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GVSU Honors College: A More Distinctive Experience

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Design Thinking to Meet Real World Needs
Grand Valley State University
Fall 2017



Grand Valley's Honors College:
A More Distinctive Experience
The Creativity Crew

Alexis Ellis, Darius Youngblood, Lynn Doherty, Marissa Kahnt,
Pierce Henderson, & Taylor Kooy

Table of Contents

Meet the Creativity Crew.....	3
An Introduction: Our Team, Our Assignment.....	4
The Design Thinking Process.....	6
The Team’s Mission: Design Brief.....	8
Foundation: The Stakeholder Map.....	15
Developing Patterns: Affinity Map.....	16
Collaborator Debrief I: Initial Integration.....	17
Collaborator Debrief II: Innovations.....	22
Collaborator Debrief III: Real World Applications.....	27
Ideate: Top Five Innovations.....	34
Prototype: Top Two Prototypes.....	41
Test: Final Prototype.....	44
Design Challenge Video: The ‘New’ Honors College.....	46
Design Thinking Climactic Presentation.....	47
Collaborator/Stakeholder Feedback.....	51
Concluding Statement.....	55
Discoveries: Research Bibliographies.....	56
Human-Centered Focus: Interviews.....	90

Meet the Creativity Crew

Meet our team (see the photo on the cover of the Innovation Portfolio)! This photo was taken following our final Design Thinking symposium in which we presented our team's final prototype. From left to right, the members of the Creativity Crew are: Taylor, Pierce, Lynn, Marisa, Alexis, and Darius.

Taylor is a junior who is majoring in Statistics. He was most known for always making sure to say 'Bless You' whenever someone in the group hiccupped.

Pierce is a sophomore majoring in Biomedical Sciences. His humor injected a positive spirit during team gatherings. He was most known for those out-of-no-where comments.

Lynn is a junior majoring in International Relations. Lynn brought a constant stream of energy to every team meeting, and was most known for her dabbing ability. Lynn's video editing skills would become known as legendary following our group's video.

Marisa is a junior majoring in Liberal Studies. Her caring nature was perfect for the interviews and led her to the nickname of "Team Mom."

Alexis is a junior majoring in Cell and Molecular Biology. Her excellent ability to conduct research and summarize the information was crucial to our team's research bibliographies. Alexis was most known for the time she secretly brought treats to class for our team, and forgot to share them with the team.

Finally, Darius is a junior majoring in accounting. His calm nature was infectious to the rest of the team during the most intense weeks throughout the semester. This led him to receiving the nickname of "Team Dad."

An Introduction: Our Team, Our Assignment

In the later summer of 2017, our team was assembled from six individuals in the HNR 313 Design Thinking class at Grand Valley State University. In time, we would learn each other's names, personalities, assign roles for the task ahead, and come to share life experiences. Alexis Ellis became our team writing lead, Darius Youngblood became the team leader, Lynn Doherty volunteered to be the scribe and recorder, Marisa Kahnt became a co-reporter and manager of human resources, Pierce Henderson became co-reporter and researcher, and Taylor Kooy became co-presenter and task manager.

With our team finalized, we were able to now tackle our challenge of creating a more distinctive Honors College at Grand Valley State University. Without a notion of where to begin, we started by reflecting on the local community and ourselves. Immediately, it was evident that there was a sharp contrast between the demographics of our team and the surrounding populous. Half of our team does not follow the standard Caucasian Grand Valley makeup. This is radically different from the population of GVSU in which roughly 83% of students are Caucasian. This statistic became a cornerstone of our project, it inspired us to research diversity within the Honors College. Unfortunately, our following research manifested into the discovery that there is even less diversity in the Frederik Meijer Honors College than the general student population.

Our team thus determined that this compelling issue was worth tackling, inspiring us to come up with our problem statement: *we will shine light on the lack of diversity in the Honors College and promote a more well-rounded learning experience by bringing in a more diverse group of Honors students.* Revolving around this problem statement, our team began using the

Design Thinking process to come up with a solution, with diversity at its core, to make the Honors College here at Grand Valley more distinctive.

The Design Thinking Process

To understand how our project developed throughout the semester, a grasp of what Design Thinking is must be established. Design Thinking is a method of solving real world problems by innovating effectively and routinely.

The first step in the process is defining the problem. As mentioned earlier within the Innovation Portfolio, the problem we identified as a team was the lack of diversity within the Honors College at Grand Valley. Proceeding from defining the problem, the next step in the Design Thinking process is empathizing with the users (in this case, Grand Valley students). Human-centered focus is a crucial initial stage in order to tackle real world problems. The goal of this stage is to get to know the thoughts, feelings, and perspectives of our stakeholders and end users (Grand Valley Honors students). This was achieved through a series of 24 interviews in which our team asked questions relating to diversity and the interviewee's opinions related to the topic. A total of eight weeks were spent on this interviewing process in order for us to gather as much information relating to our problem as possible. Along the way, we were given the option to re-define our team's problem statement, however, we maintained our original statement and moved on to the next phase, the ideation process.

This process is centered on the composing of ideas for tackling the problem, with the purpose of creating multiple viable solutions that could alleviate the issue. Using our team's affinity map (mentioned later), we began to recognize patterns in our interviewees' thoughts and feelings. It was these patterns that transformed into needs statements. From there, these needs statements manifested themselves into our top five innovations.

Next, our team narrowed down these top five innovations into our top two prototypes. These prototypes represented the innovations that our team felt most likely would tackle the problem of diversity in the Honors College, and make the experience here (at the Honors

College) more distinctive. The prototyping phase is one of the most crucial aspects of the Design Thinking process because the final prototype concept is what will be used in the final testing phase and is the culmination of all that has been accomplished throughout the semester. This Innovation Portfolio will lead the reader through our process of implementing the Design Thinking method, and will end with our final prototype concept.

The Team's Mission: Design Brief

Design Brief

Background and Context

Located in the heart of West Michigan, Grand Valley State University has come to reflect the local population. As of 2016, the population (approximately 1.6 million people) of West Michigan (comprising of the following counties: Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Ottawa) was 81.1% white (Riley). As of 2017, the ~25,000 student population of GVSU was ~83% white, with over 40% of students reporting that they do not feel that they have a good understanding of other students' backgrounds-- the other students being those of all different cultures, races, religions, etc. (Profile of Grand Valley Students 2017). When walking through the Honors College, the lack of diversity becomes increasingly, and staggeringly, apparent. Students of color represent only a small fraction of students in the Honors College. The lack of diversity continues when one takes a look at the faculty/staff involved with Honors. Our team gathered research and found that the Honors College has only Caucasian full-time faculty/staff-- no people of color. Through its mission in liberal education, Grand Valley aims to promote the importance of exposure to a diverse range of backgrounds and perspectives. Diversity is invaluable to a liberal education, enabling students to live and work in a global society. The numbers show there is a gap in mission and actual student experience. A diversified population within the Frederik Meijer Honors College would distinguish it from Grand Valley *and* the rest of West Michigan. Employers in today's modern economy are looking for people with multicultural sensitivity/awareness (Hansen & Hansen). We believe these mirrored demographics, challenge to attaining university mission, and desired employability skills are issues that demand attention and inspire action.

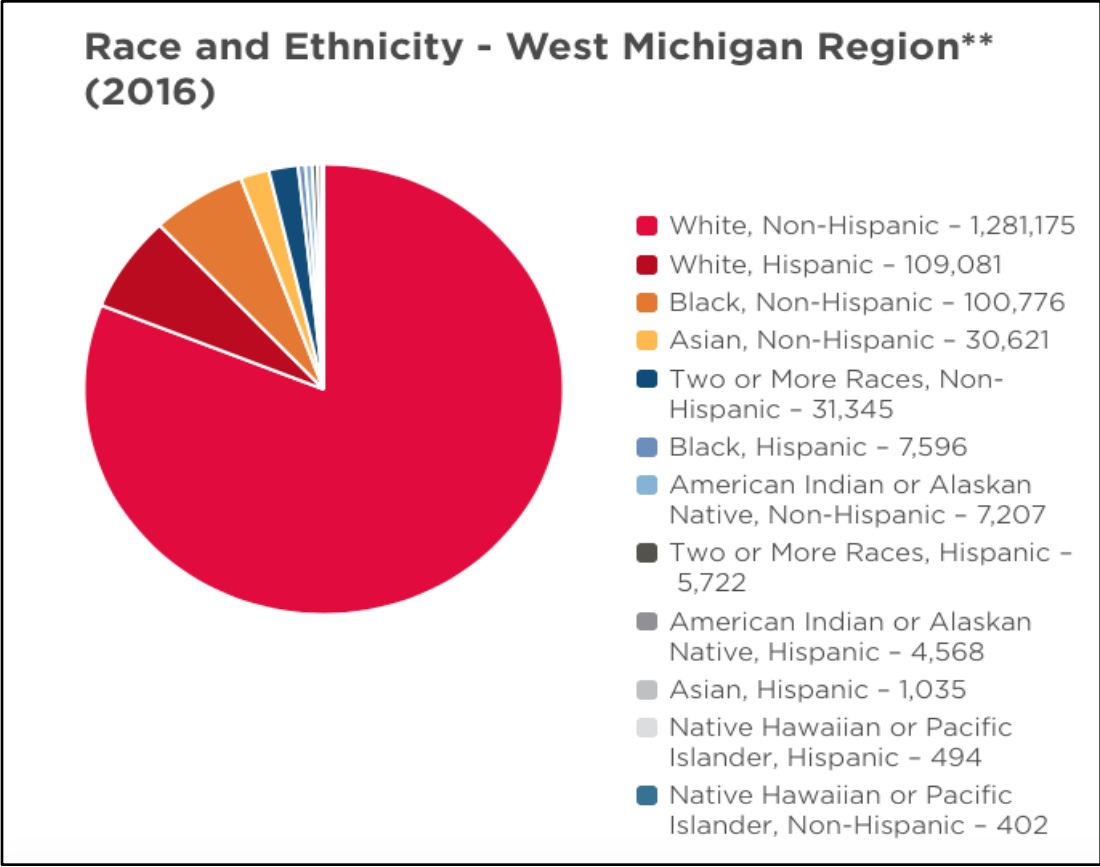


Figure 1: Race and Ethnicity Make-Up of West Michigan (Riley)

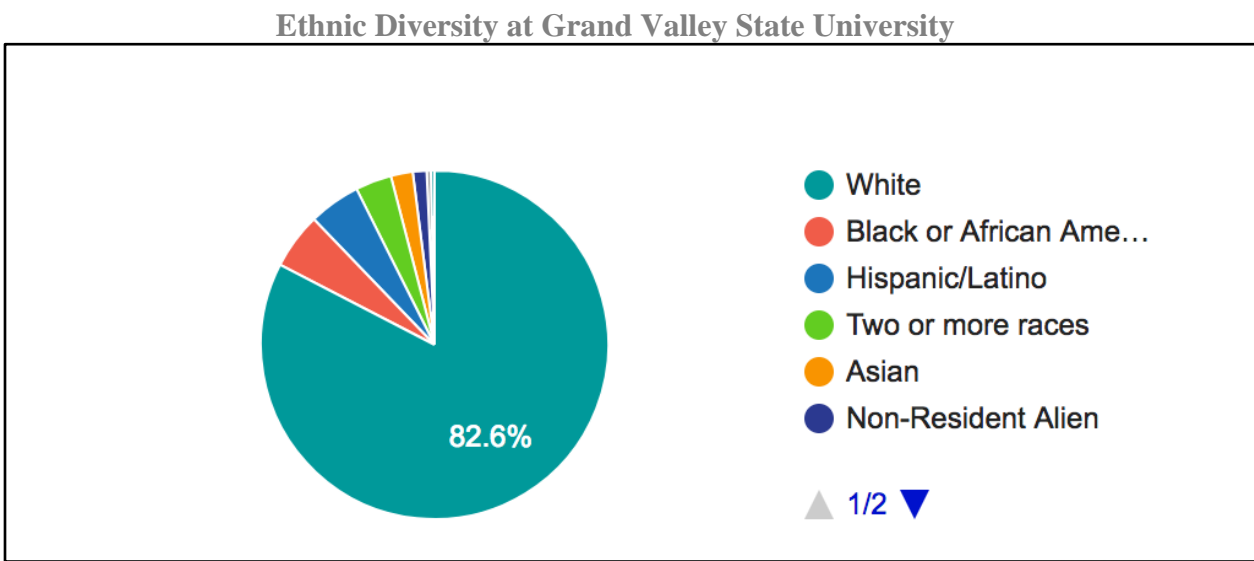


Figure 2: Ethnic Diversity at Grand Valley State University (“Grand Valley State University: How Diverse is it Really?”)

Problem Statement

In relation to our project, the term “diversity” includes gender, race, religion, nontraditional students, and transfer students. A lack of diversity fosters an environment in which empathy cannot flourish. College is meant to catalyze and accelerate the development of empathy, however this process is stymied by a lack of diversity. Lacking the ability to empathize sprouts the seed of unawareness and intolerance. A diversified population within the Frederik Meijer Honors College would distinguish it *and* Grand Valley *and* the rest of West Michigan. *We will shine light on the lack of diversity in the Honors College and promote a more well rounded learning experience by bringing in a more diverse group of Honors students.*

Our team feels very passionate about this topic because half of our team members are white, while the other half are either multiracial or Asian. Since working together in the Design Thinking class, we have gained experience working with a more diverse group of people. Also, fostering a diverse environment leads to the ability to understand different cultures and backgrounds, which in turn leads to future global citizens who are better able to work collaboratively with those from outside of their own realm of understanding. This has proved to be a pivotal piece of our team chemistry, and drove the success that we experienced in creating our Team Charter.

The topic of diversity is one that affects people of all status within Grand Valley, whether they are students or faculty. This means that our team has the opportunity to help solve one of the problems that Grand Valley faces as a university, not just the Honors College. With the Honors College acting as a catalyst for the rest of the university, diversity in the student body will begin to disseminate to Grand Valley as a whole. This diversity is invaluable to the rest of the student body as it begins to foster a learning environment in which there is a greater

understanding of varied backgrounds and life experiences (a top skill employers are looking for, as mentioned above).

Ecosystem

Our project ecosystem is defined as: current Honors students, future Honors students, future non-Honors students, related families, Honors faculty and administrators, and the greater West Michigan area. This ecosystem is not limited to these individual groups. Other organizations and services, often overlooked because they are not as apparent, are the foundation behind what sustains the Honors students, namely the facilities in which Honors students eat and sleep, Dining and Housing. Along with these, the other facilities in which students are taught, counseled, employed, study, and play all impact Honors students and the qualities they manifest. Future Grand Valley students are at the heart of the ecosystem because their diversity will, over time, alter the populous and their views. This new demographic of students directly affects the culture of the community and is linked to all those within the ecosystem. The changes they undergo will fuel the changes within other groups, individuals, and services.

Research Methods

The research methods that we are using in this design challenge are best suited for addressing human-centered issues. These techniques are all meant to “challenge (our) preconceived ideas and set aside (our) sense of what (we) think is true in order to learn what actually is true.” (Kelley & Kelley 90). We plan to do both field research and secondary research. *Creative Confidence* gives us four interview techniques to use while attempting to empathize during our field research within our ecosystem. The “show-me” technique is useful in digging deep into a person’s life and community, as they show you where and how they interact with people. Asking our interviewees to “draw it” will give us a visualization of their

thoughts. “Why?” questions are incredibly effective in prompting people to examine their attitudes and beliefs. To reveal reasoning and concerns, we will be encouraging our interviewees to “think aloud” when we ask them questions. (97). Participants in our interviews will be from our stakeholder map (Grand Valley students, professors, and administration). We may also contact administration at other Honors Colleges for interviews.

For secondary research, we will be examining prestigious Honors Colleges around the nation. We will review online information provided by these colleges and universities, and research best practices through the databases provided on Grand Valley’s library’s website.

Constraints

As constraints for our project, we acknowledge that the demographics of West Michigan will remain static. Another major constraint is trying to find a balance between a strong level of diversity while not lowering the academic standard of the Honors program, and more generally Grand Valley. While promoting diversity is the cornerstone of this project, it cannot be allowed to compromise the academic rigor of the Honors College. Furthermore, no solution will contain quotas or advance illegal practices in affirmative action. We also acknowledge that in the short term, there will be no change in Honors College faculty.

Knowing what we are unable to change will allow us to work around our constraints and allow our team to focus and innovate on the things that we will be able to affect.

Outcomes

Although this is a big problem to tackle, our team is confident that we will accomplish the goal of bringing attention to the lack of diversity in the Honors College and set the stage for recruiting a more diverse group of students in the years to come. This ideal state will be reflected via a future GVSU Student Profile in which the percentage of students who feel that they have a deep understanding of other student’s backgrounds exceeds 85%. Our direct

measure of improved diversity would be an annual increase in the proportion of students of color and non-traditional students in the Frederik Meijer Honors College.

In accomplishing our goal, the Honors College, and eventually Grand Valley as a whole, would come to be a place in which all students are represented, physically as well as intellectually. This environment will foster students who don't approach a problem with their own narrow experience, but draw on their experiences from Grand Valley to design solutions to this world's problems for the betterment of all!

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Foundation: The Stakeholder Map

A stakeholder map is a visual representation of the ecosystem that is affected by the current problem, in our case, the task of making the Honors College at Grand Valley a more distinct experience. This ecosystem includes all benefactors, stakeholders, and collaborators who may be affected by the outcome of our Design Thinking project. At the core of our map are Grand Valley students. Since the focus of our project revolves around making the Honors College more distinctive, our team made the focus of our project on the student body. Branching off from Honors students are our four main groups: Grand Valley, home communities, greater Grand Rapids community, and government/bigger picture.

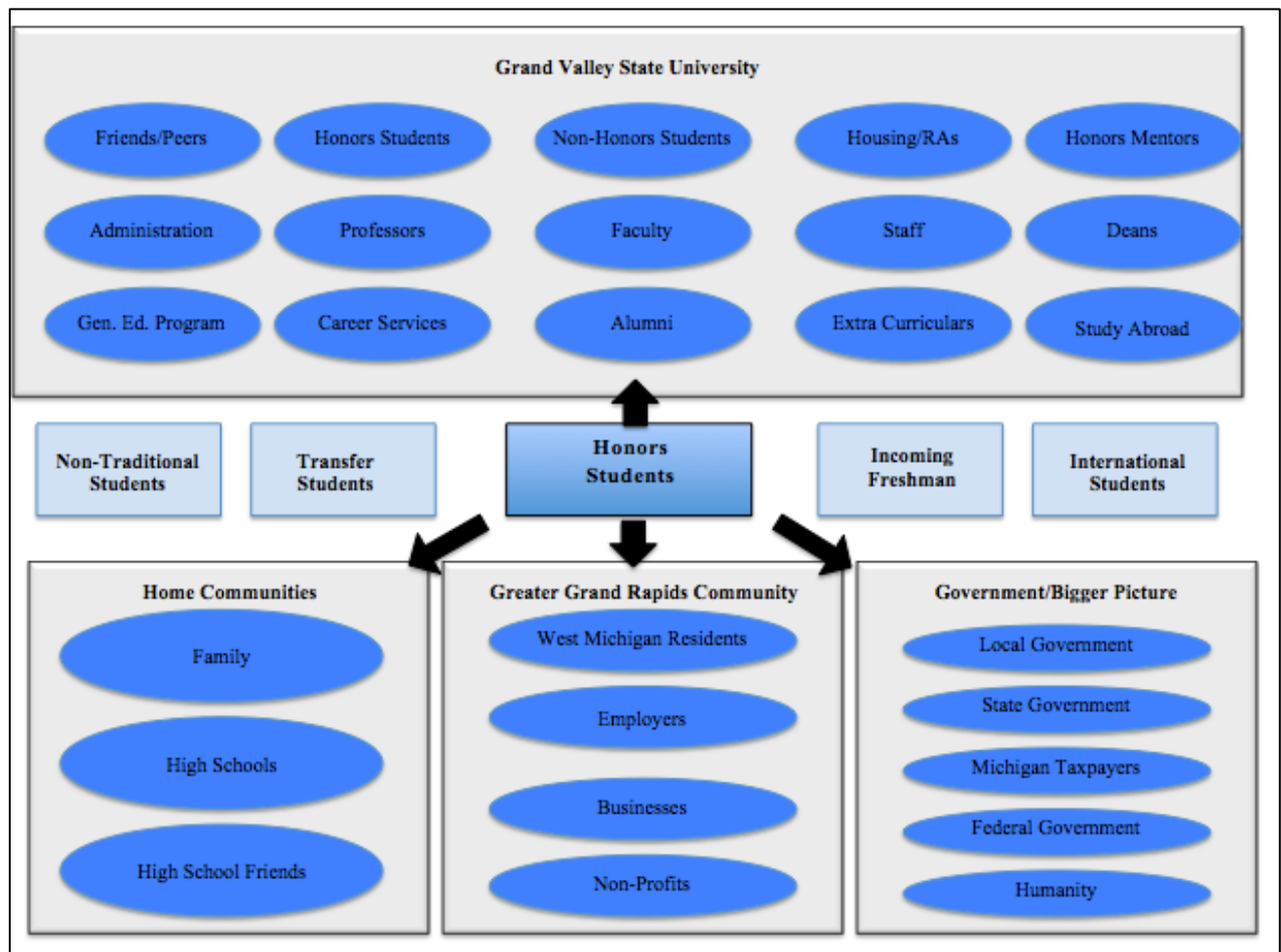


Figure 3: Stakeholder Map

Developing Patterns: The Affinity Map

The affinity map is a working, visual representation of our team’s insights gathered through interviews and research bibliographies, or our research. After 8 weeks of gathering this information (24 interviews and 15 research bibliographies), our team began to group our insights (i.e. sticky notes) together. It is these groupings that our team used to formulate our needs statements (circled bubbles on the sheet of paper). From there, these needs statements manifested into our team’s top five innovations.

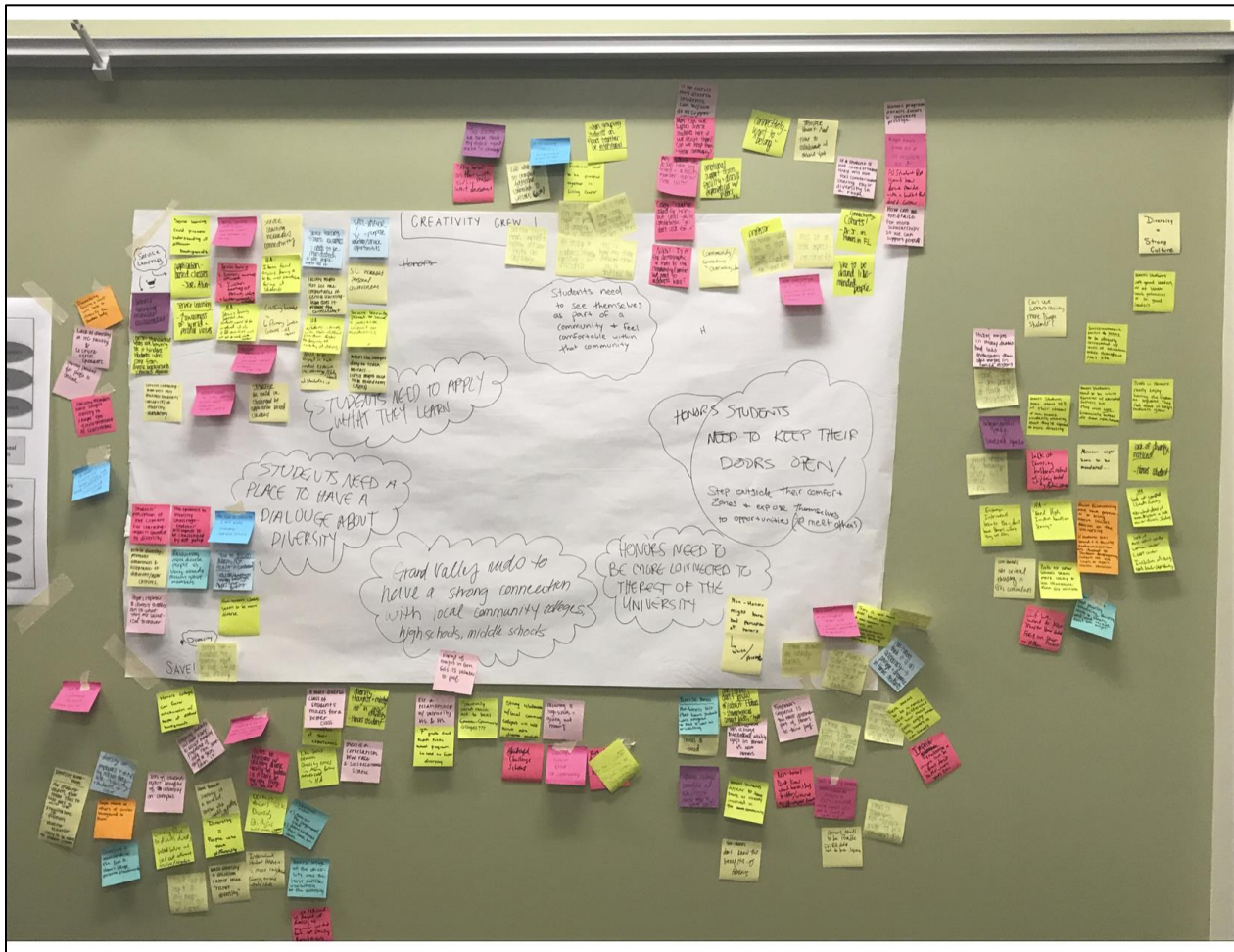



Figure 4: Affinity Map used to create Needs Statements

Collaborator Debrief I: Initial Integration

Collaborator debriefs are a critical part of the Design Thinking process because they allow the team to inform and summarize current findings for critique by collaborators. In collaborator debriefs, our team essentially presents the information we have learned to an audience of collaborators and stakeholders, who in turn provide a tremendous amount of feedback. The last part of each collaborator debrief is a focused dialogue lead by our team where we get to ask the collaborators and stakeholders questions that our team feels are crucial to our process. There were three collaborator debriefs during the semester, placed at key transition points in our design process. The first debrief represents a general overview on insights and our direction, the second debrief represents our insights transforming into innovations, and the final collaborator debrief is based off of our team’s final prototype.

Articulating and Revising the Initial Vision	
Design Challenge Debrief	<p>Team Problem Statement: <i>We will shine light on the lack of diversity in the Honors College and promote a more well-rounded learning experience by bringing in a more diverse group of Honors students.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insights: Students need to see themselves as connected to their community. • The ability to collaborate with others different than themselves is a highly sought after skill in the world today. • Students want ways to apply their learning in non-academic ways, such as service-learning. • Diversity is not restricted to only ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, etc., it can also deal with one’s mindset.
Summary Illustration	

<p>Questions for the Collaborators</p>	<p>1. Can you describe efforts that have already been made to address the lack of diversity at Grand Valley and the Honors College?</p> <p>2. Who or what (departments, etc.) would be a source of information regarding diversity, or lack thereof?</p> <p>3. Can you tell us about an experience you have had in the classroom where international, non-traditional, and transfer students impacted the outcome the classroom?</p>
<p>Capture What's Meaningful to Advance Effective Innovation</p>	
<p>Instructor</p>	<p>Looking at faculty in the Honors College, there's not a lot of diversity. What has been done beyond a student base to diversify?</p> <p>Team 2's insights that there is no rigor, no standard to Honors classes and non-Honors classes; this has been a trend across ALL teams.</p>
<p>Class</p>	<p>Team 1's insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High achieving students are attracted to an Ivy League experience • GV's Honors College lacks both internal and external reputation as a prestigious program • High achieving students make decisions based on financial incentives <p>Administration to Team 1: Ivy League students are told that they can go out anywhere into the world - global citizenship. I love the traveling to Chicago and Detroit. That's something we can promise in the Honors College, entry to global citizenship.</p> <p>Team 2's insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors students feel there is no standard for academic rigor within Honors courses and with faculty members. • Students not affiliated with the Honors College feel that it is not worth extra effort to take Honors classes. • Honors students are questioning the value of the extra work Honors courses require. Too much time and work for something to not go towards their major/degree. • Honors sequences are inflexible for students with heavy major course loads their freshmen year, or students who are unsure of their major. Other general education programs allow for more


	<p>exploration.</p> <p>Question from Team 2: What makes the Honor’s College distinctive? Faculty to Team 2: A team of faculty from different disciplines creates a deep, rich curriculum especially with the sequence. We do class events, those types of experiences. Administration to Team 2: students who do well in school have a best friend and a relationship with at least one faculty. Honors students have an ability to have a relationship with faculty. That’s specific to the Honors College. Administration to Team 2: First year sequences. The faculty who make the sequence are people who are passionate about something, who morph it to different disciplines. It’s a different type of intensity.</p>
<p>Collaborator</p>	<p>Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the past several years, we've been trying to recruit students already at GVSU into the Honors College. Diversify the Honors College through the students at GV, and raising money for scholarships. <p>Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish relationships with local middle and high school. Present ourselves to diverse places that we are a potential place for you. It’s daunting and off-putting for people who do not see themselves in a community to want to be there. Going through images of the Honors College is not easy, and you can’t hand select or doctor certain pictures because you don’t want to lie. • Have POCs look for speakers to come to GV. <p>Honors Student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I’m seeing more community and comfort in here. If there is no comfort, that student might not be able to speak up. Thinks we need to be more critical of deriving information from the end users. <p>Honors Alumni</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word of mouth isn’t a bad way to recruit for increased diversity. Bring in siblings. <p>GV Parent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also an administrator at the university <p>Faculty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They had done more outreach to diverse communities than West Michigan has in general. Recruitment days in the field house we are looking to recruit more diverse students. It’s who shows up to those things. • Music, culture, and aesthetics course. Talking about the 60’s and civil rights movement. A trans student brought a new level to the class about the gay rights movement in music. That was going on at the same time. • Students from other countries will give us personal experiences with foreign types of music.

	<p>Honors Advisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If we are to recruit more diverse students, can we support them? What does it mean to be supportive and inclusive? How do we keep them here and foster community?
<p>Other Stakeholder(s)</p>	<p>Other stakeholders to connect with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion • Director of Admissions • Provost • Dean of Students • Director of multicultural affairs • LGBTQ center • Director of AAA • High School counselors for pipeline programs • Climate results out online

<p style="text-align: center;">Integrate the Feedback & Ideate Next Steps</p>	
<p>DIVERGE: How did the feedback provided <i>deviate</i> from your team's current insights?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Honors Student's point. We need to think less in terms of demographics, we need to address community and how to get students to be comfortable with even discussing diversity. 2. Honors alumni said they could have asked for help sooner in their GVSU career but didn't until they were comfortable. 3. We need to empathize more with our end user, this may mean POC's, transfer students, etc. We need to interview people who we are trying to design for.
<p>CONVERGE: How did the feedback <i>align</i> with and enhance the team's current insights?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When diverse minds are present, it adds to the substance of the class. Honors faculty knew the trans student gave the whole class a parallel to the civil rights movement. An international student gave a personal experience that enhanced a drum lesson. 2. An administrator, who is also a professor, loves to see a range of ages in his class because he knows it will add to the class. 3. Honors advisor said that students who do well have a best friend at their university, and a connection to a professor. Students need to see themselves as part of the

	<p>community.</p> <p>4. Students want to apply their learning; the father of a student wanted a standard way for students to practice “engagement.”</p>
<p>APPLY: How can you <i>use</i> the feedback provided?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have many more faculty stakeholders that are involved in diversity issues. 2. In weeks to come, we have some leads on how to ideate.
<p>ACT: What are your next steps?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will go to high schools to understand the pipeline. 2. We will interview more POCs, transfer students, non-traditional students, etc.

Collaborator Debrief II: Innovations

Telling the Story	
Design Challenge Debrief	<p>Team Problem Statement: <i>We will shine light on the lack of diversity in the Honors College and how this impacts a more well-rounded learning experience.</i></p> <p>Top Three Needs Statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Students need to apply what they learn.2) Students need to see themselves as part of a community and feel comfortable within that community.3) Students need a place to have dialogue about diversity. <p>Top Five Innovations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Create a service learning class or add a service learning component to an existing class that allows students to apply what they are learning in a meaningful way.2) In order to foster a sense of community, intentionally assign first year students who are living in Honors housing to designated areas/floors/halls.3) Host diversity dialogues where students are able to voice and discuss what diversity means to them.4) Create a program in which GVSU students reach out to local community colleges, high schools and middle schools.5) Engaging service learning trip as a requirement of Honors curriculum.
Summary Illustration	 A photograph showing a group of about ten people, mostly young adults, engaged in a community service activity. They are outdoors in a grassy field with trees in the background. Several individuals are wearing bright green t-shirts, some with 'VCC' printed on them. They appear to be working together, possibly planting or tending to plants in a garden or field. The scene is bright and sunny, suggesting a pleasant day for the activity.

Questions for the Collaborators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which of our five innovations stands out the most to you as possibly having the greatest impact? 2. Looking at all five of our innovations, give us a “yes, and…” statement for one of them and explain why you feel that way. 3. What change(s) would you like to see in Honors College housing? 4. Please describe an experience where you encouraged uncomfortable dialogue amongst groups of people who do not know each other, and how did you do this?
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Capture What’s Meaningful to Advance Effective Innovation	
Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “How does Admissions recruit/target diversity groups when looking at future Grand Valley Students, and how does the university market the Honors College and Honors students?” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One of Grand Valley’s main forms of advertisement is its website. The website is well designed and is built around being a user friendly interface. This allows anyone navigating the website to easily find anything that they are searching for. ○ Grand Valley markets the Honors College along with the general Grand Valley populous. Is it essentially advertised as a more distinctive branch of the university. Furthermore, institutional marketing claimed that Honors students tend to self identify themselves by their work ethic. ● “Who in this class knew someone from this class before coming into the class?” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very few students raised their hands. ○ Relates back to the idea that there is a disconnect in the Honors program from Freshman year to Junior year.
Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Class did not participate in our Collaborator Debrief specifically.

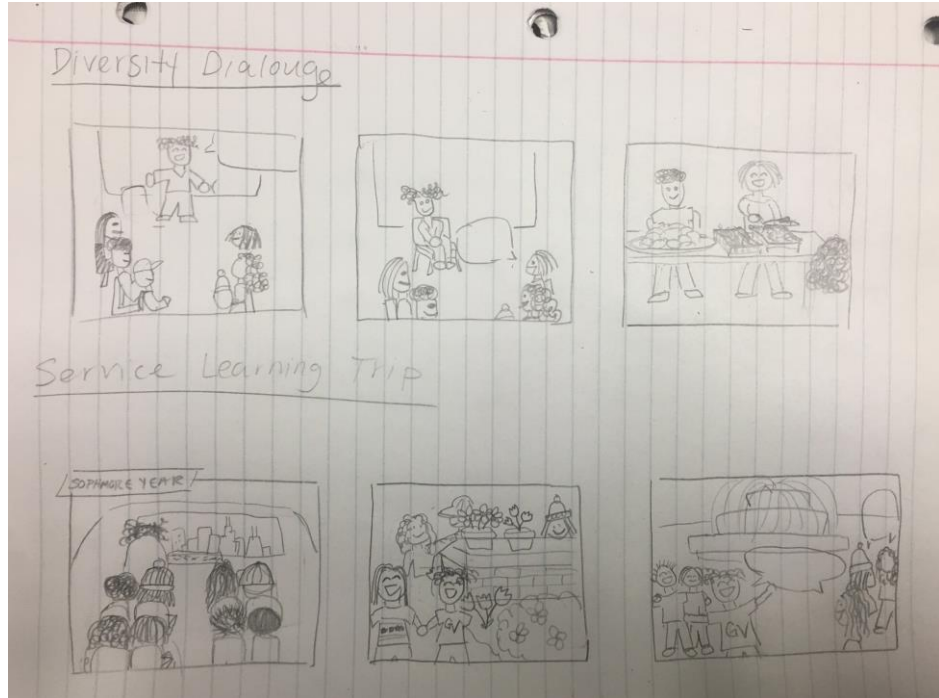
<p>Collaborator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Certain faculty members seem to be more concerned with the long-term effort of trying to diversify the Honors Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Possibly use middle schools and high schools as pipelines ○ There was concern about paying for minority students to attend the Honors College once they are here if they cannot afford it ○ Initial outreach was seen as a key investment for future diversity ● Faculty believe a class incorporating a service learning component may fit well between freshman year and junior year, since there is no Honors programs in this gap year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This class may serve as essentially a sophomore sequence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ This may help keep to the connection
<p>Other Stakeholder(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There was confusion about how our problem statement relates to service learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Service learning trips may not deal with diverse places, so we will have to make sure the places we suggest are diverse ● Faculty feels that if we were to do a service learning trip, it should be mandated to make sure that students actually participate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There was concerns about funding for our potential service learning trips ● Talk to Alternative Breaks; they host Transformation Tuesdays where they bring to light diversity and have dialogues. We can use them as a model. ● “Don’t we already have ideas #3,4,5? Where is the innovation here?” We then clarified that we have these things but not specifically in Honors. Then it was questioned, “Isn’t that exclusive?” ● Honors housing is currently in the process of changing housing for Niemeyer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The way housing is set up now was intentionally set up by the Honors housing department based off their research. ● Honors housing felt that intentionally placing freshman students in the living centers was our best idea. It was

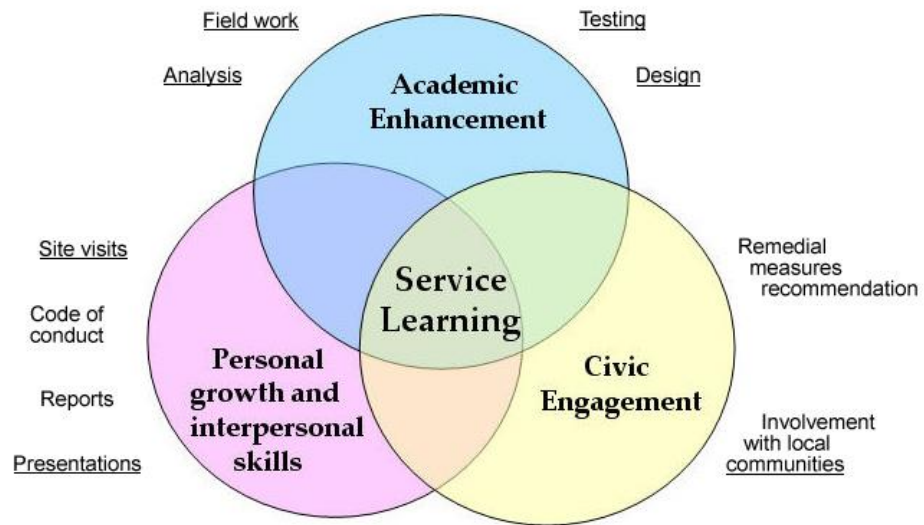
	<p>followed up that to expand on this idea, it would be great if the groups of freshman living together had the ability to go on service learning trips together.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Holton Hooker 3rd floor Honors is working with the Community Service Learning Center (CSLC) to create Residential Service Initiative for their residents to do service in the greater Grand Rapids area with intentional debriefs after. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They mentioned that they could use our help! ● Faculty suggested that in order to facilitate tough dialogue, the group of people/students involved must be open-minded. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There needs to be no hidden hostilities present before dialogue begins. ○ Faculty also stated that these conversations tend to happen naturally as people converse about problems in the world. ● For next debrief, we were given the idea of putting up the figures of West Michigan and Grand Valley's ethnicities.
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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. Faculty felt that there was a disconnect between our current problem statement and our top five innovations. 2. Administration suggested that recruitment should be a crucial aspect of promoting a diverse environment. 3. Honors housing department has done research and did the opposite of what we suggested which was to intentionally put all first year students together, not on the same floor as any upperclassmen.
<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. Staff agreed that having a service learning trip as part of Honors is a good idea and suggested that it be mandated. 2. Honors housing agreed that the living areas of freshmen should be <u>intentional</u> (they just did not agree on the layout). 3. Administration felt that a service learning class would serve as essentially a sophomore sequence which would help to get rid of the disconnect between the freshman sequence and junior seminar.

<p>APPLY: How can you <i>use</i> the feedback provided?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using this feedback, we can compare our innovations to our problem statement. 2. We can apply our feedback to our methods in explaining our problem statement and how our innovations relate to it. 3. Using the suggestions we were given, we can look into finding new stakeholders to talk to.
<p>ACT: What are your next steps?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will put up figures of local, Grand Valley, and Honors College demographics at next debrief. 2. We will look into changing our problem statement. 3. We will connect with Alternative Breaks. 4. We will contact the Community Service Learning Center about the Residential Service Initiative.

Collaborator Debrief III: Real World Applications

Envisioning the Future	
Design Challenge Debrief	<p>Problem Statement: <i>We will shine light on the lack of diversity in the Honors College and how this impacts a more well-rounded learning experience.</i></p> <p>Top Two Prototypes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Service Learning Trip2. Diversity Dialogues <p>Visualization: *Storyboards have been created for both of our top two prototypes.</p>  <p>The image shows two hand-drawn storyboards on lined paper. The top storyboard is titled 'Diversity Dialogue' and contains three panels. The first panel shows a person standing at a whiteboard with two others seated at a table. The second panel shows a person sitting at a table with another person standing. The third panel shows two people at a table with food. The bottom storyboard is titled 'Service Learning Trip' and contains three panels. The first panel is labeled 'SOPHOMORE YEAR' and shows a group of people in front of a city skyline. The second panel shows a person holding a plant in front of a display. The third panel shows a group of people in front of a large structure.</p>
Summary Illustration	



Questions for the Collaborators

1. Looking at our two prototypes, which stands out to you as having the greatest impact?
2. How would you improve upon our two prototypes?
3. What places do you think would be the most beneficial for Honors students to go serve with the community, relating to our problem statement?
4. What kinds of backgrounds/identities should our guest speakers represent?

Capture What's Meaningful to Advance your Prototypes

Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instructor would love to have a diversity dialogue day added into the curriculum of junior seminars ● Faculty already <i>wants</i> to address the issue of diversity, and all these ideas that we are implementing are things that most faculty are passionate about and want to see be implemented
Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is important to look at socioeconomic status when we look at who we bring in for our guest speakers during our dialogues, as not all students at GV are quite as economically sound as the typical student, so having someone they can relate to would be beneficial. ● We could look into combining our two prototypes into one final prototype. We would have to have the diversity dialogues before, during, and after the service learning trip, and possibly include a seminar to teach students on how to prepare themselves, both physically and mentally, on how to handle the things they may see during the service trips. ● “As someone not passionate about diversity, I wouldn’t go to lecture/dialogue on diversity if I didn’t have to. How would you incorporate this because I think there are many students like me who may not be super passionate about diversity.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Our team’s response was that this could be tied into freshman sequence classes and junior seminars how some professors have required out of class events that students have to go to.
Collaborator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dean likes the bridge between freshman and sophomore year, recommends turning the idea into a class sequence of some kind. ● Suggested that we look into/reach out to the newly formed Office for Community Partnership and Student Professional Development. ● (answering team 2): At the end of teacher-student discussions, ask “what did you learn about communication?” This can apply to our diversity dialogues.

**Other
Stakeholder(s)**

- Sustainability Faculty: Grand Rapids has 32 neighborhood associations, anyone of them would welcome help and offer the perspectives that are different.
 - Although Grand Rapids may try to publish the fact that the overall unemployment rate is low, some individual neighborhood associations have unemployment approaching 30%.
 - Inclusion & Equity: there are communities that have told us they have problems that need solving. We have a list and there's a huge variety of groups to choose from.
 - Office of Sustainability felt that the combination of some sort of dialogue with a service learning trip would enhance the overall trip experience.
 - Possibly have some of the community (that students went into and served with) come back to Grand Valley to lead conversations on the service learning trip experience.
- Assistant Vice President for Inclusion and Equity: Suggested that we take a look at Grand Valley's inclusion statement, which includes faith, gender, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, etc.
 - Important to highlight intersectionality, everyone has multiple identities and they should feel as if they are able to bring their whole self to the table.
 - Our focus may be on inclusion rather than diversity. Diversity is the presence of differences. Inclusion is making sure that everyone feels comfortable.
- Assistant Vice President for Inclusion and Equity: Thinks our idea of a "diversity dialogue" could be called "inter-group dialogue." It addresses the "meta-narrative." She thinks this could be very transformative. She told us there have been lots of people trained (30 faculty and administration) in intergroup dialogue this past summer.
- Advising Faculty: thinks invitations from communities are important in deciding where to go on service learning trips in addition to student opinions on where to go.
- Sustainability Faculty: agrees with the idea of invitation. West Michigan has a lot of needs in addition to the greater Grand Rapids area. Says connectivity to the east side can be done as well.
- Office of Student Affairs was very excited about a service

learning trip.

- Suggested that we look into the Activate training program.
 - Prepares students with mentality they should have before going on a service learning trip
 - Students need to have some background information on communities before they go in and serve
 - Major themes of humility and respect, so the students don't have a "savior" mentality
 - Important that there is dialogue in both directions between Grand Valley and local communities before going into them and serving with community
- Student: thinks we can incorporate diversity dialogues before and after trips.
 - Advising faculty: Suggests doing discussion pre, during, and post trip to get maximum benefit
- Article penned by a physicist was brought up. They surmised that diversity and excellence go hand in hand. He felt that if there is no diversity, there will be no excellence.
- Sustainability was very excited about some sort of service learning trip. He wanted us to get into contact with alternative breaks.
 - He is very pleased with those students as they are incredibly passionate and are driven students.
 - He is always blown away by how many significant outcomes can come about in a short time period.
 - Felt that the framework used for alternative breaks could be applied to our service learning trip.

Post-Debrief Reflections
Integrate the Feedback & Decide on Your Best Solution

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

1. While we understood the importance of reflection *after* the trip, the collaborators pointed out that in order to have a successful experience there must be dialogue before, during and after the trip.
2. Certain collaborators supported the idea of a sophomore sequence. Our team has considered this possibility, however, we are unsure of how accessible this will be to all students, specifically students with a heavier courseload their second year.
3. The Assistant Vice President for Inclusion and Equity made us aware of the difference between the terms diversity and inclusion. Diversity is the presence of differences, whereas inclusion has more to do with everyone feeling comfortable in a given environment.
4. One of the collaborators mentioned that it might be a good idea to allow Honors students to decide where they want to go and who they want to learn from. However, we want to stress the importance of working *with* a community. It is important that we are invited into a community and address their actual needs.

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

1. The collaborators agreed that it was important that the service learning trips work *with* a community rather than to a community. One of the collaborators pointed out that the framework that you enter into a community with is extremely important.
2. It is important to include dialogue and/or reflection in the process of service learning.
3. Many of the collaborators also felt that it would be beneficial, both to students and the local community, to stay in Grand Rapids, at least initially. One of the collaborators mentioned the book, *City Within a City*. This book brings attention to the fact that Grand Rapids remains one of the most segregated cities in the nation. Grand Rapids, made up of 32 neighborhood associations, has many opportunities for service learning trips.
4. The Dean agreed that having some Honors requirement to bridge the gap between freshman and junior year was

	important.
<p>APPLY: How can you <i>use</i> the feedback provided?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using this feedback, we can look at ways to potentially combine our two prototypes into one final prototype, as there did not seem to be one that the collaborators favored over the other. 2. Research what communities have already requested for GV to come in and serve so that we can focus on working <u>with</u> the community. 3. Seek out who is trained in intergroup dialogue and ask them their opinions about our prototypes to see if they would be interested or if it is even feasible. 4. Look into the Activate program to see how that can relate to our prototypes.
<p>ACT: What are your next steps?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create one final prototype to present on. 2. Finetune all the smaller portions of our prototypes such as location for the trip, dates, leaders, guest speakers, etc.

Ideate: Top Five Innovations

Problem Statement:

We will shine light on the lack of diversity in the Honors College and how this impacts a more well-rounded learning experience.

1. We will create a **service learning class**, or add a service learning component to an existing class, that allows students to apply what they are learning in a meaningful way. The inspiration for this innovation comes from a previous discontinued class called Crossing Borders. In this class, students spent a semester learning about a culture and then the next semester were sent out into the communities to volunteer and apply what they had learned. This opportunity allowed for students to empathize and embrace cultures different from their own in a much more personal manner, and increase their awareness of the diversity in surrounding communities. Our goal is to accomplish many of the same things, because high impact learning experiences are those in which students are put in the real world and meant to problem solve and challenge their preconceived notions of those different from themselves. This will be achieved by creating a class in the interstice between freshman and junior year, as through our research it was discovered that many students feel disconnected from the Honors College during their sophomore year. This disconnect increases as the students advance in their disciplinary degrees because there is less contact with other Honor students after the freshman sequence and junior seminar. This class can be in the same format as a junior seminar, where it is a single term three credit class. The goal is to broaden student's horizons about those they may not know much about, creating a distinctive experience unlike any other issues class. It will incorporate reflective writing after the service learning. These volunteer experiences will likely take place in minority areas around Grand Rapids. Students will spend the first four to five weeks learning about the cultures and then the focus will switch to actively working with the communities to create a positive experience for all involved. The type of service can be

anything from helping out at local school, or going to food pantries. Potentially, working with the Community Service Learning Center (CSLC) could be of assistance with this. Overall, the goal of this class will be to expose students to diverse environments while applying what they learn in a real-world experience. The knowledge gained from this class will then be brought back to the Grand Valley ecosystem.



Figure 5: Service-Learning Image

2. Our second innovation is to **intentionally assign all Honors freshman living on the Allendale campus to specific halls or floors**. This idea is meant to help freshman build community. It is a common practice for freshman to open their doors and walk into other people's rooms. However, we have found that if there are sophomores or upperclassmen in the same living space as the freshmen, that most of these non-freshman students tend to keep their doors shut throughout welcome week and beyond. This can negatively impact a student's experience in their living space, especially if they want to have it feel like a community that they are part of. Making it so that all freshmen live together and encouraging them to open

their doors allows them to meet other freshman and make friends and meet new people to help grow their sense of community.

This relates to our problem statement because in order for students to feel comfortable with diversity and consider it to be something that they are aware and understanding of, they must first feel comfortable within their own community. Also, by creating a community that encompasses a number of different people—all with different races, ethnicities, opinions, mindsets, etc.—we would be creating a diverse environment that allows students to feel as though they are a part of a group of people and embrace their differences. Research has proven that this leads to greater academic success and greater social development. Having this group of diverse people may also potentially help attract students who may consider Grand Valley, but are concerned it may be a place where they wouldn't fit in.



Figure 6: Intentional Dorm Assignment Image

3. Our **diversity dialogues** would give Honors students a chance to voice their perspectives on diversity. Nearly all of our interviewees have told us that they define diversity as the product of peoples combined life experience that gives them a unique perspective of the world. This definition differs greatly from the race and gender focused definition that is

typically thought when one talks about increasing diversity. We want Honors students to discuss their perspectives, how their lives have influenced their perspectives, and how they themselves contribute to diversity even if they are not associated with a minority group. Our research has indicated that the presence of a diverse group of people does not necessarily mean people will experience diversity's benefits. Diversity is better implemented when the group believes that diversity is valuable. We hope that through discussions of diversity, Honors students will gain an increased appreciation of divergent thinking. An increased presence of diversity in the Honors College (more people of color, different genders, non-traditional students, etc.) will foster more collaboration and open-minded thinking from Honors students. These diversity dialogues will be held in the Honors College and be facilitated by faculty to help keep the discussion on track and respectful. Conversation will be centered on how students view diversity, their experiences with diversity, and personal life experiences that have shaped their own perspectives. The dialogue will not only let students reflect on their own lives, but also on the experiences of their peers. After the discussion, students will leave the room aware of more aspects that make a person's life different and how those differences can be applied to collaboration with others in an exceptional way.



Figure 7: Diversity Dialogue Image

4. Our fourth innovation, **the creation of a program in which GVSU students reach out to local community colleges, high schools and middle schools**, was designed with the intention of creating a link between Grand Valley and local students to recruit to increase campus diversity. Through our research, we found that the Honors College population reflects that of both the greater Grand Valley population and that of West Michigan. Meaning, the majority of students in the Honors College are Caucasian. During the second collaborator debrief, the administration that was present suggested that recruitment should be a crucial aspect of promoting a more diverse environment. By creating a program that enables GVSU students to be in direct contact with diverse populations in the immediate area, Grand Valley will be creating an environment in which people from many backgrounds will comfortably engage with one another. In our research, we found that students must feel comfortable in their environment(s) in order to open up about their own diversity. One of our needs statements is that students *need* to see themselves as part of a community and must feel comfortable within that community. In order for Grand Valley to become more diverse, students from diverse backgrounds must be able to imagine themselves at GV. Part of that is being able to see themselves reflected in the student population. Time and time again, our team has found that diversity is not just the color of one's skin or characteristics that can only be seen by the eye. Diversity is difference in thought, in the way a person was raised. By creating a program that allows GV students to interact with those in the local community, potential GVSU students will be able to see that while Grand Valley may lack racial diversity (at the moment), it has a plethora of other forms of diversity amongst its student population.



Figure 8: Diversity Image

5. The fifth innovation that resulted from our primary and secondary research is an engaging **service learning trip** as a requirement of Honors curriculum. In our research, we found that service-learning trips are a compelling part of many other Honors programs. This is due to the fact that students need to apply what they learn, which happens to be one of our needs statements. By creating a service-learning trip that will be a mandatory part of the Honors curriculum, we are ensuring that Honors students will be getting experiences that would make their time in Honors more distinctive. This requirement will add to the appeal of the Honors program, as it will serve as a great learning opportunity for students to be immersed in service with their peers. Students can meet this requirement at any time during their Honors experience, which will create an interesting dynamic as there will be a mix of older and younger students who would be at different points in their academic and life journeys. This in itself would create diversity. By participating in a service-learning trip, students will be exposed to different backgrounds, perspectives, and people, which in turn will broaden their understandings of diversity. The trip will be followed by a debrief in which students will be able to process their experiences on the trip, and discuss ways in which their experiences tie back to their home communities, the greater Grand Rapids community, and more specifically, the community here at Grand Valley. For example, our service-learning trip will take place in

an urban community, such as Detroit. This location will provide an insightful experience and debrief due to the history of the city with red-lining, segregation of school districts, and so on.



Figure 9: Service-Learning Trip Image

Prototype: Top Two Prototypes

1. Service Learning Trip

One of our team's top two prototype concepts is a service learning trip for Honor's College Students. Through synthesis and integration of multiple research articles and personal interviews with the Grand Valley community, we have identified a clamoring by students for some type of service learning experience. Our team's goal is to treat this service learning trip as a requirement of Honor's College students. Through our research, we found that there is a lack of connection between the sequences required as an Honors freshman, and the junior seminars and senior projects. This trip will serve as a bridge between the freshman sequence and the junior seminar, as traditional Honors students will take this their second year, similar to the idea of a "sophomore sequence." There will be trips offered during the school year: one during the fall semester and the other during the winter semester. The trip will be a weekend trip, taking place in a regional urban area such as Grand Rapids or Detroit, serving *with* the local community. Honors students and faculty will be working on projects deemed necessary by each community (park clean ups, community gardens, building playgrounds, food banks, helping in local schools, etc.). In interviews with our stakeholders, we found that diversity is not defined as the color of one's skin or something that is solely apparent to the eye. Diversity is any difference between two people, such as a difference in background, experiences, or thought. By allowing students to learn about and work with people who have had different experiences, these service learning trips will create opportunities for exposure to and discussion on diversity. With required reflection as part of the trip, students will gather together to discuss their experiences and how they can apply what they learned to Grand Valley's community.



Figure 10: Service-Learning Trip Image

2. Diversity Dialogues with a Twist

The second prototype concept that our team decided to develop is a series of diversity dialogues. These dialogues will include a guest speaker who comes from a diverse background and has many cross-cultural experiences. Guest speakers will also be encouraged to suggest ways in which students would be able to further connect to the dialogue, i.e. a traditional activity or food dish. The dialogues will be facilitated by professionals who have experience in hosting sessions that involve tough conversations on subjects that may make some people feel uncomfortable. The purpose of these dialogues is to allow Honors students the opportunity to voice their perspectives on diversity while also gaining insight on the guest speaker's life and their experiences. We want Honors students to discuss and reflect on their perspectives, how their lives have influenced their perspectives, and how they themselves contribute to diversity even if they are not a part of a minority group. Our research has indicated that the presence of a diverse group of people does not necessarily mean people will experience diversity's benefits. Diversity is better implemented when the group believes that diversity is valuable. Through open discussion of diversity, Honors students will gain an increased appreciation of divergent thinking. Conversation will be centered on how students view diversity, experiences with diversity, and personal life experiences that have shaped their own perspectives. The dialogue will not only let students reflect on their own lives, but also on the experiences of their peers.

After the discussion, students will leave the room more aware of aspects that make a person's life different from their own and how those differences can be applied to their collaborative work with others in an exceptional way. This will foster a more well-rounded learning experience, thus relating to our team problem statement.



Figure 11: Diversity Dialogues Image

Test: Final Prototype

1. Service Learning Trip

Our team's final prototype concept represents a combination of our top two prototypes: a service learning experience for Honor's College students integrated with a strategically placed series of diversity dialogues. Based on feedback during the third collaborator debrief, our group decided to merge these two ideas into one distinct prototype to enhance Grand Valley's Honors College program. Through our research, we found that students are clamoring for service learning experiences that are reinforced by reflective dialogue. The service learning experience will be a requirement of the Honors College curriculum. Because we found that there is a lack of connection between the freshman sequences and junior seminars/senior projects, this experience will serve as a bridge in which traditional Honors students will take part during their second year, i.e. a sophomore sequence. There will be two service learning experiences offered during the school year; one will take place during the fall semester and the other during the winter semester. The experience will be over a weekend, taking place in a regional urban area such as Grand Rapids or Detroit. We want to emphasize that this service learning experience is serving *with* the local community and not serving *to* them. Students and Honors faculty would be working with local communities on co-designed projects that are deemed necessary by each community (such as park clean-ups, community gardens, establishing food banks, assisting in local schools, etc.).

Phase I of the service learning experience will be a hosted diversity dialogue led by faculty and students enrolled in service learning. This diversity dialogue will help to mentally prepare students for what they may encounter, and provide them with background and context on the culture and history of the community. This will enable

students to begin to empathize with the community before the specific project work. Phase II encompasses the service learning activity, in which will be integrated intentional facilitated diversity dialogues and honest reflection about what students are feeling, learning, and seeing. Phase III is the final diversity dialogue at the conclusion of the service learning experience. Together, faculty, students, and community members will have the opportunity reflect and dialogue on their personal engagement with the experience and how they will apply what they learned within the Grand Valley community (students and faculty). We hope that through open discussion of diversity, Honors students will gain an increased appreciation of divergent thinking.

In interviews with our stakeholders, we found that diversity is not defined as the color of one’s skin or something that is solely apparent to the eye. Diversity is any difference between two people, such as a difference in background or thought. By allowing students to learn about and work with people from different backgrounds, these service learning experiences would create opportunities for exposure to and discussion on diversity.

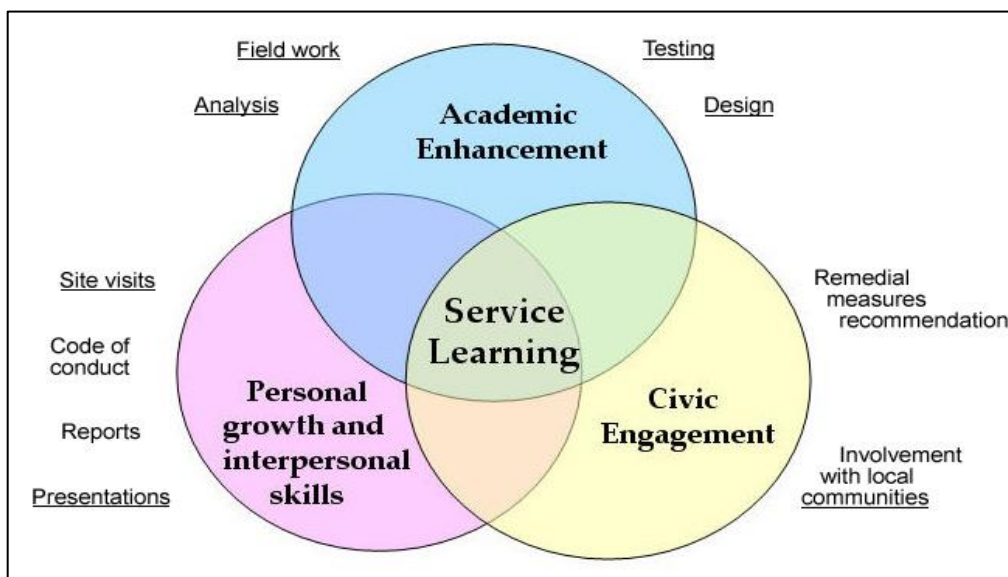


Figure 12: Service-Learning Trip (with Dialogues) Image

Design Challenge Video: The 'New' Honors College

Creativity Crew Design Thinking Final Video
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLFJ2Xeeekis&t=49s>)

Design Thinking Climactic Presentation



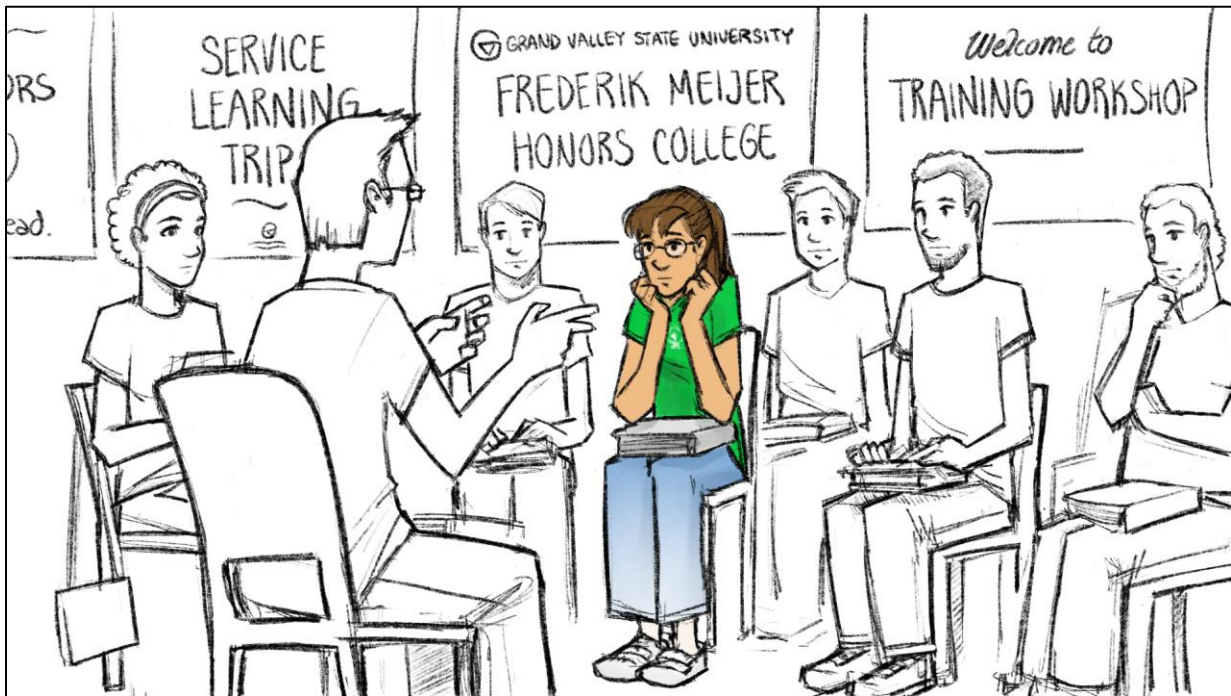
Storyboard 1: Emily at Freshman Honors Orientation



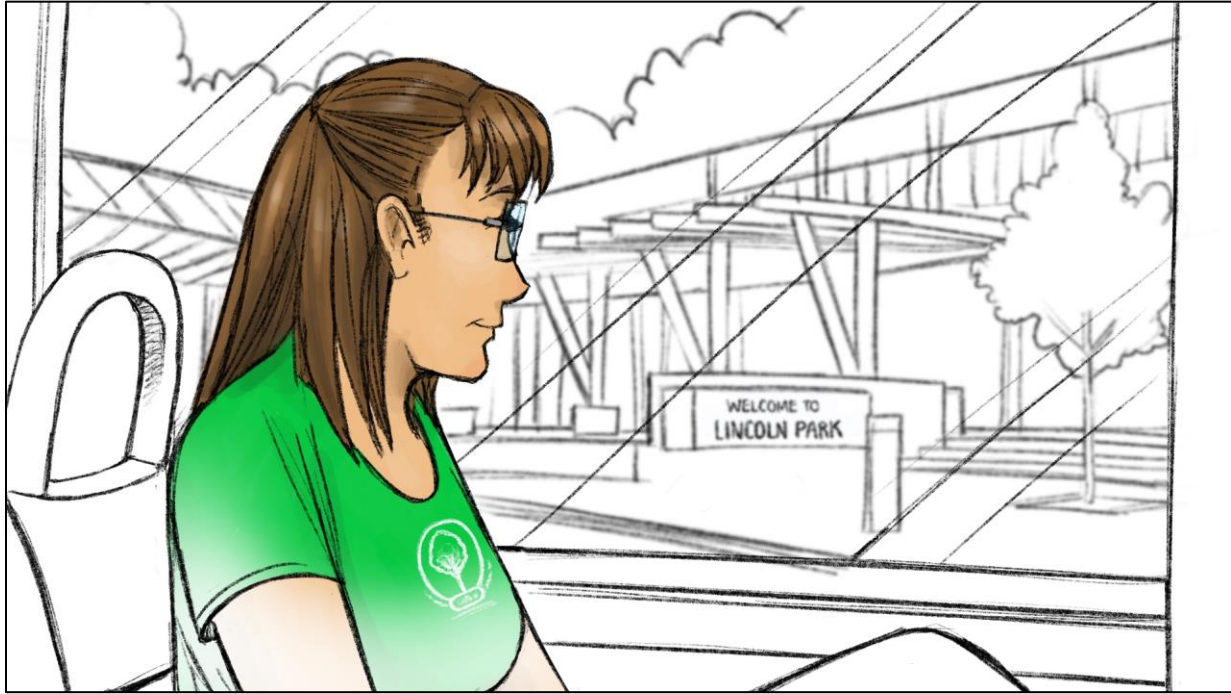
Storyboard 2: Emily being reminded to Sign-Up for Service-Learning Trip



Storyboard 3: Emily receiving supplies for Service-Learning Trip



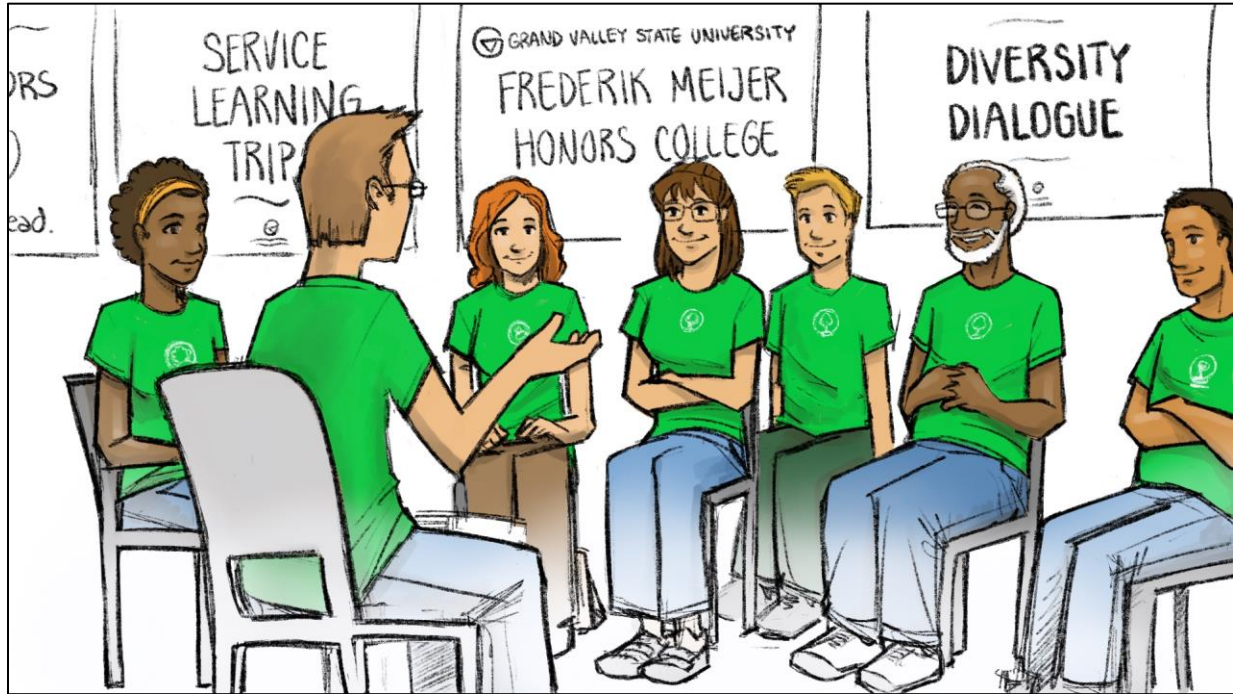
Storyboard 4: Emily in the orientation/Phase I Dialogue



Storyboard 5: Emily on the bus heading to community



Storyboard 6: Emily working with community member, Mr. Rogers



Storyboard 7: Phase III Diversity Dialogue



Storyboard 8: Emily bringing back Service-Learning Trip Experience to Grand Valley

Collaborator/Stakeholder Feedback

Call to Action Envisioning the Future	
Brief Description of How Your Presentation was Received	As a team, we felt that our presentation was well received by the audience. In comparison to the other prototype concepts presented, we felt that the stakeholders did not ask as many questions. Initially, this was worrisome. However, at the end of the presentations, we realized that this likely meant that we were able to convey all of the necessary information during our portion of the presentation. For example, our video covered the motivation behind and the process that lead us to our final prototype. Overall, after reviewing how the stakeholders decided to vote and instructor feedback on our presentation, we feel that our presentation was well received and that we did the best that we could have done.
What was the Teams Specific Call-to-Action	Our team's call to action was to ask our stakeholders for their support of our vision of a Grand Valley in which 100% of students feel as though they are able to understand those whom come from a background different than their own.
Attendee Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How would you make your service-learning trip a requirement of Honors? 2. Would students be expected to front the cost of a required service-learning trip at the beginning of their Grand Valley experience or their sophomore year?

Innovation Symposium Feedback

Verbal Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One stakeholder thought that we made false assumptions about the diversity at Grand Valley. ● A professor talked about how we should try to expose the diversity in West Michigan, not just in Honors College. ● A stakeholder mentioned that the Honors curriculum needs a sophomore component. ● An administrative stakeholder said that helping educate and normalize diversity and diverse thinking is a great way to address our problem. ● A student in Honors asked if students would spend the night in that community or back at your own home. We then explained that this would depend on the community, distance, etc. This was helpful feedback for when we, or whoever takes this up next, looks into logistics.
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Written Feedback	<p>The following feedback was written on post-it notes and put onto flow chart paper specifically for our team. Our stakeholders who attended our Innovation Symposium presentation wrote these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is going to cost money, but putting a price tag will limit people’s availability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Time will also limit a person’s ability to be a part of this, limiting the diverse learning you are trying to get ● Marketing can help you find volunteer opportunities ● Activities/games focused on realizing what your privileges are ● Connections with local nonprofits focused on diversity ● Connect with Inclusion and Equity stuff on the “preparation” dialogue ● Mix up mindsets like businesses ● Remember how students’ interests vary with regards to students’ majors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Try to have opportunities in proportional availability of student interest matched events to fit in major ● Consider for service learning: you will need to know what programs and how to connect them to us <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Look at what already works ● Maybe consider a written reflection as a part of meaning-making ● Make sure it is only one weekend, students need to be able to
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	<p>build connection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A capable facilitator will be key for the dialogue segments ● Effective facilitation will make or break the learning ● There are natural leadership opportunities here for Honors students: planners of service learning trips, dialogue facilitators, etc. ● I like that you use this experience as a bridge between existing parts of Honors (freshman and junior) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I think it is important to focus very locally where impacts and connections resonate much more (i.e. GR's West Side) ○ Does the service-learning trip have to involve travel? There are many service learning opportunities involving diversity in West Michigan! ○ Smart to build in the dialogues post-service learning trip. I think the trips and dialogues should be multiple rather than just one. ○ Model like a church or school weekend "retreat". ○ I think if the goal is more about bonding with each other, trips further away could be more fun.
<p>Visual Feedback</p>	<p>Our team had the most sticker votes, meaning that our stakeholders feel as though our project should be the first priority for implementation in regards to making the Honors College more distinctive.</p> <p>Additionally, our audience seemed to be well receiving of our idea. We received many smiles and when thought provoking points were made, it was apparent that they all were deep in thought. Many people were writing down verbal feedback as well. Overall, body language was positive.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Post-Symposium Reflections</p>	
<p>DIVERGE: How did the feedback provided <i>deviate</i> from your team's current recommendations?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One professor thinks that we should try to expose the diversity in West Michigan, not just in Honors College. 2. Some collaborators feel that we made false assumptions about what people believe about diversity at Grand Valley. 3. We didn't really consider the logistics of money, so overnight trips to places like Detroit may be more difficult without funding. 4. A collaborator mentioned they would like written reflection

	<p>along with dialogues.</p>
<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. The audience agreed that the Honors curriculum needs a sophomore component. 2. The Honors College Director agrees that helping educate and normalize diversity and diverse thinking is a great way to address our problem. 3. The audience agreed that service learning is an excellent way to be exposed to others from unique backgrounds and experiences. 4. A stakeholder agreed that she believes students want to get out of the classroom and apply their interdisciplinary education to the real world.
<p>SYNTHESIZE: How can others <i>use</i> the feedback provided?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We can use the same method used to expose the diversity in the group of students to expose the diversity present in West Michigan. 2. Make a range of trips with different costs so that students who would like to pay to travel far can, and that students who can’t afford that can still get the experience. 3. We can ask students the type of service they would like to do to diversify their experiences, as well as allow them to pick their own communities. 4. Add a writing component to the reflection process, so that it is not only dialogue.
<p>RECOMMEND: What next steps does your team recommend to stakeholders?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask a variety of communities what they need help with. 2. Figure out how we can get funding for these trips. 3. Go to the new department relating to volunteering mentioned by the Honors College Director. 4. Find students and a community willing to put the prototype into action.

Concluding Statement

One of the initial cornerstones of our team's project came out of the September 2017 Grand Valley State University Student Profile. One of the statistics pointed out that roughly 40% of Grand Valley Students felt that they did not have an understanding of those who came from different backgrounds than themselves. Trying to combat this current statistic, our team designed a prototype that will expose the Honors student populous to people from different backgrounds, while simultaneously uncovering the diversity that already exists with the Grand Valley student body. Picture a Grand Valley in which a 100% of students feel that they have the ability to understand those different than themselves. This is a Grand Valley that will be made up of accepting and connected individuals. Grand Valley State University will become a pillar throughout the country of students who are not only advocates for diversity, but also advocates for the advancement of diversity. The Creativity Crew sincerely believes that implementation of a sophomore year Service Learning experience, focused on inclusion and diversity, will make the Honors College here at Grand Valley more distinctive. Please consider implementation of this prototype concept!

Discoveries: Research Bibliographies

Research Bibliography 1

Citation:

Lee, Daniel B. "An Honors College With a Social Mission: Service-Learning From the Perspective of Students and Administrators." *Sociological Practice*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2002, pp. 15–39. JSTOR, JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/43735966.

Reason for including this source in your work:

This article examines Pennsylvania State University and its Schreyer Honors College, which "pursues a "self-evident social and moral" mission: to motivate the most talented students to improve society" (Lee, 16). At the heart of our goal to create more diversity within the Honors College, is the belief that diversity improves society, something the SHC (Schreyer Honors College) aims for as well. A goal of the SHC is to provide a community that desires engagement, but also values diversity, which is why we are including this source in our work.

Main argument:

This article examines service learning within Honors Colleges, specifically that of the Schreyer Honors College. The argument presented is that service-learning programs fail when they are not required, rather optional. In order for a service-learning experience to succeed, it must have goals related to course content, be long enough for students to foster relationships with those at their projects, as well as leave opportunity for reflection on the significance and importance of their experience.

Important ideas:

- ❖ The author suggest that "rich college culture tends to increase social solidarity on campus and enrich the undergraduate experience" (lee, 20)
- ❖ Examining different administrators and students, it appeared that each group interprets the mission and vision of the college differently, sometimes very differently.
- ❖ Interesting facts about SHC, each students is matched with a faculty member, who serves as an advisor. Schreyer students can design a custom made degree, they're given priority when selecting classes and have faculty library privileges.
- ❖ At SHC service learning opportunities are integrated into many Honors courses. An umbrella organization referred to as S.A.I.L (Service, Achievement, Imitative, Leadership) was put in place to help interested student volunteers.
- ❖ Students who are not in the Honors College sometimes see the Honors College as a kind of aristocracy, whom is privileged and condescending to other students.

Evidence:

From a student: "Neither the dean nor the college has the right to teach me about morals"

(Lee, 29). Along with this “Administrators talk about civic responsibility and volunteering, but you don’t have to,” (Lee) and “There are programs for volunteers, but to tell you the truth, we study a lot and don’t have much time for such things” (Lee). This exemplifies the author’s point, that if the mission is service- learning, then it must be mandated.

In addition, in a cohort Lee interviewed, consistently they asserted that they had “too little time to donate enough hours to public service” (Lee, 31), but if done through a mandated class, it may be possible.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

SHC (Schreyer Honor College) Mission: to motivate the most talented students to improve society.

“The SHC embraces cultural diversity in its programs and course offerings” (Lee, 25).

“I want to take every service-learning course there is. This kind of stuff is really my thing. I want to meet people of all different walks of life and try to help, but most importantly, understand. If more people just took a little time to understand where others are coming from there would be much less conflict in this world.” (Lee, 31)

A student believed her administrators were “sort of far away and untouchable,” but learned that “there are administrators who have invested their hearts into this college” (Lee, 31).

“Faculty tend to have “no interest in service-learning, because they do not see how it fulfills established curricular goals” (Grey, 1999, p. 19).

“The educational experience of service-learning tends to change positively the orientation of students, helping them to develop personal habits of good citizenship and social involvement” (Grey et al, 2000; Hunter and Brisbin 2000; Koliba 2000).

Strengths:

- Mandated service learning provides a method in which diverse groups can be understood.
- Gives insight into what other Honors Colleges programs look like.

Weaknesses:

- Doesn’t focus specifically on diversity
- Doesn’t touch on certain ecosystems.

Connections:

- ❖ By going out into the community and doing service, students are exposed to diverse groups and people.
- ❖ There are insights from this not related to service learning projects that can be applied, such as that in our ecosystem administrators are more connected to students than once thought.

- ❖ It provided insight into the perspective of non-Honors students, who view Honors as sometimes be arrogant, causing resentment and jealousy.
- ❖ If our challenge was to make service learning mandatory, in order to teach about diversity and other cultures, students feel as though they don't have the time to do service learning. Thus, service learning would have to be implemented into a class.

Questions/Concerns:

- ❖ How could going out into the community and volunteering increase diversity and knowledge of diverse groups at GVSU?
- ❖ Would the Honors College being more diverse decrease the negative connotations of it being conceited? Or unapproachable?
- ❖ Would we be able to financially support a service program?

Research Bibliography 2

Citation:

Vos, M., Çelik, G., & Vries, S. D. (2016). Making cultural differences matter? Diversity perspectives in higher education. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 35(4), 254-266. doi:10.1108/edi-11-2015-0092

Reason for including this source in your work:

This work gives us insight on how other people have defined diversity and studied diversity, specifically in a higher educational setting.

Main argument:

The research this paper reports was studied due to the increasing demand for culturally sensitive people in the workforce. Within a university are multiple organizational groups, these groups differ in reasons to diversify and practices of diversifying. The best way for a university to diversify is to use different methods for different reasons and preferred practices between groups.

Important ideas:

- ❖ Research shows that diversity management practices are better implemented when the practices reflect the team's beliefs about diversity's value
- ❖ There are 5 diversity perspectives studied: integration and learning, access, fairness, colorblindness, homogeneity
- ❖ There are 2 practices of diversity management studied: recruitment of diverse lecturers and utilizing diversity in team interaction
- ❖ There are differences between teams within the university on how they see and manage diversity
- ❖ The Honors college was found to use an integration and learning perspective
- ❖ Just because a team is diverse does not mean they use that diversity as a tool

Evidence:

The authors came to their conclusions with data from 19 semi-structured interviews at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences. They studied different teams within the university on their diversity perspectives and diversity practices.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

The 5 Diversity Perspectives

Reinforcing homogeneity – “actively avoiding a diverse workforce”

Colorblindness – “the belief that racism and discrimination are no longer relevant for contemporary society’s economic and social realities”

Fairness – “the notion that it is important that the demographics of the organization reflect the demographics of society”

Access – “people fit into the organization when the diversity of the employees matches the diversity of the market they serve”

Integration and Learning – “diversity as a source for learning for everyone in the organization”

“... There is an increasing need to prepare students for dealing with the complex demands and needs of various cultural groups, customers and clients in society that they will work with in their future professional role.” (Introduction, P1)

“Finally, an integration and learning approach was endorsed by the Honors College team. ‘We actively strive for a diverse workforce, as diversity is one of our core values in this team. For this reason, almost all new lecturers we have recently added to our team have different cultural backgrounds.’” (Results, P4)

“Taken together, the present case study shows that the demands of the labor market that educational teams serve have a strong impact on how diversity is valued in these teams.” (Discussion, P4)

Strengths:

- Methods for research specifically provided understanding of diversity management at team level
- The small sample was able to find great enough differences between teams

Weaknesses:

- Larger study would make the study more generalizable
- The study did not include students, only lecturers

Connections:

- ❖ We can use the diversity perspectives given in analyzing our interviews.
- ❖ The study confirms that studying the Honor’s college, as a team is a good idea; we are a smaller group than the university that is more likely to have a collective vision.
- ❖ The diversity management techniques analyzed could be possible prototypes in the future (recruitment and interaction).

- ❖ The research highlights the fact that different teams have different needs, meaning that OUR Honor's College has specific needs. We need to study our group to realize those needs.

Questions/Concerns:

- ❖ Does the Honor's college have organizational groups within itself that may have different diversity needs?
- ❖ Should we be asking our stakeholders about their perspectives on the need for diversity?
- ❖ What are some more ways diversity can be managed at the university (these are our prototypes)?

Research Bibliography 3

Citation:

Dounas-Frazer, D. R., Hyater-Adams, S. A., & Reinholz, D. L. (2017). Learning to Do Diversity Work: A Model for Continued Education of Program Organizers. *The Physics Teacher*, 55(6), 342-346. doi:10.1119/1.4999728

Reason for including this source in your work:

To solve our problem of a lack of diversity, we need to be able to talk about diversity. This article describes a possible prototype for solving our design challenge.

Main argument:

The paper outlines the model for "Diversity Workshops" that student leaders in the CU-Prime organization of the Physics Department at University of Colorado Boulder used to facilitate discussion about diversity. Physics is an area that shows great underrepresentation of people of different races, ethnicities, and genders. This needs to be addressed because underrepresentation is tied to racism, sexism, and other types of marginalization.

Important ideas:

- ❖ The workshops used are meant to give these student leaders skills to make informed decisions in their organizations.
- ❖ The quarterly workshops worked best for THIS group of students; they were volunteers who also had a lot on their plate due to school and work. Different groups may have different scheduling needs.
- ❖ Intergroup discussions are not always safe for people of marginalized groups to participate in.
- ❖ The workshop needed to address the fact that multiple identities intersect and to try to isolate them completely is a mistake. Students can be apart of dominant and marginalized groups at the same time.
- ❖ Facilitating the workshop is required: attending to emotions, monitoring participants' language, using multiple modes of communication, and furthering the facilitators' education

Evidence:

The report includes the dates, topics, and attendance of all the workshops held from 2014-2016. The authors facilitated the workshops themselves.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

Intergroup discussion – “discussions that satisfy two criteria: (i) the topic of discussion is one or more dimensions of marginalization: and (ii) the participants in the discussion include people who do and do not belong to the corresponding marginalized group.”

Allies – “people who do not belong to the group but who work to minimize and/or eliminate the corresponding form of marginalization.”

“While the seminar series is open to all students regardless of demographic background, Access member organizations specifically recruit students from underrepresented groups into summer programs, coursework, and mentorship programs.” (Context, motivation, and purpose. P3)

“An individual workshop would last two hours and consist of five parts: pre-workshop homework, an Empathy Activity, a homework debrief, and Application Activity, and post-workshop feedback.” (Design. P1)

“Our designs incorporated the following six principles of intergroup discussions:
P1) Intergroup discussions can be used for members of the marginalized group.
P2) Allies can develop through repeated exposure to counter-ideologies about marginalization.
P3) Both scholarly work about marginalization and the lived experiences of students from the corresponding marginalized group are equally important.
P4) Discussion of marginalization must focus on the intersections of race, gender, class, and other identities.
P5) Empathy is a critical feature of productive inter-group discussions.
P6) Discussions and resources must be tailored to the needs and goals of the organization.” (Design. P3)

Strengths:

- To reduce the risk that comes with intergroup discussion for people of marginalized groups, the participants of the workshop were CU-prime members. All had a shared interest in promoting diversity, and knew each other before hand.

Weaknesses:

- The workshop agenda is tailored to CU-Prime (the student leader group) specifically and may be unable to be applied to other groups.
- Model is not made to be appropriate for settings where there are students, professors and staff. It was only student leaders in the CU-prime organization

Connections:

- ❖ Presents a model for a possible solution to diversity-talk about the issue
- ❖ Identifies issues and barriers we would face if we were to attempt a similar prototype
- ❖ The authors (a few returning leaders of CU-prime) is similar to our Creativity Crew, a group of students designing a solution WITHIN a larger group of leaders
- ❖

Questions/Concerns:

- ❖ This model incorporates curriculum and diversity as issues, could it be possible for us to do the same?
- ❖ Would we want to go the “talk about it” path in solving our problem?

Research Bibliography 4

Citation:

Young, James H., III; Story, Lachel; Tarver, Samantha; Weinauer, Ellen; Keeler, Julia; McQuirter, Allison
Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council, v17 n2 p177-189 Fall-Win 2016

Reason for including this source in your work:

This source is being included in our work because it is titled “The Honors College Experience Reconsidered: Exploring the Student Perspective”. Our aim is to reconsider the Honors College of GVSU, which fits the title. This source explores the perspective of the students something we just accomplished in interviews we conducted.

Main argument:

The argument presented is that often administrators overlook and forget about the student voice when creating and implementing strategic plans, mission statements, and extracurricular programming. Working with students when approaching these areas may increase student’s cooperation and participation. By implementing this the connectedness, community and opportunity within the USM Honors College would be improved.

Important ideas:

- ❖ They believed the most important stakeholders to be dean, staff, and faculty affiliated with the USM Honors College as well as institutional administrators and both current and future Honors college students.
- ❖ There were three focus groups, traditional Honors students, senior Honors students, and Honors college ambassadors. Six questions were asked of these groups: How do you see the Honors college? What attracted you to the Honors college? Tell me about your experience at the Honors college? What does the Honors college mean to you? What are some aspects of the Honors college that have been helpful? What are some areas for improvement?
- ❖ The unifying result was that “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” (Young, James H., III; Story, Lachel; Tarver, Samantha; Weinauer, Ellen; Keeler, Julia; McQuirter, Allison, 182)

- ❖ Relating to community, in a study at Florida, students who lived off campus felt less connected and experience a greater sense of isolation than students residing on campus. In Honors, students feel socially connected because it’s full of like-minded students who have same goals and know what it’s like to go through a rigorous program.
- ❖ “Forming communities within academic settings is an invaluable tool that can potentially improve overall student involvement and retention” (Chickering & Gamson) Along with this, one of the most challenging parts of building a community is preventing students from marginalized.
- ❖ Opportunity was consistently mentioned, namely more personalized education, leadership, and individual research.

Evidence:

“An immediate result of the focus group findings, for example, was the creation of a new Honors college mission and vision statement, one that focuses on and highlights what students indicated they valued in their Honors college experience.” (187)

This new mission statement has led to the creation of new promotional material, they changed their website, and changed how they communicated in regards to recruitment and outreach. Additionally they have begun to take a look at the curriculum, and how it could be changed to aid in developing the type of community and students they desire.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

“in 2006, Radomski argued that 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 THE HONORS COLLEGE EXPERIENCE, 179 Honors outcomes should include academic and non-academic dimensions of students’ experiences.” (179)

“Students stated that writing a thesis during their senior year and taking required Honors classes were factors that brought them closer to their peers.” (185)

“When students were asked what the Honors college at USM meant to them, many responded by stating that it provided them with “a sense of family.” (185)

“Knowledge of student perspectives may inform the college’s strategic planning processes and the alignment between its mission and marketing.” (178)

Strengths:

- Gives more perspective into the

Weaknesses:

- Little talk of diversity

<p>thoughts and feeling of Honors students at other universities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrates that the administration is willing to listen to outside input. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Was not a lot of information
<p>Connections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The first quote above states that in order to keep up with the evolving population demographic, Honors Colleges cannot only include academic dimensions within the students' experiences, rather also nonacademic dimensions. An example of this is service-learning from previous research. ❖ An insight from this source is that the one of the most challenging parts of building a community is preventing students from feeling marginalized. Our question is how can we increase diversity, but also prevent those who are diverse from feeling this way? ❖ We will need to maintain some of the required Honors courses, because this is one of the main ways students feel connected to their Honors College. 	
<p>Questions/Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ How do we prevent our diverse students from feeling marginalized? ❖ What non-academic material could we add to the curriculum to strengthen and diversify the Honors College? 	

Research Bibliography 5

Astin, Alexander W.; Vogelgesang, Lori J.; Ikeda, Elaine K.; and Yee, Jennifer A., "How Service Learning Affects Students" (2000). University of Nebraska Omaha. Higher Education: 7
<http://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/slcehighered/144>

Reason for including this source in your work:

It is important to look at all aspects of a university—or Honors program within a university—when trying to figure out a way to successfully improve its functionality. Looking at service learning may provide some insight on how certain teaching methods affect students in a school environment, and with these insights, our team may be able to better understand the background of Grand Valley and its students. With this better understanding, we will be more effective in our ideating/prototyping once we reach that phase.

Main argument:

Service learning is something that universities offer as a course where students spend either a part of or the entire length of the semester doing a service and relating it to the material they are learning at the time. This service learning is supposedly supposed to have a positive effect on students' learning, and the study conducted by this person proved that it does, to an extent.

Important ideas:

- ❖ Service learning proved to have a positive effect on academic performance, values, self-efficacy and leadership.
- ❖ Service learning allowed students to feel that they are better connected to their classmates and that they can count on their teachers to be a person to go to in times of need.
- ❖ The service learning done throughout the course caused students to feel as if they brought about actual change in the areas they focused on.

Evidence:

Over 80% of students felt that their service “made a difference”, and this helped students to feel that they had an increased sense of awareness in the world along with an increased sense of awareness in their own personal values.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- Service learning proved to “increase the likelihood that students will discuss their experiences with each other and that students will receive emotional support from faculty”.
- “Qualitative findings suggest that service learning is effective in part because it facilitates...an increased awareness of the world [and] an increased awareness of one’s personal values”.
- “Both the quantitative and qualitative results suggest that providing students with an opportunity to *process* the service experience with each other is a powerful component [of] service learning”.

Before this finding, I had never heard of the term service learning. After some digging around, I found that service learning is, as stated above, a teaching method in which students do a civil service, often in their community, and use this to help facilitate their learning.

Strengths:

Service learning proved to be an effective way to get students to talk to each other and get to know each other better.

Weaknesses:

The study was conducted in 1997-1998, so times are different now (not sure if the results would change, however).

Connections:

- ❖ Service learning allowed students to gain better awareness and understanding of the world around them. This can lead to students being able to empathize with others, who are different from them, which, in turn, fosters acceptance of diversity.
- ❖ Like the previous point, the service learning activities proved to provide students with a better understanding of their own personal values in life, while also creating an environment where students feel comfortable talking with each other. This also creates empathy between students.
- ❖ Once our team begins to ideate and prototype, we may consider incorporating service learning into our plans to help promote and foster diversity in the Honors College.

Questions/Concerns:

- ❖ This idea of service learning is one that may be helpful to create a diverse Honors College

Research Bibliography 6

Citation:

Wawrzynski, Matthew R., et al. "The Influence of the College Environment on Honors Students Outcomes." *Journal of College Student Development*, vol. 53, no. 6, 2012, pp. 840–845., doi:10.1353/csd.2012.0074.

Reason for including this source in your work:

This research article can give us insight on how to study college students' satisfaction and self-reported development. Also it identifies some different ways to group students' living environment that we may not have thought of.

Main argument:

Honors students develop academically, cognitively, and socially from participating in the Honors program. Because living-learning communities (LLCs) are part of many Honors programs, the authors studied the effects of being in a LLC on the students' experiences at Midwestern University. The results were that Honors students in an academically based LLC (not an Honors LLC) were the only ones to have a statistically different experience from students in the other living groups.

Important ideas:

- ❖ No statistical differences were found between Honors students on a non-Honors floor and Honors students on a Honors-only floor
- ❖ Findings from the study suggest that academically based LLCs facilitate the merging of academic and residential mesosystems in different ways than Honors based LLCs.
- ❖ When Honors students are grouped in a residential community, the people who group them should be intentional with how they are grouped based on the students' additional microsystems
- ❖ Faculty being closely related to the living learning community was found to be statistically significant in producing self-reported academic enrichment

Evidence:

This is a research paper. The authors used a study that had already been constructed at Midwestern University that asked students to report their perception of their residence hall environments and academic, developmental and social abilities.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

Microsystem - “any face-to-face setting. Ex.: residence halls, campus jobs, student organizations”

Mesosystem - “when two or more microsystems or settings are linked together with the individual”

IVs – LLCs/lack of LLC

- a) Honors college floor that is part of an academically based LLC
- b) An Honors college floor that is not part of a (academically based) LLC
- c) Honors students on a traditional residence hall floor
- d) Students not in an Honors program or a LLC and on a traditional residence hall floor

DVs-self reported experiences

- a) Student-faculty interactions
- b) Sense of belonging
- c) Peer academic interactions
- d) Enriching educational environment
- e) Peer intellectual interactions

“Current literature shows that Honors students experience academic, cognitive, and other gains (e.g., critical thinking measures for class assignments) from involvement in an Honors program, even when higher levels of cognitive ability were controlled as input variables.” (P2)

“As colleges and universities continue to invest additional resources into Honors programs on their campuses, it is important to understand how to create learning environments for Honors students” (Implications for Practice and Research, P4).

“Results point to the necessity for student affairs practitioners and scholars to be more intentional than simply grouping students together in the same residence hall by designing living environments in ways that encourage student to connect learning inside and outside the classroom.” (Implications for Practice and Research, P4)

Strengths:

- Use of a census approach reduces coverage error and sampling error
- The data acquired is good for an exploratory study

Weaknesses:

- Study is limited to one institution
- More women responded
- Risk of non-response error

Connections:

- ❖ The Grand Valley Honors College experience is ultimately an ecosystem for each student
- ❖ Other universities have LLCs besides just Honors LLCs.
- ❖ Grand Valley may have other living communities that we are not thinking about.

(Darius probably had roommates that were on the track team as a freshman.)

Questions/Concerns:

- ❖ How are we going to measure our participants' experiences?
- ❖ Does living in different LLCs at Grand Valley affect the Honors college students' experience significantly?
- ❖ What effect does living environment at Grand Valley have on diverse perspectives?

Research Bibliography 7

Citation:

Brimeyer, Ted M.; Schueths, April M.; Smith, William L.
Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council, v15 n1 p69-83 Spr-Sum 2014

Reason for including this source in your work:

This source is being included because it contains information relating to diversity, and how the way Honors is structured may make the growth of diversity difficult.

Main argument:

This article touches on how there are two conflicting views on the impact of Honors programs on universities student bodies. Supporters argue that the program benefits the university and all its' students, while "critics argue that Honors programs reproduce socioeconomic and racial privileges" (Brimeyer, Schueths, Smith, 69). The findings of this article support the assertion that Honors programs benefit the entire education system.

Important ideas:

- ❖ Honor programs help to attract donors and increase prestige by increasing recruitment of high-achieving faculty and students.
- ❖ Honors students tend to be more academically engaged, resulting in them having higher GPAs, retention and graduation rates, and more satisfied with college.
- ❖ Honors students take about 75% of their coursework with non-Honors students. This exposure to Honors students, some believe enhances the non-Honors students education.
- ❖ Scholars believe there to be unequal funding for honor and non-Honors, as well as racial/ ethnic bias and unequal quality of education. This is because Honors students are normally selected because of test scores, which are biased against minorities, mainly those of lower socioeconomic status, whom can't get the same level of education.
- ❖ There is not much difference between socioeconomic backgrounds for Honors and non-Honors students. The difference between the two groups rests in their attitudes towards school.

Evidence:

“Honors students were more female and white than the general population and had more educated fathers but were not financially better off than their non-Honors peers. While the program may be reproducing racial stratification, it does not seem to be reproducing economic stratification” (Brimeyer, Schueths, Smith, 79). The importance of this is that Honors doesn’t necessarily equate to coming from wealth, it is more tied in with the attitudes and behaviors of students. These students care less about grades, more about course content. They view themselves as less academically entitled.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

“Mihelich, Storrs, and Pellett found that over two-thirds of the Honors students interviewed at a university in the western United States viewed themselves as “academically elite and deserving of academic privileges” (102) while acknowledging their cultural capital advantages.” (Brimeyer, Schueths, Smith, 70).

“Greenberger et al. found that Asians were more likely than whites to perceive themselves as academically entitled and that parents’ educational level was not significantly related to academic entitlement. They also found that students who perceived themselves as academically entitled were more likely to engage in cheating behaviors” (Brimeyer, Schueths, Smith, 72).

“The Honors students are 11% more female (63%–52%) and 14.5% more white (80%–65.5%) than the total population. The bottom half of Table 2 shows results of the students’ responses about parental education and family income. Honors students’ fathers had significantly higher levels of education (4.14) than did fathers of non-Honors students (3.92)” (Brimeyer, Schueths, Smith, 77).

“Non-Honors students reported that their family incomes (5.36) were significantly higher than the Honors students’ family incomes (4.71)” (Brimeyer, Schueths, Smith, 77).

Strengths:

It provides information on attitudes and behavior of honor and non-Honors students. It examines the socioeconomic backgrounds of both these groups.

Weaknesses:

It doesn’t provide any solution to lack of diversity.

Connections:

- ❖ This source challenged a preconceived notion that Honors students had higher family incomes, when in reality this is not the case.
- ❖ Another preconceived notion that was challenged were the attitudes toward school both Honors and non-Honors had. Previously, it would have made sense to deduce Honors students cared more about their grades than non-Honors, however Honors cared more for the content of their classes rather than the outcome of a

grade, while non-Honors students were more likely to believe they were entitled to good grades.

- ❖ If we wish to increase diversity we need to find different methods of accepting students. There are areas with minorities, but many of the students in these areas don't pass the required test scores because of underfunding and lack of appreciation for education in their areas. This is frequently due to their socioeconomic background.

Questions/Concerns:

- ❖ If Honors students aren't actually more affluent than non-Honors, does that mean to increase diversity we could potentially explore inviting those who are diverse in more wealthy locations?
- ❖ How can we use the findings on different behavior of honor and non-Honors to find those who emulate the attitudes of Honors students and bring them to GVSU?

Research Bibliography 8

Rinn, Anne, "Academic and Social Effects of Living in Honors Residence Halls" (2004). Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council --Online Archive. 173.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/nhcjournal/173>

Reason for including this source in your work:

Looking at the effects of living in Honors dorms may give our team some insight on whether a "live, learn, lead" environment is helpful to students. Also, we may learn something about the diversity, or lack thereof, that Honors dorms usually contain, whether it is cultural diversity, or diversity in one's mindset.

Main Argument:

The article mainly talks about how there are several studies that show the effects of living on-campus versus living at home while attending college, and how they are all relatively positive in regards to academic performance. The article goes on to show that Honors living centers, specifically living-learning centers, have an even higher success rate of helping students to be successful in social and academic development, along with feeling more connected.

Important Ideas:

- ❖ Living-learning centers have a positive influence on the development of a student's social and academic success.
- ❖ Students living in residence halls—not necessarily an Honors or a living-leading residence hall—are better off than students living at home.

- ❖ For regular students, if prior academic success was controlled, meaning that all students studied were high achievers, the decision to live on-campus or at home seemed to make no difference in academic or social development.
- ❖ Honors residence halls only attract a certain group of students, which leads to Honors students feeling isolated or cut off from the mainstream student body.
- ❖ Students living in theme dorms proved to be less satisfied with their peer relationships than students with other living arrangements.

Evidence:

The article mentions a study of the development of peer networks that was conducted on university freshmen, and these freshmen reported making a more successful transition into university life, “both academically and socially.”

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- “Environments that are highly differentiated, such as an Honors residence hall, tend to attract people who already share similar characteristics with the dominant group, thus reinforcing and strengthening the characteristics of the dominant group, creating a cyclical pattern.”
- “An Honors residence hall might not lead to a particular behavior: Students may have joined the Honors residence hall *already* displaying that behavior.”
- “Upon arrival at college, students involved in an Honors college may experience an easier social adjustment to university life through interaction with other Honors students and the formation of a community.”

The term “theme dorms” is something I came across that I have never heard of, but the definition is pretty simple: it is just a dorm whose students all share a common theme such as gender, major, sexual orientation, music preferences, etc.

Strengths:

- Gives great insight about the benefits of living in a live-lead residence hall as opposed to living at home or even living in a normal dorm.
- Article also gives disadvantages of living in an Honors dorm or a live-lead dorm.

Weaknesses:

- The information collected for the studies is all from the late 1900s, typically from between 1970 to 2001.

Connections:

- ❖ Our problem statement deals with creating a more diverse environment in GV’s Honors college, and a large percentage of the students in the Honors college typically live in Honors housing at one point or another in their career.
- ❖ If we are to create a more diverse learning environment, we must first look at the effects that a living-learning residence hall has on students. It was found that

students may form more of a community if they live in Honors dorms, which is something that may help to foster diversity.

- ❖ It is important to also realize the negative effects of living in Honors dorms has on students, and how this can actually hinder the enhancement of diversity instead of promote it, as all students are similar to each other in the way of past academic success and potentially even their mindsets
- ❖ The number of studies that were outlined in this article go to show that a living-learning environment overall has a positive effect on social development, and social development is a large part of becoming familiar, and, ultimately, comfortable with working/living with people of a different background.
- ❖ One study went to show that if you live in a dorm that has a common theme such as “women who are science majors”, you will be less satisfied with your peer relationships than students who are not living in theme dorms. This correlates perfectly with one of the points we are trying to prove: that a diverse group of individuals will ultimately be more successful in whatever they are doing because of the sheer number of perspectives/experiences that are brought to the table.

Questions/Concerns:

- ❖ The idea of Honors being separated from students of the majority of the mainstream student body is something that GV currently does. There have been studies that prove that these students feel disconnected or feel that they are missing out on certain aspects of “being in college” and doing things with other students who are different from themselves. This is something to take into account when we start prototyping.

Research Bibliography 9

Citation:

"DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION BENEFITS EVERYONE." *States News Service*, 22 May 2017. *Infotrac Newsstand*, go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=STND&sw=w&u=lom_gvalleysu&v=2.1&id=GALE%7CA492494288&it=r&asid=092c8840812727d21ed75048e2870561. Accessed 7 Oct. 2017

Reason for including this source in your work:

This work demonstrates the benefits of all forms of diversity in higher education including: gender, international students, and transfer students. This piece highlights the culminating criticality of embracing diversity in a world that it becoming ever more diverse. We must not think of those who attend college as students, but as tomorrow’s leaders that need to have the ability to work with others that think differently than themselves.

Main argument:

As the economy, and humanity in general, begins to evolve into a global society, it is ever more important that the future citizens of this world be able to communicate and work collaboratively with each other. By embracing diversity, beginning with a foundation of respect, in higher education, students begin can begin to foster this ability to understand, and

ultimately work more effectively with, others who represent a different way of thinking than their own.

Important ideas:

- ❖ Today's student is tomorrow's CEO or chief manager, it is crucial that these future leaders be able to work collaboratively with others who come from a different background/culture
- ❖ An environment of respect fosters embracing diversity. Berkeley hosts a Respect week each semester in which students can talk about differences that do exist in order to gain respect for what one another are going through
- ❖ International students that settle in the U.S. after graduating represent the first step in possibly creating allegiances with other countries
- ❖ Classrooms that are more homogeneous tend to hinder/stipend creativity because similar students will handle problems in much the same way
- ❖ Students who come from high schools that lack a sense of diversity will have a much harder time being able to work in a more vast community (more inclusive/ different groups of people)

Evidence: Provide

- “Last year at Berkeley College, for instance, some 700 students from nearly 80 different countries came to study, says Manuel Correa, professor with Berkeley's Larry L. Luing School of Business”
 - Shows that an international business major along with recruitment to international students can get them to come to the university.
- “Some 1,600 students attend Wenzhou-Kean University [business school for Kean University located in China], which is now in its fifth year.”
 - This shows that strong international relations can lead to a grand effect of part of the university being located in another country. Fostering strong connections between, in this case, American business students and Chinese business students.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- “The presence of international students on campus, combined with international business curriculum, helps develop a more inclusive-minded workforce.”
- “Today's college student may become tomorrow's manager or chief executive. Therefore, efforts to make universities increasingly inclusive can influence the long-term economy.”
- “If we can ground our students in the fundamental trait of respect, it embodies the beginning of embracing diversity.”
- “ ‘Large numbers of international students remain and settle down in the US,’ he says, after they graduate, and, in spirit, can be ambassadors between their native country and this one. ‘That can lead to healthy trade among countries,’ Khandria says, ‘Instead of creating war, you create alliances.’”

- “Classrooms that are more homogeneous, he says, tend to be less creative...”
- “Living and studying among people from different cultures and backgrounds helps to avoid groupthink in the classroom, he says – a phenomenon where one mindset dominates and drives everyone towards conformity rather than creativity.”
- “...Community colleges are opportunities for students from all walks and economic strata to get on the path to a university-level education. ‘It’s a great way for people of lower economic backgrounds to find an opportunity to learn, engage and maybe take the next step to transfer,’ she says.”
- “...Students who come from high schools that lack diversity may be ill prepared to work in a broader community.

Strengths:

- Strong points about considering student’s as future leaders in business and education
- It is true that our economy becomes ever more global, and the ability to work with others (from different backgrounds/cultures will be critical)
- Great individual ways that universities went about promoting diversity without using quotas (relationships with community colleges, Respect week, integration of international business studies and international students)

Weaknesses:

- No evidence or testimonies, the article dealt with the theoretical benefits
- No statistical evidence to back up arguments
- Article dealt with schools from the highly diverse state of New Jersey, how could we apply some of these ideas to the less diverse West Michigan?

Connections:

- ❖ Respect is key in order to begin to build the foundation of embracing empathy. As Berkeley has a Respect Week each semester for their students to shine light on these differences in order for other students to understand and respect. Possible idea we can link to our project at Grand Valley.
- ❖ Rutgers University tries to create a diverse student body by working very closely with local community colleges that have students that come from very diverse backgrounds. As community college serves as a stepping-stone for many to achieve higher education, Rutgers works with the community colleges to try to recruit these students (merit scholarships, financial aid, grants). To apply this to Grand Valley, the university could begin to work closely with Grand Rapids Community College and other local community colleges to recruit those students.
- ❖ At Berkeley, the international business program coupled with many international students made the program attractive for domestic as well as international students. Being exposed to different ideas and ways of thinking was deemed critical by the department chair of this program. Applying this to Grand Valley’s international business minor program, it could be turned into a major and start trying to recruit

international students as well as possible business students.

- ❖ The more diverse a university begins to become, the more attractive it will become to a broader range of future students.

Questions/Concerns: Write

- ❖ Is it worth looking into some form of a 'Respect Week' at Grand Valley? Does it seem like something to this magnitude would have a positive effect?
- ❖ Does our team need to look into the university's relationship with the surrounding community colleges to see if it needs to be strengthened?
- ❖ Can our team begin to look into the international business program (and all international programs) as a way of recruiting international students?

Research Bibliography 10

Hurtado, Sylvia, Jeffery Milem, Alma Clayton-Pederson, and Walter Allen. 1999. *Enacting Diverse Learning Environments: Improving the Climate for Racial/Ethnic Diversity in Higher Education*. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report Volume 26, No. 8. Washington, D.C.: The George Washington University, Graduate School of Education and Human Development

Reason for including this source in your work:

This article pertains to exactly what our group is trying to do, and with these results, we may be able to use them to help us gather insights on how to solve our problem statement.

Main Argument:

Diversifying a campus is a serious task that cannot be done in one day—it takes a lot of time and effort, but it is doable. People tend to go where other people who are similar to them already are, so once higher levels of diversity has been attained, it will become easier and easier to accomplish the goal of further diversifying a campus.

Important ideas:

- Racial restructuring of student enrollments may have the potential to bring about some conflict in resistance groups
- When students feel valued and when faculty/administrators are devoted to their development, students are less likely to report racial/ethnic tension
- A key component to diversifying the student body of a campus is having an equally strong commitment to diversifying the faculty and staff
- Faculty of color are able to provide support that benefits students from their particular groups
- Black students who participated in campus-organizations at predominately white institutions were less likely to report that they had considered dropping out and

were more likely to report that they were more satisfied with campus life

Evidence:

“The work of several researchers provides us with some clear direction. Specifically, these studies show that a number of activities that students become involved in during college are positively related to students’ commitment to the goal of helping to promote racial understanding”. The authors listed a number of research study citations after this.

- Structural diversity: “the numerical representation of various racial, ethnic, and gender groups on campus”
- Campus climate: “the current perceptions, attitudes, and expectations that define the institution and its members”
- “Central to the conceptualization of a campus climate for diversity is the notion that students are educated in distinct racial contexts where learning and socialization occur”
- “No matter how outstanding the academic institution, ethnic minority students can feel alienated if their ethnic representation on campus is small”
- “Research suggests that structured interaction is important for improving racial attitudes...”

Strengths:

- The article pulls from a number of different research publications to draw its conclusions

Weaknesses:

- The article is older, dealing with the late 1900s rather than modern times

Connections:

- One of the things our team wants to try and incorporate into the Honors College is not only a shift in the student body, but also a shift in diversity within faculty
- People often feel more welcome in an environment where they are around others similar to themselves, so once diversity levels increase, it can attract more and more people (not just people of color) to the university
- Attending and participating in campus organizations is another way for people of color to get involved and this can help them to be more satisfied with campus life, as one study showed
- The article sort of mentioned this and I’ve never thought about it, but HBCUs are almost filled with 100% black students, and I am not sure if there are any white students at those universities. Maybe we could look into this and find some surprising facts/insights
- Although I do not worry so much about this happening at our university, we should always keep in mind that not all students may want the demographic to change, which could lead to some tension on campus

Questions/Concerns:

- Although I do not worry so much about this happening at our university, we should always keep in mind that not all students may want the demographic to change, which

could lead to some tension on campus

Research Bibliography 11

Citation:

Ryder, A. J., Reason, R. D., Mitchell, J. J., Gillon, K., & Hemer, K. M. (2015, October 5). Climate for Learning and Students' Openness to Diversity and Challenge: A Critical Role for Faculty. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*. Advance online publication. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0039766>

Reason for including this source in your work:

This source explores the relationship between students' perceptions of the climate for learning and how these perceptions relate to their openness to challenge and diversity. The source places an emphasis on faculty's involvement in creating a climate in which students feel that they can learn and embrace diversity, as faculty are intellectual leaders within a university. As a team, we decided to include faculty as a group on our stakeholder map and I feel that this source sheds light on the need for faculty to create opportunities for diversity to flourish.

Main argument:

In order for students to feel comfortable opening up about and accepting diversity, they must feel comfortable in their environment. In a typical classroom setting, it is easy for the climate to feel stiff and unwelcoming, turning students off to the idea of embracing diversity. As faculty (professors, in particular) play a vital role in determining the climate of their classrooms, they have the unique opportunity to encourage the exploration and understanding of different cultures and perspectives.

Important ideas:

- ❖ Faculty members are amongst the intellectual leaders of any given university. Therefore, they have the unique ability to shape the environment of classrooms and the university as a whole.
- ❖ Institutions of higher education should be and have been challenged to prepare students to actively participate in an increasingly diverse society.
- ❖ Students perceive just how much the climate for learning supports the exploration of diverse perspectives, cultures, etc. and takes cues from this.
- ❖ There are three types of diversity that have been identified in higher education; structural diversity, interactions with diverse others and classroom or curricular diversity.

Evidence:

- ❖ The Openness to Diversity Challenge scale, abbreviated as the ODC, was created by Pascarella and colleagues in 1996 for the National Survey of Student Learning. This scale included eight different items, each concerned with students' openness to diverse cultures, ethnicities, races and values, as well as individuals' willingness to and enjoyment of having their ideas challenged by different values and perspectives.
- ❖ Developing openness to a wide breadth of diversity and showing willingness to engage with diverse perspectives is amongst the most important civic outcomes of

a college education, if the purpose of higher education is to successfully prepare students for active citizenship in today's society.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- ❖ “Although diversity remains unevenly distributed across individual institutions of higher education, a pluralistic society awaits most college graduates. Non-Hispanic Whites comprise less than two thirds of the U.S. population and demographic models predict that no single racial or ethnic group will constitute a majority of the total population by mid-century.”
- ❖ “We suggest that faculty members influence this important outcome not only by what and how they teach, but through the climate for learning they create in their classrooms and across campus, and how students perceive this climate. Unfortunately, the relationship between the climate for learning and this important outcome is not well understood. The purpose of our study, therefore, is to explore the relationship between students’ perceptions of the climate for learning and their openness to diversity and challenge.”
- ❖ “Our findings have important implications for the role faculty members, their pedagogy, and the content and nature of the curriculum play in shaping the climate for learning and increasing students’ ODC. Faculty members are the intellectual leaders of campus, who, by encouraging the exploration of different cultures and perspectives and teaching about diverse perspectives can significantly increase students’ ODC.”
- ❖ “Our findings reinforce the assertion that faculty members are important socialization agents on a college campus, showing faculty members who encourage the exploration of diverse perspectives and worldviews in the classroom and challenge students to wrestle with new ideas in their teaching and advising help increase students’ openness to diversity and challenge.”

Strengths: This source was a study conducted regarding students’ scores on the ODC. As there is a plethora of data created through this study, our team could potentially use this data to support our innovations and their likelihood to succeed.

Weaknesses: The study was conducted in 2015, almost two years ago. The study uses data from 2013 and 2014 as references. While two years may not seem like a lot of time, there may be new findings during this time.

Connections:

- ❖ As a team, we discussed the concept that diversity is not solely defined by physical characteristics or what the eye can see. This study shows the varying definitions of what diversity is and is something that we could really explore and incorporate into our design thinking challenge.
- ❖ Our problem statement talks about promoting a more well-rounded learning experience for students by bringing in a more diverse group of Honors students. This source discussed the notion that faculty members are key players in order to achieve an embracement of diversity.
- ❖ During the collaborator debrief, the Honors RA who attended challenged our team to consider whether a lack of diversity was really the problem at hand, or whether it was a lack of a comfortable environment. The issue of comfortability in an environment is the focus of this study. If students do not feel comfortable in an

environment, for example a classroom or the Honors College, it is unlikely that they will open up and contribute to the diversity in the room, so to speak.

Questions/Concerns:

- ❖ I am concerned that we are focusing on the lack of diversity, when the real issue is a lack of comfortability within the Honors College. I do not think that we should solely focus on the issue of comfortability, but it is definitely a topic that I think we should spend more time on.
- ❖ Do faculty feel as if they are the ones who set the tone for a classroom? Or do they feel that it is the job of each and every student to contribute to the climate?

Research Bibliography 12

Citation:

Klugman, J. (2017). Whither the diversity bargain? *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40(13), 2275-2279. doi:10.1080/01419870.2017.1344268

Reason for including this source in your work:

This article serves as a counter-argument to the definition of the problem we are solving. The study described was done on students from Oxford, Brown, and Harvard. We learned this week that Honors students are looking for “the ivy league experience” so it is relevant to our end users.

Main argument:

The article is an interpretation of Natasha Warikoo’s study and discussion “The Diversity Bargain.” Warikoo found in her study that white U.S. elite students show tentative support for preference of minorities in college admissions, and that support is for the benefit they gain from “multicultural experiences.” The author discusses three reasons for the persistence of this bargain: experiences of the benefits of diversity on campus, social expectation of elites to give “lip service” to diversity issues, and Warikoo’s methods and analysis of her data.

Important ideas:

- ❖ The Diversity Bargain is an attitude that persists at elite U.S. universities. It is a lukewarm acceptance of the preference of minorities in college admissions, in exchange for benefits that being on a diverse campus has for white students.
- ❖ Oxford students (compared to Harvard and Brown students) do not feel it is their obligation to increase the representation of minorities on their campus. They have a very different culture regarding diversity.
- ❖ Warikoo calls for the adoption of admissions lotteries at the end of her book, the author says it is the only just admissions policy.
- ❖ The diverse campus environment influences attitudes consistent with the diversity bargain, students reported changing their views about affirmative action (and

similar programs) after experiencing the benefits of diversity on campus.

- ❖ Another reason the diversity bargain attitude persists is that elite students have learned that they need to “pay lip service” to diversity issues to do well in the cosmopolitan world. Elites students are less resentful of programs like affirmative action AFTER college admission, because they have already been admitted to a prestigious university and don’t have as much to lose.
- ❖ Warikoo could have exaggerated student support for preference of minorities in college admissions due to her methods and analysis. She may have recruited more liberal students, and did not spend much time analyzing the opposing attitudes the issue.

Evidence:

The author describes Warikoo’s methods in his explanation of why her data may not represent all attitudes of the universities.

- “However, Warikoo acknowledges (33) the possibility that more liberal students selected into her sample because her recruitment emails mentioned the interviews would be about diversity.”
- “And Warikoo did present U.S. student skepticism of affirmative action, but their presence is very brief; Warikoo spends much less time analyzing their thinking than she does for the lukewarm supporters.”

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

The Diversity Bargain – “The titular bargain is these students’ acceptance of racial preferences, so long as they personally benefit from the ensuing diversity in the student body.”

Admissions lotteries – every student that applies and has the credentials to get into a school is put into a lottery.

“Before addressing explanations for the pervasiveness of the diversity bargain, I note that I found the book fascinating, albeit somewhat depressing. It is a nice illustration of the unique strengths of interview data.”

“Indeed, when Warikoo introduces the diversity frame, she quotes students saying things like “experiencing other cultures has actually been influential on me” (52), and “I never thought about issues of race and diversity and all the things that that entails ... it makes you think more” (53) and cultural events “have helped me to be more open” (53). These sentiments are vague and vacuous; Warikoo calls these students’ narratives “well-rehearsed” (60).”

“Indeed, Warikoo herself provides plenty of evidence that white American students do not appreciate their black and Latino peers as individuals. They resent black and Latino students who got accepted into their school but are not “authentic” members of those racial groups (105–106); they feel entitled to the friendship of underrepresented

“Minority students and resent programs specifically designed for them (73–74); and they feel uncomfortable in spaces dominated by black students (126–127).”

Strengths:

The author is quite critical of Warikoo’s methods. Warikoo was also very open with her methods, so we know a lot about what she did in her research.

Weaknesses:

We are not an Ivy League school, even if we are chasing that experience. Because there is less competition, it makes sense that attitudes regarding admissions specifically are less extreme. Warikoo doesn’t provide much insight on attitudes opposing minority preference.

Connections:

- ❖ Admissions lotteries is a way to enroll students
- ❖ Majority students are more willing to accept minority preference when they have something to gain from it.
- ❖ People’s responses to questions of diversity can be what they are socialized to answer. It may take less direct questions to get to real attitudes.

Questions/Concerns:

- ❖ Is our end user only majority Honors students at this point? I see consistency with the responses in Warikoo’s interview research and our research. We have interviewed mostly majority groups. Designing using only this research I fear may lead to exploiting people of minority groups.
- ❖ Just as the author feared of Warikoo’s research, more liberal people are willing to talk about diversity issues. This could be affecting the data that we are collecting about diversity attitudes.

Research Bibliography 13

Citation:

Stassen, M. L., & A. (2003). Student outcomes: The impact of varying living-learning community models. *Research in Higher Education*, 44(5), 581-613.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/10.1023/A:1025495309569>

Reason for including this source in your work:

This source will give us important insights when looking deeper into a question one of our interviewees posed, “What is Honors doing wrong with housing?” Looking at the different impacts the different styles of the living-learning communities have will help us innovate and empathize around community connectivity and how this plays into diversity.

Main argument:

This research is focusing on how the residential and academic components intersect and can be collaborative during a student’s time at their university, specifically looking at their first year. It discussed and researched how faculty plays an important role in

ensuring student success because it helps them to get connected to the community. The research also made great comparisons and studies on the different models of LC's.

Important ideas:

- ❖ LC's are intentionally designed to facilitate student-faculty interactions and relationships
- ❖ Students are more likely to stay at a University if they have opportunities to get connected socially and academically through a process of academic and social integration. Students' interactions with peers and faculty were the most influencing factors in doing this.
- ❖ LC's helped first year students "develop a supportive community of peers" to bridge the gap during their transition to college.
- ❖ LC's create a strong sense of group identity.

Evidence:

"Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) looked specifically at the role of residential-learning communities on a range of student outcomes and found that students in these programs show "significantly larger gains in intellectual orientation than students in traditional curricular programs" (p. 245)."

"(Lindblad, 2000) comes out of the work of the Washington Center for Improving the Quality of the Undergraduate experience: these studies indicate that students in LCs show greater institutional commitment, greater intellectual development and opportunity to analyze and integrate ideas, greater tolerance for difference and appreciation for pluralism, and demonstrate higher persistence and academic performance as measured by college grade point average (GPA)."

A study was done on 1st year students in LC's, and they found that LCs helped students develop a "supportive community of peers," which helped them bridge their social and academic needs.

Research done at Indiana State University: "LC students report more interaction with both peers and faculty, and show greater involvement in the social and academic components of their institution."

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

LC: Learning Community

There are five categories ultimately that LC's fall under:

1. Linked Courses (two courses independent of each other, but with common students),
2. Learning Clusters (courses linked by content),
3. Freshmen Interest Groups (courses linked by theme),
4. Federated Learning Communities (faculty as the linchpin), and
5. Coordinated Studies Programs (where all the students' course credits are associated with an integrated, theme-based, interdisciplinary curriculum

designed through intensive faculty collaboration) (MacGregor, Smith, Matthews, and Gabelnick, n.d.; Snider and Venable, 2000).

There are also 4 types of learning community models:

- Curricular LCs (where curriculum coordination serves as the link),
- Classroom LCs (where all learning community activity is organized at the individual course level)
- Residential LCs (where activities occur within residence hall communities)
- Student type LCs (where students are brought together based on common characteristics)

There is another set of qualifiers/categories that LC's include:

A common cohort of students taking the same class, interdisciplinary teams of faculty teaching courses around a common theme, students forming study groups and socializing together, and collaborative class activities and assignments.

“Learning communities are not merely block programming, an administrative convenience that facilitates registration and use of rooms. Rather they are conscious intellectual structures that teachers create, and students participate in, to share a high quality and enduring educational experience... There are as many variations on the models of learning communities as there are institutions willing to participate. All, however, strive to provide an intense and supportive environment for intellectual growth and development. (p. 16)” –Matthews

However, Tinto et al. (1994) suggest that it might be particularly difficult for students to integrate the social and academic elements of their lives in residence halls, where the social side of college life is often pitted against the academic side.

Strengths:

- There is a lot of research done from many different institutions, differing in size, public/private, etc.
- There are many different sources cited of other authors who have done this work, and they too back up the research on what is being said.
- I found it helpful that a study compared different types of LC's: TAP, RAP, and Honors. All of these had similar goals but were comprised of a different group of students because of identities with being in Honors, or by major, etc.

Weaknesses:

- Financially it can be difficult to support well-functioning LC's
- The result of the positive results have all been done on highly functioning models of LC's... they call the high-functioning models “elaborate” and confess that there is little research done on “modest” LC's
- It is possible that these results can be biased because the students that seek out these LC communities are already ambitious and wanting to be prepared in order to be successful

Connections:

- ❖ Faculty's support role in making sure students feel connected in essential.
- ❖ It is important for students to have supportive community in their living centers because ultimately that leads to their success.
- ❖ It can be hard for students to want to put together the academic and social sides of their college life, as these are often "pitted against each other"
- ❖ At large schools, students say that they "find that learning is a highly individualistic, often alienating, experience" so it makes sense that LC's would be helpful here.
- ❖ LC's create a strong sense of group identity. This can be good and bad, when we look at our affinity map and take into consideration our other research/interviews that state that Honors is seen as distinctly separate from the rest of campus.

Questions/Concerns:

- ❖ I am curious to see if GV's LC's have been evaluated (Niemeyer and Holton Hooker) as residential buildings.
- ❖ I wonder what would happen if first year students lived in "cohorts" with their sequences, or at least if the ones taking a specific sequence living in HHLC were placed together, instead of them all being spread out?
- ❖ I am also questioning if Niemeyer is the best place for first year students to live, as it can be more exclusive. I am curious to see how it would meet the requirements of being a LC in comparison to HHLC.

Research Bibliography 14

Citation:

Warren Wilson college strengthens community, beautifies campus on workday. (2017, Apr 06). *Targeted News Service* Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/docview/1884918703?accountid=39473>

Reason for including this source in your work:

As our team begins to transition into our needs statements, one of our glaring needs statements is that, "Students need to apply what they learn." This has often come up in interviews as a clamoring for some sort of service learning project. This article goes into depth of Warren Wilson's College Work day, which is in essence, a service project put on every year by the college.

Main argument:

This article talks about the 2017 Warren Wilson's College Work day in which students from across the college come together for a service project. The service project involves beautifying the campus by gardening, completing landscape projects, and by painting murals on some of the buildings. Students come together in a way that helps to not only help out the college, but strengthens the sense of community on campus.

Important ideas:

- ❖ The college not only invited students and faculty members to join, but the community surrounding the college as well.

- ❖ Work accomplished on Work Day can be seen throughout the entire school year, so students and faculty are constantly reminded of the work they did together.
- ❖ Certain Work Day projects showcase the fact that 50 – 60 students can work together to accomplish something they never would have been able to do alone.
- ❖ Work Day, or any sort of project that may resemble it, fosters a sense of community within a college environment.
- ❖ As a service project becomes more and more popular each year, more students will get involved each year.

Evidence:

- “We’re trying to do something in a day with 50 – 60 students that I could never do alone. It is an excellent way to connect with students from multiple disciplines.”
 - This quote comes from a student responding to her experience with the 2017 Work Day.
- “I believe the project showcases many diverse voices and perspective and provides insight that helps the College work towards its goal of inclusivity.”
 - This quote comes from the same student, who felt that Work Day helps to reflect the diversity within the college.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- “Music blared as students and staff and faculty members played games, talked, sang and even danced.”
- “Aiming to recapture an earlier theme, Work Day was designated as a time ‘to work as a community to strengthen, beautify and accentuate our community and campus.’”
- ““We’re trying to do something in a day with 50 – 60 students that I could never do alone. It is an excellent way to connect with students from multiple disciplines.””
- ““I believe the project showcases many diverse voices and perspective and provides insight that helps the College work towards its goal of inclusivity.””
- ““It’s a great feeling to be able to do work like that [landscaping at President’s House] and have the opportunity to use chain saws on the jobsite. It makes me really proud to do that kind of complicated and high-level work.””
- “Now, Bobbitt [President of Warren Wilson College] expects even greater participation from students, staff and faculty in 2018.”

Strengths:

- Article shows how the community and the college can work together

Weaknesses:

- No statistical evidence to back up arguments

<p>and both benefit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A service learning project (even annually) can help to foster a sense of community on campus • Diversity present within the university is easily reflected in service projects (murals painted by the Black Student Union) • Students coming together with each other to help benefit the college that they are attending • Work Day projects serve as a constant reminder throughout the school year as a sense of community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warren Wilson has less than 1,000 undergraduate students. How would a service project like this perform at a larger university like Grand Valley?
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Connections:

- ❖ One of the biggest goals that our team is focusing on is fostering a sense of community for Grand Valley students. When students are comfortable with each other, they are more likely to present their ideas and different ways of thinking. A service project (even annually) can help to build that sense of community on campus.
- ❖ Repeatedly in interviews, we have heard that there is a desire within the Grand Valley community for some sort of service project. This example of Work Day may be a possible project for the university to take on.
- ❖ A campus wide project that ties in the community as well to help the university in some way may be attractive to future students. Allowing the university to be able to attract a wider array of students.

Questions/Concerns:

- ❖ Does it make more sense if our group went towards a semester long service learning class or just an annual service project day? Could we try and provide both?
- ❖ What would an annual service project look like at Grand Valley? How would we deal with possibly thousands of students wanting to participate?
- ❖ Could we stretch this idea, and instead of beautifying Grand Valley, could we apply this to the surrounding Allendale (and maybe even Grand Rapids) community?

Research Bibliography 15

Citation:

Carey, J. M., & Horiuchi, Y. (2016). *What do college students really think about diversity? we asked*. Washington: WP Company LLC d/b/a The Washington Post.

Retrieved from

<http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/docview/1801775553?accountid=39473>

Reason for including this source in your work:

Through our previous research, my team has found that students must be able to share a sense of community with their university and must be able to see themselves as being a part of that community. One way to accomplish this goal is to increase diversity amongst faculty members. Students who come from diverse backgrounds, who are intelligent and have the potential to contribute to their classrooms, may feel uncomfortable being at a given university if they are unable to connect with a faculty member due to a difference in diversity. I thought that it was important to include this source in our research, as it provides information on surveys completed anonymously at Dartmouth.

Main argument:

In order for students to feel comfortable opening up about and accepting diversity, they must feel as if they are a part of a community. Over the past few years, in high-profile confrontations across the country, student activists have been making demands about campus climate and diversity. Students are negatively affected by the lack of diversity amongst faculty members at a given university.

Important ideas:

- ❖ Faculty members are amongst the intellectual leaders of any given university. Therefore, they have the unique ability to shape the environment of classrooms and the university as a whole. The most common demand amongst students is for universities to increase diversity among faculty members.
- ❖ While the surveys found that certain groups of students wanted a diverse faculty more than others, effectively all groups wanted a more diverse student body.
- ❖ Mobilized students, over the past few years, shared at least one demand, they supported demographic diversity on campus.

Evidence:

- ❖ “To mitigate these problems, we used a technique known as fully randomized conjoint analysis, recently developed by political scientists. A respondent is presented with a pair of hypothetical candidates for a position -- say, a faculty slot -- and asked which one should be appointed. Each hypothetical candidate is described with a bundle of attributes that include race/ethnicity and gender identification, but also many others, such as academic discipline, undergraduate and graduate degrees, research record, teaching reputation, rank and even whether the candidate's spouse or partner is already on the faculty. The particulars of each attribute (say, whether race/ethnicity is white, black or African American, Asian, Hispanic or Latino, or Native American, etc.) are randomly assigned for each candidate. The order in which the attributes themselves are presented is also randomly shuffled for each respondent. That way no attribute is inadvertently made to seem especially important just by being placed first.” While this is a direct quote, it explains the lengths to which the author and his partner went to create an unbiased survey. Or as unbiased a survey as they could. I think that this

further legitimizes the findings of the survey(s).

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- ❖ “This past year, in high-profile confrontations across the country, student activists have been making demands about campus climate and diversity. Those have included removing symbols or institutional names linked to slaveholders or to institutional racism, and removing administrators accused of racial insensitivity.”
- ❖ “African American and female students think faculty diversity is a priority.”
- ❖ “Most important, there were almost no statistically significant differences in these preferences across various groups of students. Responses from whites, blacks, Latinos and Asian Americans, from men and women, and from students across a range of socioeconomic backgrounds were similar.”

Strengths: This source analyzed information produced by a survey given to students at Dartmouth regarding changes to campus climate and diversity. The way that this survey was conducted was done so in a manner that worked to eliminate all biases that it could. The information produced by these surveys, relates to a lot of what our team has found in previous research and interviews.

Weaknesses: The source is a little over a year old. While this may not seem like a lot of time, there is always new data being produced. It would be interesting to see the data from a survey conducted this month at a public university, after the incidents that have occurred over the past few months in relation to race.

Connections:

- ❖ As a team, we discussed the concept that diversity is not solely defined by physical characteristics or what the eye can see. If we want/need a more diverse Honors College faculty, is it possible that the current faculty *is* diverse, but not in the manner that we are used to thinking about.
- ❖ Within our problem statement, our team talks about promoting a more well-rounded learning experience for students by bringing in a more diverse group of Honors students. One way that we may be able to accomplish this goal is by focusing on the faculty and how they may appeal to students from more diverse backgrounds.
- ❖ Our research continues to relate back to the idea that students will not open-up about diversity, both their own and accepting others, if they do not feel comfortable in their environment. Being surrounded by people like you, people that you feel connected to, is something that is crucial to students realizing their fullest potentials in the classroom.

Questions/Concerns:

- ❖ As I was in my first research bibliography, I am concerned that we are focusing on the lack of diversity, when the real issue is a lack of comfortability within the Honors College. I do not think that we should solely focus on the issue of comfortability, but it is a topic that I think we should spend more time on.
- ❖ How can we address a lack of diversity amongst faculty in the Honors College?

❖ Is there a way to tackle this lack of diversity amongst faculty without actively seeking out “diverse faculty,” whoever that may be?

Human-Centered Focus: Interviews

Interview 1

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors Student/Campus View Apartments
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: The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain insight on why he/she is in the Honors College and how they feel the Honors experience could be improved.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? This gives us an inside perspective of students that are currently in the program and the diversity, or lack thereof, that they bring to college/have awareness or understanding of.
Summary of Research: One of my biggest takeaways from this interview was the idea that the word diversity sparks a lot of controversy. It wasn't a positive word, but one that carries with it a negative connotation. One of his biggest concerns was that while diversity is something we should strive for, we should also always question the ethicality of how we are going about trying to achieve diversity. Another big takeaway was that this student felt that he had not, so far at Grand Valley, had a lot of opportunities to work with students who are different from himself.
Important insights: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● This student didn't know that Grand Valley had an Honors program, he just assumed that since it was a larger university that it would have one.● This student felt that the most advantageous aspect of the Honors program is that it is a resume booster, that can help a student get their foot into a graduate program.● This student felt that the most distinctive feature of the Honors program at Grand Valley is the sequence. The ability to be able to choose the direction your education takes you in the Honors program was not what he experienced at his previous institution.

- If he could change one thing at the Honors college it would be the curriculum. He felt that there are many pointless classes and that he would rather take classes that relate more towards his major.
- When this student thinks about the word diversity, he considers all of the negative connotations associated with the word.
- This student felt that he has not yet had the experience of working with students that come from a different background than himself.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

- 1. How did you hear about the Honors College? When in your college decision making process was this?**

To be honest, I kind of assumed Grand Valley would have an Honors program because it's a distinct college, and I was never going to do anything besides the Honors College. Which I was always planning on doing an Honors College no matter where I went. So when I did transfer here, I just tried to make sure that I had all of the requirements needed so that I could complete the Honors program.

- 2. So when you knew GVSU was your decision (you wanted to go there), what would you have done if they did not have an Honors program?**

I guess just take the classes in my major that I could have and take the most accelerated classes possible.

- 3. Could you please name a couple of things that supported your decision to join the Honors program at GVSU?**

One of the big things is like I have always enjoyed a challenge in school and always strive to be the best student that I can be, and so my decision to join the Honors College was really just me trying to further my own education. I really wanted to get the most out of it that I possibly could, and being able to graduate with Honors is a really great thing to be able to have especially as I'm looking towards going to graduate school; that's something that's very useful as I'm applying to graduate schools being able to say that I graduated with Honors.

- 4. What has happened in your Honors College experience that has led you to question**

your decision to join the Honors College, and since I know you haven't been in very long (transfer student) has there been anything to make you question your decision?

Not necessarily question joining it. I agree that I want to be apart of the Honors College, I just think parts of it seem very unnecessary. I'm in an "Art and Money" class, when I have no interest in that what's so ever. And I understand it's a requirement just to get you Art Honor's requirement, but it's not a class that's useful to me at all, and I definitely feel that my time could be better spent elsewhere just as I know what I'm looking for. The Honors college itself I am happy that I am apart of it and I think a lot of the things within the Honors college can be very beneficial, however, parts of it that are required can be somewhat arbitrary and useless.

5. If you had the opportunity to go back and remake your decision about joining Honors, would you and why?

Yes, I would because it really helps to get your foot in the door when applying to graduate schools.

6. What advantage do you think an Honors College experience will give you in life?

I mean there is a certain cultural knowledge you can get, and I do understand that with my "Art and Money" class that I'm gaining cultural, capital, having a better understanding of the world and the finer things in the world. So that's one of the big things, but one of the most applicable things is a resume booster that really help you to get your foot in the door when applying to graduate schools, jobs, and things like that.

7. What do you think is distinctive about the Honors program here?

One of the things, which I haven't seen at any other Honors College, is the sequence. I think that's something that sets GVSU apart. It is really interesting because I've talked with past Honors students who have taken the sequences and I know they are extremely rigorous, but they do provide a really good knowledge of a certain area of the world, and it was really interesting to hear about that because it's a different kind of knowledge that would not have been gained otherwise. So that's something that is definitely different about GVSU. Also, the opportunity to take your sequence in multiple different areas of the world, kind of where you have your interests. Also, within the sequence, I think you can choose like what category you want to further study, like literature or history (I believe). So that's really interesting to me, so that's one of things I really would have enjoyed if I were here [GVSU] for the sequence. That's really interesting, being able to have the freedom to learn about what you want to learn about is something that I think really sets GVSU apart.

- 8. So I know that you are a transfer student from Loyola University in Chicago, and were an Honors student at Loyola. Are there any big differences that you see between the Honors program at Loyola and here at GVSU? And if so, is there anything that is better than the program at GVSU? Or, what's worse?**

So there were, at least from what I've seen so far, there have been quite a few differences in at least the way certain things were structured. At Grand Valley, I feel like there are more opportunities to sort of choose what you are learning than at Loyola. At Loyola, my freshman year it was a very rigorous course, it was the hardest part of the Honors program is what I took, and it was Western Antiquities, which was a really gross subject. Essentially we covered a lot of ancient Greek and Roman texts and also a lot of religious texts. So we read St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, and a few others in addition to the Bible. Some of the things were really interesting, but it was more of a philosophy class than any other kind of thing. Whereas the classes at Grand Valley are, like especially being able to pick the sequence, what you wanted, really allowed you to study things that could be useful to you and your own knowledge. And while I enjoyed some parts of the Honors College at Loyola, I kind of adored the St. Thomas Aquinas text, it isn't something that is overall beneficial to me furthering my own education.

- 9. If you could change one thing about the Honors program here at GVSU, what would you change?**

Maybe, like, I guess going back to the Honors class that I'm in, taking out some of the arbitrary requirements for the Honors College. These are Honors students, being an Honors student, you need to already have a drive to learn, and you're going to want to learn things that are useful to you, and things that will help you as you move forward. So having to take a class, or classes, that really have no personal value to you just because it is a requirement of the Honors College it seems kind of useless to me. I don't see it as beneficial to any of the students, it's just kind of like a filler because there may be some people whom an "Art and Money" class would be extremely beneficial and something that they will be really interested in, and so great, offer that class, but don't make it be one of the select few that I can take for my Art's requirement because I, as someone who is going to be pre-PA, biomedical science major, I'm never going to need an art requirement, and like while it could be something that I may be interested in, perfect, I can take it for my own pleasure, but I don't particularly enjoy having to take it just as a requirement.

- 10. How would you define diversity, and what do you think about when you hear that**

word?

So diversity I just define as differences between people from some group or population, and that can be based on any different aspects of life. Pretty much, as many distinctions as you can desire to make. When I think about the word, I primarily think about the controversies around it, because it has become such a pressing issue in recent times. The struggle for people to increase their amount of diversity, to strive to increase it. The backlash of saying like you shouldn't have to try to increase your diversity it should just happen if it is going to happen. So primarily I just think of the arguments back and forth about the necessity of diversity and ways of implementation and whether those are ethical or not. So one of things that comes to mind is the University of Michigan admissions process, where they have a points system and you get points if you are of a certain minority or other things, which brings in the ethicality of it.

11. In your couple weeks here at GVSU, and in the classes you have been in so far, could you please tell me about a time you had to work with someone who you felt was of a different background than yourself, and how was that experience? It doesn't have to be from an Honors class, it could be from any one of your classes?

I've worked with a few students who, particular in my Spanish class, are of some Hispanic decent, but they've been finding to work with. Everything has been fine with that. The experience was pretty lackluster, for the most part, I really haven't worked with people from different backgrounds. Like, part of that is the way the classes are structured. For example, my chemistry class takes place in a giant lecture hall, and I only work with the two other people sitting right next to me, who happen to be two white girls. When I did things with the people from my Spanish class, and it was just kind of like a typical experience, the fact that they are of different backgrounds really didn't play into any part of it.

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

Nothing. I think all of your questions were great questions to ask.

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

Yes. You guys have my email and know how to get a hold of me. Feel free to.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

I haven't been here long enough. I'm not really sure of anyone that would be a good source of information for you guys.

Possible next-steps:

- it may be a great idea to look at other Honors programs and see what features make them distinctive.
- Along with secondary research, it might also help us to interview fellow Honors students at neighboring state universities.

Thank you for your time. We greatly appreciate it.

Interview 2

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors Student/Niemeyer

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

Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain insight on why he/she is in the Honors College and how they feel the Honors experience could be improved.

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

This gives us an inside perspective of students that are currently in the program and the diversity, or lack thereof, that they bring to college/have awareness or understanding of.

Summary of Research:

Through this interview, I gained some insights into the way other people might view diversity. The girl I interviewed was $\frac{1}{4}$ Asian, but she told me that it had little impact on the answers she provided me. It was interesting to learn that she preferred to think of the word diversity as dealing with one's mindset and their goals in life rather than the color of someone's skin or their religious beliefs. I always have viewed diversity as a matter of the things that make people different, but mainly in a physical or social sense (race, gender, age, sexual orientation, etc.) Never have I once thought about someone's mindset making them diverse from their neighbor, but it certainly does.

Important insights:

- Diversity includes not only physical traits, but also people's thoughts and their mindsets about different things.
- There are a number of different reasons that people choose to join Honors outside of the gen eds. I have never fully utilized the support system that Honors has to offer, but this girl has and it has positively impacted her life.
- The lack of diversity is apparent in the Honors college, meaning that more students than just my group or myself have noticed that there are not many other people as far as race and ethnicity go. There are a large number of diverse thinkers in Honors, though.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. How did you hear about the Honors College? When in your college decision-making process was this?

Through the academic advisor when she visited the summer before her senior year. Advisor asked about GPA and ACT. Initially heard about it via an online search.

2. Please name three things that supported your decision to join the Honors program?

- 1) Took care of a lot of gen education requirements
- 2) Looks good on resumes because she wants to go to med school

Likes the support system of advisors and professors that Honors offers, she talks to them a lot

3. What is/was your freshman sequence and why did you decide on that one in particular? What did you hope to learn in your freshman sequence?

History of science. Chose it because she loves science and history is her best subject, so it seemed like a good fit for her. Also, she's going into medical and she wanted to do something that was directed towards her major.

She did not have any expectations for her sequence, but she wanted to learn how to balance Honors and regular classes. Found out that Honors classes can sometimes be easier than normal classes.

4. What has happened during your Honors College experience that has led you to question your decision to be a part of the Honors College?

There has been nothing that has made her question her decision of being in Honors. In fact, throughout her time here, she has actually ended up liking it even more because of the challenge, living environment, and being close to advisors.

5. If you had the opportunity to go back and remake your decision about joining Honors, would you and why?

She would not change her decision because she likes being surrounded by likeminded people. The only thing she would redo is deciding to live in Honors sooner (she originally lived in Laker Village). She also really likes the mentor program that Honors offers.

6. What advantage do you think an Honors College experience will give you in life?

Trying to push her limits and trying to be the best she can be are the two things that she feels that Honors has taught her the most so far because she has only been a student for a month and a half.

7. What do you think is distinctive about the Honors program here?

The class sizes make her feel like it's almost like high school, and it is a lot more personal. She can voice her opinion freely and can get a more 1-on-1 feel. The advisors are also right down the hall and she enjoys that.

8. If you could change one thing about the Honors program, what would you change?

More freshman sequence options so that there is a larger variety to choose from. Or perhaps a student summary of the sequences that have been taken instead of only a class summary so that she can get more of a feel for what the class was like.

9. How would you define diversity? What do you think of when you hear that word?

Diversity is a bunch of different minds coming together. She has seen in the Honors college all these different people thinking and planning together to achieve their goals. When she hears the word diversity, she thinks about how everyone wants to make a different impact and leave their own mark on the world.

10. Tell me about a time when you had the opportunity to work with someone that you feel comes from a background that is different than yourself.

She had to work with someone who ran track with her. The person was different from her in appearance and body, but what she feels was most different was their mindsets. She ran races differently, warmed up differently, etc. At the end of the day, they were able to come together and lead the team effectively even though they were both completely different in the way they did things.

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

N/A

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

Yes; via phone or text

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Referred me to her friend who is not in Honors
- Referred me to her roommate who is in Honors
- Referred me to her professors in her sequence

Possible next-steps:

- Reach out to non-Honors student now and see how their answers can give me additional insights
- Tell my group about the diversity in thinking/mindset and see how they feel about it and see if we can incorporate that into our project at all
- Look into the faculty within Honors and see how they feel about diversity

Thank you for your time. We greatly appreciate it.

Interview 3

Stakeholder Group/Location: Non-Honors Student/their house
Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
Gender: Female
Primary Goal of this Opportunity: The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain perspective from those not in the program. As “outsiders,” it is possible that they have different ideas/opinions about diversity at Grand Valley.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? Conducting this work brings awareness to the experience with and understanding of diversity that non-Honors students bring with them to GVSU. It sheds light on an “outsider’s” perspective of diversity within the Honors college, an issue many may have turned a blind eye to.
Summary of Research: This interview went fairly quickly because the interviewee did not have much to say outside of the answers she gave. The interviewee also felt that the questions were either a little too vague or open-ended at times, and did not know how to answer certain questions. Other than this, the interview went well. She provided valuable insight on what non-Honors students think about Honors students and Grand Valley as a whole. I thought that it was really interesting that she thought of smart people and people of a higher “class” when she heard the words “Honors students”, because that is not how I feel at all.
Important insights: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Honors program is not well-known about when it comes to non-Honors students• She thinks the Honors program is the stereotypical smart kids who are in a higher “class” than regular students• In her opinion, the curriculum at GV is already moderately challenging, but it doesn’t apply the things that she learns in class to real life scenarios

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. What do you think about when you hear the phrase Honors College?

She thinks about a distinctive class of smarter people.

2. What comes to mind when you hear that a student is an Honors Student?

That they worked hard in high school to be able to take Honors classes and to be accepted into the program.

3. What have you heard about GVSU's Honors Program? Please describe any experiences you've had with Honors students.

She has heard that you have to take specific sequences, and that is it. The experiences she has had with Honors students were all just normal conversations.

4. Providing that a student is eligible to be in the Honors College, what do you feel would make being a part of the Honors Program more valuable to a student's long-term goals.

It would be more valuable because you would have to take less gen eds and could potentially not have to pay as much. Also, having that on a resume would help to make you more desirable for jobs. Finally, being in an environment of likeminded people could benefit you with studying, grades, and even friends.

5. How and to what extent do you feel challenged by GVSU's curriculum?

She thinks the curriculum is challenging because in order to stay on top of things and not be overwhelmed, she has to study every day when she would rather not do that.

6. How could GVSU's curriculum challenge you further?

She thinks that she could be challenged by GVSU by being made to apply the things she learns to real life problems or scenarios, rather than just knowing the facts.

7. How would you define diversity? What do you think of when you hear that word?

She thinks that diversity is different cultures, races, backgrounds and upbringings. When she hears that word, she thinks of different people in all shapes and sizes, along with how she defined it.

8. Please describe a time where you realized that you and another person had a completely different perspective on a topic. Describe that experience and how it made you feel.

She was talking about veganism to her friend and her friend felt that veganism is stupid and that you cannot fulfill your nutrients that way, but she feels the

opposite. It made her feel aggravated that the person couldn't see veganism the way she does and it made her want to try to prove them wrong.

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

N/a

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

Yes; text or email

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Roommate who is not in Honors
- GVSU Coach
- Professor who is in Honors

Possible next-steps:

- Reach out to a coach instead of a professor to see how they feel about Honors and if any of their athletes are in Honors
- Reach out to her roommate to get another look at what non-Honors students think about the Honors program
- Tell my team what she said about Honors students and see how they feel, then potentially adjust our team goal or our stakeholder map.

Thank you for your time. We greatly appreciate it.

Interview 4

Stakeholder Group/Location: Non-Honors Student/location TBD
Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
Gender: man
Primary Goal of this Opportunity: The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain perspective from those not in the program. As “outsiders,” it is possible that they have different ideas/opinions about diversity at Grand Valley.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? Conducting this work brings awareness to the experience with and understanding of diversity that non-Honors students bring with them to GVSU. It sheds light on an “outsider’s” perspective of diversity within the Honors college, an issue many may have turned a blind eye to.
Summary of Research: This person is a non-Honors transfer student who has attended Grand Valley for a year. He has attended two other universities, Depaul and University of Michigan-Dearborn. Overall, he doesn’t know much about the Honors college except for what he has gathered from having two Honors students for roommates. He sees that Grand Valley is aware of its diversity issue, but also sees that the issue has yet to be addressed and solved. He has lived in very diverse areas in the past and notices a large visual difference.
Important insights: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• He sees Honors students as involved with extracurriculars automatically• The Honors living center is a source of more “sameness” for Honors college students in his eyes. After all, living among all Honors students is an example of homogeneity.• He notices a difference between the attitudes of professors at other universities and Grand Valley professors.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. What do you think about when you hear the phrase Honors College?

“I think kids with a high GPA, extracurricular, more involvement in classes, more discussion based stuff.”

2. What comes to mind when you hear that a student is an Honors student?

“Just more intelligent, I think they fully apply themselves to school. I’d say they’re more dedicated, more involved in like a variety of things that have to do with academics. Very dedicated to studying or focused on school. Academically driven.”

3. What have you heard about GVSU’s Honors program? Please describe any experiences you’ve had with Honors students.

“Um, I live with two of them. I honestly don’t know much about the Honors College at all. Like I know one went to France through the Honors College. Right, or no? (The answer is no). Oh just kidding. But I literally know nothing about it. I know that they have their own living, don’t they? Yeah that’s about it. You guys lived there?”

What do you think about the fact that there’s an Honors living center?

“I think that’s a little extra. Its like yeah you go to this Honors College and I’m sure your workload is a bit bigger than everyone else’s. But I think you should still have a wider variety of friends. Like you don’t want to just be in your little clique, your dorm. Like as a freshman that’s how you make friends, it’s the people you live with or around. SO I feel like the isolation might be a little bit of a poor choice.”

4. Providing that a student is eligible to be in the Honors College, what do you feel would make being a part of the Honors program more valuable to a student’s long-term goals?

“Like in regards to their career goals? Like after college? It shows dedication. It shows an employer that you know what you’re doing, you’re successful, you’re driven. I think it opens up doors for new experiences. I don’t know what kind of opportunities are open for Honors students but I’m assuming its more than... There’s a reason these students are Honors students so I’m assuming its something extra, like an upper edge you guys have.”

5. How and to what extent do you feel challenged by GVSU’s curriculum?

“I don’t necessarily feel like it’s a challenging university. Like I personally never... its just on par. I went to Depaul and then U of M Dearborn for a little bit too, and you know that was probably the most difficult university I went to. Grand Valley is just like...more of a degree mill honestly. But it’s fine.”

What was more challenging about U of M Dearborn?

“I think the professors were like, I don’t know if it was their cockiness or whatever they work for *U of M* but I don’t know. This was a couple years ago and I took like math and science classes there and they were very intense. The labs were intense the professors were intense, the exams. For like intro courses it was very grueling. I think the professors tend to go easier here. But I think they’re more relatable here to students. They get the struggle so they try to make your work load easier, I’d say.”

6. How could GVSU’s curriculum challenge you further?

“I mean I personally am cool with less work. I don’t know I don’t really have a lot of homework. Maybe it’s just my degree, what I’m going into. I have a lot of exams and like online homework assignments here and there but nothing critical. Nothing I’d get too overwhelmed with. So either that, or more maybe requirements in all fields for internships. Like I know at other places you HAVE to do an internship but here I just did one because I wanted to.”

What’s your major again?

“Business admin and management. So that would be a good thing. I like the professors; I never have a problem with them. They have real world experience.”

7. How would you define diversity? What do you think of when you hear that word?

“Just all walks of life I guess. That’s what I think of and what I define it as. Just all types of people, different experiences, different backgrounds, you know.”

8. Please describe a time where you realized that you and another person had a completely different perspective on a topic. Describe that experience and how it made you feel.

“Oh my god this is perfect. I don’t know if this is the answer you’re looking for, just any topic? Okay so this kid just posted on Facebook right. And he posted like, something about how...I’m looking it up. The article was titled, ‘This isn’t the time to talk about gun control, and here are 3 reasons why.’ Right after this shooting thing. ‘1) The shooter is still unknown,’ irrelevant. Gun control, you know what I mean? Like it doesn’t matter. ‘2) How the shooter got his weapons is still unknown,’ irrelevant. ‘3) Making policy on the heels of horror is rarely wise.’ So that kind of lit me up a little. I was a little annoyed, but it’s a difference of opinion. I don’t quite understand where they’re coming from. I think if you see this tragedy happen today, and you have the audacity to post this when 200 people are dying, 50 people already did die? That’s a little insensitive. But that’s just me, I guess this kid has a difference of opinion.”

Do you know this person?

“Yeah I went to high school with him. He was always a piece of garbage but whatever.”

Did other things ever happen with him?

“No he was just an acquaintance. I didn’t really like him. I still don’t but whatever.”

What made you choose Grand Valley?

“Cost was a huge one. I was dating someone who was living over here at the time and I ended up living with him but that was a bust. I did that. I didn’t necessarily want to live at home, like go somewhere near that area. So I felt like it was a good balance. I had family over here. Its an up and coming city in Michigan, so that drove me over here too.”

Did Depaul have an Honors College? Do you know anything about it?

“I’m pretty sure they did. I don’t even remember what it was called but I don’t know.”

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

“YEAH. On the topic of diversity, its totally not there. Grand Valley always talks about it. I’ve seen diversity. Dearborn? That’s diverse. Even Chicago, that’s diverse. They talk about it and I’m like, but where? So I’ve seen this girl right? And I swear to God I see her 30 times a day everyone looks the same here? But other than that it’s pretty. That’s all I got to say about Grand Valley, its pretty good.”

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

Yes. I will talk to him in person.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Connection to another university’s Honors College-Depaul

Possible next-steps:

- My other roommate is an out-of-state Honors student.
- Looking at non-Honors students as a source of diversity

Thank you for your time. We greatly appreciate it.

Interview 5

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors Advisor

This was a follow-up interview, conducted via email.

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

Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

Two members of the Creativity Crew interviewed this advisor in class, the purpose of this follow-up interview was to gain additional insight into her perspective on diversity and diversity within the Honors College.

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

This relates to our problem statement, because advisors interact with a wide range of students and faculty from different backgrounds. This interaction provides them with many perspectives on the diversity on campus, providing us with more information concerning the lack thereof, of it in Honors.

Summary of Research:

It was interesting to learn more about this advisor through our email correspondence. Her experience as a Grand Valley alum and current Honors advisor, gives her a unique perspective that offers insight into the minds of Honors students. We discussed similarities and differences amongst current students and students that were enrolled at GV during her time at the university. She highly suggests that qualified students apply and stay in the Honors College. She feels that, as both alum of the Honors College and GVSU, that the Honors program gives students a more in-depth and well-rounded experience.

Important insights:

- Current GVSU students come to Honors advisors with similar problems and questions that were asked to advisors nearly a decade ago.
- The Honors College is working on how to improve the senior project, so that students are more aware of what it entails.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

These answers were copied directly from my email correspondence with this advisor.

- 1. Do you find students come to you with the same/similar questions that you went through when you were a student here? What are a few examples of these problems/questions?**

Wow, you are asking a lot of my memory! I was first a student back in 2001! For me, there were questions about how my sequence fit into my major. I was an English/Language Arts major and I took the American Civilization sequence. We did a decent amount of literature review through the sequence, and I felt it should count for credits in my major. That's a standard thing now, that some sequences get specific credit in a major (ENG, HST, MES, etc.) so I don't think it comes up very often. I know we also had a lot of questions about the senior project—how did the process work, what were the requirements, etc. We still do see those questions today. I know I also went to Honors (not an advisor at the time, but support staff) when I hit a road bump with my senior project and it wasn't working out the way I wanted or expected it would. They were able to help me through the process, and we do see students come with similar concerns today.

- 2. How do you think the Honor College could improve the senior project so that students are more aware of what it entails?**

This is a great question. We're working on this. Just last week, Meg did an info session on the senior project. It lasted about an hour and just went over all of the requirements, timeline, possible pitfalls, etc. There were only about 12 students who attended, but they found the time to be valuable. We've wrestled with the idea of making that presentation something available via video online or offering it multiple times throughout the semester/year. We do have a lot of information available on our website. Students don't always take the time to read through that information, so some of what we do is educate them about what's already out there. If there was a way to encourage students to review this information on their own it would also be good.

- 3. In your experience advising both Honors and non-Honors students, are you able to distinguish between the two and how are you able to do so?**

I want to put a qualifier that this is a really general statement—all students are different, and I've seen similar traits in both Honors and non-Honors students. However, I would say that Honors students tend to take control of their own education and plans for education and use me more as a resource, they tend to want to graduate at a faster rate (often 3 or 3 ½ years), and they also put immense pressure on themselves to be successful. This can lead to increased stress and anxiety when things don't go as planned. Honors students tend to have multiple majors/minors and involvement in a variety of areas (more involvement in research, study abroad, more RAs, tutors, etc.). I think Honors students also more often have plans to continue in their schooling, whether that be for something in the medical field, law school, graduate school, etc.

4. If possible, please expand on your role as both an academic and enrichment advisor?

I think the academic piece is self-explanatory, but includes helping current students, helping to recruit future students, and assisting new students during orientation. It includes helping them with scheduling and schedule planning, trouble-shooting or problem solving, and connecting them to things of interest. It requires that I'm pretty knowledgeable about all that GVSU has to offer so I can make strong referrals and connections for students. The enrichment piece is still being developed. It could be taken in a few different ways—academic enrichment, so bringing in speakers, offering high-impact experiences like study abroad/research/volunteering or more personal enrichment, like managing stress/anxiety, developing friendships, strong study habits, etc. I think for this year, we are operating somewhere in between—offering sessions on managing homesickness but also the senior project. We're working with some of the faculty to develop an Honors Speaker series and looking at strengthening our relationships with some of the local K-12 and community colleges, but I think it's to be determined how that all looks in the future.

5. Who or what (departments, etc.) would be a source of information regarding diversity at Grand Valley?

The Office of Inclusion and Equity and the Office of Multicultural Affairs

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

This section does not apply, as we asked this question during our initial interview with this advisor in class.

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

Yes, this advisor has agreed to reconnect for further inquiry via email.

For Dialogue: Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- The Office of Inclusion and Equity
- The Office of Multicultural Affairs

Possible next-steps:

- Reach out to the two stakeholder groups that this advisor suggested to us.
- Continue interviews with our scheduled stakeholders.

Interview 6

Stakeholder Group/Location: GVSU Staff
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: The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain perspective from those who do not directly deal with the Honors College. As “outsiders,” it is possible that they have different ideas/opinions about diversity at Grand Valley.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? Conducting this work brings awareness to the experience with and understanding of diversity that staff members bring with them to GVSU. It sheds light on an “outsider’s” perspective of diversity within the Honors college, an issue many may have turned a blind eye to.
Summary of Research: I found that the staff members involved in athletics might not have much of an idea, if anything at all, about what the Honors program is or what it provides for students. This staff member in particular is relatively new here at GV, having been hired at the start of my freshman year (I am a sophomore). Even so, he still has noticed that the lack of diversity is apparent at Grand Valley. His answers to the questions were very in depth and it seemed that he is also passionate about trying to diversify our campus. This staff member is also an African-American male.
Important insights: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The interviewee pointed out to me that nowhere in any of the questions that I asked him did I ask for his opinion on how to further enhance the diversity at GV, which is something that I think is necessary if our team is to come up with the best possible solution.● It may be a good idea to reach out to more people in the athletics, as there is a large percentage of people of color in the athletic department, whether they be athletes or advisors.● The term normal is all relative and depends on where you are or who you are around. Relative to Allendale, this lack of diversity is considered

normal, which is something we may be able to work on to help our goal of further diversifying Grand Valley.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. How and when did you hear about Grand Valley?

I was sitting on my couch, when the head coach at GV told me that there was an opening at GV for the sprints/hurdles group on the track and field team.

2. What made you decide to coach at Grand Valley?

I feel like that where I previously worked, it wasn't the best package that I could offer because I am not a fan of putting people in debt (former position being a teacher). Here is significantly cheaper and I feel that there is so much more to offer here than at my previous job. I feel like I can be more of a salesman here and use my talents better.

3. In your opinion, what is the most distinctive feature of GVSU?

I think the 5 big areas I would sell to someone to help them figure out if a school is for them are social life, financial, if they have your major, advisors and their availability, and the coaching staff/regular faculty. I think the thing about GV is that all 5 are so much better here than at most other universities. Good social scene, cheaper college than any in Michigan, GV has most majors, the advising staff here knows what they are doing, and coaching here is a goal of many coaches because of the success of the sports programs in D2.

4. If you could change one thing about Grand Valley, what would you change?

I do not think that I have been here long enough to know everything about GV, but I would try to create a position in public relations to help the alumni base be larger and have more of a presence because not many people have heard about GV unless they know about the athletics in the Midwest. I think GV is a fine institution but if you do not know how great of a school we are, you won't end up coming here.

5. In your opinion, are you able to tell a difference between Honors and non-Honors students?

As a coach, I do not worry about the Honors kids doing what they are supposed to do outside of practice because I know they will do it. Honors

students in my group (sprinters) are more sensitive to stressful situations, but I always get a vibe that the Honors athletes will be able to handle it. I do not feel that they lose sleep over it because they are confident that they can handle it. Also, the Honors athletes are more tactical about how to handle their tasks as opposed to the non-Honors athletes. Finally, I do not worry nearly as much about academics for the Honors athletes. Alternatively, I think that the Honors students do not feel quite as in tune with your bodies as the non-Honors students because you guys analyze everything but do not quite execute it as well as some others.

6. What is a distinctive memory you have in which you witnessed the growth of a student(s) as a result of his/her/their collaboration?

As a coach, I see this all the time but one specific example I can think of would be when I made my athletes do a drill with a hula-hoop. I watched the growth of communication as the game went on. The athletes learned how to communicate more effectively by the end of the drill because they had to in order to successfully complete the drill. It's really fun for me as a coach to watch because you can really tell what they are really thinking.

The hula-hoop drill is when you gather a number of people around a hula-hoop and make everyone put one finger on the hula-hoop and take it from about 6 feet in the air all the way to the ground. The catch is that you have to have everyone's finger on it at all times, and the hula-hoop has to stay level. The drill is a lot more difficult to do than it sounds—I am speaking from experience.

7. How would you define diversity? What do you think of when you hear that word?

Anywhere you go, I think normal is relative. What is normal here is not normal everywhere else. Here, the normality is the lack of diversity. I define diversity as how many people look like, act like, and seem like when compared to everyone else in the area. In Allendale, there seems to be a lack of cultural diversity, but in Grand Rapids it seems to be a little better in my experience.

8. Tell me about a time when you had the opportunity to work with someone that you feel comes from a background that is different than yourself.

All the time because I think I am polar opposite than most people. I am much louder, I have more energy, I am more expressive, have more energy, more intense, more emotional, more obsessive, etc. than most other people. I feel like I am polar opposite from the people that work

<p>here. I do not think that I have been adapting to the way it is here, if anything, I think that I have been forcing others to adapt to the way I am. GV is more rural and not as urban, procedural, by the book type of place, and I can be all of those things, but I remember the first day I worked here, I felt that everything was just different than what I was used to.</p>
<p>What is one thing I did not ask you that you think I should have?</p> <p>I would have liked to been asked about potential ways to enhance the diversity here at GV.</p>
<p>Further contact is acceptable via cell phone</p>
<p>Three more connections this stakeholder provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Other coaches ● Other athletes around the school ● Director of academic services for the athletic department
<p>Possible next-steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Definitely add the question about what interviewees think we could do to enhance the diversity at GV. ● Spread to advisors at GV, in both the areas of regular students and athletes to see what, if anything, is different. I think there may be differences because the athlete advisors deal with a large number of people of color, specifically from the football, basketball, and track and field teams. I have gone to see them a number of times, as have many of my friends who are also people of color.

[Interview 7](#)

<p>Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors Professors</p>
<p>Estimated Age: ___ 20-30 ___ 30-40 <u> x </u> 40-50 ___ 50+</p>
<p>Gender: Male</p>

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain insight on what it is like to teach in the Honors College and how they feel the Honors experience could be improved.

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

This gives us an inside perspective of professors that are currently teaching those in the program and the diversity, or lack thereof, that they bring to college/have awareness or understanding of.

Summary of Research:

This professor has worked at Grand Valley since 2003 and has been a professor of the Honors College since 2012. Overall, he values the Honors College experience and would agree that it is important for students who are high-achievers and who strive to get the most out of their undergraduate experience. He is aware of the lack of diversity within the Honors College and Grand Valley as a whole, but has had many experiences working with a diverse group of students. He believes that there is a culture of grade anxiety within the Honors College and would like to see this change.

Important insights:

- There is a culture of grade anxiety within the Honors College. Often, students are preoccupied with the grades that they are receiving rather than the information that they are learning.
- There are first generation students in the Honors College and they provide a unique outlook towards the college experience. They may need more attention/support, but they have the possibility to go far and accomplish a lot during their time at GV.
- Honors students are not necessarily smarter, but they are the ones who show up to class. They are on time and they participate. They know how to please their teachers and stay out of trouble.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. How and when did you hear about Grand Valley/the Frederik Meijer Honors College?

“I started at Grand Valley in fall of ’03. I came in as an assistant visiting professor, actually to teach Spanish, because my wife got a tenure tract job. I was finishing my dissertation. I think in fall 2005, a college was on sabbatical, who was supposed to teach the Euro Civilization section with Professor Grace Coolidge and Grace asked me if I would like to teach with her.”

2. What made you decide to teach at Grand Valley?

“I decided to teach at Grand Valley because my wife got a job here. I had another offer actually, a tenure track at another institution and we thought about it. But I didn’t really want to live apart from my wife.”

3. At what point during your career at Grand Valley did you begin to teach Honors courses?

“Once in 2005, just one semester. But I always wanted to come back and finally I got my change in 2012. I came back to teach Euro Civilization.”

When did your co-instructor start teaching with you?

“That same fall, but it was really kind of a last minute thing.”

4. In your opinion, what is the most distinctive feature of GVSU’s Honors program?

“Well it’s pretty amazing, the freshman sequence is amazing because you get to work with students for twelve hours, for a whole year. It’s like four classes. You really get to know them, maybe have an impact on them. Build that community.”

5. If you could change one thing about the Honors program, what would you change?

“Occasionally, I sometimes see the culture of grade anxiety and sometimes that becomes contagious. Everybody starts to get nervous, they make each other nervous about something. And moreover, maybe somehow related, once in a while we get students who are more concerned about the grades than the learning. They get an A- and they complain about the grade. We’re trying to teach you that it’s about more than the grade and that we’re not going to just give you a grade. The nervousness, Doctor J hired an instructor to teach a Live Learn Lead. She did a lot of mindfulness and meditation with her Honor students, I think this helped them to chill out. I think there needs to be a culture that multiplies a nice vibe of chill.”

6. In your opinion, how do you differentiate between Honors and non-Honors students?

“Honors students tend to have the higher ACT’s. Honors students tend, this isn’t real nice to say, but sometimes Honors students are not necessarily smarter than the regular student body, but they show up and they are on time. That’s half the battle, if you show up to class and are on time, you’re going to go a long way. They got to be Honors students by knowing how to please the teacher or at least not irritate the teacher. They kind of knew how to play the game. There are probably a lot less first generation students in the Honors College.”

7. What is a distinctive memory you have in which you witnessed the growth of an Honors student? What makes it distinctive?

“A really great one, that I won’t name, this student just showed up on campus and he was first generation. Didn’t know what college would be like, had no idea what his opportunities were like. This student was smart. We worked with him, he ended up winning major awards and doing all kind of research. He presented at national conferences. He showed up, kind of clueless and insecure, and we were able to show him what his opportunities were. My favorite philosopher wrote a lot about this in a book called *Reproduction*, he was probably the first to say that education is supposed to be a democratic thing, where students from lower groups can use education to rise in the social strata. But in fact, what education usually does, is reproduce the social hierarchy. I’m going to offer the opposite of the argument that I just made. What is unique about Honors is that, let’s say you get students that, when they were in high school, they were kind of ‘geeked’ out to learn, but they were kind of embarrassed to be excited about learning. So they kept their light under a bushel. What’s cool about Honors, is that you can get all these students together so that they do not feel awkward about learning. Where everyone is participating and they don’t have to feel self-conscious.”

8. How would you define diversity? What do you think of when you hear that word?

“I’m not going to say anything smart about that. It’s as much difference as possible. It is kind of a bummer about Honors, everybody is from a suburb. Almost everyone is white, from a suburb. More or less the same income group, parents about the same age. It’s not just ethnicity, but they’re all from the Detroit suburbs and hardly anyone from cities. You can ask students, what foods do you like? They’re all going to say the same thing. They’re that similar, in taste in music, food, restaurants, there’s not a lot of diversity.”

9. Tell me about a time when you had the opportunity to work with someone that you feel comes from a background that is different than yourself.

“I’ve worked with several McNair scholars. It’s a summer program. A

student does a thesis, it's for students from underrepresented backgrounds, ethnicities, first generation students or lower incomes. It's preparing them to go to a PHD. It's fun, super intense. I get paid a little bit for the summer, but you keep working into the fall. It has been successful so far, we'll see if they get into a PHD program."

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

"I would reiterate the thing about the culture of anxiety and the culture of grade thinking. Sometimes, there's a sentiment that Honors students have a sense of entitlement. I don't find it too much, just a few. It's the same kind of students that think I'm here, I deserve an A. No matter what, just because I'm Honors. If there was some way to change that anxiety, culture of grade whining."

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

Yes, this professor has agreed to reconnect for further inquiry. He prefers contact through emails.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Reach out to administration, specifically those who focus on diversity.
- Speak with both Honors and non-Honors professors about whether or not they would like to see such a divide between Honors and non-Honors students.

Possible next-steps:

- Research the number of first generation students at GV and within the Honors College.
- Speak with professors, specifically regarding the division of Honors and non-Honors students.

Interview 8

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors Professors
Estimated Age: _____ 20-30 _____ 30-40 _____ 40-50 <u> x </u> 50+
Gender: Man
Primary Goal of this Opportunity: The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain insight on what it is like to teach in the Honors College and how they feel the Honors experience could be improved.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? This gives us an inside perspective of professors that are currently teaching those in the program and the diversity, or lack thereof, that they bring to college/have awareness or understanding of.
Summary of Research: This professor has worked at Grand Valley for 15 years and has been apart of the Honors College for 13 years. Overall, he holds the Honors College and Honors students in extremely high esteem. From teaching both Honors and non-Honors classes, he notices that Honors students have a unique ability to write and discuss while making worldly connections. He is very aware of the lack of diversity in the Honors College compared to even the rest of Grand Valley, but is not optimistic that the problem will be solved in the near future.
Important insights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This professor gave us some insight on how the hiring process for professors works. Now we know more about what hiring a more diverse staff would entail. • Recruiting at high schools involves giving out money, which we can't always afford to do and isn't always legal to give to only minorities • This professor greatly sees an immense different in Honors students vs. non-Honors student. • This professor valued the range of majors found in the Gen. Ed non Honors history classes. The diversity made for great discussion.
Dialogue Questions and Response <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How and when did you hear about Grand Valley/the Frederik Meijer Honors College? "I came to Grand Valley 15 years ago, into the History Department. After I'd been here 2 years, I was invited into the Honor's College to teach a course of Asian History because the then director of the Honor's College realized that they had courses on Western history, US history, but none on East Asian History at all. As a Chinese specialist, East Asian specialist, she asked me to come in and teach. So I didn't really know about it for the first two years or so. I didn't understand that we had an Honor's program. But pretty soon, within 2 years I found out about it and then I was teaching. So that's how I found out about it, a direct invitation from the director to come participate.

2. What made you decide to teach at Grand Valley?

I was teaching in Australia, but there are not a lot of universities there. It's a small population in Australia, less than Florida. So the chance of getting a good, tenure track in Australia is just limited. So I just started looking around online, universities all around the world who were looking for people in my field and this job just sort of popped into my inbox, the History Department. So I sent an application. I still don't know how it happened, just amazingly they had 95 applications I ended up being shortlisted to the final 10, final 3. So I came to campus had a final interview and was offered the job and I just accepted it. And then moved here, sold up everything in Sydney, moved to the other side of the world with my wife. That was based on a one day impression of this place. That's kind of risky but we both, my wife was here too, we both felt the student I met here, the classroom, quality of art and everything it just felt like a really good place. I was ready for a move because I knew I wouldn't get a permanent job in Australia. I haven't regretted it since.

(I was confused, thinking that HE had a final 3 and chose from that) So you had the final three, and chose to come to Grand Valley right away without visiting the others?

So there is the final three. The process is you put out a nation-wide search, people apply. For this position, the history department I applied, they narrow it down to a final 10, then there was phone interviews which I did in Sydney. And then I didn't know if I was going to make the final three, but when I did we were brought to campus. And when we do that we meet students and professors, look at the campus, give some lectures to students on campus. So I found out in the end that I made the final three and I came down here and in the end it was me who was offered the job. It still seems very serendipitous, lucky, fated, almost fated to be. And I don't believe in miracles it amazes me the way it worked out.

3. At what point during your career at Grand Valley did you begin to teach Honors courses?

We kind of already went over this, you started teaching Honors courses within two years of being here.

Yes and within a week I could already tell the difference. The difference in ability, intellectual ability, quality of discussion, the writing was enormous. I was teaching the regular history students, and it was fine, I enjoyed myself. I was actually teaching the Gen Ed History classes and I enjoyed that more because I had a mix of first, second, third, fourth year students in those classes. You'd often have really bright science majors and business majors. I didn't really like teaching history major courses very much. Not all, but a lot of students that decide to take history as a major don't really know what they want to do. And I really like history, so they're not really fired up or driven with a passion to be a nurse or doctor or something. They're like well I'll just do history. And then I walk into this Honors class and I'm like WOW they're so bright and engaged and super into everything. I just thought they could write, talk well and I said it was great. Then I went back to the regular classes and it was a drag. And then I thought how can I get into

teaching more Honors classes? And now I've made it and I only teach Honors classes. But there was a very clear difference in the ability level and enthusiasm of wanting to be here. Also the tolerance, wanting to engage in conversation, being open to other opinions and open minded. It was glaringly obvious from the beginning.

4. In your opinion, what is the most distinctive feature of GVSU's Honors Program?

What Honors really does is be an alternative path through general education. That's really what we do. What we want to do in the future is add more Honors sections of major courses. We want Honors econ, Honors business, right? That a longer-term goal. What we do now is give students a better, more efficient, and I think more exciting and challenging way to satisfy general education. It's also more connected, so every student comes to Grand Valley and has to check off things in a box. Actually if I have to say I think it's the sequences that are the most distinctive feature of this college. In one connected sequence we satisfy a whole range of gen education requirements. Students get their writing, their issues, their art, history as a cohort. As a group of colleagues all together. I feel sorry for students who don't get this. You wonder along to history and take it for one semester and never see those kids again. Here from day 1 you're part of a group of students like you for a year, and you settle an enormous amount of gen education requirements, and you all grow together in a connected way. The classes we offer students as science classes, junior seminars, these are all really good. But the most distinctive are these fabulous first year sequences. That makes Grand Valley stand out as a leader among Honors programs nation wide. And it is recognized nation wide by the way, because of the sequences. But that's going to change in the future as we try to make it possible for science students to take Honors classes.

5. If you could change one thing about the Honors program, what would you change?

Our most glaring problem is our lack of diversity. I've had one African American student in 12 years, in the Honors College. Latino/Latina a few more, not many. Asian students; we've had quite a few Korean-American, Japanese-American, Vietnamese-American and so on. But our lack of diversity is a problem. Last year because I was on sabbatical for the fall I couldn't teach my two Honors classes, so instead in the winter I taught 3 non Honors classes. And I was struck straight away by the increased diversity in those classes. I had a little class of only 14 and 3 were latin@, 3 were African American, one was African. SO more than half the class was nonwhite. And I come back to my Honors class and all my kids are 90% white, middle class, from the east side of the state somewhere. I would love to increase our diversity, but that would mean somehow going out and recruiting. So you need to be a high achieving student to get into Honors. Because opportunities for latin@ students, African American students to get into good high schools are limited for many reasons, socioeconomic reasons, those who are high achieving from those groups are quickly offered a lot more money from the University of Michigan or Michigan State that have more money than us. Because those universities are also trying to increase their diversity. So it's a real problem. We've struggled with this for 10 years now. If we go out and try to recruit from high schools, we can't compete financially. I don't know how to get around it. Everyone in the class would benefit from this diversity. But we just don't have it. So for now we just do the best we can with white, middle class students.

Going back to last year when you said you had a non-Honors class with a more diverse group, did you notice a difference surrounding the diversity presence?

The diversity was much richer and much more present. On the other hand, the quality of writing and discussion in general—at least for the first part of the semester. Later on when these students figured out that it's actually okay to say stuff and have an intense discussion because they never really had that opportunity in their other classes. Initially I had to work really hard as the facilitator to get the discussion going. And I had to lower my standards of essay grading, even though I was teaching third and fourth year students, compared to what I expected of first year students in Honors. The ability gap was there and obvious. But I did love the diversity; I loved having black students in my class. They could tell I was happy to have them there, I wanted to know what they think, what their opinions are. I could tell that they grew in self-confidence as the semester went on. This professor values my opinion. It's a safe place to discuss my experiences compared to the white kids and Latino kids. It was tremendous how rewarding it was in a different way. Still, I missed my Honors students.

6. In your opinion, how do you differentiate between Honors and non-Honors students?

I was thinking about this with a student yesterday, I have a student in my class and we were discussing her essay. In Big History all my students have to write about faith and science. And if they have conflicts reconciling faith and science about the origins of the universe, plate tectonics, evolutionary principles with whatever religion. Pretty much every student said they never had a problem. And I said, well you're a special group of students. A lot of people have a problem looking at theory and reconciling it with the biblical accounts. It's because you're a special part of the population. 35% of the US population has some type of tertiary education now, which is impressive and good. So 1/3 of America has had some college experience. We also know Honors students represent the top 10% of our students here at grand valley. So that's they top 10% of 35% means Honors students are in the top 3.5% of the nation in terms of ability and potential. So it's a small population of very selective students, elite students, who can think well write well and express themselves in rigorous conversation, which will all go out and become leaders in their fields. I can't say that about all the other students in the university. I can say Honors students will become world leaders in different ways, well communities' leaders I'll say. Most of them will go to graduate school and that makes you apart of a smaller group. Its something very distinctive, its academic ability but also a more mature worldview, and not see the world in black and white but also terms of grey where all opinions can somehow can be reconciling. It doesn't have to be this or that it can be this and that. And that's just ability... And you're lucky that this idea in your home was developed and encouraged, and you went to a good school, and so these abilities innately in you were developed when you were young. And then you come here, and I know looking at you, we take your potential and rake it up higher and higher. You can't do that with all regular students. That means there's a big burden on you too. You have to stand up and accept these leadership roles because you're able to see these problems that a lot of other people can't. You have a better mind, you can see things. It means being a part of the solution to many problems we're facing is going to rest with you. It's a solemn mission. You come in already brightly engaged. And by the time you leave we want you

to step up and be ready to deal with the issues of the world. I don't feel that about all the students here, it's an Honors unique thing.

7. What is a distinctive memory you have in which you witnessed the growth of an Honors student? What makes it distinctive?

So many. In the course of 4 weeks, you see students who have their first day of college and then they're dressing differently their views are changing. You get their first essay and give it back and the second is so improved. Every day with Honors students I see this growth. I think you really notice when they come back second year. It's like they look different they're more mature. And you guys are my advisees for your whole time here so I help writing references for grad school. Last year I had a couple students here before graduation, students I first met 4 years ago. I think look at this mature bright young woman already has a job and is ready to go out and take on the world. And I think back to the first day I can always remember, I remember your first day. I look at the growth that's gone on. Because I'm lucky enough to stay in touch the whole time you're here. I don't so much have a eureka moment its more like I see you regularly. But where I do see it is right before graduation. First to fourth year. I see it everyday though.

8. How would you define diversity? What do you think of when you hear that word?

When I hear the word diversity I think of a group, a community, made up of different racial groups, cultural backgrounds, religious groups. It's a mix of a wide of range as possible of worldviews, experiences, and skin colors, ethnicities if that means anything anymore. A sort of mix, a melting pot. The diversity that's made this country great. I was in Toronto a few weeks ago and you could have been in India in one part of Toronto, in southeast Asia in one part of Toronto, huge diverse world city. People from every nation of earth all together in one city. That's wonderful. That's diversity for me.

9. Tell me about a time when you had the opportunity to work with someone that you feel comes from a background that is different than yourself.

One class last semester, the one with 14 students I mentioned half were black. When I was a regular teacher I had more diversity. I always enjoyed reaching out and trying to be as inclusive as possible. I was always aware of the more challenging childhood they've had, tougher school districts, these girls were from Chicago. I enjoyed the experience of helping the feel they belong here as much as anyone else. Because a lot of crap they get from media and childhood experiences led them to think maybe they're not as worthy as everyone else. Part of my job is to reach out. That's what I try to do when I get the chance, which is not often in Honors.

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

Part of what you’re doing with this project, are you actually trying to come up with possible solutions for this? How to increase diversity? I’ll be very interested to see your final report. Sadly a lot of it comes down to money. If we could offer them more money to come to the Honors College. With affirmative action laws you can’t legally now target specific groups and give them more money compared to white students. Somehow you need to encourage high-achieving students from minorities, and it’s going to have to be in the form of financial aid. But in a way that doesn’t break laws. Its very tricky business. Until in this country we have a more equal social structure at an earlier age, so that black and white kids get the same access to same quality high schools. How diverse was your high school?

Better than here, but not representative of national demographics

I’ve sort of given up I guess. I think in terms of what can we do as a not diverse group to make it better in the future. When you leave here and go into the world you have to be champions of diversity wherever you are. We have to talk about diversity and make it known what were missing out on here. And everyone should be conscious of this. If you have this with 17-18 year old students, at least you can help them think about it more and what we might do about it. That’s what I can do now as a teacher.

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

Yes. I can email them.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Ask administration about previous attempts at increasing diversity
- Ask other professors if they have taught non-Honors classes, and seen a greater lack of diversities in Honors vs. non-Honors classes

Possible next-steps:

- Maybe recruiting is not the option we should go for (we will have to see after more interviews if there is a pattern)
- Reach out to whoever hires professors as a stakeholder

Thank you for your time. We greatly appreciate it.

Interview 9

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors Advisors

Estimated Age: 30-40

Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain insight from someone who hasn't been at GVSU for too long, but has been at various schools and experienced their diversity. Along with this is to learn the advisers' role and their impact on students specifically within the Honors College.

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

This relates to our problem statement, because advisors interact with a wide range of students and faculty from different backgrounds. This interaction provides them with many perspectives on the diversity on campus, providing us with more information concerning the lack thereof, of it in Honors.

Summary of Research:

It was interesting to see the perspective of an Honors advisor. She had much to say as to what the university is doing to combat the lack of diversity on campus. Her experience working with students and faculty has provided her with a unique viewpoint and understanding of the struggles students go through specifically those who are diverse. She discussed the benefits of service learning and how it can be implemented well or poorly. The advisor has only been here for 10 months, but has a good understanding of what the university believes in and supports. Following the interview, she has left us with many leads to pursue into further understanding how to improve diversity within GVSU, but specifically within Honors.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. How and when did you hear about Grand Valley/the Frederik Meijer Honors College?

I heard about Grand Valley in about 2011. A friend of mine went to GVSU and really enjoyed his experience, however, I had no idea this school existed until I met him. The Honors College piece I learned about much later on, when job searching and noticed that this position was open.

2. In your opinion, what is the most distinctive feature of GVSU's Honors Program?

I think what I noticed from the get go was the interdisciplinary nature of what it means to educate people. I know I have had conversation with other folk that work in education and we've known the interdisciplinary approach works. Much of my work in the past has been with students doing service learning or service learning projects attached to what they are learning in classes. Most of my work has been with the experiential part of education, and often times we talk about what does it

mean to integrate what they are learning out into the real world with what they are learning about in the class, which needs to be done in the interdisciplinary approach. I saw this was a key feature of the Honors College here, allowing for high impact learning.

3. It sounds like you've had prior experience with schools trying to morph in a service learning project, how effective have these been and do you enjoy them tying in with the curriculum?

Yeah I enjoy that type of learning, and I have found that these experiences have been the most transformative for myself in my own college experiences. Being out in the world and gaining experience that may or may not be what I'm learning in the classroom has been the most helpful for me and is where I've seen the most transformation with students. Often when I'm with a student on a service project for instance, they will many times say what I feel like what I learn in the classroom isn't real, I'll never use it, but then I come here and I feel like I'm learning more about life. Then it's my job to say well actually I wonder what it would be like for you to enter the classroom with this new knowledge. Educators need to be around for these aha moments and facilitate that, but I don't know if that is happening here because I am still new to GVSU. I would like to see service learning take place in Honors, I am not sure if it is. I have worked with many universities in the past in regards to service learning, I've found that the ones that are most successful are those in which the students want to be involved and are doing in on their own free will, and it's not mandatory, and that their connection with whatever staff member they are with is cultivated and builds on what they are learning.

4. If you could change one thing about the Honors program, what would you change?

One I think in general, Honors feels inaccessible to students, at least that is what I have gained from people in conversation. They didn't know they could do Honors. Many pre students, like at Laker Experience day are held back because they don't think they are smart enough or won't fit in with the Honors crowd, which holds a lot of people back. I think this holds true with students from minority backgrounds or underrepresented students. I am not sure if there are enough faces in Honors that allow for some people to believe they belong here, who may look "just like me" or have similar experiences. If any of these people were to get in the door, or those with not the best scores, but have a great resume in other ways, were to get in the door then they would see this curriculum sheet that is just overwhelming. I think there is a lot we can do to simplify curriculum and how we talk about it, as well as how and what we deem to be an Honors worthy or appropriate student, so that are messaging how welcoming we are.

5. Who or what (departments, etc.) would be a source of information regarding diversity at Grand Valley?

The Multiple Cultural centers, so Women's center, LGBT center, Inclusion and Equity, Cook Leadership Academy. It's also important that we recruit professors and

faculty from diverse backgrounds, so our students can feel represented by those that teach them. We all know students who want to go deeper, or could, but do other professors know about exactly what Honors is and could they potentially be educated as to what Honors is and recommend students to join.

6. What other efforts have already been made to address the lack of diversity at Grand Valley and the Honors College?

A campus climate survey was conducted and is so far being taken very seriously. GVSU has been ramping up its efforts internally to recruit both diverse faculty, staff and students. It has worked on bystander intervention and how to be an inclusion advocate when hiring. I've only been here for a little while and things are happening, it is difficult for progress to go quickly because the area is so white, and so Christian and because of that not exactly the most welcoming. She herself when moving here with her partner, had to ask is this a safe place to live? I think about this for our students of color or Muslim are they safe. What does it mean to create an area that is safe for them?

7. How would you define diversity? What do you think of when you hear that word?

It took me awhile as a kid to make me realize that I am coming from a diverse background, just in terms of languages spoken in my house or my own exposure to people that are different from me, which took awhile. My experiences living abroad continued to blow this up and what does it mean for me to look at people of different races and ethnicity from this U.S. centric view and expand upon that. I think lots of us are coming from diverse perspectives, although we may not be people of color, or Christian, I think we all come with lots of different experiences that we may or may not be conscience of. When students begin to interact with students that are different it fosters the beginning of empathy and solidarity, with those who are different from themselves.

8. What do you think are some potential ways to enhance the diversity at Grand Valley and within the Honors program?

There is enhancement of diversity in terms of bringing different speakers and perspective to campus so that our learning environment is diverse, which must happen first but also always and continuously. We also need to open our doors to people to come and teach or come and learn here. You need to be firmly open to people that this is what the area of West Michigan is really like. We can't sugar coat, I think there are ways to grow in these areas and I see that Grand Valley is working on this so we're not literally white washed.

9. Tell me about the efforts that have been made to connect Grand Valley and the Challenge Scholars Program?

Challenge Scholars is basically if you go to a couple schools in Grand Rapids and hit a certain GPA, you can go to college for free. It is part of a larger context of what is

<p>going on in Grand Rapids how some areas are growing and changing and some areas are not. It is part of a larger movement and initiative to educate students coming from low socioeconomic backgrounds and students of color, who wouldn't have access to higher education, like their white counterparts. So Challenge Scholars works with these students before they get to college. The university as a whole has had some contact, Honors has not done much with these students. Have to be careful with service because it can be very paternalistic, top down, what can we do for you, which is not what we want. The question she asked in her interview was what can Honors offer the community? What does it mean for our students to be active citizens, thoughtful and engaged? We need to be helping the communities with challenged scholars and get them to come here.</p>
<p>Stakeholder response to “what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?”</p> <p>Couldn't think of any.</p>
<p>Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to be contacted?</p> <p>Yes, by email.</p>
<p>Three more connections this stakeholder provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multicultural Center ● Cook Leadership Academy ● Inclusion and Equity ● Women Support Center

Interview 10

Stakeholder Group/Location: Resident Assistants (Honors and non-Honors)
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:

The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain insight on how Honors students interact with each other within the dorms, and to what extent RAs try to strengthen a sense of community.

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

This interview gives us an inside perspective of an Honors RA, who deals with the living situation in Niemeyer and how students interact with each other.

Summary of Research:

One of the biggest take aways from this interview was the freshman play a critical role in the welcoming process and the formation of groups and a sense of community. This RA stated that he would love to see if all freshman would get grouped together in the dorm, so that they would all be able to hangout and begin to foster a comforting social environment. Another crucial takeaway was that while Grand Valley may not be able to change the limited diversity of West Michigan, by making the school more welcoming and prestigious Grand Valley would be able to start receiving applications from students across all sorts of backgrounds who would bring many different life experiences to the Grand Valley environment.

Important insights:

- When learning that someone is an Honors student, the next logical question is: “What was your sequence?”
- Niemeyer was designed to have a lot of community space, but it is not used very well.
- The biggest thing that deters students from socializing is when there is a room of freshman next to a room of sophomores. The sophomores are never going to open their doors, but the freshman want to socialize. Then after a month, the freshman are going to close their door too because no one is hanging out with them.
- “I have had more experiences with more people who are white male or who are white female from this community, the typical GV student, who have actually said something from a different perspective that impacted me more so that if someone from a different diversity group, or demographic background would have said it.”
- There is a large array of diversity in a room full of people of the same race.
- “Everyone is, in some way, a summation of all of their experiences and how they have decided to process them, and so that is essentially never processed the same

way by two different people. So that is essentially what makes diversity, which is what makes everyone different.”

- “I think, honestly, if you’re looking to enhance the diversity, one, you have to be welcoming and open to anyone’s perspective. So there should be no criticism towards another person’s perspective...”
- “I think the biggest thing you can do is to just make it more appealing to everyone, because if you make the Honors College something that is appealing to everyone, you are going to get people to apply from wherever and whatever backgrounds...”

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

In your opinion, what is the most distinctive feature of Grand Valley’s Honors program?

I have to say the sequences, because that’s the most apparent thing that makes it different from all of the other non-Honors programs.

So is it more the sequences being rigorous courses or just that the sequence is a different set-up of general education requirements?

Just the fact that it’s a different set-up. So if you asked someone “Are you an Honors Student?” and they say yes, the next question that follows up is: “What is your sequence?” Not that that’s like the most prestigious feature of the Honors program, let’s say, but that’s the thing that most people are going to tell you.

How often do you see students of different backgrounds living and hanging out with each other in common areas within your dorm building (Niemeyer)?

Depends, I see regular groups of students hanging out usually, there’s at least one group that generally hangs out in our floor lounge at night, depending on the night. Like Friday, Saturdays, and Sundays the lounges are empty. If you’re talking within the residence halls, then that’s usually how it is. I don’t usually see people hanging out within the lobby area or that little out cove to your left as soon as you enter the building. The only time I see students there is during the day, and they are typically just studying. Other than that, the building itself has some community space, it was built with that in mind, but it’s not very well used.

What do you do (as an RA) to encourage community connectiveness in the living center? How effective do you think these strategies are, and what, possibly, could make them more effect?

Well, we as RAs are required to do two programs per month. So that’s one thing for sure that we do. We’ll send out emails and we’ll try to keep our doors open and talk with people just walking by, especially the freshman. Like I know the people on my floor pretty well, so if I see them I’ll stop and have a brief conversation with them.

There's not so much 'community building' other than that. The programs that RAs put on are usually known for not having very much attendance. It's usually a hit or miss in whether people are going to be interested or not. How programming works on campus is like, the first two months on campus you'll get okay attendance, and after that, people find their own groups and their own activities, so they don't come to your programs any more. Part of the problem there, I will tell you though, and I've suggested this to Joe (my living center director), that I think it would be more beneficial if, for example, all of West Niemeyer is freshman and all of east would be the upper classmen, or at least you have a whole distinctive floor that's freshman or incoming students, because the biggest thing that deters students from socializing is when there is a room of freshman next to a room of sophomores: the sophomores are never going to open their doors, but the freshman want to socialize. And then after a month, the freshman are going to close their door too because 'no one is hanging out with us.' That happens very often, and the thing that housing is going to keep on saying is that: 'well we want freshman to have access to upper classmen, that they can share their experiences' but that's never happened as far as I know.

So based on what you just said, it sounds like students are not placed in general locations, all grades are placed all over the place in the building?

Yes, because the Honors College is open to all the classes we have an assortment of everyone. Most of our, typically it ends up happening that most of our freshman do end up in West, but that doesn't necessarily mean that the first floor West is all freshman. They are scattered all over.

What is a distinctive memory you have in which you witnessed a specific growth of a student as a result of their own collaboration with a team of other students?

I guess I can say more towards our RA group, because through RA training we would be together for a long time and we would have more discussions revolved around: "what if a resident was going through this situation?" and kind of working through all of that, and then we have to tackle things from different sides because we can't be biased towards any residents one way or another. So in those situations, we'll ask everyone to try and contribute what they can from whatever their perspective their bringing, and occasionally we'll have an RA present an idea that makes you think: "Wow, I've never thought of it that way" and would really help if I treated that resident in a certain way, or address 'this' with the resident. We did it in the context of a resident there, but they [other RA] also grew out of it.

Can you tell me about a time that you had the opportunity, in the Honors program or outside of the Honors program, in which you were able to collaborate with someone who comes from a different background from yourself?

Almost all of the time, to be honest [laughter]. There's not that many people with my background walking around campus. So yeah, I work with many students from many different cultures and ethnicities and all of these different types of backgrounds, but really, that brings me to an interesting point because I remember during out

dialogue [collaborator debrief] you asked: “what experiences have you had in the classroom with that maybe came from a student with a different diversity group than the typical GVSU student, and how that impacted that class?” and that’s an interesting question because, well to be honest, I would not have asked that question because it’s somewhat leading. In the sense that you’re asking people to respond in a way that you’re hoping to hear answers from, but another side to that question is that I have had more experiences with more people who are white male or who are white female from this community, the typical GV student, who have actually said something from a different perspective that impacted me more so that if someone from a different diversity group, or demographic background would have said it. So, yes having different cultural background and socioeconomic identities in the room does sometimes offer more benefits to the rest of the class, but those same benefits are there, just because people come from different backgrounds and experiences depending on where they are coming from. So there is more to that diversity in what you can benefit to other people just by collaboration, not even considering the ‘actual’ diversity of the room.

So that might lead us into our next question well: how would you define diversity, and what do you think about when you hear that word?

I think about everyone is, in some way, a summation of all of their experiences and how they have decided to process them, and so that is essentially never processed the same way by two different people. So that is essentially what makes diversity, which is what makes everyone different.

So thinking about your definition of diversity, what effect does diversity have on students who are living in a community?

Well one thing is that you really have to realize that in living in a society or a community, or any sort of global world, you’re not just an individual, you’re going to be interacting with other people, and the other people are going to be essential for the success of the community. And so you have to understand that there are going to be people who have different backgrounds and experiences from you, and you need to know how to interact with them in order to benefit the entire community. You need to know how to work with them, and it really ends up benefitting you if you are able to get along with them. So that’s the biggest thing that I think people end up learning from being in a community setting. And especially when you’re living in a dorm, you’re forced to interact with so many people who you might not get along with, but in those actual moments of crisis is when students actually being to learn the most.

What do you think are some potential ways to enhance the diversity and Grand Valley, and specifically within the Honors program?

I think, honestly, if you’re looking to enhance the diversity, one, you have to be welcoming and open to anyone’s perspective. So there should be no criticism towards another person’s perspective, whatever they are bringing to the table. There should never be any criticism towards our identity, obviously, but you should bring it up in dialogue, but in a constructive way, but I think the biggest thing you can do

is to just make it more appealing to everyone, because if you make the Honors College something that is appealing to everyone, you are going to get people to apply from wherever and whatever backgrounds, and that's really how you're going to build the best diversity. We can try to increase the Honors diversity that we have in the Honors College, and the easiest example would be the racial diversity, and we can try to do that but you're looking at 'Where are we recruiting our students from?', which is West Michigan itself, has limited diversity. So you can't expect that Grand Valley is going to be this mixture of everything when the community around us, who are students are coming from, isn't. We can put too much effort into try to increase diversity in those aspects, when we have to realize if our community is 80-85% white, and that's throughout Michigan, then maybe that's the maximum diversity we are going to get here, and then we should focus on making it more prestigious and welcoming so that we can, in the future, as things diversity naturally, and then as that starts to happen, the people who will be coming in, who are the newcomers of this identity are welcome here.

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

I was expecting and introduction for who am I, and what perspective I'm bringing (maybe this is because Marissa explained it to me earlier), just because that's how I would do an interview, but other than that, no.

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

Yes, of course! Contact via email or phone is fine.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Niemeyer living center director
- Holton-Hooker living center director
- Leadership Office at GVSU

Possible next-steps:

- Get in contact with connections provided by interviewee to investigate Holton-Hooker and how they deal with siting incoming freshman.
- Get in contact with living center director of Niemeyer to investigate if his insights parallel with what we learned from this Honors RA.

Interview 11

Stakeholder Group/Location: Resident Assistants (Honors and non-Honors) Honors
Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
Gender: female
Primary Goal of this Opportunity: Honors RA: The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain insight on why she is in the Honors College (if applicable) and how she feels the Honors experience could be improved.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? This reflects on the team's problem statement because it shows how Honors is an experience, and by looking through the lens of housing we are getting a more holistic view.
Summary of Research: It was interesting to see how a RA views Honors, how the students in both Honors and non-Honors interact, and how she sees diversity coming into play here. She overall spoke a lot of how Honors has a lot of room for improvement. Having experience living in Niemeyer and then becoming in Honors RA in HHLC, she gives interesting insights about what it is like in regards to diversity in Honors. She has a lot interesting insights because she works for the Honors building too. She talked a lot about how we need to be more intentional as an Honors College with our programming.

Important insights:

- Honors needs to get better at having tough conversations.
- When students, specifically students of color, we need them to get past the word “Honors.”
- We need to strive to have these dialogues and be more transparent about our white privilege in Honors and at GV.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. In your opinion, what is the most distinctive feature of GVSU’s Honors program?

That’s hard because I have two things that go hand and hand: The most distinctive academic part of the Honors College is our foundational interdisciplinary sequences. I think the perspectives that they give and the way that they approach the educational process is very unique to Grand Valley. One thing that I like to tell perspective families coming in is that if you do regular general education at Grand Valley, that’s fine. But what you’re going to do is take a bunch of general classes specific to one department. If you take one of our sequences you are going to have a class that brings a bunch of different approaches in. So if you go with Food for Thought, you’ll be looking at food justice, food waste, inequality but you’ll be looking at it from a social science perspective, how can we approach this from a writing purpose, how can we share this with the world. Also, we stay true to class sizes. This is specifically true for science majors. Sometimes you’ll have classes with big lectures, but in Honors we stay true to 22 students, unless we absolutely can’t. This creates a really close relationship with professors, to the point where you can ask them for letters of recommendation during your senior year and they will remember you and know the student you actually are. This prepares you more for the rest of your time at Grand Valley. My freshman mentor told me that my sequences was going to be the hardest class I took at Grand Valley, and it is still true to this day.

2. How often do you see students of different backgrounds living/hanging out with in common areas?

Last year we had all majority Honors in one hallway, and so I think the dynamic of that last year was a lot more negative because they stuck more together but then left out, and I think that their academics suffered because of that. This year we have an almost all Honors floor, with the exception of those who requested non-Honors roommates. And everyone is thriving because they can always find someone else in their same sequence, same major; they’re interacting really well academically and the social is sort of just coming in response to that. Do I see large amounts of non-

Honors hanging out on our floor? Not generally. I think there is a stereotype on our floor based on that, but I do see Honors students from our floor go to other non-Honors floors with friends that they've made, so that's always positive. Looking at backgrounds overall, we aren't a hugely diverse floor—I mean we aren't really diverse at Grand Valley in general. I think HHLC Honors floor is an accurate representation of GVSU Honors. My first program with them was something they asked for, and it was actually a floor potluck. I had a guy minoring in Chinese bring in homemade curry from scratch. I had a guy bring fakasha bread made from scratch who was from native American background. And this is all made by them in traditional style dorms; we didn't supply stuff or anything. They seem to be interested in their backgrounds and having these discussions.

3. What do you do to encourage community connectedness in the living center? How effective do you think these strategies are? What could make them more effective?

So RAs are always required to program, it's built into what we have to do. To be honest, this year we haven't really had to push connectedness. We have one resident, who has pretty much been the RA on the floor. I swear I wouldn't have to do anything if I didn't really want to. He's just really inclusive towards everyone. I am being intentional about not necessarily building the community, but instead how I can educate my residents. RAs have 4 pillars, and this semester I am focusing on academics, citizenship, intercultural, and community building. This semester we are really pushing for the other 3. I'm doing a program on Honors Study Abroad and being intentional with that. Next month we are doing a panel with all of the major groups on campus on how to be successful as a student. We are trying to enforce the educational aspect and the community aspect is following. The people who are interested in learning are going to group together regardless. Curiosity is a magical thing, and freshmen, if they're not curious, they're not going to care about your programs if it's not community building. Community overall, we have one program a month for the overall building. We don't want them to be secluded to the third floor. We are trying to get them to engage with the whole building. There is a huge stigma against Honors. I don't think most people know what it takes to get into Honors, and that most people think "oh they're on the third floor... they're so special" when in reality, if you looked into it about 3 months ago, you probably would've been here with us. The requirements aren't that hard for a reason, we just want students who are naturally curious to come in. We are definitely trying to push the idea of HHLC as a community, so it's not just HHLC, plus the third floor Honors.

4. How do you perceive the Honors program and the students who are a part of

it?

From a third year student now looking back, I think Honors looks snooty. I don't think admissions talks about us enough or that we are a big presence on campus that we are... the reality is that we aren't our own separate college. We fall under Brooks, so we need to be functioning like other resources on campus do. We are trying to have Honors create programs that we are bringing to others across campus, we want anyone to come, not just Honors. I feel that right now we have secluded ourselves from the rest of campus and we need to make a driving force in our priorities to make ourselves a resource on campus.

5. What is a distinctive memory that you have where you witnessed the growth of a student(s) as a result of his/her/their/collaboration?

I had a resident who got a zero on her first paper, and I remember being frustrated, as would I. Coaching her and encouraging her to make that tie with that professor was a really rewarding moment, no matter how intimidating it was. All freshmen are scared to talk to professors, but all professors chose Honors freshmen for a reason because they want to mold them. She ended up getting an A in the class. She then got recommended to the Brooks Deans office now. Watching her jump over those obstacles was so rewarding.

6. Tell me about a time when you had the opportunity to work with someone at GVSU that you feel comes from a background that is different than yourself.

Every day. Every single day of my whole life. With GV being a PWI, there is a lot of white privilege. The people who aren't agreeing that this is a thing aren't interested in being educated. Again, this goes back to the natural curiosity thing. I have someone on my staff who is extremely Baptist, and as much as I want to appreciate and understand his viewpoints, sometimes I don't. The reality is that he is a white, Christian, male. And that's just privilege, it is. My best friend on our staff is gay, and it is hard for me because he thinks my best friend's identity is a sin. And so this is sometimes hard for me to want to be his friend. The good thing is that he is open, so we have a lot of dialogue about say, "if my best friend were to have a wedding and get married, would you go?" and his answer is always "I don't know." It's about creating the comfort of dialogue. In my sequence, Alliance and Conflict, I feel like I lost my religion, but not in a negative way. I lost mine and gained three more. I feel like we all really believe the same thing. We went on trips to Synagogue and Mosques, and it really is true that it isn't real until you're there. It's different when you walk in and everyone welcomes you with open arms and embraced us. That's not something you can learn from a book.

7. How would you define diversity? What do you think of when you hear that

word? I think this is a group of people who come from different backgrounds. People of different identities. Actually, you could have a group of all white males and they could still be diverse in their backgrounds.

8. Thinking about your definition, what effect does diversity have on students in a living community?

It's everything. Last year was an election year. This was hard to be a first year RA in. I really saw, despite of all of this, how diversities and cultures can coexist. We held a lot of programs to have residents talk about heir feelings and opinions in safe ways. We had a lot of RAs get in heated discussions with residents because their ignorance was showing. It is the difference between calling out and calling in. We want them to be inclusive, but we don't want to call out to do so. We don't want to put them on the spot the same way that they are putting others on the spot. GV can be a culture shock too. Teaching them about how to ask people about their life in a way to not be offensive towards others.

9. What do you think are some potential ways to enhance the diversity at Grand Valley and within the Honors program? Should GV strive to get more diversity?

Probably. But should we strive to have these dialogues and be more transparent about our white privilege? Absolutely. We lie to the public, if you drive down Lake Michigan and see the Laker Effect billboards its all people of color basically. And I think that is awesome for us to showcase them, because we do have them, but that is not an accurate representation of GV. By fooling people by saying we are going to put all of our people of color on one page and you think there are thousands more of them... I think that we need to be transparent that yes, we are a PWI, we want more people of color on campus. Here are our resources, here is how we educate our freshmen. Jamie Washington during Transitions did an awesome job because it was mindblowing to see them take a stand. We are having tough conversations academically, but not when it comes to mixing classes like Alliance and Conflict and Middle East Headlines talk about what they learn. Bringing teams together. We need to reach out more to people of color at GV.

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

What is the Honors College doing wrong about housing? Why are we still promoting Niemeyer as the place to live for freshmen?

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

Yes, cell phone text.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Living center director
- Other RAs

Possible next-steps:

- Reach out to _____(function)
- Dig in deeper to her question about what Honors is doing wrong with housing
- It would be interesting to do an immersion in HHLC and see how students interact.

Interview 12

Stakeholder Group/Location: Resident Assistants (Honors and non-Honors)

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

Gender: male

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

Honors RA: The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain insight on why he/she is in the Honors College (if applicable) and how they feel the Honors experience could be improved.

Non-Honors RA: The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain insight as to how they perceive Honors, their experiences with diversity and observations, as well, of residents.

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

This reflects on the team's problem statement because it shows how Honors is an experience, and by looking through the lens of housing we are getting a more wholistic view.

Summary of Research:

It was interesting to see how a non-Honors RA views Honors, how the students in both Honors and non-Honors interact, and how he sees diversity coming into play here. He overall spoke a lot of how he sees Honors as separate from the rest of the university because of its' eliteness and profound nature. He spoke of how this is limiting in some ways because students aren't necessarily growing socially, as they are academically. He also talked about how diversity isn't just a set definition, like we normally think of it. It is very broad and can encompass many different parts we normally don't think of.

Important insights:

- Again, the idea that diversity is broad and not just the things we can see or the typical attributes we hold towards diversity. "Wide variety of people who are also connected."
- Honors as distinctly separate and elite.
- Bringing light and awareness to diversity will be more effective than recruiting for demographics.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. In your opinion, what is the most distinctive feature of GVSU's Honors Program?

n/a because not Honors

2. How often do you see students of different backgrounds living/hanging out with in common areas?

All of the time. Often. On the third floor where Honors students live, I mostly see mixing of both Honors and non-Honors students. But, I have mostly non-Honors students and there are definitely different backgrounds and identities, but not so much with Honors on my floor at least.

3. What do you do to encourage community connectedness in the living center? How effective do you think these strategies are? What could make them more

effective?

I would say that my main goal as an RA is to build community and connectedness. Whether that's connecting with their neighbor or connecting themselves to campus and resources and organizations. I feel that my residents are all very connected to each other and have built community. A way I can build on that is to do more things with them personally, bring them with me to events and things.

4. How do you perceive the Honors program and the students who are a part of it?

I perceive the Honors program as, I want to say, elite. Being very profound and well-known. I think that people in the Honors College really value school and their academics and you can see that with them being in their rooms a ton and focused on their schoolwork. I don't know if it's competitive, but it is a great thing to be a part of. I think that Honors students have a sense of community with themselves that sets them apart from regular academic students as they are exploring and diving into new cultures, ideas, and ways of thinking due to the sequences that they are offered, that other students are not offered. This is a way to distinctively separate them. I think it can be negative in some points. Not negative in the way that it is a bad thing, but in a way that they aren't getting the experiences and engaging with more social community. They are definitely building community with academics, but I think it can be so focused that they need to do well, that they aren't being exposed to being social or trying new things. Can be limiting.

5. What is a distinctive memory that you have where you witnessed the growth of a student(s) as a result of his/her/their/collaboration?

The first thing that came to mind was actually a program that a co-RA put together, which was actually a diversity potluck. One of the residents who is in the Honors College kind of put it together himself. And he planned and coordinated it. He engaged his whole floor, created the community for himself. He took on the RA role, I guess I would say. He brought out so many people.

6. Tell me about a time when you had the opportunity to work with someone at GVSU that you feel comes from a background that is different than yourself.

Every single day. Being here at GV for 3 years I've learned so much about myself and others: how much we are similar, how much we are different, and my privileges. My graduate student has a background very different from myself. He came from a single family, is Hispanic, and so I feel like he didn't have a lot of the same childhood and experiences that I had. But then we also share many of similar qualities, as we are both interested in higher education, we both are apart of the LGBT community. So working with him, we have such a different background, but

when we started talking we focused more on the similarities and they were more distinct.

7. How would you define diversity? What do you think of when you hear that word? I think of a wide variety of people who are also connected. Being surrounded by individuals who share different race, religion, sexual orientation, languages, up brings, ideas. It can be so broad.

8. Thinking about your definition, what effect does diversity have on students in a living community?

Students are bound by human nature, claim to people that are similar to them, just because of safety and the effect of feeling their needs met. In traditional style we have to walk to the bathroom or to get out of your room to do most things. This is nice because you are interacting with people who could be different from you, it could be someone with a different gender who lives right next to you, or from out of state.

9. What do you think are some potential ways to enhance the diversity at Grand Valley and within the Honors program? To bring light and knowledge that is isn't as diverse as we think it is, or that it isn't to its full potential of being diverse. I don't know if there is ever a ceiling or anything. I think people think that GV is so diverse, but when you look at statistics there are so many things that show us it isn't as diverse as we think. Knowing that is isn't diverse and making an effort to enhance it by encouraging the growth you can get out of diversity, encouraging students to see the benefits of seeing, understanding, and talking to people who are not like you. Bringing light and awareness is how I would handle it. By bringing awareness that we aren't at the level of diversity that we want will encourage it to change. You can't just have it change by growing and growing, you have to know what you want to do and how it can change or what we need to change.

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

Why I am not a part of the Honors College, or why I didn't join? I don't know if you can join if you're not a freshman.

And Do you think I am diverse? Would you consider yourself diverse?

~I asked him these questions~

Why I am not a part of the Honors College, or why I didn't join?

Stereotypes. I feel like I never fit the stereotype of being at the top of my class or the smartest, so I didn't think I could become someone who was a part of Honors as I wasn't so academically focused in high school.

Would you consider yourself diverse?

I would consider myself diverse, in multiple ways, even though I am a white male. I would consider myself gaining knowledge on diversity.

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

Yes, cell phone text.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Living center director
- professors, I don't have one in mind, but both Honors and non-Honors
- n/a

Possible next-steps:

- Add possible questions he suggested to the dialogue scripts.
- I think it would be cool to do an immersion and observe in HHLC dorms at a normal time to see how students interact.
- Compare insights from the Honors RA and non-Honors to see if their observations are the same or if they have different perspectives.

Interview 13

Honors Student at Central Michigan University
Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

This will allow our team to get an inside look at what it is like to be part of a different college's Honors program and compare it to the program that we have set in place here at Grand Valley. From this, we can look to see if they do something better than us, which can give us some potential insights into how we may better Grand Valley's Honors program.

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

We will use this interview to specifically look at the diversity of Central's Honors program, and from these results we can gain some insights about our problem statement.

Summary of Research:

This interview showed me that this particular student really enjoys being part of CMU's Honors program and never once questioned her decision of being part of Honors. The diversity aspect of the interview proved to be valuable, as this student said that she wished the incoming students in CMU's Honors program are close-minded individuals who do not seem to want to dream big or branch out and take risks. This relates to GV because a number of people seem to feel similar about the current state of our Honors College in the sense that there is a lack of people who wish to be different than the status quo, both in ethnicity and in major. One idea I saw that was interesting to me was to put a bulletin board up where students can put a sticker under the category that they feel best represents them. CMU did this and got a majority "white, catholic, and female".

Important insights:

- CMU's Honors Program seems to be constructed similar to ours, with an overarching theme of religious, white, female students being the common student.
- This student has not had many opportunities to work with people who were much different from herself throughout her time at CMU, much like a number of the students at GV, largely because of the demographics.
- CMU has 150 students per year in the Honors that receive full scholarships.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. Please name three things that supported your decision to join your Honors program?

There were a variety of things that supported my decision to join the Honors program, but I would narrow it down to scholarship funding, housing, and extra opportunities offered.

The Honors Program at Central Michigan has two types, Track 1 and Track 2. Students entering as a freshman on scholarship are known as Track 1, while students

who have been at CMU for over a year and qualify may apply to be a part of Track 2. These students do not receive scholarship money, but are allowed to participate in Honors classes and Honors programs events. I figured that it would be beneficial for you to understand that I am Track 1. In addition, within Track 1 there are two subcategories-gold and full Centralis. Gold receives 36 credit hours of tuition a year for four years and is given to 130 students. Full Centralis is 36 credit hours of tuition a year plus a stipend for room and board for four years, and a book stipend for four years.

Ok, sorry, now that I explained that I'll get back to the question ☺. Scholarship funding was the main reason I decided to be in the Honors Program and CMU. My tuition would be completely paid for, and I would not have to worry about loans in that area. In addition, I can use "left-over" credits I did not use during my school year to be applied for study abroad. If I have 12 credit hours left over and a credit hour is \$417, I can make some serious cash to travel. In addition, all Honors students are housed with other Honors students. It creates a very close-knit community surrounded by individuals taking the same classes as you and going through the same process. Finally, I was offered several extra opportunities within Honors. I am offered Honors classes, which are significantly reduced sizes. Each class has around 14 students in it so you can foster relationships with professors. In addition, I am offered a more extensive class list. The Honors program puts on special topic courses throughout fall, spring, and summer semester. I was able to take a class on Beaver Island, at CMU's biological station, for free because of the Honors program. The Honors program also puts on special events for students as a way to strengthen bonds within the community.

2. What has happened during your Honors College experience that has led you to question your decision to be a part of the Honors College?

I have never once questioned my decision to be a part of the Honors program at Central Michigan University.

3. If you had the opportunity to go back and remake your decision about joining Honors, would you and why?

I would not go back and remake my decision about joining Honors. This program has provided me with a plethora of opportunities that I would not have received had I not been in Honors. I could not imagine my college career without being in Honors.

4. What do you think is distinctive about your Honors program?

My Honors program is very selective and very well put together. We are given numerous resources to help us achieve. We have our own academic advisor, as well as research advisors. In addition, they pay for a lot. In addition, I think the scholarships are distinctive. We have 150 students per year receiving full tuition

scholarships.

5. If you could change one thing about your Honors Program, what would you change?

I would change the type of people in the Honors program. Over the years, I have had the chance to get to know and build relationships with several different people in several different years of school. My class was filled with individuals who were not afraid to take risks or dream big. We have individuals who want to be astronauts, senators, philosophy professors, and everything far and in between. While the classes that are coming in are very close-minded individuals who are interested in safe, steady jobs. While there is nothing wrong with wanting that, I find individuals who aren't afraid to dream big better to be around.

6. Would you consider yourself as a part of a community in the Honors program? Why or why not?

I would consider myself as a part of a community in Honors. Living with all Honors students for two years, and constantly being surrounded by Honors students in classes, you develop a community. CMU Honors has inside jokes and sayings that other individuals do not understand. In addition, we have an amazing support team of several individuals who are professors, advisors, and the head of the Honors program. They will schedule coffee meetings with you and one on ones throughout the year to check in on how you are doing and get to know you better.

7. How would you define diversity? What do you think of when you hear that word?

To me, diversity is defined as a variety of different things. However, looking at it with individuals, I would define diversity as individuals coming from different backgrounds, whether that be a religion, ethnicity, social, or income wise.

8. Thinking about your definition of diversity, how do you think this translates over to your Honors College experience?

Looking at the backgrounds of individuals in the Honors program, I think it varies. We once had a bulletin board where individuals would put a sticker under what they thought represented them. There were different religions, genders, and ethnicities. At the end of the week, a majority of the stickers were under catholic, female, and white. At the forefront of appearance there is a lack of diversity. I can count on one hand, the number of Asian/African American individuals in my class in the Honors Program. However, looking at how individuals grew up in concerns with money, I believe that there is a variety there. We have a wide variety, ranging from individuals who were homeless for a year of their life, to individuals who come from a very wealthy family. So there is an economic diversity, however not at ethnic diversity.

9. Tell me about a time when you had the opportunity to work with someone that you feel comes from a background that is different than yourself.

I had to do a group project freshman year, and I worked with, my now roommate Chelsea. Chelsea and I are both white females, however growing up she was a lot poorer than me. My family had just enough and some for some extra things, but Chelsea lived in the boondocks scraping money together. Honestly, I haven't worked with individuals who come from a different background than me that often.

What should I ask you that I didn't ask you?

I think you should ask to describe the individual's Honors program set up/how they got into their Honors program-application, grades, essays etc.

Will the person agree to be contacted again?

Cell phone

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- CMU Honors Student
- CMU Honors Student

Interview 14

Stakeholder Group/Location: Parents
Estimated Age: ___ 20-30 ___ 30-40 ___ 40-50 <u>x</u> 50+
Gender: Woman
Primary Goal of this Opportunity: The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain insight on why he/she is in the Honors College and how they feel the Honors experience could be improved.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? This gives us an outside perspective of students that are currently in the program and the diversity, or lack thereof, that they bring to college/have awareness or understanding of.

Summary of Research:

This parent has one child at Grand Valley, and has another child who is a senior in high school and is currently going through the college admissions process. She works with many people from the Grand Rapids area, and knows school counselors who have all told her about Grand Valley. She left the college admissions process up to her first child for the most part, but is trying to have more of a role in her next child's process. What she appreciates about Grand Valley is the ability to have one-on-one conversations with admissions staff, financial aid staff, professors, and advisors. She knows about the Honors College at Grand Valley only because her first child applied to it, but says she wouldn't have otherwise because she was not aware they existed before that. Again, her definition of diversity is closely related to definitions of our past research, that diversity is the result of people with different mindsets looking at the same thing.

Important insights:

- The college admissions process is different from people who are not neuro-typical.
- The ability for parents to speak with someone from the university relieves some of their stress.
- Parents may not know about Honors Colleges because they did not know about them when they attended a university.
- Another person believes that diversity is defined by different ways of thinking.
- Although diversity may be present in terms of numbers if nothing is done to by people make good the diversity there is no effect.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. How would you describe the college admissions process as a parent? What did you see your child(ren) experience as they were choosing a place to attend school?

I really felt like it was simplified because of the CommonApp. But on the other hand it was kind of mysterious because everything is electronic. Going back to my own experience, where I had to submit an application that was specific per school. I think because of that it made it more thoughtful, versus everything going electronically out there. It was almost like you had to hurry up and come with 3 colleges to electronically send your application to. Did you even think about going there? Did you visit? Another thing, if you made one mistake it really could cost you. While it was simple, it was anti-climatic. I feel almost removed from the process as a parent. I'm taking you for instance, you were a senior, you had some guidance from the school. It's like I had one part in the process, besides taking you for visits. You were trying to be responsible and do it all. I was kind of following directions.

For my other child specifically, she has no idea and her way to deal with it is to avoid it yet remain super anxious knowing the deadline is looming. Because of the Asperger's and the anxiety with procrastination. With me going through this with you and that I learned from you, I know a little bit more about the steps. Portage Central for instance published a guide, I didn't get that from Northern. They gave us a step by step guide. Plus I have my own now, that board. That board makes her crazy, but I think you would have appreciated it. You just had it in your mind, the outline. But I didn't have it, so it was hit or miss. I think she feels stressed, and has no idea what she wants to do.

2. Prior to your child(ren) attending Grand Valley, to what extent had you heard of the University?

I had always heard it was an excellent school. From my clients, my next door neighbor is a counselor at Portage Central and has been to all the colleges. I was surprised that when you went to visit there, only because you were dead set at getting out of Michigan and going to Chicago. I think it was a blessing you went there though. When I went to orientation with you, all the professors were speaking; I thought it was made in heaven for you. It was exactly your style of learning, especially at the Honors College. I almost started crying, I don't know if you remember that. I was so excited about the classes I wished that I could go there. With my own experience, like you, I applied to a big university, the University of Illinois-Urbana and to a small private college. Grand Valley isn't really small but the experience is like a small college like what I had at George Williams. I fell in love with George Williams and wound up going there. I'm glad that I did, I don't think I would have made it at the big university. Only some students can adapt easier and make their own family on campus, but you need to do that. The fact that you could call on the phone and talk to a real person, I loved that. Look what happened at UIC, you couldn't talk to anyone unless you drove all the way down there and stood in line to

speaking with somebody. It was not a good experience. Everything I heard came to be true, it's an excellent school.

3. What concerns, if any, did you have regarding your child(ren) attending GVSU?

I didn't have any parental concerns; I had concerns about you being happy there. When I first visited Allendale, it was a dream come true for a parent. But geez, is a kid who wanted to go and live in Chicago and experience that kind of life going to be happy being where there is a cornfield near-by? I think there was a difference between what you need and what you wanted. Grand Valley was what you needed and became what you wanted. The fact that Grand Rapids is close by helped, and the fact that you made good friends there. And the fact that you had your own room, you had some privacy. I was really worried about that with you especially. I don't think you would have done well in a small little room where you had to hear them breathing. My main concern had nothing to do with a parents concern, because I was happy you were there versus Chicago.

4. What role did you have in your child(ren)'s decision to attend Grand Valley?

All along I wanted this whole experience to be yours. I was silent in the background just waiting to be helpful. I think my role was one of support and encouragement. In our situation, I was the one trying to shine a light at the end of the tunnel because at the beginning this was not what you wanted. Because of what happened with Chicago, I felt confident that this was where you belonged, but I was waiting until you felt the same thing.

5. Were you aware, prior to your child(ren) attending the university, that Grand Valley has an Honors College? (If yes) Did you make a push for your child(ren) to be a part of the Honors program and why/why not? (If no) Now knowing that, do you think you would make a push for your child(ren) to be a part of Honors and why/why not?

I knew that because you applied to Honors and were accepted. I didn't know what that meant because we didn't have that when I went to school. Maybe at a larger school that was always the case. I know there was more status attached to certain schools, sororities, and fraternities. I didn't know there was an Honors College within a college.

I never made a push, especially with someone like you; I don't think that would have ever been helpful. I will say that the only time I made a push with you was when you were so unhappy in middle school, to take advanced English. I knew you needed the challenge, and I was happy I did that. You found out some things about yourself, like how capable you are, and you were able to focus on that rather than relationships with other girls and what was

happening at that time, just being a teenager. I think that gave you enough pride in yourself to keep carrying on. You may have continued to underestimate yourself staying in regular classes.

6. What differences have you noticed in your child(ren) since they've started attending Grand Valley?

What I love the most is how excited you are about your classes and what you're learning. I also like that I get to witness the increase in your level of maturity. I like that they're not relying on parents to give you direction. You pick up where parents leave off. You get quality time with your advisors and they care about you and the decisions you make. When you called me and let me know about this and that and were so excited. Its not like you were someone taking up 10 minutes, getting wrote answers, I love the one on one care that you get. I think you've flourished under that. You have confidence. You're also more open to a lot of different ideas. You've always been careful in your responses to other people. But I really feel like you are actively listening and considering what people say to you. I can see it clicking and working in your eyes.

7. Were you aware, prior to your child(ren) attending the university, that the Honors program has a living learning community at Niemeyer? To what extent did you try persuade your child(ren) to live there? Why?

I knew about it, and you lived there freshmen year. I was confident when you told me you weren't going to be living there sophomore year. I was super glad you were there freshmen year.

8. If you had to guess, what would you say the demographics at Grand Valley are regarding gender and race?

I would guess, female/male is probably pretty standard. I would say it's pretty even. As far as race, I know there are people of color there and international students, so I would guess POCs and international students comprise 35% to the balance.

9. How would you define diversity? What do you think of when you hear that word?

I think diversity is multicultural; diversity is also different ways of thinking. Its not one thought process, or encouraged way to think about the world. Diversity is looking at the world with eyes wide open, and when anybody of people is looking at the world that way, they will notice different things than the person next to them. I think the world has always been diverse, but it was not always okay to have diverse thinking. Therefore, education and everyone funneled people and their thoughts into this acceptable channel that met somebody's idea of what people should be. I think when communication opened up, wars happened and people traveled more. You can experience diversity by going to a farming community and see what happens there. You can experience diversity by going to Chicago. I lived and went to school where I did, but your

father lived and went to school three miles away from me. His world was completely different from mine. We were both living in Chicago, both living at the same time, completely different. And why didn't I know that? Why wouldn't I be able to experience that at the time when we were both around the same age? I was in my own little bubble. I know a lot of people think diversity is race, and I know that's part of it. But diversity is like that one class you're taking, Sally over here has these strengths, Joe over there has those strengths and everyone has a different skillset. I have to recognize that each of these people bring a wealth of insight and train of thought to a certain problem, and it's okay that it doesn't match mine. Its messy, and I can see why people sometimes don't like it. Its uncomfortable to be challenged like that sometimes, but the end result is something beautiful.

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

I think for someone like you who is biracial, nothing against Chicago, I don't know if you would have experienced more diversity in Chicago. I think Grand Valley is purposeful in creating that type of environment because they are true educators. They are giving you tools to rip open the wall and practice some freedom. Even though a city, Chicago, is full of different people, which in itself does not create diversity and the celebration of diversity. You know there are pockets of people, I grew up in pockets of people and each one is like a different country. There are like invisible borders. I don't see the defined borders that exist in Chicago here; though I know they're here. I think the acceptance of diversity needs to be created first.

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

Yes, they can be contacted by text.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- We can research the benefits of diversity in areas that are labeled as “hubs of diversity” and what has been done to celebrate this diversity.
- Research what makes a university “accessible” to parents in terms of ability to get information
- We can look into how common it is for parents to feel disconnected from the admissions process

Possible next-steps:

- Neuro-atypical people can be added to list of what makes a group diverse
- Research resources that people like this have/don’t have at Grand Valley
- University of Illinois-Chicago, admissions

Interview 15

Stakeholder Group/Location:

Parent

Estimated Age: 40-50

Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain insight on her opinion of GVSU, why she sent her kids here, and how she feels the Honors experience is and how it could be improved.

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

This gives us an outside perspective from those who are not currently at GVSU, yet still connected to it. Those outside GVSU and Honors may have ideas on how to improve it, as well as provide insight on what diversity is and how we should go about fixing it.

Summary of Research:

This parent has two children enrolled at GVSU. These two children are both a part of the Honors College, however, only one lived in it. She thinks the Niemeyer is separate from the rest of campus and not the best place to live if you want to feel connected to the rest of the freshman community. She thought GV was very friendly and a welcoming place to all people, despite Allendale mainly consisting of white people. She recommends the Honors College because she thinks it has been helpful to her children, however, she has heard it can be too much work and not always rewarding. She identifies diversity as being people from different backgrounds, cultures, religions, genders, and colors, yet is not sure how to fix the problem, aside from recruiting more diverse people.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

- 1. How would you describe the college admissions process as a parent? What did you see your child(ren) experience as they were choosing a place to attend school?**

The college admissions process was made easy for me as a parent since both my kids handle the applications by themselves. We only had to drive around the U.S. and the State of Michigan to visit all the campuses the kids wanted to see, it's was a three year process.

The waiting period for the acceptance letters, was hard, but exciting. The decision was made, based on the size of the campus, the major's available, and academic scholarships. GV seemed friendly and welcoming, and was close enough that we could get to our kids, but far enough that we didn't want to come visit every weekend.

- 2. Prior to your child(ren) attending Grand Valley, to what extent had you heard of the university?**

We had three of our friends who had attended the University and always highly recommended it, we considered it as an option for the twins to consider. We also saw other students from the kids High Schools going, so thought we would check it out while exploring colleges around Grand Rapids.

- 3. What concerns, if any, did you have regarding your child(ren) attending GVSU?**

Absolutely none, besides the usual freshman beginning. They are smart and mature, so we expected them to do well, which they have. We considered roommate problems may occur, but nothing scared us from sending them or wanting to bring them home. I personally loved how Grand Valley is its own campus not exactly connected to any city, so the kids are surrounded by their own peers.

4. What role did you have in your child(ren)'s decision to attend Grand Valley?

We let both our children make their decisions, it was important for them to be responsible for their own future. Money was not an issue so we wanted them to go where they would be most happy. We did hope they would stay together, yet we were okay if they didn't.

5. Were you aware, prior to your child(ren) attending the university, that Grand Valley has an Honors College? (If yes) Did you make a push for your child(ren) to be a part of the Honors Program and why/why not? (If no) Now knowing that, do you think you would make a push for your child(ren) to be a part of Honors and why/why not?

Yes we were aware, we again left it up to them to be part of the program, we wanted them to feel comfortable with the decisions they made. Now we might encourage them, but at the end of the day we want for our kids what they want so if they had not wanted to join we would not have been mad.

6. What differences have you noticed in your child(ren) since they've started attending Grand Valley?

Both of them left the house at the end of high school teenagers and returned after the first semester at GVSU as young adults. Even more responsible and respectful of others. This is in part attributed to them being challenged by the Honors College, but also because they have gone out and joined clubs and Greek life building on their interpersonal skills and leadership.

7. Were you aware, prior to your child(ren) attending the university, that the Honors program has a living learning community at Niemeyer? To what extent did you try persuade your child(ren) to live there? Why?

Yes we were aware about Niemeyer learning community, our son Pierce lived there his freshman year and loved it. His twin sister decided to reside in freshman land and loved it also. I think it depends on the student, but as a freshman my daughter felt she met more freshman in freshman land. My son made some friends in Niemeyer, but the environment was not as conducive to community as in freshman land. We thought it was nice, but only wanted him to live in Niemeyer because he had found good roommates, we didn't like that he was far from the center of campus and freshman land.

8. If you had to guess, what would you say the demographics at Grand Valley are regarding gender and race?

60% female, 40% male
80% Caucasian
20% others

9. How would you define diversity? What do you think of when you hear that word?

Diversity is defined by a group of people made of different backgrounds, culture, colors, genders and religions.

10. What do you think are some ways to enhance the levels of diversity in Grand Valley, and in the Honors College in specific?

I am not sure since I don't have all the info necessary to answer, aside from recruit more diverse people, however I have been told by some parents that they would not recommend the Honors program to their child since the extra work load would be too demanding. This is not my opinion, but some of the majors require a grade point average to be accepted in a specific program and some parents want the student to focus only on said program.

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

I'm can't think of anything

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

Yes

Possible next-steps:

- Talk to parents from areas with large minority populations
- Contact those in charge of the admission process
- Talk with those who are only at the downtown campus about their connectedness to GVSU

Interview 16

Stakeholder Group/Location: Parents

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

Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

The primary goal of this opportunity is to understand, from a parent's perspective, the process of applying to and joining the Honors College and how this parent felt about their student joining the HC.

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

This work gives us an understanding of the parental perspective of Honors College students in regards to diversity and the program itself. How large of a role this parent had in his/her child joining the Honors program and whether or not they encouraged their student to join.

Summary of Research:

This woman is the mother of two Grand Valley students. Her oldest, now an alumni, was a part of the Honors College for the four years he attended GVSU. Her youngest is currently a junior at GV and is enrolled in the Honors College. Overall, she thinks that the Honors College is a fantastic opportunity for students who are looking for a higher level of learning. While she noticed more diversity at Grand Valley than that of her hometown, Traverse City, she feels there is still a lack of diversity in comparison to other schools her children were accepted at, such as Michigan State and University of Michigan.

Important insights:

- As a parent, she found Grand Valley to statistically be a safer option in regards to on campus violence than other schools, specifically Michigan State.
- She heard about Grand Valley when she was applying to colleges in high school.
- She heard about the Honors College as her children were researching which colleges they wanted to apply to.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

- 1. How would you describe the college admissions process as a parent? What did you see your child(ren) experience as they were choosing a place to attend school?** "It's interesting because I made you kids do it. I would describe the actual admissions process as kind of a fine process. It's a little more complicated than it has to be, but what I found much more challenging was that the process to have the college decide to give you financial support was much more difficult. Grand Valley was one of the better ones, but the other colleges you applied to were not as great. Look at the hoops you jumped through at Michigan State to get nothing. Of course, Grand Valley probably seems gentler because they gave you money. Otherwise, you just filled out the application and had to write a few essays. And send in your transcript. Which was easy. I saw my children experience stress. I would say that it was a stressful experience for both of my children, specifically you. I would say that it was stressful for your brother to go around and see all of the options. Of course, he

always knew what he wanted to do. But you did not. It seems like it shouldn't be a stressful process because it's such an exciting time of your life. Grand Valley seems like a less stressful process."

- 2. Prior to your child(ren) attending Grand Valley, to what extent had you heard of the university?** "Oh, I had heard about it since I was in high school looking at colleges. I knew about it and I knew that they had some unique programs there. I think that the physical therapy program was unique, they had a pre-cursor to the program, which was one of their original programs at the college. As a high school student, I was aware of that because I found it very interesting. When you were in grade school, when I was an adult, I kept running into other adults who had gone there and sang its praises. It made me wish I would've gone there."
- 3. What concerns, if any, did you have regarding your child(ren) attending GVSU?** "I don't know if I had concerns specific to Grand Valley. I had concerns about any college, because you were moving away and did I prepare you to live life on your own? To do the right thing and take care of yourself? I think that probably any parent questions this when they send their child off to school. As far as specific to Grand Valley, I think I had a little less of the safety concerns in regards to violence on campus or violent crime. I was very concerned about Michigan State with respect to that and it was something I really looked in to and studied. Grand Valley had a better reputation in regards to student safety than the other colleges you looked at."
- 4. What role did you have in your child(ren)'s decision to attend Grand Valley?** "I think that my role was one of encouragement, you know? I tried to encourage my children, whatever school they chose, by being helpful. I tried to be morally helpful, emotional helpful, and also my role was the number cruncher. This is how much it is going to cost and this is how you can compare it to other schools."
- 5. Were you aware, prior to your child(ren) attending the university, that Grand Valley has an Honors College? (If yes) Did you make a push for your child(ren) to be a part of the Honors program and why/why not? (If no) Now knowing that, do you think you would make a push for your child(ren) to be a part of Honors and why/why not?** "Was I aware of that? I'm thinking hard if I was aware of that. I would say yes, to the prior to you attending it, but I found out about it as a discussion with you kids. Before you applied, while we were researching schools, we found out about it. I'm going to say yes, that I pushed for you and your brother to be a part of the Honors program. I did it because you were both smart and it offers you different and broader opportunities than the regular program. For your brother, that meant better housing. But I think that you did more with the Honors College than your brother did, and for that, I'm grateful. Why not do more?"
- 6. What differences have you noticed in your child(ren) since they've started attending Grand Valley?** "Well, they have learned to take care of themselves and I

don't mean the everyday stuff, but they've learned what to do in case of an emergency. Like how to find a doctor when they are sick. They've matured a lot and become more independent. Of course, they're smart. Their ability to problem solve. I've also noticed that both of you seem to make good choices with your friends. And you've both always made good choices with your friend, but for you it seems as if it's working out better in college than in high school."

- 7. Were you aware, prior to your child(ren) attending the university, that the Honors program has a living learning community at Niemeyer? To what extent did you try persuade your child(ren) to live there? Why?** "Yes. That's where my son lived. I think that he made the choice to live there on his own, or at least he was leaning that way on his own. When I realized how nice it was there and that he would be grouped with like-minded people, I encouraged him to live there. It was different for both of you. I think he latched on to that and I encouraged him, thinking it would be a good fit. You, on the other hand, were pretty adamant that that was not the experience that you wanted. You wanted to be more immersed in the college experience, so it was decided that it was a better fit for you. But we did talk about it, quite a bit, but the decision was ultimately yours as you had to live there. For Christopher it was perfect, but it's a personality thing and you guys have different personalities. At least socially."
- 8. If you had to guess, what would you say the demographics at Grand Valley are regarding gender and race?** "As I vaguely recall, gender-wise, it seems as if there was a slightly larger number of females than male. I don't have any concept of transgender numbers, but 55-65% female and 35-45% male. I don't remember studying the numbers of race, I studied a lot of things, but I don't remember studying the numbers of Native Americans or Asians. I do remember walking around campus and observing the diversity, and I remember that it is much more diverse than Traverse City, the town that we are from. But, it was mostly Caucasians. I want it to be diverse. I look at any diversity as a positive, as a necessity."
- 9. How would you define diversity? What do you think of when you hear that word?** "In this conversation, I think of race, I guess. People's racial or ethnic backgrounds. That could spill over into religious backgrounds. I think of Native Americans, African Americans, Asians and white people. And from that, I think of people from different religions; Amish, Islamic, Buddhist, Hinduists. I would define it as the differences in peoples, with the goal being that those people can all mingle and live together, not have conflict, but maintain their uniqueness."
- 10. What do you think are some ways to enhance the levels of diversity in Grand Valley, and in the Honors College in specific?** "You know, I'm guessing that's a marketing thing. It's a Google analytics thing, how do you reach those students? I'm thinking hard, I think that's what it boils down to. If you reach the right people, it's a great college and they will come, but you have to be intentional about it."

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

“I don’t think so, but I love that you’re exploring this and I hope that you come up with a solution to increase the diversity.”

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

Yes, she has agreed to further contact by phone call or through email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Suggested reaching out to an Honors College alumni.

Possible next-steps:

- Review the other interview with a parent and see how the data is similar and how it is different.
- As the collaborators in the second debrief pointed out, there is disengagement with our problem statements and innovations. A possible next-step is to revise the problem statement.

Interview 17

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors Student, Central Michigan University

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

Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

The primary goal of this interview was to gain insight as to what Honors is like at other Universities, like Central Michigan University. Through this interview, we hope to gain knowledge about what an Honors student from another school thinks of our innovations and

if they have had any experiences like the ones we are proposing.

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

This relates to our overall goal because we are able to compare other Honors programs to our own to see what makes theirs distinctive. This reflects our team problem statement because we are focusing on enhancing diversity in Honors and shining a light on it, so we are able to gain insights to what other Honors programs have done/what an Honors student in general thinks of our ideas.

Summary of Research:

This interview was with a junior in Central Michigan's Honors program, and she lived in Honors housing twice. She too thinks that diversity is an important issue to focus on at GV, as well as at her own university. She really thinks that our focus on diversity is important and in particular really likes our service learning focus by is also worried that it doesn't directly relate to our focus on diversity. CMU LAS does a trip to Detroit, which is an area we had discussed doing out third innovation in. I also thought it was interesting that Honors housing is more popular there and that it helps to bond their community.

Important insights:

- CMU Honors also has similar demographics in their Honors program, which was interesting because their school is more diverse than GVSU.
- Honors housing is an important part of building community.
- CMU Honors students are more likely (it seems) to live on campus in Honors housing more than one year, which isn't really that common at GVSU.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. Looking at our top five innovations, which do you feel would have been the most helpful to you and why?

I love the service learning ideas in 1 and 5, but I think the diversity component is very important. You need to make sure you tie that in. CMU Honors program also struggles with lack of diversity. Its constituents are primarily white females. They have been making moves to attract more diverse populations, so we will see if that pays off with the next incoming class.

2. Which of our five innovations stands out the most to you to make the Honor's College at Grand Valley most distinctive?

Having first year Honors students live together seems very important to me. I valued that a lot as a freshman, and it definitely set the tone for the rest of my three years on campus. I think we all developed a strong sense of community through it, so much so that many of us chose to live in the Honors housing again our second year.

3. What would you like a service learning experience to encompass? (Where should we go on these trips, and what should we do there?)

I know LAS at CMU takes a service learning trip to Detroit, so that is an idea! But really there is poverty and need everywhere. Rural poverty is such an issue that so many people do not think to look at, so maybe somewhere that could encompass helping rural poverty. I myself need to work on this as well, as I tend to focus on wanting to help urban underserved areas.

“What's LAS?”

Oh yeah, sorry! Leadership Advancement Scholarship is what it stands for. This is a cohort program through CMU's Leadership Institute.

4. Looking at our top five innovations, are there any that you do not feel relate to our problem statement?

I do not think innovation two relates to the problem statement, but I still think it is very important.

5. Looking at all five of our innovations, give us a “yes, and...” statement for one of them and explain why you feel that way.

Yes, and focus on recruiting people that may not have otherwise been given an “Honors opportunity”. For example, the Centralis competition is now letting people who do not have a 27 ACT or 3.7 GPA apply if they can argue that they had significant life events that prevented them from achieving these standards and can demonstrate that they would be competent in the program.

“Could you explain to me what the Centralis competition is?”

Yes, so it is a scholarship competition for Honors that I competed in. Its's one of the main reasons that I joined CMU Honors and even went to CMU in general, because I got such a big scholarship.

6. What was your housing like freshman year? What did you know about the people living next to you? Was there a sense of community? What do you think would have made your living situation better/more enjoyable?

I did live in the Honors hall, so I was surrounded my Honors students. The people

on my floor became my best friends and study buddies. I really could not ask for a better first year experience, so nothing really would have made it more enjoyable!

7. Think back to the last time you had a difficult conversation. How did it go? Why do you think it went this way?

I had a difficult conversation with my sorority little, actually. I think it was hard due to lack of communication on both of our ends (it would have prevented the problem in the first place).

“So you think communication plays an important role in having these difficult conversations?”

Yes, definitely! I think that communication is the key to facilitating successful dialogue because both parties are able to fully explain what they mean.

8. Have you ever experienced service learning? If so, what was the experience like? (If not, what do you imagine this experience entails?)

Yes, I actually took a service learning class on Beaver Island through the CMU Honors program! It did not incorporate much actual service, but instead focused on learning about the active citizenship continuum and the issues of the island community. I wished it had had a real service component, however.

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 actually.

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

Yes, of course!
Contact via email or phone.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- LAS at CMU student, Bobby Hahn
- Someone who works in the Leadership Institute at CMU
- A Leadership office at GVSU

Possible next-steps:

- Research and look into the Detroit CMU LAS trip that goes to Detroit that this student mentioned to me.
- Revise the problem statement.
- Look further into innovation two that was questioned if it connected to the problem statement.

Interview 18

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors Student/Campus View Apartments

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

Gender: Male

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

The primary goal of this opportunity was to expose a current Grand Valley Honors student to our team's top five innovations and get feedback on those innovations. This is in response to the goal of narrowing down these top five innovations into our team's top two innovations.

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

This work relates to our problem statement in that we are applying our newly defined definition of diversity (different ways of thinking). By fostering a strong sense of community (through service learning or another one of our innovations), students begin to feel more comfortable with each other. When students are more comfortable with each other they are more willing to share their own ways of thinking. When these different ways of thinking are broadcast, the hidden diversity within Grand Valley will be exposed.

Summary of Research:

Over and over, this current Honors student felt that some form of a service learning project would be crucial to making Grand Valley's Honors program more distinctive. By being able to apply what you learn in the classroom in the real world, with the combination of helping the community, this student felt that that in itself would set Grand Valley apart from other schools. This student also felt that the Grand Rapids community was a perfect platform to be able to spring board a service learning class. There are many opportunities within the Grand Rapids community to serve.

Important insights:

- Favorite innovation was the service learning project as this Honors student felt that it would allow him to apply what he is learning in class while helping out the community.
- Service learning class would be the best means of making Grand Valley's Honors program more distinctive, because as far as this student knows, not many other Honors programs do that.
- An opportunity for a service learning trip would be going to downtown Grand Rapids and going to a local children's resource center and helping kids with homework to try and catch them early to benefit their entire future.
- Lack of a sense of community within the Honors program at Loyola. Even though the entire building was mostly freshman, because of offputting personalities there was a lack of community.
- Honors student feels that Grand Valley Honors students are typically very nice and friendly, or at least a lot more so than the institution he attended previously.
- The last conversation this student had went well because there was a general understanding between the two parties.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

- 1. Looking at our top five innovations, which do you feel would have been the most helpful to you and why?**

I like the service based learning one. It is definitely beneficial to me and to the community. Applying what we learn to the real world and helping people can give a different perspective of people's lives, and really give a medium by which the things you are learning in school can have a positive impact on the world.

- 2. Which of our five innovations stands out the most to you to make the Honor's College at Grand Valley most distinctive?**

I feel like if you did have a class that incorporated service based learning would make Grand Valley stand out because I don't know many other schools that do that. They certainly didn't have that at Loyola. Also, I like the Honors College reaching out to local schools would be fairly distinctive. Definitely a lot of schools will reach out to high schools and other groups, but not often Honors Colleges. I feel like a good amount of Honors Colleges have a lot of the same thing where they group freshman together in their living centers, so I don't think that would make Grand Valley distinctive. Also, I think the service learning based class would also make Grand Valley distinctive in the fact that it allows students to apply what they are learning. A semester long class of service learning would be high caliber. It would have a large impact on the surrounding community.

3. What would you like a service learning experience to encompass? (Where should we go on these trips, and what should we do there?)

One of the most prevalent, because Grand Valley is associated with the greater Grand Rapids area, would be a service learning project in Grand Rapids. Students could go to some of the worse areas of Grand Rapids, where there is a lot of poverty. However, as to what they would do, I'm not entirely certain. Going off on a tangent, I did a project on homelessness last year, and how just giving people money to help them get by is a very ineffective mean of combatting homelessness. The most effective method is actually helping people come self-sufficient. So I'm still lost on what students could do. You could always do environmental stuff, and what I mean by that is helping to clean up Grand Rapids. You could a project where students go to a children's area and help them with homework and stuff like that. Students who wouldn't necessarily have the means for more resources to help with schooling to kind of catch them at a younger age to help them live a better life in the future.

4. Looking at all five of our innovations, give us a "yes, and..." statement for one of them and explain why you feel that way.

Create a program in which Grand Valley students go into the local schools. Yes, and have the local school set aside a certain amount of time for their students to meet with the Grand Valley Honors students, because if it's one of those things where they say, "It's available, go check it out if you have the chance..." the students are more than likely not going to attend. However, if they are almost forced, in a sense, to be exposed to this encounter, they might be exposed to something they didn't know, and learn some things about the Grand Valley Honors program. For the

innovation on grouping freshman together their first year living on campus. Yes, and having other ways for Honors students to interact with each other to create these friendships to really create a community. I feel like that is something that could be very beneficial. Something that I've seen, is that Grand Valley Honors students happen to be generally nice and friendly people.

- 5. What was your housing like freshman year? What did you know about the people living next to you? Was there a sense of community? What do you think would have made your living situation better/more enjoyable?**

So last year, my freshman year, I lived in the Honors College at Loyola university in Chicago. Where it was one ugly brick building. It was hideous. It was the oldest building on campus, so it had the most janky equipment and infrastructure. I had a pipe running through the middle of my room. It was awful. Being a freshman, I didn't know anyone, and during orientation I met a somewhat normal human being and asked if he wanted to be roommates and luckily he said yes. He was pretty much the only Honors student I liked. The rest of them were stuck up jerks (part of the reason why I left). Our neighbors were terrible. Throughout the school year, we probably had to tell them 50 times to shut their door and keep it down. However, there was a sense of community in the fact that there was a mutual hatred for the required Honors course, because it was awful. The only thing that would have made it better if everyone didn't go there. The people were just terrible. So it's hard to say what would have made the experience better.

- 6. Think back to the last time you had a difficult conversation. How did it go? Why do you think it went this way?**

The last difficult conversation I had was a few weeks ago with my roommates. Let's just say two of them were doing something they probably shouldn't have been doing, and to make matters worse, they were doing it in the apartment. Aside from it being just a bad activity to participate in, it also distracted me in my homework/studying as well as my general living environment. So I knew I had to confront them about it, and make sure if they weren't going to stop doing said activity, that they at least needed to do it outside of the apartment. Overall, the conversation went well. There was a mutual understanding that what they were doing was wrong, so they quickly agreed if they were to do it again, that it would take place outside of the apartment. Since then, there has been no more instances.

- 7. Have you ever experienced service learning? If so, what was the experience**

like? (If not, what do you imagine this experience entails?)

So I participated in a program at Caledonia high school called L.I.N.K.S, in which I as a high school went to the middle school everyday, and I would go and work with a 6th grader who has autism. Pretty cool kid. I just kind of was with him in his classes. I just tried getting him to focus more in class and get his work done, and have a good relationship with his other classmates. The experience was very valuable because there was an extreme amount of patience required. Especially with him, it wasn't always easy, and having just a different kind of learning (outside of lectures and typical studying) was beneficial, and it was something that I enjoyed. An experience like that improves your personalableness and provided me with the chance to try and act as an authority figure.

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

No. I think you laid out what the interview was going to be about well, and I think you tied it in well with your five ideas.

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

Yes. You have my email and phone number, just reach out.

For Dialogue: Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors RA

Possible next-steps:

- As our team begins to boil down from our top five innovations to our top two, I think there is a continued pattern that service learning will have to be involved somehow.
- Keeping this last statement in mind, our team may have to begin coming back to our

problem statement and how it relates to service learning

Interview 19

Stakeholder Group/Location:

Honors Student/Campus View Apartments

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

Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

To receive feedback on our top five innovations to see which would be most helpful in the eyes of a student at Grand Valley.

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

This interview allows us to specifically see if our stakeholders feel that our innovations actually relate to our problem statements, or if we need to do some adjustments.

Summary of Research:

The girl that I interviewed missed out on the first couple of weeks living in Niemeyer because she was in Laker Village, but then moved out. Because of this, she feels that she missed out on the chance to make connections with everyone on her floor. With that being said, she has made a number of friends with the people surrounding her room, but she has noticed that her floor never really has their doors open (she assumes because they are upperclassmen). She feels that having all freshmen on a floor would have been really beneficial to her feeling that she has a sense of community in Niemeyer.

Important insights:

- If more people were to have their doors open and were to go out of their way to welcome/meet other students, the sense of community would be much greater.
- Service learning portions of an Honors sequence should be for ALL sequences instead of just for certain sequences. This makes it hard, however, because some sequences cannot be easily related to service learning.
- Having conversations where the opposing party does not want to listen to your side of things and only tries to convince you without being open to new thoughts is very frustrating and counter-productive when trying to help to educate or inform someone.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. Looking at our top five innovations, which do you feel would have been the most helpful to you and why?

Having all the freshman live together because she does not know everyone on her floor and she feels that it would have been much more beneficial to her if she could have seen more faces and met more people, similar to how she has heard it is in freshmen-land at GV. It would have felt more welcoming and more relatable if everyone were a freshman.

2. Which of our five innovations stands out the most to you to make the Honor's college at Grand Valley most distinctive?

Having a service learning trip would be awesome because if it is a requirement for the Honors program, it could help to knock out some of the volunteering hours that people need (for pre-med majors), and it would force people to be part of the community.

3. What would you like a service learning experience to encompass? (Where should we go on these trips, and what should we do there?)

Anywhere that you can do a type of project where you put in a lot of hours where you can gain experience, like building houses or working at a food bank, or distributing Christmas gifts during the holidays. Anywhere that you can get a fulfilling weeks' worth of work.

4. Looking at our top five innovations, are there any that you do not feel relate to our problem statement?

She feels that the first option doesn't relate because it would be really hard to fit into

everyone's schedules and whatnot, whereas if it were a set and scheduled trip, more people would be able to go because it would be more organized (I do not think she understood the question).

5. Looking at all five of our innovations, give us a "yes, and..." statement for one of them and explain why you feel that way.

Looking at the first innovation, she likes the idea and she says that it should be a requirement for ALL Honors sequences so that we can expose the entire Honors student body to diversity, because everyone needs a freshman sequence.

6. What was your housing like freshman year? What did you know about the people living next to you? Was there a sense of community? What do you think would have made your living situation better/more enjoyable?

She lives in Niemeyer, two bedrooms, one bath, really enjoys it. She knows that they're all in Honors and what their sequences are. She knows about their relationships and what they do all weekends, etc. They talk about life and classes, boyfriends and girlfriends, meaning they are all really close. There is a sense of community with a fraction of the people she lives near, the people that she is friends with. Other than that, she doesn't feel that great of a sense of community. She heard that there is a better sense of community on the second floor because more people open their doors. She wishes she would have been able to live there from the beginning (she moved in late) and was around for more of the Honors transitions. She also wishes that more people on her floor were willing to accept change and meet new people and open their doors to have conversations.

7. Think back to the last time you had a difficult conversation. How did it go? Why do you think it went this way?

She had a conversation with a friend recently and she felt like it was very one-sided and that the other person was trying to convince her instead of having an actual conversation. The person would not listen to her side of the argument, and she wished they had been more open-minded.

8. Have you ever experienced service learning? If so, what was the experience like? (If not, what do you imagine this experience entails?)

She has not experienced it yet, but she is going to at the end of the school year. She has heard that you get to learn a lot about yourself and that you get to be exposed to more diverse aspects of life. You see a whole different side to things that you see every day, and it makes you more appreciative of everything.

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

N/A

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

Cell phone or in person

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Niemeyer student
- N/A
- N/A

Possible next-steps:

- Make sure that our problem statement aligns with our innovations
- Make sure that our innovations are relatable to diversity
- Make sure that if we happen to do something with service learning, it can be related
ALL Honors freshman sequences

Interview 20

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Estimated Age: 40-50
Gender: Female
Primary Goal of this Opportunity: The primary goal of this opportunity was to interview an administrator whom is connected to diversity here on campus and gather her input into what it is and how it can be improved. With the addition of her new perspective, we will be able to see what innovations may work best in tackling our problem statement.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? This work reflects on our team problem statement because this administrator works in the Title IX office. Due to her job, she is contains a prolific amount of knowledge on diversity related to gender and sex. This is an area we mostly haven't explored and can provide us with new insights.
Summary of Research: This research has provided us with new insights into what diversity is, specifically her idea of the role of power, privilege, access, and exclusion in diversity. This idea along with her work in the grievance process for those who have been discriminated against sexually, has led her to believe that potentially, our innovation number four, might be the best at solving the diversity problem on campus and in the Honors program. She sees those who are minorities; don't believe they can be in the Honors College because of money, but also because of the imposter syndrome mentality that they are not good enough. If we want to change this we need to go to their schools and communities, and recruit them as well as allow them to use their diverse background to their advantage. An example of this would be to let them know if their SAT is a little below what they need to get in service, and volunteering may help them get in, or perhaps a good essay. They are not aware of this so it is our job to make them aware.

Important insights:

- We need to look at the campus climate survey.
- Diversity is an outdated term, people are beginning to use “Inclusion and Equity”.
- If we want students who are diverse to join the Honors College, they must know that joining isn’t all about SAT and GPA.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. **What is your official title at Grand Valley? What duties does this job include?**

Title IX coordinator and equity officer/director; this position oversees the grievance process for sex-based discrimination. It has the goal in mind of creating opportunities for equality within our programs, our entry, so admissions, scholarships, as relates to sex and gender. This position also office prepares and disseminates educational materials, including brochures, posters, and web-based materials that inform members of the campus community of Title IX rights and responsibilities, to the campus community. Along with this it receives and processes, in a timely manner, inquiries from students, faculty, staff, and administrators regarding rights and responsibilities concerning harassing behavior or other discriminatory behavior in violation of Title IX.

2. **To what extent do you know about the Honors program at Grand Valley? What is the most distinctive feature of GVSU’s Honors program?**

She has a limited knowledge, but has taught in the building not related to Honors. The coordinator has worked with students in Honors who have had grievances relating to their sex, but also working with students doing Honors theses in Honors programs. She thinks that Honors students are outstanding. It’s an honor to work with them in their research they are stellar and able to bring together two different areas of discipline and complement them. The most distinctive feature follows along with what was just said, in addition, the faculty and advisers are amazing as well, but what is distinctive for her is the Honors students’ ability to bridge and demonstrate how one discipline informs the other.

3. **What is a distinctive memory you have in which you witnessed the growth of a colleague or student? What makes it distinctive?**

The most impactful for her was a student who shifted majors a lot, they were a first generation college student who was not confident with what her needs were or how to ask for them. She was naïve and so she worked with this student about how to effectively meet her needs and voice them. She was able to grow from this and get an internship in D.C, who ultimately went into law. This administrator thought she was a wonderful student and women, who is well rounded and thus recommended

her to others because she could embrace the university motto of shaping the universities community.

4. How do you define diversity? What do you think about when you hear that word?

Before she defines diversity what comes to mind, she thinks of power, privilege, access and exclusion. She appreciates and is fully aware that those who look similar offer diversity in terms of experience, knowledge, but when she thinks about it she relates it back to her job, which mainly means minorities populations, women, disabilities, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation/ identity. Her work helps her workout that gets what and creates a structure so that people can get help and the right grievance for any discrimination against them.

5. Thinking about your definition, how do you contribute to diversity at Grand Valley?

As Title IX, her role to ensure that people have equitable and equal access to things likes STEM, sports, scholarship, travel and the admission to these programs. Also addresses sex-based and discrimination-based issues. She also makes an effort to be aware of when students may not have the opportunities. Make sure for example that a young woman has access to a free hostile environment, if she is being harassed and prevent it from happening. Help students who aren't often present or thought of, an example was a student on the eastside of the state who didn't have access to technology to finish up her schooling, which was surprisingly a challenge.

6. Thinking about your definition of diversity, what do you think are some potential ways to enhance the diversity at Grand Valley within the Honors program?

Can we look at schools that aren't predominantly white that have more resources to help push these students of color to do better and "push" them to be part of Honors? Is there a way that we could adjust our admissions to make it so that if we have x number of service hours, or emphasize SAT less and more on the essay. We could potentially get some money to help students come here.

7. Tell me about a time when you had the opportunity to work with someone at GVSU that you feel comes from a background that is different than yourself?

Non-traditional student identifies as male, military background, did an internship with her. Experience was impactful to her because it is difficult to get men to work to help get equal rights for women. Also, military background can often take up a lot of space in a man's ego. He was loud and confident and present with a very

masculine authority. She got to watch him adapt some of the leadership strategies that she employed as he implemented them in his team and then at planned parenthood.

8. What efforts have already been made to address the lack of diversity at Grand Valley and the Honors College?

She has the benefit of being in this division that is designed to address the lack of diversity, whether it is to recruit students of a diverse background, and retain them till graduation. We have many offices like pathways, LGBTQ Center, Women's Center, Center on Faith, and Office of Multicultural Affairs all working to address issues with diversity and working to address them in the community. We do the campus climate survey to see what we are not doing and who doesn't feel welcome on campus. She has a team of investigators who investigates each case. This group is diverse and helps to bring understanding to the issue. She also works with the deans and police. If students group invites her she will go and speak with them about Title IX and what their rights are regarding it.

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

Couldn't think of anything thought the questions were very thorough.

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

Yes and by email

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Office of Multicultural Affairs

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

- We need to look at the campus climate survey.
- She thinks best way to get diversity here is by going into minority areas, so we should look at that innovation.
- We need to contact the stakeholders she provided.

Interview 21

Stakeholder Group/Location: GVSU/Honors Student/Honors RA
Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
Gender: Female
Primary Goal of this Opportunity: To gain insight, from the perspective of a student who is both a member of the Honors College and an Honors RA, on our top five innovations. This student is extremely involved on Grand Valley's campus, specifically in the Honors College, which gives her a unique perspective.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? As we modify and revise our team problem statement, we are looking for input on how to better our statement so that it reflects our innovations and overall vision for the Honors College.
Summary of Research: This student is a member of the Honors College, as well as an Honors RA in Holton Hooker and a part of the Honors office staff. This student gave great feedback on how service learning has impacted her own life, and how she sees it best fitting into the Honors College program as a whole. She was also extremely passionate about the idea of hosting diversity dialogues, allowing students to come together and discuss their differences. She brought up an important question, which was how do we foster these innovations at different levels? As in, how do we make service learning, for example, applicable to a certain year of school or to a certain class within the Honors College?
Important insights: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It might be beneficial to introduce the diversity dialogues during the first week (welcome week?).• The less that you require of Honors students, the more extraordinary things they will accomplish on their own.• She feels that we are already accomplishing the service learning innovation, at least in classrooms.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. Looking at our top five innovations, which do you feel would have been the most helpful to you and why?

“I think that’s difficult because I think I have one that I’m really passionate about and one that I think that is best for Honors as a whole. The innovation that I think I’m most passionate about is those diversity dialogues. I think that GV as a whole needs to make a bigger push to having those tough conversations. I think they did really well during Transitions. I think that introducing those really hard topics during the first week would make them flourish later on. We introduced ourselves with pronouns. These are our pronouns; this is how you use them. We’re not telling you that you have to use them every time you introduce yourself, but it’s something to keep in mind that there are other pronouns besides he and she. We had a little block party after and we heard residents introducing themselves with those. Freshman want to learn. I think that we have a huge responsibility with freshman to teach them these things. What I think is probably better for the Honors College as a whole, is something that has to do with service learning. If it could be a requirement, that would be awesome. My concern with the first option, as an aspect of the class, is that we do have freshman sequences that already have service learning as a component. I think that there would be pushback from professors in a very negative way. I think that, instead, you should take several professors who are passionate about service learning and have them lead several trips a year. You would have more success if every student has to do one of these trips before they graduate. I think what we’ve learned with Honors professors, if they’re not passionate about it, it’s not going to be good.”

2. Which of our five innovations stands out the most to you to make the Honor’s College at Grand Valley most distinctive?

“To be honest, I think it would be those dialogue conversations with those diversity dialogues. It is very common to have volunteer or some sort of service initiative requirement in an Honors College. When I went to NCHC, almost every Honors College had one. Our former director made a push to get rid of this. He found that the less you require of Honors students, the more extraordinary things they will accomplish on their own. That being said, I really like the idea of having one requirement before you graduate, that way you could do something that you’re interested in. If we could make the dialogues a series, like the Meijer Lecture Series that we have, but make them also a requirement. Maybe one a year, in the grand scheme of things, that is not that much time that you have to give.”

3. What would you like a service learning experience to encompass? (Where

should we go on these trips, and what should we do there?)

“I guess my first thing is that I would really like it to be in two parts. I think that service learning in one day is never really effective, you don’t make any connections or have deeper roots to a cause. I think I would like to see us give back to the campus first and then go into other schools. SCLC started a new initiative, Holton Hooker and Niemeyer are both participants in it. I think that we should start with SAP and our community, so that we can see what our university needs to function and to succeed, and then we can spread that out. I would love to see us do more with Kent County schools. The reality is that Grand Valley is not that hard to get into. And we are trying to get more people of color. And that’s hard to do when our scholarship requirements are a 30 ACT and a 1200 SAT. Not only do we need to be helping Grand Valley, but we need to be helping recruitment, which I think is everyone’s duty. What a lot of people don’t know is that Kent County residents despise GV students and I don’t think that a lot of people know that. We are single-handedly taking away economic housing for people of color in downtown Grand Valley. We need to show them that we care, that we want to do something about it. We’re not just trying to push them out.”

4. Looking at our top five innovations, are there any that you do not feel relate to our problem statement?

“As much as I love the idea of service learning, I don’t think that’s going to help. As far as the classroom goes, I think we’re already doing this. I think that the two best ones, I know you asked me for the worst ones, but I’m going to flop it, would probably be the diversity dialogues and getting into the school districts. And I’m not sure that the community colleges are where we want to start. I think we should start at the middle school level. The truth is, that by 8th grade, most kids know if they’re going to college or if they want to go to college. I was in Alliance and Conflict and you could talk to me about different religions every day of the week, but until I actually became a part of that community, I’m not going to have a good idea of what it is. You can tell me every day that Islam is a loving religion, but if all I see is radicalism and I never spend time with someone who is Muslim, I’m never going to know that.”

5. Looking at all five of our innovations, give us a “yes, and…” statement for one of them and explain why you feel that way.

Answered in a previous response.

6. What was your housing like freshman year? What did you know about the people living next to you? Was there a sense of community? What do you think would have made your living situation better/more enjoyable?

“Freshman year I lived in Niemeyer. I lived in a two-person apartment, so I had my own room. My roommate and I were not particularly close, so it was like an

apartment you would share in New York City. The doors were always closed, so it was very secluded. I think that's why I always push students to live in the freshman side of campus.

Nothing. We lived on a corner, and I knew the person across from me and the people diagonally from me, but not the people next to me.

No, the community that you had was the community that you built. I think that the community that I had were the people from my sequence who lived there.

Not being on the south side of campus. I know that especially recently, housing has been very intentional in placing all freshman together, in four person apartments, but I think that the truth is that our freshman succeed with a lot of social stimulation and south campus does not give them this.”

7. Think back to the last time you had a difficult conversation. How did it go? Why do you think it went this way?

“I had a resident come to me last night that wants to move out of her room. Her roommate is very condescending to her and I think that they come from very different backgrounds. She was very understanding, but I think it was a difficult conversation because I can't give a green light, like you can move out of your room tomorrow. I can suggest a lot of things for her to bring up to her roommate, but at the end of the day, I don't know how her roommate is going to react and you can't really change a person, you can only change the situation. One of them comes from a very traditional background, where generally the wife is a housewife who raises the kids. I think she came in not knowing how to do laundry and never having to do chores. They came in deciding not to share anything, like her side is her side and my side is my side. The roommate who came to me is a lot more down to earth, she has siblings, they always had chores, she had to put in a lot of work to get what she wanted. There's not a problem with either person, it's just that they clash in living circumstances.”

8. Have you ever experienced service learning? If so, what was the experience like? (If not, what do you imagine this experience entails?)

“So I've done two big service learning projects, I would say, here. This year, our RA training actually got a service-learning component, which I was super excited about. We split into groups; I think we were only allowed to have one other person on our staff, to get us to interact with other staff members. There were a variety of places we went. I went to the SAP and we were only there for four hours, which is why I think I say this needs to be more than a one-day thing. But probably for the two and a half hours, he just walked around and taught us how different things grow and how to use machinery. The ending portion, we just moved mulch. It didn't really feel like I was giving back, but I loved the education portion of it. The other service learning

I did was with my sequence. We had a requirement of 10 hours to go with our assigned religion, I went to a, I can't remember. It's across from Aquinas, Temple Emanuel I think, it was a synagogue. They were reformed, so it wasn't a traditional synagogue. We went to a Bar Mitzvah, a regular Sabbath and a Yon Kippur bible study. We went for multiple days and got super immersed. I loved it, because the people at that synagogue were just as curious in our beliefs, and us as we were in theirs. We came in at 2015; there was a lot of radical Islamic news at that time. It was very refreshing to get immersed into a community that wanted us to be a part of their community. It made me realize that I have a set of beliefs, not a set religion. It made me question why I have grown up Catholic, with such strong feelings against other religions. I think that if you can make service learning a multiple day thing, or a semester long thing, it fosters more growth."

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

"I think that the biggest thing that we have lacked from this conversation, is how do we foster this at different levels? I think that in Honors, we are very freshman focused. Which I think is great. I think that what we're lacking is involvement in the sophomore, junior and senior years. It's not that I want to make Honors more work, but I think that we're losing students on the way."

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

Yes.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors Professor
- Honors Professor
- SAP Director

Possible next-steps:

- Revise our problem statement, so that it aligns with our innovations.
- Research how service learning is already a component in Honors College classrooms.

Interview 22

Stakeholder Group/Location: Living Center Director
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: The primary goal of this opportunity was to gain insight on the placement of first year students in Honors housing, both in Holton Hooker and Niemeyer, by interviewing one of the living center directors. The intentional placement of first year students is one of our top five innovations, one that we haven't spent a ton of time on, and we wanted to see if it should be one of our top two innovations.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? We found in our research that, in order to become more open to diversity, students must feel comfortable in their environment. Through interviews with other Honors students, we found that many (who lived in Niemeyer) felt that they did not receive the same freshman year experience as non-Honors students or those who chose not to live in Honors housing. One of the reasons for this lack of experience was because freshmen living in Honors housing were not necessarily next to other freshmen.
Summary of Research: This stakeholder is a living center director. He was actually a student here at Grand Valley, an Honors Student, and received his masters at NYU. He had great insights on what Honors housing is currently doing to intentionally place first year students and was very interested in hearing our suggestions and overall feedback. He thinks that a service-learning component of the Honors curriculum could be extremely beneficial to our students. He would love to see our partner with preexisting initiatives and allow students to have access to diversity, in all forms.
Important insights: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are already steps being taken to improve first year students' living arrangements.• Whether or not our team decides to choose this innovation as our number one, Honors housing would still like our assistance and input in regards to what we think would be most beneficial for first year students.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. Which of our five innovations stands out the most to you to make the Honor's College at Grand Valley most distinctive?

"I mean, obviously giving that I work for housing, the thing that stands out most to me is intentionally assigning first year students to particular hallways and floors. I think that the connection between the first year experience in Niemeyer, and now in Holton Hooker, is tied into what you're talking about. A first year floor for students living in Honors housing. I also like the idea of engaging service learning programs and trips. Those are things that have been tried before, but I think that one of the reasons they were not so successful is because they were not a part of the curriculum. I was an Honors student here, I went and got my Masters at NYU, so I've seen a lot of different Honors programs, as well as living learning communities. We call Niemeyer a living learning community, but what that is, is more than just everyone having the same major in the building. There should be connections between living in this building and parts of your program, which we don't necessarily have here. So I guess, to circle back to your question, including some aspect of service learning as part of the curriculum and even connecting that to housing would be huge. My junior seminar was called 'Learn Lead and Act.' It's different from many of the current classes. There were maybe ten of us in the class, mostly juniors, but also sophomores. We set up service learning projects all over campus, one was called 'Soccer for Sudan' and the money we raised went to Sudanese refugees. It really was service learning centered, with a few papers."

2. Looking at all five of our innovations, give us a "yes, and..." statement for one of them and explain why you feel that way.

We felt that he answered this question in his answer to the previous question.

3. Looking at our top five innovations, which do you feel is the most feasible and why?

"I would say, again speaking from the housing side of things, the most feasible would be intentionally assigning first years. I'm not sure if we're going to get into this later, but I have already started doing this and I would love to get your perspective on how to improve on this. Do you think what I'm doing is a good idea? I don't think most students know that we're doing this. I was a freshman at Grand Valley in 2009, Niemeyer had just been built. Before that, the Honors College was in North C. At that time, there was only one option. You either lived in Niemeyer, or I think there was overflow in Murray. They were so excited about having this new building that they didn't even think about placing first year students on the Freshman side of campus."

4. What change(s) would you like to see in Honors College housing?

"I've been going back and forth on having an entire floor dedicated to Honors freshman and then other floors dedicated to upperclassmen. This is possible, but we've had issues trying to do this for next year. We have current students signing up

for housing next year, all over Niemeyer. You could move them, basically you would go into the system and move them into similar rooms that are not on this new 'freshman only floor.' We could do this, but should we do this? This is what I've struggled with."

5. What is the value of service learning?

"The short answer is that service learning is extremely valuable. I've had great experiences with service learning and I think that it's important that all students have access to service learning opportunities."

6. What would you like a service learning experience to encompass? (Where should we go on these trips, and what should we do there?)

"I think that, logistically, it's a huge thing. Doing a month in Haiti was a huge endeavor. The only way to have a successful, healthy service trip is to figure out what the community you will be working with needs. You have to make sure that what you're doing is what they want you to do. Service learning is a two way street, they're receiving help from you, but you're learning so much from them. With my students on the Haiti trip, I tried to make sure that they realized that they were getting more out of that trip than they were giving. At the end of the day, you have to think about the fact that if you take the money that we invested to send those students to Haiti, to shelter them and feed them, you could have donated that money to that community. Don't get me wrong, community service, mission trips, whichever are important and beneficial. However, there are often cases that prove that going into a community isn't always the *most* beneficial. I read this great book called *Toxic Charity* and it was talking about service trips and how much people spend on going to do service projects. There was one case study, where a group of people went to Haiti and worked on building houses there. To send ten people to Haiti for a week was around \$30,000, for travel and lodging. And they were not builders. So after they left, they had to repair what hadn't been done correctly. If they had just hired local workers, they would've created local jobs and it would've cost around \$3,000 to build one house and they could've built ten houses for the cost of those ten people to travel there. The point is that you need to realize that you need to do good while you're there, but you need to bring what you learned back and apply it to other communities."

7. What is involved in planning an Honors trip? What are the barriers/limitations that come with funding?

He felt that he answered this question in a previous answer, so we skipped over this one.

8. Is there a place within Honor's to host a diversity dialogue? If not, what would it look like?

"Have you looked into intergroup dialogue? Intergroup dialogue is essentially a method of relationship building and communication amongst people with differences. It's not necessarily a curriculum, but a way of approaching anything. So

I went through training, U of M has a class on it. It's trying to get a group, particularly with differences, to communicate. There's debate, discussion and dialogue. Debate is an interaction where you're playing to win. You're listening to the other person in order to rebuttal and state what you're trying to say. Your goal is to win the argument. A discussion is having a conversation, but you're each throwing facts out there. You're saying, 'okay, this is my opinion, that's your opinion, let's agree to disagree.' There's no real interaction between the two of you. A dialogue is a conversation where you're listening to understand. They listen to you say what you believe and you listen to them say what they believe, and you kind of find common ground between the two. We have differences, but let's try to understand where each other is coming from. Either we create a new opinion or we acknowledge that our opinions differ, but that's okay. There was a training last spring with faculty and staff, to facilitate this. A lot of the housing folks went to it. As a department, we are trying to get everyone on board with this, even the RA's. My answer is that there is an opportunity or a space that is already being attempted. You could use the same principles in an Honor's setting."

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

"I think it's important to remember that there isn't going to be an influx of money coming into Honors. It's important to look at the staff and programs that are already in place and figure out how your innovations may be able to integrate into what is already happening. You could reach out to someone in housing, like a director, or an Honors advisor and make this a partnership."

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

He has agreed to reconnect for further inquiry through email or stopping by his office.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- He suggested that we reach out to the Honors advisors

Possible next-steps:

- Reexamine our top two innovations (service learning and diversity dialogues) and decide if we feel that Honors housing is as important/feasible, if not more important/feasible than them.

Interview 23

Stakeholder Group/Location: GVSU/Honors Student/Alternative Breaks Exec Member
Estimated Age: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
Gender: Female
<p>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</p> <p>The primary goal of this interview was to gain insight from someone who is in Honors, and also serves on the executive board of Alternative Breaks, a service-learning trip organization on campus. It was recommended in one of our collaborator debriefs that we should reach out to them to see their thoughts on our innovations, in particular the service learning one.</p>
<p>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</p> <p>In Alternative Breaks they have a focus on diversity through their service learning, so it would be interesting to gain insight as to how these are connected. Also, learning about reflection after these experiences will help us to connect to our problem statement in regards to shining a light on the lack of diversity.</p>
<p>Summary of Research:</p> <p>Overall, this interview was very insightful because this stakeholder has background and experience with service learning, and she is an Honors student. Come to find out, she is doing her senior project on service learning, which is very interesting. She spoke of how diversity, diverse thought is very important to all of our innovations. Specifically, she liked the one about reaching out to local community colleges, high schools, and middle schools because we would be seeking out more diversity and intentionally recruiting them. She says for the long run this would be our best option. She did however love the service-learning concept because it is something she is very passionate about. I learned a lot about what the trip should entail and how important the reflection and reorientation components are.</p>
<p>Important insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Urban gardening would be interesting to look into for our service-learning ideas because it covers social and environmental problems and shows how they intersect.• She feels that long-term diversity recruitment efforts will be the more beneficial, yet that short term the service-learning component would be interesting.• Doing something with homelessness in West Michigan would be an idea.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. Looking at our top five innovations, which do you feel would have been the most helpful to you and why?

I really think that the most beneficial would be the fourth one, because we need to intentionally do targeted recruitment because GV isn't even diverse at all. We need #4 for #3 to even matter. For GV, #4 is the most helpful. For my experience, me personally, I would have to say #1 because that really would've helped me to bridge the gap during my first year where I didn't get involved right away.

2. Which of our five innovations stands out the most to you to make the Honors College at Grand Valley most distinctive?

#4 because diversity is so important and we really need to practice what we preach. Like, "oh be and inclusive community" but that's like really easy when we're a homogeneous group. I really like the idea of #4. I really like all of these ideas. And of course, service learning. Wait; maybe I want to change it... I love #1.

3. What would you like a service learning experience to encompass? (Where should we go on these trips, and what should we do there?)

Oh, it would be cool if you did one a semester! My favorite trip I went on was very intersectional with social and environmental service. I think that's the point of every service-learning trip, to integrate both components, to realize that social problems are environmental problems and they're interconnected. Urban gardening would be great! Looking at access, poverty, sustainable agriculture, how we are affecting our environment. Any topic that addresses poverty. Looking also at problems West Michigan struggles with Homelessness is a big struggle here.

4. Looking at our top five innovations, are there any that you do not feel relate to our problem statement?

I think they all address it. Service learning inherently addresses diversity because you're dealing with diverse perspectives. I am obsessed with service learning. I don't think people are looking at it with the right lens if they say service learning doesn't fit with diversity. Diversity means differences, it doesn't mean having a black group of students work with a white group... that's not what it is.

5. Looking at all five of our innovations, give us a "yes, and..." statement for one of them and explain why you feel that way.

The service-learning component in a class would have a final portfolio at the end with all the components that you need to learn about and know before you go on this trip. So like service, empathy, community partnership, social justice, and cultural humility. You would learn about all the things one would need to know about before you go on the trip. I feel

like a sustained week or weekend of service is so much more impactful than a day of service. But connect them to the project or something in a way you can connect the issues, because everything is so interconnected.

6. What was your housing like freshman year? What did you know about the people living next to you? Was there a sense of community? What do you think would have made your living situation better/more enjoyable?

I liked in Pickard my first year. I was 60% Honors, and I lived at the end of the hall. I didn't really make any friends but also I didn't really try. I do think there was a sense of community because it was suite style, and I definitely got to know my roommates and suitemates even though we didn't really have that great of a connection, we didn't stay in touch at all after. Maybe a better RA could've made it better. She left half way through the year, and like only implemented one program. So like I always hear these RA success stories about people who had their RA connect them to student orgs and helped them to get involved, but I didn't have that. I wish there was that leadership there. Also, not living at the end of the hall. Also, a better mentality on my part.

7. Think back to the last time you had a difficult conversation. How did it go? Why do you think it went this way?

One of the AB site leaders expressed, well actually I reached out to her because we have this policy that if you miss meetings you get money deducted. If you contact us far enough in advance with a good reason you won't get money deducted. So I contacted her explaining that this was the second meeting she had missed and she didn't notify me enough in advance, so we would be deducting money. And she got mad because last year they let her get away with it and they didn't care, and I had to explain that this is a new leadership board. And it was hard because she was missing it to go to work, so she was saying she couldn't afford to be deducted. It was hard because I wanted to be empathic because you have work, and I understand things were different last year, that must be confusing, but I'm still going to take your money because you signed a contract. I offered to set up a meeting with her, but I don't care because I stuck her ground. Like we are both students, we are both equals that make it hard.

8. Have you ever experienced service learning? If so, what was the experience like? (If not, what do you imagine this experience entails?)

Oh yes! I have been on 4 weeklong service trips with multiple days of service and overnight ones too. Service learning has 3 main components. So education, orientation, and training. Issue specific, site specific, and skill specific. You look into the mission of your community partner's work to help them and make sure what you're doing lines up with it. So a homeless shelter, for example, the mission might be to end homelessness. Reflection is so important. To illuminate your identities, to illuminate social structures, and to challenge to transform are the goals of reflecting. Synthesize your service, what you learned, to head to the "now what" component that leads you to reorientation which hopefully takes you to apply what you just learned back to your community. Because all

of this is about building community. Reflection helps you hear from other perspective, which is where I think diversity and diverse thought can be helpful.

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

I think you asked me everything.

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

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- OxFam (advocacy group)
- USAS
- Other higher ed, College of Education

Possible next-steps:

- Look further into the 3 components of service learning, like she mentioned.
- Continue to look at what community partners would need for us to come help *with*, instead of coming in deciding what we could do *to* the community.
- Make sure to continue to create a clear line of sight to our project goal of making it distinctive and our problem statement on lack of diversity.

Interview 24

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors Advisor/Niemeyer Building

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

Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

To see what some of our key stakeholders think about our five innovations and help us to potentially limit these down into two prototypes that can be effectively implemented into the Honors College.

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

This work helps our team to narrow our focus on which innovations work with our problem statement and which do not, as this is a specific question we asked during this interview. Also, many of the questions deal with ways to effectively teach students about diversity through our innovations, which is what our problem statement talks about.

Summary of Research:

The Interviewee feels that our group has done a great job coming up with these innovations thus far and really enjoyed the ideas on service learning, as that is something she has worked with for a number of years. She was very informative on what to do if we go the service learning route, in particular by saying that we need to make sure that we are attending to the needs of the community we are serving, not just doing what we want where we want. It needs to be 100% mutual, meaning we must first be invited (although asking is ok). Along with that, she informed me on some of the things that GV Honors is currently either implementing or trying to implement right now.

Important insights:

- If we do service learning, we must make sure to be aware of whether or not we are wanted in the community or not
- There are currently some efforts in place in the Honors College to help students to talk about things, called Honors Speaker Series, but not necessarily diversity.
- Honors housing seems to be kind of a stretch when it comes to relating it to our problem statement.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

1. Which of our five innovations stands out the most to you to make the Honor's College at Grand Valley most distinctive?

She thinks that service learning being incorporated would make GV Honors more distinctive. She hears about a lot of programs including more service learning, but she wants to make sure that if we do it, it has to be done right. It can help make our Honors program more distinctive and she is really intrigued about this potential Honors trip.

2. Looking at all five of our innovations, give us a "yes, and..." statement for one of them and explain why you feel that way.

Service learning class – first, yes and this is an opportunity for us to engage in hard conversations about privilege, power, race, inequality, etc. Second, yes and we need to make sure that our educators are prepared to engage in these kind of relationships with the community (we are going there to learn from them, maybe not even help. That would be our service). Third, yes and this kind of thought process expands our work in an intentional way and this could ruffle some feathers in all the best and

worst ways.

Niemeyer housing – yes and we are already starting to think, talk, assess that so that is starting to roll a little bit. Also, yes and this is a little more complicated than I had bargained for. Because she is not a housing person, she has realized that if you couple a lot of freshman together, the RA will have a lot more work to handle, so we will have to be a little creative.

Diversity dialogue – yes and how will this one be different from the other ones that are on campus. How do we make this more personal and intentional for students?

Ex) this one will be about topic x. How do we plan these events and will these diversity talks add to the depth of a student's knowledge or is this just another thing they have to go to. Yes and this could be a great opportunity for us to think about learning pedagogy (all the stuff that goes into why educators do what they do, how they teach, why they teach, etc.)

Pipeline – yes and we are starting to do that a little bit. Yes and what does that look like? Are we going to do tutoring, pre-college talks like what it means to go to college? Are we targeting potential Honors students or are we willing to sit down and spend some time with some students who need more help?

Engage in a service-learning trip – yes and maybe consider making it a specific time in a student's path through college instead of just whenever because experiences will be much different between freshmen and seniors. This trip offers a great experience for students to get connected with Honors.

3. Looking at our top five innovations, which do you feel is the most feasible and why?

Niemeyer housing, diversity dialogues, and reaching out to schools are already happening and mainly the pipeline/housing. If we were to incorporate more diversity education for Honors students' education, what does that look like? We have some things in place now that may satisfy Lib 100, but is that really the depth we are looking for?

4. What change(s) would you like to see in Honors College housing?

She just got out a meeting with housing and they talked about creating a community for freshmen, sophomores, etc. Not only that, but what it means for all of us to be part of Honors. There is potential for great programming where we can set up events and other things, but how do we make sure that it is fun and not over-programmed?

5. What is the value of service learning?

Her background is in service learning, and she has been doing SL stuff with students for her entire career in higher ed. Students get an opportunity for cross cultural connections; get an opportunity to get a taste what the real world is like without

being an actual adult; SL done right really focuses on the student and their learning NOT at the expense of the community they are working in; SL, if not message the right way, can feel like a burden for all involved so there really needs to be a buy in from all people involved; SL really produces possibility in students as far as transferrable skills, but we need to do a better job of showing them how their experience transforms their life and how they can get that point across for others; SL helps students to realize how complicated the world really is through these SL relationships, the waters really get muddied which allows for depth work to be done. We need to get faculty and staff to become mentors, along with these trips, to be a guide for the students. SL would create a great environment for Niemeyer to focus on student leadership because having 1700 students do service learning would almost not be possible.

6. What would you like a service learning experience to encompass? (Where should we go on these trips, and what should we do there?)

Things that have some intensity to them, whether they are the same time every week or just over a weekend. Also, pulling from those intense experiences and having them be brought up in class. The only way SL is beneficial to people is when it is paired with facilitated reflection and the facilitator is properly trained. It is better to be invited by a community rather than just showing up unannounced. It is ok to approach the community and ask them but it cannot be forced. They need to ask US to come in and experience life through their eyes. We need to be really intentional about not pushing ourselves on a community so the relationship is mutual. This means we may have to accept a “no” from time to time. And if we accept the invitation, we accept 100% of it even if stuff hits the fan – we will be there to help them figure it out. Does there have to be buy-in, students/staff have to want to be there, have to be part of the planning and implementation, and all who are involved need to continuously reflect on if it is working.

7. What is involved in planning an Honors trip? What are the barriers/limitations that come with funding?

Maybe it would be interesting to incorporate a fee every year leading up to help to lower the cost, but there will need to be a strategic conversation that is always evolving. The school will need to probably look at outside help as well. You have to find people who are willing to be part of it, and who are part of all different disciplines. This needs to be done slowly and correctly so that we can do it properly. Let’s be intentional about this. There will always be exceptions for people who can’t go, but we really need to look at why this is and how we will deal with that. Is this experience going to be assessed for a grade? Or will it be just for the student to learn

about himself or herself. This will require extra staff as well.

8. Looking at our top five innovations, are there any that you do not feel relate to our problem statement?

She wonders if diversity is the key component of the Honors experience, and if it is, the Niemeyer housing could have something to do with it, but less so than the other options.

9. Is there a place within Honor's to host a diversity dialogue? If not, what would it look like?

Currently, they are calling it the Honors Speaker Series, which has, potential to be what we are talking about with our dialogues. It would be great to talk about diversity in these meetings, but it very well could be sidelined so we would have to be cautious. Looking at the demographic of Honors, we really need to educate the predominately white student body about power and privilege, and are these dialogues the way to do it? Or do we want to talk about deeper learning? They would personally like to see that be blown up even more. If diversity programming was to be an innovation for Honors, they should hire a person for that and the person should come from a diverse background with diverse cross-cultural experiences.

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

She is wondering what diverse students think about our innovations: are they patriarchal, do they undermine their identity, etc.?

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

Yes, email

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Service learning people on campus and in Brooks

Possible next-steps:

- Revise our innovations to come up with what we feel are our two best, or some combination of innovations, that we can turn into our prototypes.