't be as motivated to do more and more with academics and my personal life right now.

4. *Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors College?*

I feel like I would be a lot more distracted and immobilized by my surroundings. Similar to what I stated previously, I wouldn't have access to the great opportunities and luxuries that I do now.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

I might have already answered this, but the most beneficial thing to me would be the closeness of the community. Whether it be professors, staff, roommates, or other friends; it's the people that define the honors college living and learning style.

6. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?*

I think the greatest things to improve the Honors College curriculum, from a freshman standpoint, would be to make the Live Learn Lead more meaningful. I have a full schedule as it is, and that brought pretty little into my actual education. I appreciated the fact that it wasn't just a lecture and multiple-choice class like the normal ethics class is, but I feel like there has to be something more to it with Honors. There needs to be more purpose. Another suggestion to improve academics would to put a sunset clause-style imposition on professors to completely throw out their course plan every five years to encourage them to be more adaptable to teaching students in different ways. This could be beneficial to both the students and the teachers in a successful model.

7. *Describe your ideal curriculum for the Honors College.*

An ideal curriculum would be better suited to my major specifically. There lacked a guidance of advising when I was signing up for my classes in the summer of '17 for fall. I wish I had even *known* about the other lower-credit sequences designed for students with heavier workload majors like engineering. This means directly helping students when signing up or before signing up for classes-non-negotiable. They get help. Not just an offer for it.

8. *How did your freshman sequence in the Honors College affect your freshman year?*

The sequence has undoubtedly added a lot of stress to my schedule being probably my most time-consuming class. I enjoy it, it's a lot of good work in my Design Thinking for Social Product Innovation class, but it's good work that is practical and useful for me. It's strengthened my interest my major and also expanded what I might like to work on outside my major as a new possible minor.

9. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within you major?*

I feel like the sequence I signed up for directly reflects on my interest in my major which has helped. I am passionate about and very consumed by my major, so keeping my focus in-subject is very important to me.

10. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

I view it as still important, but for the same reasons as above; my passion and time commitment for my major, my primary classes are far more important. A good example would be my HNR 242 life sciences general education course which has not a single biology/sciences major in the class. No one is confident on the higher concepts of the class, so our professor allows us to connect the content more with our specific majors in discussion, work, and projects which greatly benefits the comfort and success of the class.

11. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

In addition to what I said before, it's a great resume builder. Having great experiences like the living-learning environment, a freshman sequence with fun, personal professors and fun engaged student leaders, great friends and roommates and the undeniable bests. Personal growth in leadership and academics are ginormous and should also not be overlooked. There are also great opportunities to walk away with something meaningful in the junior seminar and senior project. I would hope these are going to be as important to me after college as they are within college to keep my GPA.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

This stakeholder did not have any questions that they felt should have been asked.

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

This stakeholder agreed to reconnect via GVSU email or by text message.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors Student, Mechanical Engineering, Freshman
- Honors Student, Mechanical Engineering, Junior
- Honors Student, Computer Science, Sophomore

Possible next-steps:

Interview the Honors student contacts given above for further insight. Possibly rework some of the dialogue questions toward curriculum over experience in general.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Non-Honors Faculty</p>
<p>Estimated Age: ____ 20-30 ____ 30-40 ____ 40-50 <u> x </u> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Male</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>The goal of this opportunity was to obtain an outside perspective of the Honors College at Grand Valley State University. This individual was chosen based on their amount of time spent employed at GVSU, expertise in his field, interaction with the university, and relation to the Honors College through his currently enrolled daughter. We hope to gain empathy and insight from a wise faculty GVSU individual who may offer insight to how students may be better prepared for real-world jobs through the Honors College curriculum.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>This interview allows us to gain insight from a highly experienced individual and employer, which will help us decide what skills for real-world application are needed to be taught through the Honors College curriculum.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This faculty member is very opinionated about the Honors College, its faculty, the direction on where it has been and where it is going, and how it should be altered. He has been at Grand Valley for 24 years and has seen how the Honors College has impacted and trained students both positively and negatively. The biggest issue he sees with the current Honors College curriculum is the major disconnect between the Brooks College with its requirement of training in humanities and with the rest of the university in training in STEM fields. With a majority of the Honors College students enrolled in STEM fields, he sees a major pitfall with the lack of valuable education courses and experiences in those areas. In the future, he hopes to see the curriculum bridge the sophomore gap, be more beneficial for STEM students, and have classes that genuinely prepare students for the future.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Honors College attracts (most of) the brightest and best students at GVSU, and it should be doing the best it can to provide for them. • There is uneven education being provided among the difference sequences in terms of material covered, expertise of faculty, and type of grading styles. • The Honors College does not properly account for students in STEM fields. • The general requirements should hit the important things: public speaking, writing, science, history, etc. They should cover the important aspects of each of these without diving in too deep and causing students to get so off track from their own majors that it distracts from their overall learning experience.

- What was being done for general education 50 years ago was hitting the mark; what is being done now may be going too far off track and not genuinely preparing students for the real world.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. *Describe what you do at Grand Valley. When did you start working here?*

He has been a professor of Statistics at Grand Valley for 24 years, he and has held the department chair title for 18 years.

2. *How do you structure your different classes in terms of curriculum and material you are required to cover?*

It depends on the class - upper level classes are more flexible, but classes like STA 215 follow a fairly strict guideline that has been agreed on by the corporate faculty group. He has written an Introductory Statistics textbook with another faculty member which many of the faculty use. This allows for the students to focus on exactly what the students need to learn from the professor without being distracted by extra information and resources. He looks at and takes into consideration best practices from other successful classes and clinical studies outside of Grand Valley to best prepare his students beyond their education. In his upper level courses, he asks students what they are interested in doing their studies in, and he infuses their interests into the class.

3. *If you had the opportunity to develop a new course without ties to the general education program, what would you do?*

He said that his course would probably look the same because he has been here so long and has such a large voice on what happens in the department. Based on his experience and position, he knows what works well for students and what would best benefit them in the future.

4. *Do you feel that the Honors College has a large presence on the GVSU campus, or does it fly under the radar?*

Yes, he believes that the Honors College has a fairly significant presence and has grown significantly since it began at GVSU. It represents the best and brightest students at GVSU, and these are the students that are most likely to best represent GVSU going forward.

5. *What do you know about the Honors College and its curriculum?*

He is well aware of how the Honors College works and educates its students because of his time at GVSU and his daughter in the program. He sees how the housing situation impacts students; many first-year students live on campus and are very involved in the Honors community, but they often lose that sense of community as they move off campus their second and third years. He sees how the sophomore gap can positively and negatively impact students in the Honors College (as well as across GVSU) in that the large freshman immersion builds a great sense of community and cohesion and spreading out the credits among the years might take away from these things.

6. *If you had the chance to teach an Honors College course, would you be interested? Why or why not?*

Certainly. There is one Honors section of STA 215, and he would like to see more in the future. He thinks it would be beneficial to have individual sections that focus solely on the humanities side of statistics and other sections that focus solely on STEM side of statistics. He personally would create a class that covers the mandatory things but includes more visualization and modern statistical methods rather than the history of statistics.

7. *Have you noticed a difference between Honors College students and other students at GV in terms of academic performance?*

He can definitely tell when a student has the characteristics of being an Honors student, but he doesn't know for sure if they are in Honors unless they tell him. He thinks that the current requirements for getting accepted into the Honors College are good.

8. *Imagine you are a student within the Honors College. What would you want to see changed?*

He has seen that some of the faculty are not as exemplary as others; there are definitely some professors who are not qualified and experienced enough to be equipping these students to their best potential. Additionally, he has seen how there is uneven distribution in the grading. The majority of students could have received a 4.0 across all university general education classes, but some Honors courses are putting the student's GPA at risk and disadvantage because they are comparing the best students together. He sees a need for a different method of grading in the Honors College that pushes them to do their best but doesn't hurt them in the long run.

9. *What do you think of Honors faculty as compared to non-Honors faculty?*

Some are fantastic, and some are definitely not. His suggestion is to choose faculty based on their length of experience at GVSU, experience in the real-world field, satisfactory feedback from students and faculty, and input from GVSU administration rather than just the Brooks College and Honors College administration.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

A question he has about the Honors College is if the courses offered are really helping all of the students involved. It seems to be inspiring for students in humanities but not STEM fields. He thinks that the Honors College is a good thing, but there is opportunity for improvement.

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

Yes, very willing and interested in the project. We can connect through email or in person.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Chemistry Professor
- Chemistry Professor
- Microbiology/Molecular Biology Professor; teaches Honors science course

- Chemistry Professor

Possible next-steps:

Reach out to some of the suggested stakeholders to get a perspective from GVSU science faculty and see how engaged they feel the sciences are in the curriculum.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors College Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Female</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>We are seeking to gain empathy from the largest stakeholder group, which is Honors College students. We hope to gain insight on how the Honors College curriculum can best benefit the student from the student’s point of view.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We are seeking to find ways in which students feel separated from the Honors College, so we can figure out a way to “actively tether students to the Honors program” and which skills they feel they lack, so we can factor that into the curriculum.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This Honors College student is currently a sophomore, and she feels that she really benefited from the community of the Niemeyer living center during their freshman year. She has had an overall very positive experience with the Honors College, and she is looking forward to continuing her experience through fulfilling her Junior Seminar while abroad and completing her senior project in the following year.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She wishes there was more involvement with the Honor College mentors. For her, she didn’t really feel like she knew about them until it was too late. • She wishes that the sequences and Honors courses were all equal to each other in terms of difficulty and skills learned. • None of her Honors classes have anything to do with her major.
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?</i></p> <p>She is a Biomedical Sciences / Biochemistry double major, with a minor in music. This requires her to be involved in clubs (pre-med club) and several music groups (Orchestra, small ensembles, etc.). In addition, she regularly attends the on-campus ministry provided by Grand Valley.</p>

2. *What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?*

The biggest draw to the Honors College was how it would look on her resume to graduate “with Honors.” However, the idea of a sequence covering most of the general education classes was also a big factor.

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College’s role in your life? Why?*

The importance of the Honors College has been about an 8 in her life. From providing beautiful housing and helping to foster relationships with like-minded people, to streamlining general education courses, the Honors College has provided amazing support to her education. In addition, the Honors College has always been a support to her education with the advisors and learning spaces.

4. *Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors College?*

If she was not in the Honors College, she would not have lived on campus her freshman year. This would not have provided the friendships and connections provided by on-campus living. She also believes that her GPA would have taken a hit her freshman year, because of the general education requirements.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

So far, the most beneficial part of her Honors College experience has been living in Niemeyer. She feels honored to have been a part of the learning community that was built during her time living on campus. This has given her the chance to create more connections and build a network that is integral to future success.

6. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?*

She thinks that pushing more for Honors advising is the only improvement. Helping figure out classes that will work for each degree program was a struggle for her, because she had to do it on her own. Once she finally got around to asking an advisor, it seemed like she had poured many hours into an unnecessary project when she should have just asked for help.

7. *Describe your ideal curriculum for the Honors College.*

Her ideal curriculum is like the structure that is operating in the Honors College now but offers more consistency in the curriculum. She understands that the Honors College wants to tailor the experience to the student, but because of the variation in the sequences, some courses are significantly more difficult than others. This puts the satisfaction of the student in peril, as they are most certainly comparing their experience to others around them.

8. *How did your freshman sequence in the Honors College affect your freshman year?*

She happened to really enjoy the content of her sequence, so that was good. However, she did have an unfortunate experience with her professors that caused undue stress and unnecessary situations. This really took a toll on her during the winter semester of freshman year.

9. *For Sophomores and up- How has the lack of a required Honors course your sophomore year affected your sense of connection to the Honors college?*

What connected her to the Honors College has always been the people. Maintaining her personal network of friends has been a high priority in her life. So, she doesn't feel like she has ever been disconnected from the "Honors Experience."

10. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within your major?*

None of her Honors classes have anything to do with either of her majors, or her minor. Her courses have provided her with many other skills, but none pertinent to learning within her majors.

11. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

She thinks we need to learn as much as we can to become the most well-rounded individuals possible. Being able to participate in intelligent conversation about a wide range of topics is so important to lifelong success. In addition, each new thing you learn evolves your ability to absorb and assess different kinds of information.

12. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

Along with being a resume booster, the Honors Experience has also established connections with wonderful faculty members and students alike. In addition, it has helped her foster skills in leadership and independent learning that she will take on through the rest of her education and career.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

There were no real questions about how living with Honors students (or without) affected the student's experience with the Honors College.

The two groups of people she suggested talking to are the Honors advisors and the students in good academic standing who elected to leave the Honors College. The advisors because (unfortunately) they get the brunt of the student's frustration with the curriculum, and the students, because the people who were clearly unhappy probably can identify opportunities for improvements in their experience that might not have happened with a satisfied student.

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

Yes, they can be contacted by email or text message.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors College advisors
- Former Honors College student
- Statistics Unit Head

Possible next-steps:

Reach out to the people provided and take into consideration this student's opinions on the Honors College.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Non-Honors Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Female</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>To discover the positive aspects of Grand Valley’s educational model, as well as perceptions of the Honors College from an outside perspective.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>This relates to our problem statement because we are trying to figure out what students like about Grand Valley’s interdisciplinary style of education, so we can create a more satisfying experience for Honors students that tethers them to the Honors College.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This stakeholder really values Grand Valley’s liberal arts philosophy, and they feel that they have gained a lot from taking general education courses. They especially value the interactions they have had with students of other majors within their classes, because they feel that it broadens their perspective. To them, Honors is perceived as very prestigious and isolated. This stakeholder also expressed interest in the Honors curriculum structure, specifically the freshman sequence and the junior seminar.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students find it valuable to work with peers from other majors • Honors is held on a pedestal from outside, and seen as having many privileges • Liberal Arts philosophy is valued • Non-Honors students admire the Honors curriculum structure
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in?</i></p> <p>Their major is Advertising and Public Relations. They work as an RA, at the Lanthorn, and as a housing desk worker.</p>

2. *Can you describe GVSU's educational philosophy? What do you like about this philosophy?*

They mentioned Grand Valley's liberal-arts philosophy and said that taking classes outside their major opens them up to a lot of topics they haven't heard about. "It forces us to learn about things you wouldn't learn within your major."

3. *Tell me about the general education classes that you are taking. How do you feel that they have prepared you better for studies in your major?*

Their middle eastern studies general education class has led to the realization of how things can be mis-portrayed in media. This helped them within their major because they have to work on being unbiased in their work.

4. *Tell me about a time where you had to work with students from outside your major. What did you learn from this?*

In one of their classes, they experienced discussing philosophies of life with people in other majors. They have benefited from learning with others and hearing new perspectives, and they value hearing different opinions because "everyone's opinions should be heard."

5. *How do you feel that you could be more connected to your "College" within Grand Valley?*

They are within CLAS, specifically the School of Communications. They feel like they are connected to the School of Communications, because they see recurring faces in class. They feel that they would benefit from holding major specific meetings and networking events within the College.

6. *What is your impression of the Honors College at Grand Valley?*

The word that first comes to mind for them is prestigious. For them, the Honors college is perceived as hard to get into. They have only met nice students in Honors. They said they feel it is "an honor to be in the Honors College."

7. *If they give a positive response- What advantages do you see for students in the Honors College?*

They said that they see an advantage within the Honors curriculum, specifically with the freshman sequences and junior seminars. They said that they would like the opportunity to experience something like this if they had the chance.

8. *How would you grow if you had the opportunity to apply what you have learned in your major to a culminating, real world experience? What would your project look like if you had this opportunity?*

They would focus on advertising sustainability at Grand Valley. They would experience personal growth from learning more about the topic of sustainability and putting their advertising skills to use. They said that they would feel more motivated to do the project if it were required for them.

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

They responded saying, “I think the Honors College is very secluded from the rest of the University, especially North campus. I feel like students would really benefit from being mixed in with each other, because they could learn from each other.”

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

Yes, they want to be contacted via email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- They provided a connection to a non-Honors student that was very opinionated about Grand Valley’s educational model

Possible next-steps:

Perhaps a next step would be to factor in the integration of Honors students in the Grand Valley academic community into our problem statement.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Female</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>The primary goal of this opportunity is to uncover weaknesses and areas of disconnect within the Honors College, as perceived by an Honors student.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We are seeking to find ways to tether students to the Honors program throughout their 4 years, so by finding discovering areas of disconnect as perceived by Honors students, we can investigate and fix the issue.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This stakeholder had a lot to say about the Honors housing community, but I will be focusing on their curriculum-based comments, seeing as that is what relates to our problem statement. They stated that the most beneficial part of their Honors experience was the general education “fast track” because it helped them get to major related content sooner. Even though they praised the “fast track,” they still value taking classes that don't directly relate to their major. They definitely felt a disconnect from the Honors College after they completed their Junior seminar their sophomore year. They expressed interest in having an Honors-based class that would allow students to job shadow people in their desired field, indicating a desire for Honors classes to teach real world skills. Finally, this stakeholder expressed very strong distaste for the Honors senior project. They felt like they were poorly supported in their planning, and that it is a waste of their time.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They do not like the requirement of a senior project. • They do not feel like the Honors experience will benefit them in the future. • They like the general education “fast track” that Honors provides. • Disconnect before and after junior seminar. • In Honors because they felt like they were expected to be.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. *Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?*

They are a Junior, with a major in computer science. They are an RA, in the Design Thinking Academy, an Alternative Breaks Site leader, and they work in the Office of Student Life as a staff assistant.

2. *What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?*

Their brother was in the Honors College and sold them on it because of the Honors “fast track and sequences.” They said that they haven’t heard of a single bad experience with the freshman sequence. They also chose the Honors program at GVSU because at MSU they felt like “just a number.” They said enrolling in the Honors program felt like an expectation because of their high school academic performance.

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College’s role in your life? Why?*

Right now, a 2 because they are not currently enrolled in any Honors courses, and they only have their senior project left. But during freshman year it was an 8, because their friends were all in Honors, they were very involved in their sequence, and they lived in Niemeyer. They said they didn’t think living in Niemeyer freshman year was healthy, because the Honors College “breeds pompousness.” “Put together all the arrogant kids, and they all live in Niemeyer.” They said that they liked living on north campus better, because north campus is friendly, and people didn’t stick up noses at each other. They felt like the Honors culture is not for them.

4. *Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors College?*

They said, “it would be awesome because I would not have lived in Niemeyer freshman year.” They felt like they would have had a better social experience in North Campus. Academically, they think that not much would have changed. They do like the discussion-based Honors classes they have taken and feel that it gave them the confidence to speak up in other classes.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

The “general education fast-track” has been the most beneficial part of their Honors experience. It freed up their schedule to take classes in their major. The fast track is helpful for people who do know their major early on. They wish there were more prep work for choosing a major, because they didn’t like exploratory classes outside of the Honors College. They also want a class where you job shadow people.

6. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?*

They think it is essential to increase the presence of the Honors community on the campus and integrate Honors students with everyone else. Students also need more preparation and guidance for the senior project requirement. However, they really love and appreciate the newsletter.

7. *Describe your ideal curriculum for the Honors College.*

They don't like the concept of a senior project because the people doing them have been disconnected from Honors College for a while and are clueless and ill prepared for the project.

8. *How did your freshman sequence in the Honors College affect your freshman year?*

It made their freshman year class load easier. They liked that they got to know a group of people for a whole year in their sequence. They had an "easy sequence" so they feel that it didn't prepare them for sophomore year. They said that the freshman sequence felt "like a cushion".

9. *For Sophomores and up- How has the lack of a required Honors course your sophomore year affected your sense of connection to the Honors College?*

They do not feel like they are even in the Honors College right now. They considered dropping out, so they could avoid doing a senior project. They would prefer it if the senior project was optional.

10. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within your major?*

It helps them in their minor, but the Honors credits don't carry over to minor, so it makes them feel upset. Otherwise, the content of previous Honors courses doesn't help them in their specific areas of study.

11. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

They like it, because it is essential to the liberal arts philosophy. It is "important to have a specialized skill set, but you need to have diverse education so that you are not ignorant upon graduation. They said that it "changes your outlook."

12. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

They don't see it benefitting them in any way in the future.

13. *For upperclassmen--What would you do if you could start your academic Honors experience over again?*

They wish that they could have taken a "fun" junior seminar.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

They commented on the Honors housing arrangements. They do not think that freshmen should live in Niemeyer, but if they do, they should live on their own floor.

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

Yes, they agreed to reconnect. They would like to be contacted via email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- This stakeholder did not provide any more connections.

Possible next-steps:

After this interview, I think the group should investigate more opinions on the Honors senior project, because we have heard very polarized opinions about it. There is no consensus on the Honors senior project.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location: Parent of FMHC Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: ___ 20-30 ___ 30-40 ___ 40-50 <u>x</u> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Female</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity: To see what parents of Honors students perceive about their child’s experience in the Honors program and how the parent may or may not have guided their child in this experience and to what degree they were involved in their child’s decision.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? Our problem statement is all about finding ways to “actively” tether students to the FMHC, beginning the moment they start their curriculum. Parents are often the sounding board for much of this decision-making and are capable of providing their own insights. This interview pertains to our team problem statement because it explores one of the few groups of people that is responsible for educating their children on programs as they explore and decide on their future college careers.</p>
<p>Summary of Research: Overall, this interview was very helpful in gaining the perspective of a highly important stakeholder of our group: parents of Honor students. Some main points brought to our attention was the extreme importance of perspective and academic diversification to allow for non-academic growth. This stakeholder seeks the FMHC as a huge influencer in the success of their child and views the program as the single reason as to why their student decided to attend GVSU. The one concern this stakeholder possessed was that the group seemed improperly elitist and exclusionary and wondered if there was any way to get rid of the social pressures associate with the title of being an “Honors student?”</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new curriculum should seek to expand and develop current and new support for non-academic aspects of the Honors student experience • They see the experience as highly beneficial for their student • They wonder if the “we-they” concept between Honors and Non-Honors students can be mitigated

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. *Please describe your child. Based on what you know, what are they involved in? Major?*

This individual described their child as an overachiever that frequently sets high expectations and is willing to do what it takes to achieve what they set out to do. They also said their child is nerdy and rarely falls to pressures because they do not get derailed when they are focused on something. On the other hand, they can be overly focused on grades, which while it can be worthwhile, it can also lead to missed lessons or experiences. This individual said that their child has always been wired this way and that there is no moment when some lightbulb went off. Their child is studying business and languages and is highly focused on academic activities that are focused to push the student further in their field of study.

2. *What do you know about honors programs in general? About the program your child is enrolled in?*

This individual perceived the Honors program as it is at a different level than a regular academic program. They see it as having higher standards and higher expectations, but also perceived some level of forgiveness. In general, this individual sees that there is opportunity for students to excel and achieve even more. They also commented that the program has not been easy for their student. Finally, the individual made comments that the FMHC can be snooty, exclusive, or elite. Nonetheless, this parent would not have pushed their child into GVSU if it were not for the Honors program. They would have otherwise strongly fought for their child to attend the University of Michigan.

3. *Do you think that your perception would change if the student had not lived in Niemeyer?*

The interviewee definitely thinks that their perspective would have changed. Their child was being rewarded for putting in the academic effort. They did mention that the Niemeyer Living Learning Community did seem "like their own little castle."

The individual delved deeper into this question to highlight more reasons - outside of just living facilities - that prompted their student's decision to attend the FMHC. They stated that Dr. J made a huge difference with sending the letter of acceptance. His attention and involvement were deciding factors for their child to attend the college.

4. *What skills do you think your child will gain by participating in their Honors program? (Why is this important to you or your child?)*

There is a level of expectation and professionalism that is higher. This parent also stated that their student cannot slack off in Honors and still survive. This mentality carries over into any career, and, in the eyes of this interviewee, you have to perform and continue to perform at a high level. The Honors program should emulate a high-level career and that "to say GVSU is one thing" but "to say GVSU Honors is something totally new."

5. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about Honors programs? Why?*

This individual stated that the current program should be expanded to encompass support for non-academic focuses and rigor. They wondered how well-rounded these students would be at the end of their academic experiences if they were not encouraged to partake in other non-academic activities like going to the gym, attending artistic clubs, or learning (for fun) about historical events. One

example this individual gave is that students at Aquinas (her other child attends the school) are required to take a theology and sociology class. These classes, in the eyes of this parent, can help to develop more well-rounded students.

6. *Describe your ideal curriculum for the Honors College.*

This individual really stressed the importance of a diversified experience and more experiential based learning. This should not just be offered in the form of a freshman sequence but should be peppered in throughout the entirety of the FMHC experience.

7. *What about your child's Honors College makes it stand out among the rest?*

Above all other things, the living accommodations were spectacular compared to other programs. The parent saw the living learning centers as a reward for academic achievement in high school. Living in this environment encouraged their child to embrace their surroundings - like the art on the walls and the difference in perspective. The smaller class size has also been good and has promoted deeper interactions with professors, which has opened some doors for their student. Additionally, the high school their child went to had classes with the same underlying theme. The parent picked up on some of this happening in Honors and would like to see more of this.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

This interviewee did not have any questions that we should have asked them but asked their own questions.

- Is there any plan to grow the Honors program?
- Is there a way to segment some of the classes to offer to non-Honors students? How can the challenge be presented to others?
- How will the we-they concept between Honors and non-Honors be mitigated?
- How often is the curriculum being audited?"

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

Yes, they agreed to be contacted again if needed. They prefer to be contacted via email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- This individual did not provide additional connections but welcomes further inquiry.

Possible next-steps:

After this interview, the team should seek out ways to support non-academic skills. This can be done through further research, interviewing, or idea mapping.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Former Honors College student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Female</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>The primary goal of this opportunity is to uncover weaknesses and areas of disconnect within the Honors College, as perceived by a former Honors student.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We are seeking to find ways to tether students to the Honors program throughout their 4 years, so by finding discovering areas of disconnect as perceived by an Honors student who began the program and decided to leave, we can investigate and fix the issue.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This student was very happy with the community that the Honors College provided. Unfortunately, she decided to leave GVSU because she did not receive enough support and direction in finding a major and future career that fit her. Although she was very involved in campus activities, was a straight A student, and explored different areas of study, there was something lacking in her educational support that prevented her from reaching her full potential as a Grand Valley and Honors student.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She was happy with the community that was provided with the Honors College living center. This had a large impact on her college experience. • After a year and a half at GVSU in the Honors College, she still had not been able to settle on a major and was lacking in supportive advice from her courses.
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p><i>1. Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What were you involved in? What was your declared major?</i></p> <p>She was involved in several clubs, such as Dance Troupe, Swing Dance Club, and Campus Ministry. She was undecided her first year, and then she declared a psychology major.</p> <p><i>2. What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?</i></p> <p>She mostly thought about if/how being an Honors student would influence future job resumes. She also appreciated the more academic environment, as well as the great housing opportunity.</p>

3. On a scale from 1 to 10, how important was the Honors College's role in your life? Why?

I would say 6. The Honors College provided a good community and helpful professors, as well as very nice housing.

4. Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience have been different if you were not in the Honors College?

She would have been surrounded by a different community of peers that were potentially not as academically focused, and she would not have had the Honors College benefits, like the advising and unique opportunities for Honors students.

5. What was the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience?

The most beneficial aspect of her Honors College experience was getting most of her general education requirements done within her Honors sequence. She also met many great friends through living in the Honors College living center.

6. Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?

The Honors College could have more advising/counseling hours, or more events specific to Honors student that they would be interested in or could benefit from.

7. Describe your ideal curriculum for the Honors College.

Her ideal curriculum would include one or two courses to take care of general education courses, possible extra courses specific to majors or future job skills, and extra courses or help with job opportunities.

8. How did your freshman sequence in the Honors College affect your freshman year?

It took care of several general education requirements, which freed up her schedule to try different courses that sounded interesting. She was able to study topics that she was considering majoring in.

9. How has the lack of a required Honors course your sophomore year affected your sense of connection to the Honors College?

She still felt connected to Honors College her sophomore year because she lived in Niemeyer, and she met with advisors throughout the semester. It also freed up time in her schedule to take several classes within her major, which she appreciated.

10. How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses supplemented your learning within your major? How did you perceive learning content that was not related to your major?

Her Honors courses did not really relate to learning within her major. She liked learning new information outside of her major, though, especially art and history. She saw it as an opportunity to

learn more and expand her horizons. This was especially helpful because she was undecided in her major for a while.

11. Do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?

Yes. Even though she was only in the Honors College for a year and a half, she believes that her time spent in her interdisciplinary Honors courses and the support from faculty will definitely benefit her in the future.

12. What would you do if you could start your academic Honors experience over again, if anything?

Nothing different.

13. Was there anything more that the Honors College could have done to help you in deciding your major and staying enrolled?

The Honors College could have provided more resources in career/major exploration, or offered a course tailored for Honors students to give an overview of several different career fields and provide additional resources. She ultimately decided to leave the Honors College and GVSU altogether because she was undecided in her career goals, and she did not see a purpose in pursuing a degree in something that she didn't enjoy.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

Nothing else to contribute.

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

Yes, by text or email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors College advisor
- Honors College advisor
- Other Honors professors, former Honors Director

Possible next-steps:

Make individual appointments with the Honors College advisors to learn about the Honors College curriculum from their perspective.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors College Director from another university</p>
<p>Estimated Age: ____ 20-30 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 30-40 ____ 40-50 ____ 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Male</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>The primary goal of this opportunity is to discover how another University’s successful Honors program is run, and to draw inspiration from their structure.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We are attempting to help Honors students feel connected to the Honors College and make them feel more satisfied with their experience. In this interview, we tried to gain insight as to how the University of Michigan successfully conducts an Honors program, and if student feel connected to it or not.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>First, it should be made clear that the University of Michigan does not have an Honors College, but an Honors program. Students can join the program at any point in their academic career, but most join as Freshmen. There are 3 core disciplines that students must take classes in, with a total of 7 credits for each discipline. However, the courses offered are interdisciplinary. These classes are completed Freshman and Sophomore year. As students’ progress, Honors requirements are dictated to them by their specific college and major. Students also have the option of making regular classes Honors acceptable by doing an Honors conversion, which means that they can meet with faculty to do research or extra work on the topic of the class. Most students appear to feel connected to the program because of their like-minded peers. Though there are complaints about the program that mirror Grand Valley student’s complaints, it is reported that students have an overwhelmingly positive view of the Honors program at University of Michigan.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each major has different Honors requirements • 3 core areas within Honors program, total of 21 required credits for Honors • Only freshmen and sophomores take Honors specific classes • High satisfaction rate with program • Students can change any class they like into an Honors class by doing extra work and meeting with faculty • Students can join Honors program at any point in their academic career
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p>

1. How long have you held this position at your current college?

They have been the director of the University of Michigan Honors Program for a year and a half. They have been a U of M professor since 2001, teaching Political Science and Philosophy.

2. Describe your daily schedule at work.

They first wanted to make it clear that University of Michigan has an Honors program, and not an Honors College. So, basically Honors students take few classes with only honors students, and most with other students. They consider their job to be 50% professor (teaches 2 courses), and 50% Honors Program Director (job responsibilities include curriculum development, setting admission requirements, big picture development, and academic advising for Freshmen and Sophomores about 4-5 hours per week). They do lots of administrative work and are currently working on a new way of allowing students to graduate with Honors. Later, they are meeting with graduate student who is doing analytics on the Honors program. They are trying to speak to as many people as possible to gain insights on how to improve Honors College. Finally, they teach a course in Honors in the Fall semester. They stated that their role is equivalent to the department chair of a program. One of his responsibilities is managing faculty, they "Buy out professors from other departments to teach in Honors."

3. Why do you think the Honors students at your university choose your Honors program?

Some students like the prestige (they think it looks good on a resume). The Honors program is looking for students who are academically ambitious and intellectually curious. 40% of Honors students come in as pre-med, but most of the students abandon the major later on. Students want to be pushed academically. People like the idea of doing research, and the Honors program grants them that opportunity. Their (the Honors program faculty's) research suggests that students like the Honors community and find like-minded individuals within it. "Honors students have proven to be more successful academically than non-Honors students".

4. What made you interested in the Honors College at your college?

They think Honors students are fun and wonderful to teach, so they wanted to interact with them and get closer to the students they interacted with. They liked the community of "likeminded nerds," inspired by their undergrad experience. They stated that they liked the opportunity of "running pilots" within the Honors program.

5. What is the structure of your Honors College curriculum? (Classes required all 4 years? How do you handle transfer students and late-admits? How do you appeal to all majors?)

Students can enter the program whenever, but most enter the program their Freshman year. Students are expected to take 3 honors core courses, each is 4 credits, and you have to take at least 7 credits from each category (natural sciences, humanities, social sciences) and about 12 options to choose from. Freshman students must take first year writing class within Honors, which can be fulfilled by certain core courses. They are all interdisciplinary courses. It is expected that students take 3 classes over their first 2 years. Lots of courses have Honors sections (intro level courses) to further involve students in Honors, including lots of Honors options for math courses. Students can opt to make a class an "Honors Conversion" to challenge themselves (they are taking a regular course, but

they meet regularly with faculty to do extra work like reading recent work on the topic or doing extra research). They have a freshman housing option (a dorm with a few Honors floors). Juniors and Seniors have no required Honors courses (no capstone or senior project) but they can choose courses off of a menu. Each major gets to determine what an Honors version of their major looks like, because “departments know what are best for the students”. However, there is a clear discrepancy in expectations between Honors major requirements. Most programs require Honors thesis. The Honors program pays students money to stay over summer and start working on thesis (20 students to be exact).

6. What about your Honors College curriculum makes you stand out among the rest?

They are not sure if it stands out significantly and are skeptical of ranking of “best in the country.” They think that the praise for their Honors program is based off of reputation, not actuality. They think the program offers a diverse experience, and what makes it successful is that it is accessible to students at all parts of their academic career.

7. What areas of your Honors College curriculum are needing improvement?

A major issue facing the program is diversity. There is minimal diversity racially, geographically, and socioeconomically. They are worried that they are not diverse and inclusive enough. In terms of the curriculum, they are currently proposing a new way of graduating with Honors. They are trying to make an option for Honors civic engagement and leadership without writing a thesis. Finally, they are trying to work on Honors student’s options for extracurricular activities to relieve stress.

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

Some students find themselves frustrated with Honors program, they mostly are frustrated with the way AP credits transfer to the Honors program. Students also don’t want to take classes that don’t fall within their major, so some are frustrated with that. Students are frustrated with lack of consistency in Honors majors. However, students are overwhelmingly happy with Honors experience. The program benefits from incredibly generous alumni, 50% of operations are ran from donation funds. About 200 freshman and sophomore students per semester take advantage of the “Honors Conversion”.

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

Yes, they did agree to reconnect, and they would like to be contacted via email, or over Google Hangouts if time allows.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- This stakeholder provided connections to two Honors students at their university

Possible next-steps:

We should look into the possibility of adapting an “Honors Conversion” program such as this university does, it seems to be quite popular and would allow students much more flexibility.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors College Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Male</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain further insight into the desires and concerns of FMHC students regarding the Honors College curriculum.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>Our team is focused on keeping FMHC students tethered to the Honors College. We want the students to be engaged in the Honors College experience throughout their entire career at GVSU, and even beyond graduation. This interview will allow us to gain first-hand knowledge from an upperclassman Honors student on how to accomplish this goal.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>In general, this student has been fairly pleased with his Honors College experience. He said that he feels like his tie to the Honors College has not weakened but noted that the Honors Community dissipated a bit after his Freshman sequence. He also emphasized that he prioritizes his major over the Honors College and wished there was a better variety of Honors classes to fit students of all majors. He said that he really enjoyed his freshman sequence, and that his sequence professor was one of his favorite professors at GVSU. He noted that his primary goal of being a part of the Honors College was to eliminate General education classes and to have a better-looking resume.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentioned a large discrepancy in the difficulty of Freshman sequences • Desire for greater variety in curriculum to suit the student’s major • Views Honors College as a lower priority than major
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?</i></p> <p>I am a mechanical engineering major, in my free time I go to Bible study and play on the club ultimate Frisbee team.</p> <p>2. <i>What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?</i></p> <p>My friends would call me stupid and ridicule me if I didn’t.</p>

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College's role in your life? Why?*

4, my engineering classes are way more important to me than my Honors classes

4. *Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors College?*

I would have had to take more Gen. Ed. classes and that would have been distracting from my engineering curriculum.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

I have been able to meet some cool people that value school and learning similarly to me. I have also been able to take some interesting classes with cool professors such as war and tech with Dr. Jon.

6. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?*

There is a huge discrepancy between the difficulties of each sequence, some are really easy, and others require triple the effort to get the same grade.

7. *Describe your ideal curriculum for the Honors College.*

You would have more options on classes to take that varied in the field of study, not just social issues classes.

8. *How did your freshman sequence in the Honors College affect your freshman year?*

I really enjoyed war and tech, I met quite a few of the other engineers in the Honors College and still hang out with them once in a while.

9. *For Sophomores and up- How has the lack of a required Honors course your sophomore year affected your sense of connection to the Honors College?*

I feel about the same as I did freshman year. There are not any more required classes, but I still end up taking an Honors related class almost every semester. However, since none of the classes are no longer required you don't have the same people in all your classes so it is really easy to lose touch with people you have met in previous classes.

10. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within your major?*

Engineering and Honors don't fit together very well; most of the Honors classes I have taken do not apply to engineering. Some of the classes may have taught some study techniques I can apply but for the most part the content I learn in Honors does not transfer well to engineering.

11. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

I feel like learning outside of your major is good because it can give you a broader perspective on life and how other people think, however if learning outside of your major hurts your studies within your major then I think it can be a bad thing.

12. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

I think being able to say I graduated with Honors will look good on my resume and may help set me apart from someone who was not in the Honors College.

13. *For upperclassmen--What would you do if you could start your academic Honors experience over again?*

I would do the same thing.

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

The stakeholder did not respond to this question.

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

This stakeholder agreed to reconnect via text message, email, or a personal visit.

For Dialogue: Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors Student, Mechanical Engineering, Junior
- Honors Student, Mechanical Engineering, Junior
- Non-Honors Student, Mechanical Engineering, Junior

Possible next-steps:

Next, I would like to get perspectives from prospective students and high school faculty. I plan to do this over spring break.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors Parent</p>
<p>Estimated Age: ____ 20-30 ____ 30-40 <u>x</u> 40-50 ____ 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Female</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>To discover what the strengths and weaknesses of the Honors program are from an older and perhaps wiser perspective.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We aim to make the Honors experience satisfying for students, and oftentimes the perception of something is influenced by outside perspectives. Parents have a large influence on a student’s lives, and so we want to make sure the parents needs are being fulfilled in our new design, so that students are wholly fulfilled.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This parent did not seem too informed on Grand Valley’s Honors program, despite having a child in the program. Overall, they believe that the program is benefitting their child by challenging them, giving them experience with group work, and connecting them to excellent Honors faculty. This parent seemed to know the overarching goal of the Honors College, which they stated as “the Honors program seeks to combine different studies to encourage having a worldview that has a dynamic lens, rather than a narrow one” which is certainly something that the Honors program, as well as Grand Valley as a whole encourages. The one thing that the parent thinks could be improved upon is the Honors College outreach, so that parents can feel more connected to what their students are doing.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents don’t feel very connected to the Honors program, or very aware of what their students are even doing in the program. • Honors faculty is perceived to be very good by parents. • Parents expect that their student are being challenged with the content of their classes, not just receiving a large amount of work. • Parents seem to understand the overarching goal of the Honors program, whether that is due to communication from the Honors College, or from their student.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. *Please describe your child. Based on what you know, what are they involved in? Major?*

My daughter is a reserved, responsible, and hard-working young woman who is as about well-rounded as a person can get. As a sophomore Honors student at Grand Valley she is involved in leadership activities, student life activities, athletic activities, and performing arts.

2. *What do you know about Honors programs in general? About the program your child is enrolled in?*

In general, I know that the Honors program seeks to combine different studies to encourage having a worldview that has a dynamic lens, rather than a narrow one. It also seeks to make the learning student initiated rather than 100% traditional lecture. But sadly, I don't know much about the program that my child is enrolled in.

3. *What factors did you and your child consider in their choice to enroll in an Honors program?*

The fact that there were the seminars with a unique and enhanced approach to learning, and also that the students and Dr. J were so enthusiastic when we came to Grand Valley to learn about the program.

4. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important was it that your child participate in an Honors program?*

For me, I'd rank it at about a 7, but for my daughter I would predict a 9.

5. *Picture yourself as an Honors student. How would you imagine your college experience enrolled in an Honors program? What would you expect?*

I would imagine my college experience enhanced by the Honors program because of the comradery that comes from having a smaller group of students that you interact with, along with some beneficial relationship building. And I would expect that the professors don't merely give more work but rather encourage learning about topics deeply, and facilitating deep and varied thinking, as well as facilitating real world learning beyond books.

6. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of an Honors program experience for your child?*

I think the most beneficial part of my daughter's Honors experience has been her interesting professors. I know that she has made several meaningful connections with professors in the Honors College, and it has helped her with applications for jobs and scholarships.

7. *What skills do you think your child will gain by participating in their Honors program? (Why is this important to you or your child?)*

I think my child is gaining the skills required to work effectively in a group. It's important to me because it has real world application, and it is necessary. It's important to my daughter because

working in a group is not necessarily her preference, so she will gain some experience with this through the program and develop her group skills.

8. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about Honors programs? Why?*

From the parent perspective, I think the Honors program could communicate what's happening there, like what the students are accomplishing, because it would allow parents to be able to make some of those real-world connections with their students as well.

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

There's nothing else I can think of, I think the questions were fairly inclusive. I think it could be a little clearer if the questions should be answered from only the parent perspective, or combined perspective.

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

Yes, they did agree to reconnect. They wish to be contacted via email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- They provided contact information for another Grand Valley Honors parent.

Possible next-steps:

A next step could be to interview another Honors parent to see if we gain similar insights to the insights that we gained from this interview.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors College Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Male</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity: The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain further insight into the desires and concerns of FMHC students regarding the Honors College curriculum.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? Our team is focused on keeping FMHC students tethered to the Honors College. We want the students to be engaged in the Honors College experience throughout their entire career at GVSU, and even beyond graduation. This interview will allow us to gain first-hand knowledge from an upperclassman Honors student on how to accomplish this goal.</p>
<p>Summary of Research: In general, this student has been happy with his Honors College experience. He said that he has not felt disconnected to the Honors College despite the lack of a required sophomore class. This student loved his freshman sequence and emphasized that the professor was a large factor in his admiration of the class. He expressed a desire for a little more emphasis on each student’s major, but otherwise thought that the Honors College curriculum was well designed. He stated that his primary motivation for joining the Honors College was the non-traditional class topics as opposed to regular general education classes. He also stated that he views the Honors College as a secondary priority to his major and does not feel that it has had a major effect on his college career.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors College curriculum needs very little change • Small desire for greater variety in curriculum to suit the student’s major • Views Honors College as a lower priority than major
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?</i></p> <p>I’m a mechanical engineering major here at Grand Valley. I’m a member of the Honors College and involved with IM sports and the Biomechanics and Motor Performance Laboratory downtown in the Cook-DeVos Center for Health Sciences (CHS). My freshman year of college I was on the varsity cross country and track and field team at Grand Valley.</p> <p>2. <i>What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?</i></p> <p>The primary factor that I considered was how the courses that I would be taking in college would change based on whether or not I was in the Honors College. The unique course offerings provided by the Honors College seemed interesting to me and to not be any additional work or time commitment compared to the standard general education courses.</p>

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College's role in your life? Why?*

Around a 2 or 3. I'm mainly focused on my major and course of study, whether or not I'm in the Honors College is secondary, as it really only affects the general education courses.

4. *Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors College?*

I'd mainly just be taking different general education courses. As a result of this I would not have had the experience of taking the unique course offerings of the Honors College.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

The unique course offerings and the access the dedicated Honor's College advisors have been the most beneficial parts of my Honor's College experience. This is important to me because it has allowed me to enhance my college education and experience.

6. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?*

I currently have no suggestions for improvement for the Honors College. I am perfectly content with my Honor's College experience so far.

7. *Describe your ideal curriculum for the Honors College.*

I think that the curriculum is pretty good as it is.

8. *How did your freshman sequence in the Honors College affect your freshman year?*

I really enjoyed my sequence my freshman year. I took War and Technology with Dr. White, and he was amazing. I wish he could teach all of my classes.

9. *For Sophomores and up- How has the lack of a required Honors course your sophomore year affected your sense of connection to the Honors College?*

I haven't really felt a disconnect due to the lack of an Honors course my sophomore year. I have friends who I regularly hang out with in the Honors College, so I feel as if I am still a part of the Honors community.

10. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within your major?*

Honestly, I don't feel as if they have helped me in my major very much if at all. I guess I have had to write some papers, which has helped me practice writing, and the classes have been interesting, but have done very little to help my engineering major.

11. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

I find the content outside of my major to be very interesting, and I know it is important to gain exposure to other fields of study. That being said, I wish the classes were a little more related to my major.

12. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

I think that it will look nice on my resume. Also, I feel like the Honors College has helped me build a community of academically motivated friends and colleagues that will provide me with a lot of connections in my career.

13. *For upperclassmen--What would you do if you could start your academic Honors experience over again?*

I would do the exact same thing.

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

The stakeholder did not respond to this question.

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

This stakeholder agreed to reconnect via text message or email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors Student, Mechanical Engineering, Junior
- Honors Student, Electrical Engineering, Junior
- Non-Honors Professor, Mechanical Engineering

Possible next-steps:

Next, I would like to reach out to some prospective students since that is a shareholder group that we have very little input from.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors College Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Female</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>To discover areas for improvement within the Honors College. It is especially important to find student's areas of frustration with the Honors College, so we can figure out what needs are not being met.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We are aiming to improve the Honors curriculum so that students can learn skills with real world application, as well as make them feel connected to the College. If we can figure out areas of disconnect, we can better serve students in our innovations.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This stakeholder has had an overall positive experience with the Honors program. Academically, they do not feel disconnected to the Honors program, because they have taken Honors courses every semester of their time at Grand Valley. They do feel very socially disconnected from the college though. They mentioned several times that they feel like their writing skills have improved as a result of being involved with Honors. Like many other Honors students that have been interviewed, they also expressed distaste with the way the senior project is handled.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students feel like they lack passion and guidance for their senior project • This student feels that their writing and group work skills have improved as a result of the Honors program • This stakeholder does not feel very connected to the Honors program despite being in Honors classes every semester of their academic career.
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?</i></p> <p>The stakeholder is a Junior, and a Political Science major. They are involved in Student Life, and intramural sports.</p>

2. *What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?*

They said that they considered the curriculum, and whether it would help them move more quickly through college. Grand Valley's Honors curriculum incorporated the AP credits they were bringing in well, so that really influenced their decision to enroll. Finally, they stated that the personal email response from Dr. J about their admissions paper really made them want to come to Grand Valley. They said they were looking for a school in which they felt like a part of a community, and Dr. J's response made them feel that they were going to be a valued part of the Honors community here.

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College's role in your life? Why?*

They said that it was about a 4. They have been in Honors classes every semester of their college career, but otherwise they have had no connection to the college. They also lived with Honors students their freshman year, but they felt that they did not make any meaningful connections with other Honors students as a result of this because everyone was so focused on studying. This stakeholder said that they wished they were more involved in Honors non-academically.

4. *Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors College?*

They said that the only thing that they could picture as being different would be their credit amount right now. They said that they still might be wrapping up a few general education courses, but Honors allowed them to bypass that. They then added that they feel that their writing has improved as a result of their Honors.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

So far, the most beneficial thing that the Honors College has provided has been the challenge provided by their freshman sequence. They feel that this has prepared them for the rest of their college experience.

6. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?*

They think that the Honors program should work harder to involve students and make them feel like a part of the Honors community. Also, as a student who will soon be working on their senior project, they wish there was more guidance with the Senior project. This student said that they are not looking forward to their senior project at all.

7. *Describe your ideal curriculum for the Honors College.*

This stakeholder said that they could not envision changing the current Honors curriculum.

8. *How did your freshman sequence in the Honors College affect your freshman year?*

They said that their sequence helped them improve their writing skills due to the many writing assignments. They also said that it helped them make friends within the Honors College.

9. *For Sophomores and up- How has the lack of a required Honors course your sophomore year affected your sense of connection to the Honors college?*

This student took two Honors courses their Sophomore year, so they feel that their connection to the college has not been affected.

10. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within your major?*

They do not feel like the content of their Honors courses has supplemented learning within their major that well, besides one Honors economics course that they took. They do feel like the writing requirements for their Honors courses have helped them to become a better writer, which in turn has helped them within their major.

11. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

They think it is good to learn diverse content, as long as it is an experience they choose. They said that they would not want to be forced into science or math courses, because they have no interest in it. But if they had to take a humanities course that was not directly related to their major, they would have interest in that.

12. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

They think that connections with professors and other Honors students will benefit them in the future for employment opportunities. They also think that their exposure to constant group work in their Honors courses will help them in their career.

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

The stakeholder did not come up with anything for this question.

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

Yes, they agreed to be contacted via email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

This stakeholder did not provide any other connections.

Possible next-steps:

A possible next step is to reach out to past Honors students that have been interviewed and ask them about their soft skill development as a result of the Honors program.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Prospective student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Male</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>The primary goal for conducting this interview is to find out what high school students, who are interested in the Grand Valley State University Honors College, think about the Honors College and what they expect from the College in the form of a curriculum.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We hope to bring more students to the Grand Valley Honors College and provide them with a rigorous, constructive, and beneficial education that will prepare the students for the future outside of their education. By conducting this work, we are gaining insight on what is expected from an Honors curriculum by a perspective student. This will help us in designing a new curriculum.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This interview was very informative as knowledge about students who, while not Grand Valley State University students, are high school students that are interested in Grand Valley and the Honors College. Information that was learned from the interview involve what this student finds to be important subjects and skills to improve, how the Honors College should be set up, and one point about making sure the curriculum is known to perspective students. The student believes that public speaking should be a part of the curriculum. While he did like the current curriculum plan he believed that there should be one required class each year with elective style classes added with this. The last point to expand on is that he did not know much about the curriculum until it was explained to him. This shows that the curriculum should be explained more and to a better degree than it currently is to perspective students.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He thinks public speaking is an important subject and thinks that should be part of a required class. • He did like the way the curriculum is currently laid out but would change it up to be one required class a year with electives. • He does not think that the curriculum of the Honors College is well advertised currently. • “I’m really into like skills and stuff like that, especially the shops and all that and if I get certified I can get a job saying I’m certified and manufacturers love that, so I like something where you learn certain skills” Want’s skills that manufacturers want taught (helping prepare for after graduation)
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>High school or transfer student? What year are you?</i></p> <p>I’m a senior at Hampshire High School.</p>

2. *What are your top college choices?*

The United States Naval Academy, University of Michigan, Kansas State, and Grand Valley. They offer really good engineering programs. University of Michigan was my Dad's alma mater, and the United States Naval Academy was like a dream.

3. *What sort of extracurricular activities do you hope to be involved in when attending college?*

I know there's one where you design a car and enter it in races, I know it was at K-State, it was at Michigan too, but any of those sort of manufacturing ones I'm definitely going to do. I'd check out HEMA and robotics.

4. *How did you hear about the GVSU Honors College?*

My brother got in it and that's how I heard about it. Then I visited the dorm and was like 'no other college dorm can compare.'

5. *Do you know anyone who is in the GVSU Honors College or any other Honors College? What positive/negative things have they expressed about it?*

My brother. Positive things would be the room and people, the community from what I have heard. They never really talked about the curriculum stuff while I visited, I don't think. I went to the Honors Director's presentation and he said there were some things that were like team building I think there was one of them that they can do, but I did not get into any specifics on anything else. I understood that it was going to be more difficult and that there was going to be more. I haven't heard any negative things about the Honors College specifically. Genuinely, I haven't heard any negatives; it seems pretty great, but I haven't heard much about the curriculum itself.

6. *What about the Honors College interests you?*

I like the idea of being involved in an Honors College. It's a different setting to be in, not just dorm wise. You are with like-minded people who want to want to learn and want rigor and are willing to help each other out.

7. *In your opinion, what would the ideal Honors College curriculum look like to you?*

I don't know how they would do it, but there should definitely be some class with public speaking because that's something I need to work on. I don't think there should be too many classes, not something like once a semester or something crazy like that, maybe once a year. One required Honors class a year. Obviously, you can take more since some people are into that sort of stuff and I'm totally fine with that, but I would like just one of them be required. I could see it being the Public Speaking I be Freshman or Sophomore class, then Junior year you can take a different class, or you take (for lack of a better term) Public Speaking II, and then for your Senior project you've done three public speaking classes and you speak in front of a big crowd. You would still take electives outside of your classes like Honors Chemistry, Accounting, Engineering, etcetera. I think this would be a good structure because I'm really into specified skills and stuff like that, so I can get a job easier and learn useful things.

8. *What do you expect out of the GV Honors College?*

I think of an Honors College as hosting all of the upper kids, the cream of the crop. I know there are some kids who are top of their high school classes that go there. They are good and rigorous students. I'd expect the students to be more education inclined if that makes sense. They are not going to be the partiers they will be in their rooms studying.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

I can't think of anything that you would ask me. Everything that you asked is what I would have though.

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

Yes, he is willing to reconnect through email or text.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Fellow student at his school
- Fellow student at his school

Possible next-steps:

- No change to problem statement except for a possible addition to providing skills that are useful for different jobs.
- Get in contact with the two people who he mentioned.
- Spread Honors recruitment to High Schools to find more prospective students.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors student at another university</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Female</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>To discover how this student feels about the way their University’s Honors program operates, and thus discover if the insights we gain from them align with Honors students here.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We are aiming to improve the Honors curriculum so that students can learn skills with real world application, as well as make them feel connected to the College. By seeing what insights align, we can work to make changes in these areas.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This student has been very involved in the Honors program at U of M and has enjoyed their time there immensely. Overall, they like the Honors community and have made many friends, as well as strong connections with faculty and staff. They feel these connections will help them in their future endeavors. As for the Honors curriculum, they enjoy the senior thesis project. Students seem to be well guided in the process of writing their thesis. This stakeholder said that the thesis project has shaped the path of their future career. Finally, this stakeholder acknowledged that they do enjoy learning content that is outside of their major, and said they enjoy the liberal arts philosophy.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They truly appreciate the opportunity to have a culminating experience within Honors (thesis). • The Honors community has helped them in many ways. For example: applications for fellowships and grad school. • They appreciate the extra services Honors provides such as advisors and outside social experiences. • Enjoys learning outside of their major.
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>Describe your identity as a U of M student. What are you involved in on campus? What is your major?</i></p> <p>I am a senior in LSA studying Anthropology, Spanish, and International Studies. I am involved extensively in the Honors program because I have worked as student staff for the program for 3 years and because I am writing a senior Honors thesis (in the department of Anthropology). I am also involved in research through the Department of Anthropology in the undergraduate coding lab associated with the project Mexican Exposures. Outside of work and academics, I dance in a student-</p>

run dance group, climb at the local climbing gym, and enjoy beer, food, and great conversation with the wonderful friends I've met in my time at UM.

2. *What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors program?*

Coming into such a large university was daunting. I knew I wanted to find ways to make the university smaller, so I sought out learning communities. Honors, because students live and take classes together freshman year, was a great way to enter UM with a slightly smaller community, making it easier to make friends and build connections.

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors program's role in your life? Why?*

Honors has become an increasingly important part of my experience at UM, in large part due to the fact that I work as student staff for the program. This year, because I am writing a thesis, I would say Honors is 10/10 important in my academic life. The academic advising through Honors has also been extremely formative in my undergrad years. I have an advisor who knows me well and is very dedicated to their work, a fact which has encouraged me to apply for scholarships, fellowships, and jobs that I otherwise may not have applied for. Rating the program's role in my life on a scale is difficult, but if you're looking for a description of my involvement in the program, I am very involved through both work and academics, and the Honors program has played a huge role in shaping my time at UM.

4. *Picture yourself as a U of M student, NOT in the Honors program. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors program?*

Without Honors, my college experience would be entirely different. I have no way of knowing what my experience would look like without Honors, as I entered as a freshman and have become increasingly involved since then. The connections with faculty and students that I have made through Honors have fundamentally shaped my college experience. I still live with friends from my Honors hall freshman year, writing a thesis has influenced what I want to pursue in the future and has allowed me to connect with faculty in ways I likely would not have if I were not writing a thesis. The academic advising through Honors and the mentorship I have received from Honors faculty and staff, and as I've worked as a student staff member, has pushed me to challenge myself in coursework, fellowship applications, etc.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors experience? Or what will be in the future? Why is this important to you?*

The friends I have made through Honors will be lasting. The connections with faculty through working for the program and writing a thesis have already positively influenced my ability to get a job and have encouraged me to pursue research in the future. So, if you're looking for an umbrella term to describe what has been the most beneficial part of the Honors experience: the network of intelligent, engaged students, staff, and faculty.

6. *What do you think could be improved about the Honors program? Why?*

When I was a freshman, Honors was restructuring the Honors Core Courses. At that time, there was a lot of variety across core courses in regard to difficulty, skills gained, etc., and many of the courses had kinks that needed to be worked out because it was the first time they were taught. I cannot speak to how the Honors core courses have developed since then.

7. *What would your ideal Honors program at U of M look like?*

I have witnessed the Honors program make some tweaks and changes while I've been involved, and for the most part I think they are positive. I like that Honors is planning recreational events for students that are difficult to access otherwise, for example, rock climbing and scuba diving with the director. The faculty and staff in the office are really, really great—they are dedicated to their work and excited about change and improvements to the program. The one suggestion for growth that I can think of reflects an issue that plagues higher education and U of M more generally: a lack of racial and economic diversity.

8. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within your major?*

Most of my coursework (besides my thesis) within Honors has not been learning *within* my major per se. Honors core courses and elective courses allowed me to study topics that I didn't get a chance to explore within my major. This exploratory opportunity that Honors courses offered were beneficial in my first years before I really knew what I wanted to study, and I appreciate having had the chance to explore non-major topics, but none of my Honors core courses have counted towards my majors (they did count toward general education distribution requirements).

9. *Describe the Honors requirements for your major if you are familiar with them at this point. How do you feel about your Honors major-specific requirements?*

To graduate with Honors within a major, you need to write a thesis. Unless you write a thesis, there are no Honors requirements for anthropology. The requirements of what a thesis looks like vary depending on the major. I am writing a thesis through Anthropology. Anthropology requires that students enroll in the thesis seminar class Fall and Winter semesters of their senior in order to produce a paper (required length is not strictly defined, but they usually range between 50-100 pages) based on their original research. We will also present our paper in a poster format at a symposium in late April.

10. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

I am not quite sure what you mean by this question, but I have very much enjoyed coursework that wasn't within my majors while at UM. I suppose my answer to this question is it depends on the course. Of course, there was some learning content not related to my major that I liked more than other learning content not related to my major. I do believe a liberal arts degree that encourages students to take courses in a variety of subjects is extremely valuable for educating critical, engaged thinkers.

11. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

The connections I have made through Honors will likely help me get jobs or apply grad school (faculty recommendations). The research I have done through an Honors thesis has encouraged me to pursue research in the future and has most definitely deepened my interest in pursuing graduate school for a degree(s) in Public Health and/or Anthropology.

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

The stakeholder did not have a response for this.

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

They did agree to reconnect, and they wish to be contacted over email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- This stakeholder did not provide any more connections

Possible next-steps:

We should look over our insights from Honors students at GVSU and see if they agree or would agree with some of this student’s statements to see if the needs for Honors students are similar across the board.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Female</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain further insight into the desires and concerns of Honors students so that we can innovate properly.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We hope to create an Honors curriculum where students feel connected to the program and satisfied with their experience by the time they graduate in terms of the skills learned and the overall Honors experience.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>Overall, this stakeholder was very satisfied with their Honors experience. They were selected over other candidates for a job because they are an Honors student, and they are very grateful for this. They did not expect their freshman sequence to be what it is actually like, but they enjoy it nonetheless, and feel that some of the content covered may help them in their future career. They like that the Honors program offers a fast track to get through general education classes. Currently, they are taking a sequence and a Live Learn Lead, and they enjoy both because of the opportunity to be a part of a tight knit class and being able to have open discussions.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are very satisfied with their Honors experience. • They are grateful that the Honors program helped them get a job. • They feel that the course descriptions for the Honors freshman sequences are misleading and need to be redone. • They appreciate the Honors fast track.
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response</p> <p>1. <i>Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?</i></p> <p>They are a nursing major, a member of the pre-nursing association, they regularly go to church, and they work downtown as a research assistant.</p> <p>2. <i>What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?</i></p>

They were deciding between Grand Valley and U of M, and they liked the smaller community and welcoming feeling of Grand Valley. They felt like the Grand Valley Honors College was interested in student development. Part of choosing to be in Honors at Grand Valley was because it made their parents accept their choice.

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College's role in your life? Why?*

Besides the fact that being a part in the Honors College helped them get their job, they think the Honors College role in their life is about a 3. They don't feel connected to the college in any other way besides their freshman sequence.

4. *Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors College?*

They think that they probably wouldn't have gotten their job if they weren't in the Honors College, and they would not have met certain friends. They said that they would not have gotten their job if they weren't involved in the Honors College because their employer told them that seeing the Honors College on their resume made them stick out.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

Academically, Honors makes it easier to get general education classes over with, provides the opportunity to learn about different topics that don't exactly pertain to their major, which they think is "cool."

6. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?*

They think that the Honors College should fix the course descriptions for the freshman sequences, because they don't think the course description offered an accurate representation of what their sequence actually turned out to be. Nonetheless, they are satisfied with their sequence.

7. *How did your freshman sequence in the Honors College affect your freshman year?*

Their first semester adjustment was difficult, the sequence was a lot of work and a big time commitment. They like the discussions they have in the class and enjoy getting to know their classmates. They really liked their Live Learn Lead because they got to know their professors and classmates very well, and it provided them the opportunity to talk and share their opinion in class, which they never felt they had the opportunity to do in high school.

8. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within your major?*

They feel that there is little relation between their major and their sequence, but they in general like learning new lessons that may apply to their future career. They think learning about different cultures in their sequence will help them in their future career as a nurse.

9. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

They like the idea of being well rounded, and they think that they need to know diverse information to help them in the real world, and in their non-professional life.

10. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

They think that the whole experience helps students get through college quicker, and the content of Honors classes forces you to adapt and work diligently. To them, Honors students look stronger on paper, and the Honors experience helps with resume building and opportunities.

Innovations

- *Required study abroad:* They are very fond of this idea. They want to study abroad themselves and would love to get more credit for it.
- *Senior project advisor:* They like the idea of an advisor in their specific field, but they don't like the idea of a predestined project. They want flexibility for the content of the project.
- *Tiered difficulty scale:* They like the idea. They feel that it would help students to plan their schedules accordingly.
- *Service learning and field trips:* They like the idea and feel it would provide Honors students with a unique opportunity.
- *Interim term style class:* They feel this would be relaxing and make Honors a unique experience.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

They did not have a response.

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

Yes, they wish to be contacted by email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- This stakeholder did not provide any further connections.

Possible next-steps:

We should reach out to other stakeholders who were considering other Honors programs and see what made them choose Grand Valley. For this stakeholder, it was the idea that the FMHC was invested in her personal growth. It would be interesting to hear what won students over about Grand Valley.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Female</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain further insight into the desires and concerns of Honors students so that we can innovate properly.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We hope to create an Honors curriculum where students feel connected to the program and satisfied with their experience by the time they graduate in terms of the skills learned and the overall Honors experience.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This student is a freshman, currently taking an Honors sequence. They say that their sequence has helped them develop good writing skills and has helped them to become more confident in their speaking skills. In addition, they like that they have had the opportunity to develop close relationships with the students and professors in their sequence. They have a large major in credit, so they like the fact that the Honors program allows them to finish general education credits earlier, although they did not choose to be in the program for this reason, they just see it as an added bonus. They do not foresee themselves being very connected to Honors upon completion of their sequence, and they do not look forward to their senior project. Overall, they have enjoyed their Honors experience and feel that it has pushed them to achieve more in their academics.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They thoroughly enjoyed their sequence and feel that it has helped them achieve more, grow in their writing skills, and develop strong relationships with another Honors student and faculty. • They are dissatisfied with the organization of the senior project and feel it is a burden. • They are predicting that they will feel disconnected from the Honors College upon completion of their sequence. • They do not enjoy classes that don't relate directly to their major. • They appreciate the Honors fast track.
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?</p>

They are a Freshman, with a Spanish education major with an emphasis on secondary education, minoring in psychology teaching. They are in Spanish club, Humane society and Laker Familia, and work at admissions.

2. *What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?*

They took all Honors and AP in high school, so they wanted to be challenged academically in college. A friend encouraged them to enroll in the Honors College. So far, they really enjoy the community that Honors has provided.

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College's role in your life? Why?*

Socially, about a 6, and academically about an 8. They feel like they will be disconnected after completing their general education courses because there aren't many other Honors choices.

4. *Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors College?*

They would not feel as on top of their academics, and they like the Honors fast track. Honors enabled them to be proactive in scheduling and finishing general education requirements. They feel like the sequence made their freshman year because they made connections with a small group of people and professors.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

Their sequence, because of the connections they have made. The sequence helped with the transition into college on a social basis. They said, "definitely not the senior project, because it feels like an added burden."

6. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?*

They wish that the senior project was started earlier on. They don't know anything about it. They wish there was more structure to the senior project. They want it to be a project that you can work on at any point in their academic career.

7. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within you major?*

They feel that they are learning skills that apply to other classes such as writing and speaking. They feel more confident in their writing skills as a result of their freshman sequence.

8. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

They think it takes a lot of time away from their learning, and feel they are wasting money on classes that don't have to do with their final degree. Especially "hard skill" classes like science and math. They

feel that all the skills they need can be learned within their designated area of study. However, they acknowledge the positive exploratory nature of gen eds.

9. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

It gave them a lot of confidence in their academics and has set the bar high for their achievement in college. They made it through their sequence, so they feel they can do anything.

Innovations

When questioned about each of the innovations, they had positive responses for all of them. They especially felt strongly about the study abroad innovation, because they feel that a lot of Honors students already take advantage of study abroad, and it would be great if they got more credit for it. They also liked the idea of the predetermined style of the senior project because they felt that it would remove some of the ambiguity of the senior project.

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

They did not have a response.

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

Yes, they agreed to reconnect and wish to be contacted by email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- This stakeholder did not provide any further connections.

Possible next-steps:

We should look into more innovations that deal with the senior project, because there seems to be universal dissatisfaction with the way it is handled.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors College Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Male</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain further insight into the desires and concerns of FMHC students regarding the Honors College curriculum.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>Our team is focused on keeping FMHC students tethered to the Honors College. We want the students to be engaged in the Honors College experience throughout their entire career at GVSU, and even beyond graduation. This interview will allow us to gain first-hand knowledge from an upperclassman Honors student on how to accomplish this goal.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>In general, this student has been fairly happy with his Honors College experience. He said that he has not felt disconnected to the Honors College due to the fact that he has taken Honors courses every semester of his college career. This student strongly disliked his freshman sequence and actually dropped the class. Despite his poor sequence experience, he has enjoyed all of the other Honors classes he has taken and said that they provide a nice break from his major classes by teaching different subjects. He expressed a desire for a little more emphasis on each student’s major in the freshman sequence. He stated that his primary motivation for joining the Honors College was due to the housing and because he took Honors classes in high school. He also stated that the Honors College has had a significant impact on his life, primarily due to the friends it has allowed him to make.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberal Arts based classes provide a nice break from the monotony of major classes • Desires greater variety in freshman sequence curriculum to suit the student’s major • Feels more “well-rounded” due to Honors College curriculum
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?</i></p> <p>I am a junior in the Honors College, my major is Mechanical Engineering, and I am on the Ultimate Frisbee team and participate in the Laker Marching Band.</p>

2. *What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?*

The housing situation was ideal for me and I had been in Honors classes in high school, so it felt like the right fit for me.

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College's role in your life? Why?*

8. So many of my friends are people I've met through the Honors College. I have a great, supportive group of people around me who are all trying to be the best that they can be.

4. *Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors College?*

I don't think I would've been in as healthy of an academic setting as I am now. I know my cousin did not like his living situation freshman year because he was in the traditional freshman dorms. He moved to Niemeyer Sophomore year and he felt like his college experience was so much better with other strong students around him every day.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

The connections I've made and the friendships I've gained from being in the Honors College are what is the most important to me from my Honors College experiences.

6. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?*

I was in the Making of Europe Sequence my Freshman year. Although it was a recommended sequence for Engineers, it did not fit with my schedule along with many of my classmates for Sophomore year. I think that this could be improved by designing sequences that fit better with the Engineering curriculum.

7. *Describe your ideal curriculum for the Honors College.*

In my case, the Honors College was a great break from my rigorous engineering courses. It allowed me a break from the constant differential equations with learning about music, art, and culture. An ideal Honors College curriculum provides a balance from the rest of one's courses.

8. *How did your freshman sequence in the Honors College affect your freshman year?*

My freshman sequence was Making of Europe and it was one of the most stressful classes I've ever been in.

9. *For Sophomores and up- How has the lack of a required Honors course your sophomore year affected your sense of connection to the Honors College?*

I continued to take Honors courses my Sophomore and Junior year, so I did not feel a difference in connection.

10. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within your major?*

The content in my Honors courses didn't really relate to engineering, but the separate subjects was beneficial to my learning. Having a break from Engineering helped clear my mind while I focused on other subjects before coming back to Engineering work.

11. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

I was easily able to learn subjects not relating to my major other than chemistry. It was a subject that I couldn't quite grasp as well as others.

12. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

My Honors education has given me a more liberal education and expanded my world view. I've learned a lot in other subjects and being a well-rounded individual will help me greatly in the future.

13. *For upperclassmen--What would you do if you could start your academic Honors experience over again?*

I would not have taken the Making of Europe sequence and would've fulfilled my Honors credits using various other Honors courses. I enjoyed the other courses more and did not feel as stressed in those classes as I did in the Making of Europe sequence.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

The stakeholder did not respond to this question.

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

This stakeholder agreed to reconnect in person, via text message, or email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors Student, Computer Science, Sophomore
- Honors Student, Biomedical Science, Junior
- Non-Honors Student, Computer Science, Junior

Possible next-steps:

Next, I plan on continuing to gain input on our team innovations through interviews with Honors students and prospective students.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Male</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>Understand what an Honors Freshman thinks of their first year so far at the GVSU Honors College and thus gain their insight.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>We hope to create a curriculum that is rigorous and beneficial for students. Understanding the thoughts of a new student will be a way to help us know what fits that criteria.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This was an interesting conversation, as the student was a freshman and mentioned that he did not fully know or even understand the curriculum for the Honors College, which was something to note as it would cause confusion later on in his college career if not addressed. He believes that the College having an interdisciplinary focus in the classes it offers is very beneficial to students' education. He mentions that this leads to useful skills and lets students understand the world better. He also talks about the social aspect of the college and this is interesting as it and the classes he has taken have affected his life in a significant way, both socially and academically.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broader perspective is something he finds useful • The interdisciplinary approach of the Honors College is a good thing and is important. • The Honors College is a good way for students to meet like-minded individuals
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?</i></p> <p>I'm a freshman and I'm a computer science major. I haven't done the secondary admission yet since there are requirements that have to be completed freshman year before I can apply for secondary admission. Then I'm part of the Honor's College, and with that I'm part of the Making of Europe sequence, which is the political and military history of Europe from roughly the 1500s to the end of WWII. As for things I'm involved in, I'm in the Historical European Martial Arts Club which is basically fighting with all sorts of medieval weapons, swords, axes, spears, that sort of thing. I'm part of the Anime Club. It's a club where we get together, watch anime, and do social events related to them. I'm also in the League of Legends Club, which is a Club that meets on Monday nights and we all get together and play League of Legends. I'm also in the Pokémon Club which is also pretty self-explanatory as to what it is. We get together Wednesday nights, sit down and play some Pokémon. Sometimes we'll have certain events that go along with it, such as having debates as to which</p>

Pokémon is considered the best of what is generally considered the worst Pokémon. We've done games where you have to draw a Pokémon from memory. I'm in a lot of clubs, but at the same time I put most of my focus on keeping up with my classes. So, if I had to choose something from my class or something from my club most likely I would choose the class for that, since after all at Grand Valley we are here to get our education.

2. *What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?*

I would say for me it's personally because I wanted an educational program that would challenge me. For basically my entire life with school I've been in advanced classes and have performed exceptionally well in them for the most part and coming to college I was looking for something similar. In high school I did an International Baccalaureate program (IB) and that put a lot of emphasis on looking at things from an interdisciplinary perspective and not just learning the material, but also learning how they connect to each other. An example is looking at history and talking about how different subjects relate to it and how those factors affect what's going on now and that sort of thing. So, when I came to Grand Valley I wanted to find something that would challenge me in the same way IB did, and the Honors College was the natural extension of that. It is like IB 2.0.

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College's role in your life? Why?*

I would probably say a 6 or a 7 just because most of my really good friends I have I've met through the Honors College. For example, 'Friend A' I met during the Honors orientation. I have met a few friends through my Honors sequence. My dorm, while not specifically only Honors is mostly Honors and that sense of community is built since we are all going through the same things. Some of the experiences I've had in class have been some of the most interesting. Like my Honors sequence has looked at a number of wars I never even knew happened and my professor has recognized that none of us are history majors and has not put the emphasis on the specific events. He instead puts the emphasis on broadening our perspective, saying that this is what was going on in the world this time and it lead to this, and this, and this, and applies that into the sort of things going on in the world today.

4. *Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors College?*

For one thing there is the difference in classes. I'm currently in an Honors sequence and an Honors art class, and I don't think I'd be in either of those if I was not in Honors. I think the biggest impact it would have is my friend group would be different. With the Honors College and Honors Orientation when we first arrived here it sort of helped me meet a few good friends, and some of the other events that went along with that I met a few friends. With the clubs I got involved in I think it would be somewhat similar, but my friends wouldn't be as close since we would only know each other through the club.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

I would say being able to choose an Honors sequence that interests you rather than being thrust into one you don't care much about. And with the mentorship program pairing similar people up. I've

always been a shy person, so making friends has never been easy for me. Through Elementary school I didn't really have many close friends. I had 1 or 2 close friends through middle school and high school, but here I formed my own friend group quicker than I expected. Since I stuck with the same friend group I was worried coming to Grand Valley leaving my circle in general that I wouldn't be able to find friends, but the Honors College and the school in general have helped me to make friends.

6. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?*

I think the mentorship program should be arranged on interest, so people can gain friends from the start, but since I don't know the innerworkings of the mentorship program I do not know if my experience was coincidence or not and I want to make sure that what happened to me happens more often. This isn't with the Honors College but more with the school in general, but I think making clubs easier to find or make would be helpful. I know that there are some who would rather the Honors College not interfere, but I think having an advisor try to stay in touch with the students at Grand Valley and if they are not in a club to point them in the direction of some and to help them out with their academic career. Basically, having that information at their fingertips would be beneficial.

7. *Describe your ideal curriculum for the Honors College.*

I think the Honors sequence is definitely a very important thing to keep. So, I think keeping that in Freshman year is good and gives you a taste of the interdisciplinary approach of the Honors College, and I think it has been a very good experience that everyone should have. I think there should be something in your Sophomore year, it seems peculiar to me that this isn't something there. Perhaps something like a Junior seminar or another sequence there. A class that gives you more of that interdisciplinary approach and a broader perspective. With that there should be multiple options for each major. Say for a Computer Science Major like myself maybe a Sophomore Computer Science class that looked into the applications for code that was taught in classes that was taught Freshman year or use coding knowledge to teach others or solve problems. Junior year I think the seminar would be good, I admit I don't know much about the Junior seminar, so I would not know if any changes were needed. The Senior project is the same, I don't have enough information on the structure, but as long as it continues the wider perspective work that the Honors College does and if it does not then something needs to be changed so it does.

8. *How did your freshman sequence in the Honors College affect your freshman year?*

It's been a very interesting experience. For one thing, my sequence has been a bit unusual. It's been a bit of reading but compared to a super in-depth history class it has not been 'read this book within a week and have a report ready by Monday.' It's a manageable class that fills the credit slot and lets me learn about something I'm interested in. With the combination of this sequence and my major part of the reason I'm going through the path is because I would possibly like to go into game design with a Medieval strategy emphasis. I will repeat something my professor said: 'Going forward we are not going to remember the specific events of the battle, we aren't going to remember the specific events of the history and that really isn't the point, going forward looking at the world from a wider perspective is.' This class has helped me do that and see different ways different subjects interact and accomplish their goals.

9. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within your major?*

With the specific content of the class there hasn't been that much intersection, which is obvious since it is computer science compared to European history. There isn't going to be much overlap there. Part of it is that this class has stressed things from a wider perspective and the different causes that play into what comes next, which can be used in the debugging process and creating a computer science project. It is very easy to simply write code and have it do something but in order to have it do what you want it to do in the way you want it to do you need to do a lot of testing. One of the assumptions you cannot make in Computer Science is that the user will know the exact way you program functions immediately. So, you have to be able to prepare your code to handle anything that could be thrown at it. To do this you have to 'A' think up all of the different scenarios your code could face which takes a fair bit of thinking and then for each of those scenarios you have to find out if your code in its current form can handle any of those scenarios and if it can't then how can you change it so it will. If something is going wrong, where is it going wrong? I think the wider perspective that my Honors sequence has been working to help us look at things through helps when trying to find the things that make the code not work and fix it. My Honors class has helped me to work on the skills that help me find where the problem may be. It's taught me to look at things from a wide perspective, which helps when I go to code it helps me think of the different places that something could go wrong.

10. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

I think for that it depends on what you're learning and the interests of the specific person learning it. For example, last semester I took Japanese 101 and it was difficult, but I liked it because I was interested in it. This semester I have to take an Art History to fulfill the art credit and while I do think it is boring, I think it is valuable to learn the different processes. As I said, it all comes down to the particular student, and I would rather take unrelated classes that interest me than ones that are more or less just to fulfill credits, but I do think it can be a valuable experience either way.

11. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

I kind of touched on this earlier when talking about wider perspectives, but especially as a computer science major going into game design or a professor in computer science. I think being able to look at problems from different perspectives, looking at the whole picture, trying to find different ways that different information and facts interact, will be something good to take into any career.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

I honestly don't have any. The questions you prepared and what came up is what I expected."

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

Yes, by GVSU email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Upperclassman Honors student
- Professors who work with the Honors College

Possible next-steps

- No revisions needed
- Go interview more Honors professors

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors Student
Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
Gender: Male
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>The main goal is to gain an understanding as to what a Freshman who is a GVSU Honors Student thinks about the program that they are currently working on.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>Our goal is to make sure that the FMHC has a rigorous curriculum that stimulates motivated students and prepares them for their life after they graduate.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>The student mentioned that academics were a very important part of the Honors College and should be the reason that people join it. He noted that the Honors College affected many things including his social life and his writing ability. These are important things to take away, since we want the students to be tethered to the Honors College, especially with the academic side of it, and if we can incorporate how to include these sorts of experiences into the curriculum more students will hopefully stick with the curriculum. He also mentioned that there should be something like a class in Sophomore year and that he was worried that since there was not he would not be as connected to Honors if he did not have one. He also mentioned that Honors taught him skills he finds important, such as how to critically analyze problems and how to be open-minded.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors affected his social life in a big way. • Honors has helped him with his writing skills and taught him important skills like Critical Thinking and open-mindedness. • He thinks that there should be a class sophomore year.
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?</i></p> <p>My major is Computer Engineering. The sequence I'm taking right now is East Asian in the World, and I absolutely love that class. It is probably my favorite class of the week because the professor is really nice, he makes the lectures interesting, and the discussions are fun. I have clubs almost every day of the week, except Tuesdays and Thursdays. On Mondays I go to League of Legends Club because it's probably my favorite online game to play. I've probably put too much time in that game; I think last I looked it was 54 days total time played. On Wednesdays, I go to Pokémon Club. I don't play as much Pokémon as I used to when I was younger, but I absolutely love everyone in the club; everyone's really inviting and open. Everyone is a friend there, and there are not really any issues at all. Fridays I go to Chess Club, and I try to go when I can since I liked chess when I was in High School. I think I found out about it at Campus Life Night, so I took a chance and went there. It is rather small and not super organized, but it is a fun place to hang out. Saturday is HEMA Club, and I enjoy that. Honestly,</p>

when I first saw it I thought 'this is pretty cool, maybe I'll give it one go' then when I went I thought that it was so fun. Sunday, I go to Anime Club, everyone is really nice there.

2. *What factors did you consider in your choice to enroll in the Honors College?*

Initially I think I was given the invitation for it first and academics was the thing I was best at and I wanted to keep going with it. I struggled a bit, but I'm working to do well. I was raised to keep doing my best and if I'm not at least trying to get into the Honors College then am I doing my best. My essays are getting better as my sequence is mostly writing and my professor is saying my writing is getting better, and he lets me get into broader topics for my papers and looking at both modern and historical interpretations.

3. *On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College's role in your life? Why?*

Well for classes I want to be in the Honors College since I love my sequence, so class-wise close to a 10. I love my sequence. I have always been terrible at writing. I have felt like I'm not getting it and I'm not getting the proper help and, in the end, it doesn't feel like my paper from all the changes people tell me to make. My sequence professor has been helping me improve and doesn't change the meaning of what I am trying to say. For social, I don't think the fact that I'm in Honors College affects my social life at all since the majority of people I talk to are from the clubs I'm in, not from Honors. Most of the time people don't care that I'm in Honors they just care that I'm a person and that's what is important. I talk to some people in my Honors sequence and I met a friend in it but that is not where my social time is spent. I did not join Honors for the social aspect, and I don't think anyone should join it for that reason, it is academic reason they should join for. So, in that case probably a 6 or 7 for social things.

4. *Picture yourself as a Grand Valley Student, NOT in the Honors College. How would your college experience be different if you were not in the Honors College?*

I don't think would know Friend A since I met him in my Honors sequence. I don't think I would know Friend B since I met her the first week during the Honors Week. I would probably not know Friend C either. I probably wouldn't be in Pokémon Club since I joined that because of Friends B & C. So honestly a lot of my social stuff would be different. I would probably be stressed out daily and my classes, well I would probably still hate writing. In a general class the professor probably would not have as good of a relationship with the students. My professor for the sequence schedules three days for just his Honors students to come and talk about the class and their papers. I don't think a general class professor could do that since they would be so busy. At first glance I would not have thought Honors College isn't that important to my social life, but now I think about it I wouldn't know the people in Honors if I wasn't in Honors.

5. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

Academically it has got to be the writing. As I have said many times before I did not like writing. The only time I have done well in writing has been creative writing. Now I'm actually doing well with research papers, and my professor is helping me spin it in a way I like. I like learning about history and stuff, but I think there is only so much you can write about history, and I think it is even more important when you look at it how people view it now. For example, my next paper is about samurai and is the way we view them now, the knight in shining armor of Japan, is that how they were or are

they just warriors. As you got me to think socially I would not have known like half the people I know now since if I wasn't in Honors I would probably be sitting in my room doing absolutely nothing.

6. *Going off of that, what do you think could be improved about the Honors College? Why?*

I hear from other students, not in my sequence, that they don't like their professors or their sequence. Other than that, honestly, I can't think of anything that could be improved upon. I mean they send us emails and I do see them for the most part.

7. *Describe your ideal curriculum for the Honors College.*

I guess looking ahead we have to do something Freshman year for Honors then nothing the next year and I am worried that I will fall out of the Honors circle. I would try to incorporate Honors into Sophomore year, though I worry that it may overwhelm students. I don't know what goes on Junior year and Senior year especially since my older sister did not ever talk about the academic side in Honors. So, at this point since I do not know enough about what goes on I do not think I can give a full answer.

8. *How did your freshman sequence in the Honors College affect your freshman year?*

As I've said I'm loving it. First semester I loved half of it the other half not so much. We had a professor change and I think it was teaching style as to why I did not like the other half. My sequence almost did not happen, and it was only because the other professor stepped up that it did. It was very hard to learn from that one professor since he was not used to teaching Freshman. He gives us chances to learn outside the classroom since he believes there is more to learning than sitting in a classroom and lecturing. We are comparing and contrasting things, discussing how a small thing can affect history in a major way.

9. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within your major?*

As far as knowledge we are learning not much overlap, but the skills, which he cares about the most, yes. Like being able to critically analyze things I will need that for engineering. It is the skills that he is teaching us is the most important thing that I could take away, regardless of the major I am in.

10. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

It's kind of weird since some history I do not like and then there is some history I love. I have definitely gained respect for history and cultures over the years. I've watched a few "TED Talks" and some YouTubers. What I love about my class is that it is East Asia in the World so there is a focus on East Asia which I absolutely love Japanese culture which I learned from a specific YouTuber and my High School Japanese class. I'm enjoying the history stuff we are learning, and the lecture notes he posts online it feels personal and like I am there, like when he talks about the Great Wall or some hot place in China.

11. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

I think the critical thinking is going to be very important, if I end up changing majors or doing random jobs it is very important to think critically, analyze things. All these discussions on how to be open-minded about things it has helped me to get other people's understanding about things. I feel everything I've been learning in the Honors College regarding that is beneficial.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

"I'm not going to lie I did not know what to expect with this, so I have nothing like this."

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

Yes, via cell phone.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Talk to professor and get their thoughts on the Honors curriculum
- Honors advisors
- Other Honors professionals

Possible next-steps (other stakeholders to reach out; revisions to problem statement; resources to research; other locations to visit, etc.):

- Possibly interview faculty and staff of the Honors College.
- No revisions to Problem Statement.

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location:</p> <p>Honors Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Female</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>To gain insight and feedback on our top innovations from an Honors student who has been through the existing Honors College curriculum. Hearing feedback from a student will help us understand if our innovations will appeal to students and how we need to alter them.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>Our goal is to make sure that the FMHC has a rigorous curriculum that stimulates motivated students and prepares them for their life after they graduate.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>This student is a Sophomore who has been very involved with the Honors College and has enjoyed its benefits. The community played a large role in her sense of being involved in the Honors College. Even though her Freshman sequence was not directly related to her major and future career, she saw the benefit of learning skills outside of her major and expanding her vision. This student thought that our top 2 prototype concepts would be very appealing and beneficial to the Honors College curriculum.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student would like to see more STEM classes represented in a future curriculum, possibly some 1-2 credit classes about special topics in science/math. • The student liked the idea of study abroad but noted that it isn't financially possible for all students. • The student thought that students would be more devoted to a class that they were genuinely interested in, so it's important to offer a wide variety of classes.
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>Describe your identity as a Grand Valley student. What are you involved in? Major?</i></p> <p>I am a Sophomore and studying Biomedical Sciences. I am involved in a few clubs that are not related to my major. I lived in Niemeyer my Freshman year, but I am living off-campus this year to save money.</p> <p>2. <i>On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is the Honors College's role in your life? Why?</i></p> <p>So far, I have really enjoyed my Honors classes and the community, so I would say a 6. My sequence (Food for Thought) didn't have anything to do with my future career, but I definitely learned a lot of interesting things about a subject that I wouldn't have chosen otherwise. The community of Honors,</p>

especially living in Niemeyer, has made a huge impact because I have met some really good lasting friends through it.

3. *So far, what has been the most beneficial part of your Honors College experience? Or what will be in the future? (Why is this important to you?)*

The most beneficial part of the Honors College so far has been being able to learn about topics and skills that I didn't know I needed. I went into college thinking that I could take all science classes and graduate as a successful individual, but I have since realize that it is so important to learn about different subject areas than what might be your favorite. Being in Honors has also introduced me to a wide variety of amazing and talented students.

4. *How do you think the content of your previous Honors courses has supplemented your learning within you major?*

Not much, directly. I've learned how to think creatively and read more thoroughly, but the content of my Honors courses hasn't related to my major.

5. *How do you perceive learning content that is not related to your major?*

Most of the time, I enjoy learning about topics that aren't directly related to my major. However, when an entire class is devoted to a subject that isn't super interesting or I have to do hours of research and reading on something I don't find interesting, I find it hard to put in my best work and effort.

6. *How do you envision your Honors experience benefitting you in your future career and endeavors?*

I think that the Honors courses so far have taught me how to be a well-rounded learner, student, and person. There wasn't a whole lot of initial class options that I found interesting, but I have learned to enjoy different types of classes and how I can apply them to my life.

Prototype Concepts:

- **Study Abroad or 'out' / Interim / Service Learning trips**
 - I think that this is a great idea to make it a requirement to study/learn elsewhere, but to give students the option to stay local. I have always wanted to study abroad, but the financial aspect just isn't realistic for me. My Freshman sequence required service learning at the Sustainable Agriculture Project, which I wasn't initially excited for, but I ended up loving it and learning some new skills out of it too.
- **Tiered difficulty / Senior project**
 - Like I mentioned before, I enjoy learning outside of my major, so the idea of having a 1 credit class on an interesting topic would be very appealing to me. I could learn about something new without having to devote several hours a week researching boring topics. As far as the senior project, I don't really know anything about it yet, so a workshop could be really helpful.

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

The individual did not ask any further questions.

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

Yes, by email or text.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors student
- Honors student

Possible next-steps:

- Figure out how classes will be created and determined for the tiered class innovation.
- Consider financial support options for study abroad.
- Consider having Non-Honors faculty from all major areas teach a 1 credit class (in order to involve more major and offer applicable classes).

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors College Student</p>
<p>Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Female</p>
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity: The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain feedback from a current Honors College student on our list of top five innovations.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? Our team is focused on keeping FMHC students tethered to the Honors College. We want the students to be engaged in the Honors College experience throughout their entire career at GVSU, and even beyond graduation. This interview will allow us to gain first-hand knowledge from an upperclassman Honors student on how to accomplish this goal through our innovations.</p>
<p>Summary of Research: This student thought that four of our five top innovations were strong, viable options. She especially like the ideas of an incorporated study abroad program, senior project advisor program, and the tiered class format. For the study abroad innovation, she was mainly concerned about the funding and other resources necessary for the program to thrive. For the senior project advisor program, she mentioned that it is a good idea, but it may take some time to implement. For the tiered class format, she had no concerns except that the Honors faculty and staff may be resistant to changing the entire format of Honors classes. She was leery of how the service learning and field trip innovation would work around students' other classes. She thought that the interim style innovation was confusing and contradicted the tiered class format.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thought four of the five innovations were viable innovations to pursue, excluding the interim style innovation • Thought that the study abroad, senior project advisor, and tiered class structure innovations were great (10 of 10) • Thought the interim style innovation needed work and was confusing
<p>Dialogue Questions and Response:</p> <p>1. <i>Do you feel as if innovation 1 will be achievable? If so, what are some possible hurdles that may need to be overcome in order to enact this innovation? What do you like/dislike about this innovation? Do you have any questions or concerns regarding this innovation? Rate this innovation on a scale from 1-10 with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest.</i></p> <p>I think it can be done, but it would may be difficult for a lot of students. For example, those that wouldn't have gone abroad in the first place due to financial or academic schedules such as those in the engineering or nursing programs may find this difficult. If we had a J-term, a two-week trip would be more viable than in the middle of the summer because most study abroad companies have a minimum of four weeks for a session. I really like the idea of this. I completely agree that everyone should go abroad and learn to interact and appreciate other cultures. It might be difficult to make it a</p>

two-week minimum though since many have jobs during the summer and rely on that for money for school, and some jobs may not allow them to take two weeks off to do this. If you were to accept an experience with Alternative Breaks though this would be feasible in my opinion. I give this idea a 10.

2. *Do you feel as if innovation 2 will be achievable? If so, what are some possible hurdles that may need to be overcome in order to enact this innovation? What do you like/dislike about this innovation? Do you have any questions or concerns regarding this innovation? Rate this innovation on a scale from 1-10 with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest.*

I think this is a great idea. This is definitely achievable, but this will take some time to implement. I give this a 10.

3. *Do you feel as if innovation 3 will be achievable? If so, what are some possible hurdles that may need to be overcome in order to enact this innovation? What do you like/dislike about this innovation? Do you have any questions or concerns regarding this innovation? Rate this innovation on a scale from 1-10 with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest.*

I really like this idea. I think it will take a lot of persuasion for the Honors College to change their entire curriculum, but I really like the points you make about the purpose of each type of class and the effort made to keep students engaged member of FMHC. No concerns. I give this a 10.

4. *Do you feel as if innovation 4 will be achievable? If so, what are some possible hurdles that may need to be overcome in order to enact this innovation? What do you like/dislike about this innovation? Do you have any questions or concerns regarding this innovation? Rate this innovation on a scale from 1-10 with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest.*

I like the idea, but I'm not sure it will work. If it is a short trip or activity that falls within the class time allotted I think it would work. You could make field trips that are outside of class time optional because if a student cannot attend due to another class, they should not be penalized for missing an event that cuts into another course. I like the idea of engaging students in other ways or bringing in guest speakers, but field trips and service trips may have to depend on the class. I give this a 6.

5. *Do you feel as if innovation 5 will be achievable? If so, what are some possible hurdles that may need to be overcome in order to enact this innovation? What do you like/dislike about this innovation? Do you have any questions or concerns regarding this innovation? Rate this innovation on a scale from 1-10 with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest.*

I don't think this will be very achievable. I understand the idea of challenging high-achieving students, but this seems to contradict the idea of courses in tiers. In my opinion, you need to choose one or the other. This idea is very confusing to me. For example, would three one-credit courses taken in a semester count only as a one-credit course in the tier system? Or would it count as three? I like the tier system better. Also, if students are enrolling in multiple one-credit courses that are five weeks each, would these courses be held at the same time or would a student get stuck with scheduling a new class in the middle of a semester? I give this idea a 3.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"

The stakeholder did not respond to this question.

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

This stakeholder agreed to reconnect via text message or email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

The stakeholder did not provide any extra connections.

Possible next-steps:

Focus on working our innovations into prototypes based on this feedback.

RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHIES

RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY 1

Citation:

Owens, D., & Travis, J. E. 2013. College and University Honors Programs in the Southern United States. *Focus on Colleges, Universities, and Schools*. Volume 7, Number 1.

<http://www.nationalforum.com/Electronic%20Journal%20Volumes/Owens,%20Dena%20College%20and%20University%20Honors%20Programs%20FOCUS%20V7%20N1%202013.pdf>

Reason for including this source in your work:

This article reports the results of a study conducted of 92 colleges and universities who are members of the National Collegiate Honors Council. The study identifies the major characteristics of these Honors programs, the directors' perception of effectiveness in the program, and the challenges that Honors programs are currently facing. The article is strongly related to our issue at hand and may offer insightful information as we move forward in the research and planning process.

Main argument:

The findings of the survey reveal that the majority of Honors College directors are very satisfied with the presence of an Honors College on their campus and the opportunity to encourage and challenge to superior students. However, most directors also agree that there is a need for improvements in the areas of curriculum and marketing of the program.

Important ideas:

- "The most effective features of the Honors program were Honors curriculum and class size (43%) and sense of community (20%)" (5).
- Honors College faculty and staff benefit and look forward to their involvement with the intelligent and eager students as well.
- "The level of satisfaction experienced by faculty and students comes not from increased funding or dedicated facilities, but Honors program success and sense of community" (6).

Evidence:

- "Areas of the Honors program that Honors directors felt required extensive change were marketing of the Honors program (36%), Honors faculty benefits and recognition (30%), and program curriculum and scope (26%)" (5).
- "Adequate changes were recommended for program support by general faculty (55%) and program support by administration (52%)" (5).

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- “Graduation requirements across the 92 Honors programs included the following:
 - specific Honors courses (70%)
 - an Honors thesis or project (66%)
 - independent study (13%)” (5).
- “The Honors program curriculum consisted of Honors sections as regular courses and unique Honors courses at 84% of institutions, projects and theses (78%), and independent study and/or contract work (67%). The most unique characteristic of Honors programs incorporated theses and research projects (70%)” (5).
- “Additional hallmarks included:
 - interdisciplinary Honors courses (68%)
 - special guest lectures or performances (63%)
 - colloquia/seminar (62%)
 - field trips (54%)
 - independent study (38%)
 - team taught classes (63%)
 - student visits in faculty homes (27%)” (5).

Strengths:

- This article introduces new ideas that other Honors Colleges incorporate into their curriculum

Weaknesses:

- This article states that there is need for improvement, but does not go beyond the findings to explain what could be done

Connections:

- This article relates to our design thinking challenge because it confronts the directors of Honors programs and considers what challenges the programs are facing and how they might improve them.
- This article introduces new ways of doing the Honors program curriculum, such as the departmentalized Honors programs and the additional “hallmarks” of some of the programs.
- This article takes real data from directors considering all aspects of the Honors program and community to get at the core of the challenges that they are facing.
- This article receives feedback from the director/faculty point of view, which is one of our main stakeholder groups.

Questions/Concerns:

- It appears that issues with the Honors curriculum are common among several colleges and universities. How might we create a plan that checks all of the boxes, while appealing to students, faculty, and other Honors College programs?
- What has been done already to recreate the Honors curriculum at other colleges/universities?

<p>Citation: Rinn, Anne. 2005. Trends Among Honors College Students: An Analysis by Year in School. The Journal of Secondary Gifted Education. Volume 16, Issue 4. http://journals.sagepub.com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/doi/abs/10.4219/jsge-2005-479</p>
<p>Reason for including this source in your work: This article places great emphasis on the differences between freshman- and sophomore-level students and between junior- and senior-level students. Just as the title states, the article divulges into the trends present among Honors students, attempting to provide secondary research to other studies previously conducted. What is most interesting, and perhaps useful, about this article is that it provides research and findings contrary to normal beliefs and is based in a Midwestern, large university - the exact demographic of the FMHC within the greater GVSU community. The study was conducted along five basic concepts (discussed below) within a group of 298 Honors students.</p>
<p>Main argument: The author of this article conducted a relatively large-scaled study (298 students) within a Midwestern University to determine whether or not Honors students of the university differed from non-Honors students with regard to a number of factors including academic achievement, academic self-concept, educational aspirations, career aspirations, and general self-concept. The main findings of this article determined that there were very little trends between freshman standing and sophomore standing; rather, junior-level Honors students, as compared with senior-level students, experience a shift in their course load - from general education classes to major-specific classes - which most likely paves the way for these students to experience the highest levels of academic self-concepts and educational aspirations. Additionally, the majority of Honors students in each class standing aspired to earn a doctorate degree.</p>
<p>Important ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is little data from this study to suggest any present trends between freshmen-level and sophomore-level students • Junior-level students experience the highest levels of educational aspirations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Perhaps due to major-specific course load • Students in each class standing exhibited widespread aspirations to obtain a doctorate degree • The study was university-specific, and the content must not be interpreted on its own • 298 students from 22 different classes (from 19 professors) were surveyed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The majority of students were either of freshman or sophomore standing
<p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Juniors (M = 6.99, SD = .62) had significantly higher academic self-concepts than seniors (M = 6.58, SD = .61) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ They also had significantly higher educational aspirations (M = 2.81, SD = .4) • Freshmen (48%), sophomore (43%), junior (81.3%), and senior (50%) Honors students exhibited widespread academic self-concept, such that the majority of these students desire to earn a doctorate.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

Quotes

- “Very little research has examined how these variables differ across class standings of [Honors] college students.”
- “Results from this study reveal a significant difference between the academic self-concepts of juniors and seniors. These findings are not consistent with previous findings in this area.
 - “Prior research suggests students experience an increase in academic self-concept throughout college, such that...by the end of a student’s senior year, his or her academic self-concept is greater than it was at the beginning of freshmen year.”
- “Replication of this study across varying types of Honors programs is necessary before one can generalize from this research.”

New terms

- Academic achievement
- Academic self-concept
- General self-concept
- Educational aspirations
- Career aspirations

Strengths:

- This article attempts to fill in gaps left by previous researchers. The author has sought to compare the class standing of the students to determine if there are any significant trends

Weaknesses:

- This study was conducted at one university in the Midwest; therefore, it is hard to determine the validity of the results. The author even states a disclaimer in the final section of the article

Connections:

This article pertains to our study because it analyzes how the different class standings of Honors students may have an effect on perceptions about themselves, their academics, and their future prospects. In our attempt to define a path for Honors student curriculum within the FMHC, it is necessary to see what trends have emerged within Honors students. While this article only focuses on the group of students within one university, the university is located in the Midwest, it can lend some powerful insights to our project and how we will define a new curriculum in which students can best apply the liberal arts knowledge to their personal and professional selves.

Questions/Concerns:

- This research is school specific, so the data must be carefully considered; however, it brings up an interesting question: how can we further “check” this data and verify how students feel when involved in the FMHC?
- How can we bend our thoughts of “tethering” students to the FMHC, while also allowing them to expand their involvement campus- and community-wide?

Citation:

Young, James H., III; Story, Lachel; Tarver, Samantha; Weinauer, Ellen; Keeler, Julia; McQuirter, Allison. The Honors College Experience Reconsidered: Exploring the Student Perspective. *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council*. Volume 17, Number 2, Pages 177-189.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1131996.pdf>

Reason for including this source in your work:

The title and abstract caught my attention because it strongly relates to the challenge we are currently working on. This article talks about a study that was done to reconsider and reconstruct the Honors College experience at the University of Southern Mississippi. A main focus of the article is the students' voice and opinion on the matter, which is exactly what is going on in our study as well.

Main argument:

The purpose of the study and the article was to assess the Honors College program and student experiences from the perspective of the current Honors College students. They sought student input on what they thought was beneficial and what they thought was lacking in order to strategically redesign the Honors College experience at USM.

Important ideas:

- This Honors College has what they call "traditional" students, which enter their freshman year and stay enrolled all 4 years, and "senior" students, which enter their junior year and stay in the Honors College for 2 years.
- The Honors College sent out invitations to participate in the study, and they created 3 focus groups out of the respondents which lasted approximately 2 hours each. The participants were "rewarded" with a \$15 gift card to the bookstore. They asked fairly broad questions pertaining to the Honors College.
- After the interviews, they held a thorough analysis of the interview transcripts with a group of people that ranged in backgrounds and expertise, and that had no prior knowledge of the initial findings.

Evidence:

- "Honors programs, in the aggregate, offer programming and services aligned with a generalized set of academic characteristics but fall short in offering specialized, non-academic services that may be needed by this evolving population demographic, indicating that strategic planning and Honors outcomes should include academic and non-academic dimensions of students' experiences" (179-80)."
- "The dean of the Honors College approached the research team and requested that it conduct a study in order to gain a deeper understanding of students' perspectives as a part of a strategic planning and redesign process" (180).

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- "The students stated that the Honors College brought them together in a communal experience with the staff, faculty, and other students, enriching their educational and professional growth. They expressed this experience within three themes—connectedness, community, and opportunity" (182-3).
- "There's a feeling that they really care about us. They want to help us. If you go to my department and get advised, of course they'll do everything they can, but they don't actually care. They don't

know who you are or what you want to do . . . unlike everyone here. (Participant 4, Focus Group 3)” (184).

- “This knowledge of student perspectives may inform the College’s strategic planning processes and the alignment between its mission and marketing. Additionally, the findings of the study may influence Honors College programming, student services, and planned activities in order to meet the needs of students more effectively. Such realignment may contribute to increased retention and recruitment efforts” (178).
- *Phenomenological approach*

Strengths:

- The study revealed that this Honors College was very successful in bringing Honors students together and offering them a unique college experience.

Weaknesses:

- The results of the study revealed a lot of positive things about the Honors College, but it neglected to talk about the areas where students wanted to see improvement.

Connections:

- The biggest thing that relates this article to our own challenge is that fact that it is based on the students’ perspectives and insight. While we are considering several outside stakeholders as well, our main stakeholder and insight is coming from the Honors students.
- The findings of the study influenced the Dean of the College to rely more on student input for future planning of the curriculum and other Honors College events. It is important that we make known to the leaders of the Honors College how important it is to listen to, consider, and encourage student input.
- The findings of this article show that Honors students are pleased with their Honors College in the areas of community, connectedness, and opportunity. Our team agrees that our Honors College broadly covers these three characteristics as well, but we must dig deeper to find the issues with the curriculum. This article was lacking in substance related to the downfalls of the Honors College and how it could be improved.

Questions/Concerns:

- How thorough should our own post-interview analysis be? Should we invite a third to review some of our findings to get an unbiased opinion?
- This article brings up the issue of funding. Do we need to consider the reasonability of costs for the Honors College?

<p>Citation: Lafferty, R. 2017. Creative thinking, from concept to creation. <i>Sunday Business Post</i> http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/docview/1977763956?accountid=39473</p>	
<p>Reason for including this source in your work: This source provided information about ways to think creatively/think differently and gave some advice in the creative thinking to designing process.</p>	
<p>Main argument: Creative thinking, given its thinking-outside-the-box nature, is a riskier approach to project design than a more laid out one, and this can make some wary of accepting it. Despite this creative thinking can be useful tool when solving problems in projects.</p>	
<p>Important ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal creative thinking helps the company from the inside out. • External creative thinking helps with outreach • Ideas must be clear and should only be able to be interpreted in less ways Technology growing helps make designing easier while simultaneously making the risk decrease 	
<p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the “Internal Thinking” section the author clearly states, “it involves improving the internal running of things,” and later states that, “...enhanced environment can substantially increase happiness and productivity in staff...”. • In the “Technology and reduced financial risk “section it is mentioned that, “The increased visual information with libraries and universities helps reassure communities...”. 	
<p>Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Thinking • External Thinking • “It involves improving the internal running of things, enhanced environment can substantially increase happiness and productivity in staff...” • “The increased visual information with libraries and universities helps reassure communities...” • “Ideas need to be clearly expressed and less open to interpretation, so that everyone involved can clearly see the result prior to the build. • “Now collaboration fuels success and this creative approach means that all steps are approached simultaneously.” • “The creative services industry relies on the validation of idea generation...” 	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaks the topics into categories that are understandable. Explains concepts and why they work. 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides few if any real-life examples to show how concepts work in real life.

Connections:

- Differentiation between internal and external design thinking explaining what the difference is. If we want to have our program help with people from different areas go external and thoughts on how one can improve from the inside, internal.
- It helps define ideas, so they can still be possible while also being creative.
- Reminds us that technology is a way to help create, spread news/information, and clarify concepts about our solution.

Questions/Concerns:

- Are we going to be able to create clear, and concise ideas that still are able to greatly improve the system we are wanting to create?
- How can we not focus an excessive amount of time on internal or external thinking and have a good balance of both types of thinking?

<p>Citation: Poulson, Nancy. 2008. The Freestanding Honors College: Wilkes Honors College at Florida Atlantic University. National Collegiate Honors Council Monographs Series. Pages 75 - 85. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1003&context=nchcmmono</p>
<p>Reason for including this source in your work: The concept of a freestanding Honors program is quite interesting, especially considered the opportunity that we have been given to decouple our Honors college from the general education program. Also, when quickly reviewing the article to see if it was worth including in our research library, I discovered that the chapter of the NCHC Monograph series reviews the curriculum, administration, budget, and other aspects of a Floridian university.</p>
<p>Main argument: The article did not present a main argument, per se; however, it summed up the main characteristics of their honors programs. The article touched on the history, main characteristics, administration, faculty, curriculum, budget, endowment, physical plant, overall benefits of being collegiate, and the challenges, frustrations, and aspirations of the college. Perhaps the main ‘argument’ can be summed up by the mission statement of the college, which states that they:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“Offer students a liberal arts education of the highest intellectual and scholarly standard. As a public institution, we open our doors to those seeking a challenging, yet affordable, learning experience equal to that of the most selective colleges and universities. Small class size, rigorous requirements, and an emphasis on interdisciplinary study anchor a community of dedicated faculty and a talented, diverse student body. We value our special responsibility of public service and recognize that this responsibility extends not only to the people of Florida but also to the nation, the global community, and the natural environment.”</p>
<p>Important ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important ideas presented in this article detail that the Wilkes Honors College at Florida Atlantic University is free-standing, highly selective, and research intensive. • Additionally, this selectively extends passed the limited enrollment; the program is very selective in its established areas of study as it “does not offer programs in engineering, nursing, business, education, architecture, and urban and public affairs” (pg. 79).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence: • “The college’s 2006-2007 budget will be approximately \$4.9 million, with close to \$4 million for salaries and benefits” (pg. 80). • “All of the faculty at the Wilkes Honors College are hired, promoted, and tenured in the college. To be clear, our faculty do not belong to a disciplinary department nor do they teach non-honors college courses” (pg. 79). • “The college will reach a full build-out and have over 500 students and about 50 faculty to maintain a 10:1 student to faculty ratio” (pg. 77). • “The Honors Scholars program has a competitive application process and accepts a maximum of 35 students each year” (pg. 76).

- “A historical analysis of the statistics indicates that of every four Florida high school graduates who enroll in universities outside of Florida, only one returns to the state after college” (pg. 76).

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

Quotes

- “The idea for the creation of the freestanding Honors College came from a campus vice president...and a Florida State senator...who were alarmed by the number of academically talented Florida high school seniors who were leaving the state for their undergraduate education” (pg. 76).
- “Not having departments within the college facilitates creative interdisciplinary curricular initiatives” (pg. 79).

Concepts

- Freestanding Honors College
 - Stand-alone college

Strengths:

- The article presents an interesting concept of a freestanding Honors program, with faculty that are hired specifically for the purpose of teaching the Honors courses.

Weaknesses:

- The article sheds light on a highly selective and incredibly limiting program.
- It seems as though there is little promise of post-graduate distinction if everyone will receive the same degree

Connections:

As we are exploring the idea of decoupling the FMHC from GVSU’s general education program, it is interesting to see a university that has done exactly that - but to the absolute extreme. While some of the ideas presented in this article are enlightening and pave the way for a non-attached Honors program, it also shows how we may potentially choose to find a middle ground between our present-day curriculum and that which is in place in the “Freestanding Honors College” of Florida Atlantic University (FAU).

Questions/Concerns:

- How might we take the ideas of this article and weave the concepts into future curriculum at the FMHC without entirely separating the Honors students from the liberal arts education and the university population?
- How might we allow students to design their own program of study, as practiced the Honors Program at FAU?
- I am generally concerned with how limited the curriculum seems at this freestanding Honors College. How can we avoid limiting our end users but also provide some semblance of structure in curriculum?

<p>Citation: Radomski, Kelly. 2006. College Honors Programs: What Are We Really Doing for Gifted College Students? Journal of Student Affairs at New York University. http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.502.3347&rep=rep1&type=pdf.</p>
<p>Reason for including this source in your work: The title of this article is incredibly interesting and eye catching, as it raises an important question and seems to beg for an answer. The article, in its italicized abstract, notes that it will detail certain voids left by honors programs that would not have necessarily been left by non-Honors programs and seeks to determine pathways toward improvement. It seems to possess a parallel idea to what our design thinking challenge is all about.</p>
<p>Main argument: The article presents a few key supporting pillars of one main argument: honors programs do not offer enough non-academic support and that, “By not addressing developmental issues such as establishing identity and developing autonomy, an honors program is not truly serving the needs of its students” (pg. 24). The article continues to state that honors programs do not do enough to help students develop and foster healthy and reasonable expectations for success.</p>
<p>Important ideas: This article drives home the idea that there is a disconnect between attention gifted students receive in high school and what they begin to experience upon entering their university experience. In order to improve, the article determines that it is necessary to establish a platform of non-academic need-based assistance. Further, “through assessment and collaboration of faculty and student affairs professionals, colleges and universities can move beyond this restricted scope and work to better serve, support, and develop gifted and talented graduates” (pg. 27).</p>
<p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Statistically, talented women who are members of minority groups are more likely to fail in their academic endeavors than women who are not labeled academically talented” (pg. 25). • “Gifted and talented students usually perform in the top 3%-5% of their high school population and demonstrate high ability, high task commitment, and high creativity” (pg. 21). • “The majority of honors programs are academically focused, facilitated by one or more faculty members, and used as a recruitment tool for the university” (pg. 22).
<p>Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:</p> <p><i>Quotes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Too much support prohibits a student from becoming autonomous and can even foster apathy, while too much challenge discourages students by confronting them with seemingly hopeless situations” (pg. 26) • “In order for an honors program to be successful, it must encourage students ‘[to] reflect productively on different kinds of knowledge...[to] look outside the ivory tower and examine the worldly consequences of what academic disciplines produce’” (pg. 23). <p><i>Terms</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schlossberg’s Transition Theory: “The “4 S’s” in Schlossberg’s theory of situation, self, support, and strategies outline the appraisal process one uses when transitioning to college” (pg. 26).

- Sanford’s theory of Challenge and Support: “holds that there are three developmental conditions: readiness, challenge, and support “pg. 26).

Concepts

There are three types of Honors programs:

1. Challenging introductory and general education courses are offered during the first two years, and then reliance on individual departments to offer challenging courses emerges
2. An interdisciplinary honors semester is offered to bring together students of different areas of study within an institution
3. Development of an Honors contract allows students to design and complete their own curriculum

Strengths:

- The article draws on a present-day solution that seems to affect many students - both honors and non-honors alike (though, the focus is specifically on Honors students)

Weaknesses:

- The article is over 10 years only and presents very few tangible pieces of evidence (very few numbered pieces of data are used)

Connections:

The article is very relevant, even considering it was first published over ten years ago. While it does not possess many firm pieces of numerical data, it draws on common flaws of honors programs around the country. Another interesting part of the article is that it briefly mentions the necessity of a living-learning community - something that the FMHC already has established (multiple times over). As we are designing for these “heavily gifted students,” it is important to keep in mind the various non-academic needs these students will have.

Questions/Concerns:

- Our project is focused on redesigning the current FMHC curriculum, but how might we encompass various non-academic support systems into our proposed curriculum?
- Are there ways that we may prompt professors to introduce healthy support systems for tangible and realistic success? Are there ways we may promote healthy non-academic dialogue for students into our curriculum?

Citation:

Scott, Richard Ira and Philip Frana. 2008. Honors 2025: The Future of the Honors College. National Collegiate Honors Council: Honors in Practice - Online Archive.

https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1076&context=nchchip&sei-redir=1&referer=https%3A%2F%2Fscholar.google.com%2Fscholar%3Fhl%3Den%26as_sdt%3D0%2

Reason for including this source in your work:

As we are developing a curriculum for the FMHC, we must keep our eyes on the present-day curriculum and our minds on the future of the program. It is interesting to consider where this new curriculum will be in seven years, especially considering that the current curriculum is also aging, celebrating its ten-year anniversary this year.

Main argument:

The article focuses on four connect areas of consideration (mission, curriculum, assessment and accreditation, and recruiting) to evaluate how Honors programs are “moving away from being defined by specific problems or disciplinary approaches” and are instead focusing more intently on flexible problem-solving skills through an integrative approach-based curriculum instead of a distributive approach-based curriculum.

Important ideas:

This article is incredibly important when considering how honors programs around the country may create a more integrative and diverse curriculum that is not limited by rigid structure. In Honors programs’ mission statements, students should practice “scholarship and citizenship together” in an Honors “site” rather than an exclusionary pre-elected environment. Curriculum, on the other hand, should ground students in “empowerment in and out of the classroom,” and should encourage these students to explore and contribute to their global community. Next, the article focuses on accreditation and assessment, highlighting the need for evaluation of each and every Honors program, ensuring that they do not become “devalued misnomer[s]” (page 3). Finally, in terms of recruitment, Honors programs must begin shifting their main focus away from only the top students and begin practicing “active outreach” (page 5).

Evidence:

- “In 1994, 23 honors programs and colleges were in the NCHC database,” whereas of 2007, this number had increased to 92 institutional members.
- “If an institution is simply gilding the name, the ‘Honors College’ becomes a devalued misnomer designed as a marketing strategy and intended to mislead potential applicants” (page 4).
- “The newer guard of honors administrators are operating in a ‘culture’ of evidence,’ implementing assessment to demonstrate value added by honors education” (page 4).

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

Quotes

- “Faculty members act as interactive participants, resources, advisors, consultants, or coaches, helping keep students on task, delivering content, evaluating progress, and giving regular feedback. What emerges is the ability to solve real-world problems collaboratively and creatively” (page 2-3).
- “We expect that curriculum to consist of arrangements that ground student empowerment in and out of the classroom... The goal is readiness” (page 3).
- “By 2025 look for more honors colleges requiring internships, team tutorials, joint theses, study abroad, and intra-national travel as classroom boundaries become permeable and elastic” (page 3).
- “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, and to do so we must identify what practices are transferable to other contexts” (page 4).
- “Race and class biases in testing are too well understood to allow continued use of standardized tests to screen for a population of prospects” (page 5).

Terms

- Moribund (in terms of the word “honors”): “‘honorable’ is medieval in origin and requires unquestioning conformity to social expectations” (page 3).
- Market economy versus gift economy:
 - Market economy: “high status goes to those who own the most” (page 5)
 - Gift economy: “high status goes to those who *give* the most” (page 5)

Strengths:

- It is a very obviously forward-thinking document that supports a diverse and liberal arts-based curriculum *and* community

Weaknesses:

- There is little numerical data to support their ideas; it is more of a commentary piece with speculative statements

Connections:

The current curriculum for the FHMC is aging and has become quite standardized and scripted. In reading this essay, it becomes apparent that we will have to consider how the curriculum will apply in the immediate future versus when it reaches its peak and its potential downfall at the behest of new emerging student needs. The article also outlines various ways in which honors programs may innovate, which may help our team ideate in the future.

Questions/Concerns:

- How might we develop a curriculum that can bend as it ages and continue to be applicable and effective for the student?
- What characteristics do we want to see remain relatively the same over the life cycle of this curriculum and which characteristics or aspects can we intentionally design to be changed or adaptive to the student environment?

<p>Citation:</p> <p>Frana, Philip and Scot, Richard Ira, 2008. "Honors 2025: The Future of the Honors College". <i>Honors in Practice</i>. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C23&q=honors+college&oq=honors+co&httpsredir=1&article=1076&context=nchchip</p>	
<p>Reason for including this source in your work:</p> <p>It gives background for Honors Colleges and talks about the basic ideas of an Honors curriculum.</p>	
<p>Main argument:</p> <p>The future of Honors College will change from what it is now like it did from days long past.</p>	
<p>Important ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal for an Honors College is to make good public citizens that are able to research and work well in groups, leading others if need be • It is expected that classes in Honors will move away from the typical lecture style to more student collaboration and student driven content • Honors College recruitments may move to trying to look outside the college rather than looking at the current best students enrolled in that college 	
<p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The core value, freedom of inquiry, requires transparency of method and assumptions as well as participation in a peer community through publications and presentations." 	
<p>Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The core value, freedom of inquiry, requires transparency of method and assumptions as well as participation in a peer community through publications and presentations." • "More sensitive ways to access prospects and predict performance-including labor intensive strategies favoring review of teacher recommendations, personal interviews, and campus visits by prospects and their families-rather than reliance mainly on standardized test scores." • "Faculty members act as interactive participants, resources, advisors, consultants, or coaches, evaluating progress, and giving regular feedback." 	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gave some interesting predictions as to where Honors programs could go in the future. 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not give many examples on these more student run class styles.
<p>Connections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a section on curriculum which is what we are looking at. • Mentions recruitment for Honors College and we want to make the curriculum work for incoming people from different backgrounds. • Provides an idea as to what we should think an Honors student should be capable of. 	

Questions/Concerns:

- How can we use this information to inspire our curriculum creation ideas?
- What knowledge of past Honors College expectations should we use when creating our curriculum?

Citation:

Salisbury, Mark H. 2013. "The Effect of Study Abroad on Intercultural Competence Among Undergraduate College Students". *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*. Vol. 50, Iss.1: 1-20.
<https://search.proquest.com/docview/1703448890?accountid=39473>

Reason for including this source in your work:

One of the repeated themes in our interviews with employers was the desire for candidates that have intercultural competence. One proposed solution to increasing the intercultural competence of Honors College students so as to improve their marketability to employers was to promote study abroad experiences as a part of the Honors College curriculum. This article explores the effect of study abroad experiences on the intercultural competence of students using pre/post-test method.

Main argument:

This study used the Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (MGUDS) which measures intercultural competence based on three subcategories: diversity of contact, relativistic appreciation, and comfort with difference. The results of this study reveal that while study abroad does have a significant influence on a student's intercultural competence as a whole, the significance seems to be heavily in the "Diversity of Contact" of the student, and it has little to no significant effect on the student's "Relativistic Appreciation" and "Comfort with Difference." The findings also suggest that on-campus diverse experiences during the student's fourth year have a significant effect on the intercultural competence of the student as well. As a result, the author argues that study abroad may not be the best method of improving the overall intercultural competence of a student.

Important ideas:

- Study abroad was shown to significantly increase the intercultural competence of a student as a whole
- "The significant effect of study abroad on the overall measure of intercultural competence was not replicated across each of the constituent subscales."
- Study abroad may not be the best way to improve the intercultural competence of college students

Evidence:

- "Findings suggest that on-campus diverse interactions and integrative learning experiences can also influence intercultural competence development. In fact, the size of the estimated effects across multiple subscales suggests that these experiences might be comparatively more effective in developing intercultural competence than study abroad."

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- Intercultural competence- range of skills that lead to communicating effectively and appropriately with people of other cultures
- "The significant effect of study abroad on the overall measure of intercultural competence was not replicated across each of the constituent subscales."
- "The finding of this study suggests that although students who study abroad make unique gains on an overall measure of intercultural competence, the nature of this gain across the three constructs underlying the overall measure suggests only marginal support for the initial hypothesis of this study and, more importantly, may appear to challenge the more widely asserted relationship between study abroad and intercultural competence."

- “Findings suggest that on-campus diverse interactions and integrative learning experiences can also influence intercultural competence development. In fact, the size of the estimated effects across multiple subscales suggests that these experiences might be comparatively more effective in developing intercultural competence than study abroad.”

Strengths:

- The author went to great depths to avoid any statistical bias. The quantitative data presents a supported method to review the effectiveness of study abroad in intercultural competency.

Weaknesses:

- The data was only collected from students in their first and fourth years of college, so a total picture of the effect of study abroad throughout college cannot be attained.

Connections:

- Provides information on improving intercultural competence, which was mentioned as a desire by several interviewed employees
- Shows benefits of not only study abroad, but many other factors on intercultural competence
- Allows us to decide, based on quantitative data, whether incorporating an emphasis on study abroad in the Honors College curriculum will help distinguish FMHC alumni as job candidates

Questions/Concerns:

If study abroad is not the best way to improve intercultural competence, what is another method of improvement that can be implemented in the Honors College curriculum?

<p>Citation Cobane, Craig. 2008. "Honors in 2025: Becoming What You Emulate". Honors in Practice-Online Archie. Vol 18. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://scholar.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1062&context=nchchip</p>	
<p>Reason for including this source in your work: This source explores possible paths for Honors Colleges to take in the future, and we hope that this article will spark inspiration for us in designing a new Honors curriculum.</p>	
<p>Main argument: The author predicts that by 2025, most universities that have Honors programs will transition over to having full-fledged Honors Colleges. He argues that most Honors colleges should be functioning colleges within the larger University ecosystem. He also argues that Honors Colleges should/will be more mindful of creating a quality educational system that prevents student from racing through it, just to get to their next milestone. Surprisingly, the author argues for Honors Colleges to accept less AP credits, and increase the number of core classes students must take within the Honors College.</p>	
<p>Important ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Honors Colleges should function like private colleges within the university. Honors Colleges should also focus on creating a valuable experience for the students, which includes not accepting as many AP credits, so as to give students a full 4-year experience. Emphasis should also be placed on making the Honors experience technologically advanced and progressive. 	
<p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "An Honors College education will be more in tune with a traditional private-college experience than today's assembly-line university process that is increasingly dominated by accelerated learning, pre-college credits, credit for life experience, ITV, online, and weekend courses" (28) "In sum, by 2025 the fully developed Honors College will look and act like a private college" (28) 	
<p>Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "An Honors College education will be more in tune with a traditional private-college experience than today's assembly-line university process that is increasingly dominated by accelerated learning, pre-college credits, credit for life experience, ITV, online, and weekend courses" (28) "Today's college students and parents are often more focused on the speed of a university education than its quality or the educational experience itself" (27) "Some of the traits that define private colleges include: granting degrees; having an independent faculty; granting promotion and tenure; negotiating partnership agreements with other entities such as foundations, academic institutions abroad, or the Washington Center; having a board of trustees or the equivalent; and employing a substantial staff to conduct responsibilities such as recruitment, development, and financial aid/scholarships" (26) 	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This work employs various sources to support the arguments. 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This work is short and certain points could be elaborated upon.

Connections:

In our interviews we have heard a lot about AP credit acceptance, and how students wish the Honors College were more accepting of AP credits. Interestingly, the author of this work urges Honors College to not accept as many AP credits, because they are rushing through their college experience. More emphasis should be placed on the value and quality of the education than the time it can be completed in.

Questions/Concerns:

- Would we anger students if we heeded this authors advice and accepted less AP credits so as to give them a fuller Honors College experience? Or would students feel cheated and upset?

<p>Citation</p> <p>Hébert, Thomas P. and McBee, Matthew T. 2007. <i>“The Impact of an Undergraduate Honors Program on Gifted University Students”</i>. National Association for Gifted Children. Volume 51 Volume 2. 136-151. http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0016986207299471</p>
<p>Reason for including this source in your work:</p> <p>This source mentions that this study was looking at the differences and similarities of Honors students and this information may be able to help our group make a program that will better fit more students (<i>see “weaknesses” section for more information</i>).</p>
<p>Main argument:</p> <p>The way that the success of an Honors student can come from intellectual rigor and the love of learning that the students have. It also argues that an experience outside the classroom benefits students as well.</p>
<p>Important ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Honors students looked at were used to isolation/being alone instead of collaboration and this affected their worldviews. • The intellectual rigor of the Honors College the students went to made them feel at home and bolstered their love of learning. • The students benefited from participation in Honors co-curricular activities that were outside the classroom.
<p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Through mentor, Marcus grew more comfortable expressing his feelings, and he believed that the journaling associated with the mentor program was significant to him.” (146) • “Isaac highlighted how the Honors program helped to motivate him to read about a variety of subjects to which he had not been exposed through coursework.” (145)
<p>Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Honors program quickly became the focal point of Kim’s Southeast Tech experience as she described her early experiences with her new peers in the Honors program” (144) • “Dawn expressed this hunger for growth as early as high school. She explained that the first thing she did when she acquired a driver’s license was to join the local community singer’s group.” (145) • “Isaac highlighted how the Honors program helped to motivate him to read about a variety of subjects to which he had not been exposed through coursework.” (145) • “The underlying philosophy of such programs is similar to that which underlies gifted programs at the K-12 level—that academically talented students require modifications to the usual classroom experience to fully actualize their potential.” (136)

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides insight into some students and what the Honors College gave them. • Gives a suitable selection of topics to better understand the student's personality. 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study sample is very small (only 7) and thus must not be used to think most Honors students are like this. • Does not include the views of certain students in certain sections giving a sense of bias. Example being in the Religious views they only showed people who were into eastern religions or who questioned Judeo-Christian beliefs instead of including the conservative Christian seeming boy to give his views to balance out.
<p>Connections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some ideas as to how people with different views can better learn so we can find a program that fits with more people. • Gives us insight into the thoughts of other students from a different part of the college so views from people from outside the typical area GVSU accepts students from. • Provides topics that we may have never considered at first such as how religious views influence a person, so we can think about and try to plan for that. 	
<p>Questions/Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can we use some of the steps they used in this when interviewing others? 	

<p>Citation:</p> <p>Campbell, K. Celeste and Fuqua, Dale R. 2008. Baywood Publishing Co. <i>Factors Predictive of Student Completion in a Collegiate Honors Program</i>. J. College Student Retention. Volume 10(2): 129-153. http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2190/CS.10.2.b</p>
<p>Reason for including this source in your work:</p> <p>In order to make an effective curriculum one must find out what factors may cause students to succeed or fail and then plan accordingly.</p>
<p>Main argument:</p> <p>While Honors graduation data is hard to come by what is found shows that the number of students who graduate with Honors is low. This low Honors graduation rate looks poorly on the student, the family, and the institution and thus it is important to understand why these rates are so low.</p>
<p>Important ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This low Honors graduation rate looks poorly on the student, the family, and the institution. • Tinto's <i>theory of student departure</i> that as the study describes it as the drive to leave or stay in college depends on how well integrated the student is. • There can be many different variables that affect how well a student will do and use of pre- and post-entry variables will allow for a more accurate conclusion.
<p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page 139 results of study say that after 5 years 59.82% of students did not complete the program, 21.73% only completed part of the requirements and 18.45% completed the program fully. • On page 141 the results say that the students who did not complete (the 59.82%) did not live in Honors housing.
<p>Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:</p> <p><i>Quotes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "After five years, 62 of the 336 students who began college as active participants of the Honors program in the fall of 2000 had completed the Honors Degree requirements (18.45% completers), 73 of the students had completed only the General Honors Award (21.73% partial completers), and 201 had earned no Honors awards (59.82% non-completers)." (139) • "Non-completers have significantly lower first-semester college GPAs, high school GPAs, and high school class ranks. They are also less likely to live in Honors housing their first semester and are more likely to be males." (141) • "Students who perform well academically during their first semester of college gain a level of academic confidence that can serve as encouragement to continue to pursue the additional rigor of the Honors curriculum." (143) • "Some of the non-completers may have become ineligible at a later time, however, by failing to meet the minimum GPA requirements of 3.25 for freshmen and sophomores, 3.37 for juniors, and 3.50 for seniors." (143)

- “The univariate analyses suggest not only that more females than males participate in the Honors program (194 females; 142 males) but also that females complete Honors award requirements at a significantly higher rate than males (47.94% of females and 29.58% of males completed an award).” (146)
- “Another speculation is that Honors award participation, which involves more social contact individually with faculty members and in small groups with other students, is more rewarding and meaningful to the female students than it is to their male counterparts.” (146)

Terms

- Non-completers: The 201 of the 336 students (59.82%) who did not complete the program
- Partial completers: The 73 of 336 students (21.73%) of students who only completed part of the program

Strengths:

- Provides information about variables that may provide insight on who tends to struggle in the Honors College.

Weaknesses:

- These results may only provide information about the college the study was taken on and it is unknown if these results are like other colleges.

Connections:

- This can provide insight as to who struggles in the Honors College, so we can create a program that includes them
- This provides information that will help us make a curriculum that is rigorous yet is fair and will make it, so it does not favor one group.
- This can lead to think up reasons and find resources that help us make a more inclusive curriculum

Questions/Concerns:

- What challenges do groups that do not do as well in honors face and what is the reason?
- How can we take this information to make a more encompassing, inclusive, and rigorous curriculum?

<p>Citation:</p> <p>West, Nancy M. 2014. What's the Point of an Honors College, Anyway? The Chronicle of Higher Education. https://search.proquest.com/docview/1492314997?pq-origsite=summon</p>
<p>Reason for including this source in your work:</p> <p>Given recent feedback from our interviews with Honors students, it is apparent that some students do not really see the point in their FMHC education. The title and subject matter of this article is directly relevant to these comments and serves to give purpose to an Honors education.</p>
<p>Main argument:</p> <p>The article attempts to define what the 'point' of an Honors program really is. After delving into two halves of the same sphere, the author details that the "'point of an Honors College' is its idealism" (page 2).</p>
<p>Important ideas:</p> <p>The point of an Honors program is derived in two ways: in terms of students and in terms of its benefit to the university. With regard to students, Honors programs actually thrive in their Honors courses as compared to their non-Honors courses and that Honors is "'the natural home of pure meritocracy'" (page 2). Specific to the benefit brought to the university, an Honors program serves to create a "third place," which is an environment that is "separate from work and home" and acts as a social leveler (page 2). In this sense, these third places serve as anchors of a less scripted community and word to disperse of a common perception of Honors elitism.</p>
<p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Honors students often do better in their Honors courses than in their non-Honors courses" (page 1-2). • "Students - too many of them these days - go from their classrooms to their part-time jobs to their apartments" (page 2). • "Surrounded by other high-achieving and curious students - both in their classes and in their living arrangements - Honors students feel pressure in the best of ways to do well" (page 2). • "Honors education has never been a cost-effective enterprise, given its demands for quality instruction, small classes, enhanced opportunities, and personalized service to students" (page 1).

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

Quotes

- “In an academic culture tainted by grade inflation, Honors Colleges celebrate true accomplishment, instilling in students the pride that comes with being thoroughly in earnest about their education” (page 1).
- “Honors is thus the ‘natural home of pure meritocracy’” (page 2).
- “While colleges become more like companies, and "excellence" increasingly refers to financial success, surely we can justify the value of an Honors College by guaranteeing that it remains one space on the campus where deep thought flourishes, and where ‘excellence’ still possesses meaning” (page 2).

Concepts

- Third place: refers to an environment that is separate from work and home that people visit frequently and voluntarily. Examples include coffeehouses, cafes, salons, and the Internet
- “Although they vary wildly in look and feel, third places share certain fundamental traits. They act as social levelers, discounting class status as a marker of social significance. Their mood is playful; their atmosphere is warm and friendly. They promote group creativity and lively conversation. Most important, they serve as anchors of a community, fostering broad and less scripted interactions than those we have at home or our regular workplaces” (page 2).

Strengths:

- This article is relatively concise and offers two specific ways to identify the true point of an Honors College.
- The article opens and closes with a story that is personal to the author. It is relatable for the audience.

Weaknesses:

- There is little physical evidence to support the claims or speculations of the author

Connections:

As we begin to define what some of our prototypes are, it is important to envision what the end purpose of our prototyped Honors program will be - and how it serves various stakeholders. We have also heard many people say that the FMHC seems elitist - a parallel thought highlighted by this article. In this sense, it is necessary for our team to dispel an elitist perception but also maintain the concept of a more intensive education.

Questions/Concerns:

- What are other ways in which people define ‘the point’ of an Honors program?
- What are ways our different stakeholders would define what ‘the point’ of an Honors education is?
- How do we want to define the meaning of an Honors program? Is this something that we want to explicitly or implicitly relay to our end users?

Citation:

Sederberg, Peter. 2005. *Characteristics of the Contemporary Honors College: A Descriptive Analysis of a Survey of NCHC Member Colleges*. Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council.

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1184&context=nhcjournal>

Reason for including this source in your work:

It is a survey of all members of the National Collegiate Honors Council to identify common characteristics of fully-developed Honors Colleges. The information gathered from these surveys will serve as a guideline for what is successful and not successful in Honors Colleges across the country.

Main argument:

The survey found that the universities that have Honors College cover a wide range of characteristics. Some university are very large, and others are very small, ranging from under 10,000 students to over 30,000 students. Some have large Honors Colleges, and some have very small, ranging from 150 students to 2700. They found common motivations for creating an Honors College, with 80% of respondents indicating that they arose out of a pre-existing Honors program. Other motivations arose from the top administration.

Important ideas:

- The trend toward establishing Honors College is relatively new. 21 colleges (60%) have been established since 1993.
- Another, somewhat ambiguous, measure of resources involves faculty lines controlled directly by the unit.
- The most widely shared services are:
 - 91.4%: Student travel
 - 77.1%: Student research
 - 77.1% Publications
 - 71.4% Student council activities
 - 68.5% Honors course enrichment
 - 60% Senior thesis expenses

Evidence:

- Honors Colleges relate to their university setting in different ways as indicated by the answer to a question on their overall structure:
 - 68.6%: Centralized “overlay” structure of university undergraduate programs.
 - 14.3%: Free standing college, with own faculty and curriculum.
 - 5.7%: Decentralized coordinating structure providing an Honors core overseeing departmentalized honors.
 - 11.4%: Other
- Substantive motivations for establishing a college were also widely shared. Among the dominant reasons given are:
 - 100%: Recruit stronger students
 - 91.4%: Improve overall campus academic quality

- 88.6%: Improve the quality of Honors educational opportunities
- 85.7%: Raise the profile of Honors within the institution
- Given the range in size of the participating Honors Colleges, we expected to find a significant variation in the number of courses offered each semester:
 - More than 100 courses: 5
 - 75-99 courses: 4
 - 50-74 courses: 4
 - 25- 49 courses: 11
 - Fewer than 25 courses: 11

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- “Some of the other attributes of a fully developed college within the contemporary university, however, are not so widely shared among our sample. For example, only 20 (57.1%) had an alumni organization, and even fewer (17; 48.6%) possessed a full- or part-time development officer.”
- Describes the Honors College as “the best of both worlds.”
- “The most obvious way of addressing resource issues is through the budget.... The average per capita budget was \$596/student. The range was \$83 to \$1,855. Only four colleges had a per capita budget of over \$1,000; 8 had budgets of between \$500 and \$1,000; and the remaining 11 were below \$500.”

Strengths:

- This survey revealed that Honors Colleges come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and each one is unique. This shows that we don’t have to follow strict standards to create a successful Honors College.

Weaknesses:

- Although this research revealed that we have a lot of flexibility, we might not know exactly what will work for a successful Honors College until we test it out.

Connections:

- Based on our prior extensive research, nothing in this survey came as a surprise. We are aware that all Honors Colleges have their own unique characteristics, some of which are more common than others.
- From this article, we can compare what the Frederik Meijer Honors College offers for its students to what other colleges offer. For example, it appears that many other Honors Colleges allow for and require some sort of study abroad, so that is something we should take into consideration moving forward.
- The article talks about how there should be considerable control over an Honors College selection of faculty. Based on negative feedback from several stakeholders, this is something that needs to be revisited and standardized to ensure that the best faculty are chosen to teach the Honors students.

Questions/Concerns:

- The survey showed that the majority of Honors Colleges spend a portion of their budget on student travel. Is it crucial for us to include the requirement of some study abroad in order to provide a well-rounded Honors College experience?

- How can we make sure that the faculty chosen for the Honors College are well-experienced and qualified enough to be teaching the brightest students and equipping them with an exemplary education?

<p>Citation:</p> <p>Zekeri, Andrew A. "College curriculum competencies and skills former students found essential to their careers." <i>College Student Journal</i>, vol. 38, no. 3, 2004, p. 412+. <i>Academic OneFile</i>, Accessed 9 Mar. 2018.</p>																														
<p>Reason for including this source in your work:</p> <p>We want to find out what skills college students find most useful upon graduation so that we can work that into our proposed curriculum.</p>																														
<p>Main argument:</p> <p>The author argues that communication skills are the most beneficial to college graduates in their careers. They support this claim by conducting a study on college graduates of land-grant universities. They found that the highest ranked skills were those in communication and interpersonal competency. The author argues that universities should place as much importance on development of communication skills as they do on development of technical skills.</p>																														
<p>Important ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The top 5 highest ranked necessary skills are as follows: oral communication, problem solving, written communication, motivating and managing others, personal time management” • Communication skills are the most important in the workplace across the board • Curriculum should thoroughly prepare students to be successful in oral and written communication, as well as analytical reading skills. 																														
<p>Evidence:</p> <p>“ACTION COMPETENCIES SCORE:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Skill in oral communication</td> <td>3.49</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skill at using problem solving techniques</td> <td>3.36</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skill in written communication</td> <td>3.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skill in motivating and managing others</td> <td>3.27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skills in personal time management</td> <td>3.27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skills in setting personal goal</td> <td>3.18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skill in setting organizational goals & objectives</td> <td>3.15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skill in effective group leadership</td> <td>3.07</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skill in project and/or program evaluation</td> <td>2.90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skill in public speaking</td> <td>2.81</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skill in negotiating employee/employer differences</td> <td>2.84</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skill in finance and cost management</td> <td>2.80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skill in handling consumer/customer relations</td> <td>2.80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skill in computer use</td> <td>2.54</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skill in basic statistical techniques</td> <td>2.43”</td> </tr> </table>	Skill in oral communication	3.49	Skill at using problem solving techniques	3.36	Skill in written communication	3.25	Skill in motivating and managing others	3.27	Skills in personal time management	3.27	Skills in setting personal goal	3.18	Skill in setting organizational goals & objectives	3.15	Skill in effective group leadership	3.07	Skill in project and/or program evaluation	2.90	Skill in public speaking	2.81	Skill in negotiating employee/employer differences	2.84	Skill in finance and cost management	2.80	Skill in handling consumer/customer relations	2.80	Skill in computer use	2.54	Skill in basic statistical techniques	2.43”
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Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- “The need for the two quantitative analyses skills, computer and statistics, are scored lower than all other skills. Next, average scores of three management skills--negotiating employee/employer differences (2.84); handling consumer/customer relations (2.80); and finances and cost management (2.80) are scored significantly lower than all of the communication or organizational skills. These findings indicate that despite the technological changes occurring in places of work, communication skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking effectively are expected to remain critically important to the work force of the 21st century.”
- “In sum, the sense from these former college students is that, communication skills (speaking, reading and writing), are expected to remain critically important in the work force of the future. Jobs or careers of the future demand new higher order basic skills of employees, that is, thinking, problem solving, and the ability to communicate effectively. Aspects may include effective and appropriate use of language; careful editing and proof reading; revising and expanding one's work; clear and well-organized presentation of materials orally or visually and thoughtful, careful listening. These skills are minimal expectations necessary for effective functioning in society and in the workplace.”
- “Students should pursue excellence in communication competencies that are essential to the transfer of knowledge from classroom practice to real-life problems.”

Strengths:

- This study really made clear the importance of communication skills. There were no points of confusion or uncertainty.

Weaknesses:

- The study only took into account responses from 291 students, a larger group would have been more effective. Also, the students surveyed were from land-grant universities, which place a large emphasis on technical skills, math and science. This could have resulted in skewed results that are not representative of all college graduates. Finally, the study only provided the option of 15 competencies, so certain skills may have not been represented.

Connections:

We have heard from employers that intercultural competency was a highly sought-after skill, but interestingly it did not come up in this study. Maybe it is something that employers seek, but employees don't find they use that often. Or maybe it was not included as an option in the study. However, we recognize the importance of communication skills and are seeking to incorporate them into the learning outcomes of our curriculum.

Questions/Concerns:

- How can we make a curriculum that includes strong communication skills as a learning outcome?
- Can we trust this data because of the nature of the education the participants had? Does it apply to Grand Valley?