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Innovations for Communication: Innovations for Improving Honors Faculty-Student Communication

Caroline Simko
Grand Valley State University

Sierra Grogan
Grand Valley State University

Brianne Nickel
Grand Valley State University

Ryan Elliot
Grand Valley State University

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INNOVATIONS FOR COMMUNICATION

**Innovations for Improving
Honors Faculty-Student Communication**

Team Tenacious

Caroline Simko

Brianne Nickel

Sierra Grogan

Ryan Elliott

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Team Opening Remarks

Hello and Welcome! Prepare to embark on a journey of discovery in the realm of the Frederik Meijer Honors College (FMHC) and the student psyche that drives its operations. Over the course of the Winter 2019 semester, the Honors Course: Design Thinking to Meet Real World Needs addressed a problem as proposed by the Honors College Director, Roger Gilles. Using the Stanford method of Design Thinking, our team of four innovators empathized with our problem stakeholders, properly defined our problem, and innovated in order to create potential solutions which will later be prototyped and tested for efficacy. The following report outlines the entirety of this process, and the results obtained throughout the research. We hope our findings serve as a resource to the evolution of the FMHC as well as a resource to other Honors Colleges. Thank you, and enjoy!

Design Brief

Background and Context:

The Frederik Meijer Honors College (FMHC) is one of the most comprehensive educational experiences at Grand Valley State University, reflecting the university mission in liberal arts education. Being home to approximately 1700 students, the Honors College serves as one of Grand Valley's educational hubs. While many of Grand Valley's buildings are dedicated to a specific school or track of study, the Honors College incorporates an interdisciplinary approach. In fact, the Honors College description states that "The focus of the college is to bridge the gaps between traditional academic disciplines and allow students a chance to see the impact each discipline has on the others" ("What is the FMHC?", 2018). This is a reason to protect, enhance, and cherish the Frederik Meijer Honors College.

One way Honors administration has served to enhance this intellectual hub was through the development of the Niemeyer and Holton-Hooker living centers. Simply put, Niemeyer is an Honors fortress. Guarded by impenetrable ravines to the south and east, an expansive parking lot and marching field to the north, and a cluster of commons on the western front, Niemeyer's physical construction creates geographic division between residents and non-residents of the building. Honors Students who are residents of Niemeyer have their housing development embedded with their classrooms. This reinforces a culture of isolationism for these students because they have no need to integrate with the other students of campus.

Alternatively, Holton-Hooker takes a more communal approach. Instead of allowing Honors Students to study separately from other students, Holton-Hooker challenges Honors

Students to integrate within the culture of North Campus. In fact, the Honors students residing in

Holton-Hooker share the building with non-Honors students. This approach to campus living

really enforces the interdisciplinary directives of the Honors Program, and allows for Honors

students to share their passion for knowledge outside the walls of Niemeyer. We have

highlighted the two housing developments of the Honors Program because the distinct

differences between these housing options is representative of the diverse Honors culture in its

entirety. The interdisciplinary nature of the program is fueled by differences in culture and

perspective. For this reason, many Honors students identify as isolated, social, or somewhere on

the spectrum in between. Figure 1 demonstrates the vast culture differences present in the

Honors College by demonstrating the network of student relations across the world. The pin

points below are representative of student origins, faculty origins, and study abroad ventures.

This network clearly indicates the constitution of the Frederik Meijer Honors College is a

derivation of a global culture, meaning a widely diverse culture.

Figure 1. GVSU FMHC's Interactive Student Origin and Travel Map

As the heart of the Honors College Program is the desire to foster cross curricular learning and interdisciplinary studies, therefore, a vast array of majors are attracted to the program. Figure 2 captures this diversity in its whole. A demographic breakdown of the Honors College from the perspective of student majors may serve as the best representation of diversity in the program. In the major selection process, a student will align themselves with the type of career they intend on pursuing. This decision-making process requires an internal assessment of personal values and opinions. Therefore, having such a large spread of selected majors demonstrates differences in values and opinions of the students. While these differences are truly a good thing, they certainly pose a problem. How can a group of students, so diverse in nature, be represented through administration and governance of the Honors College?
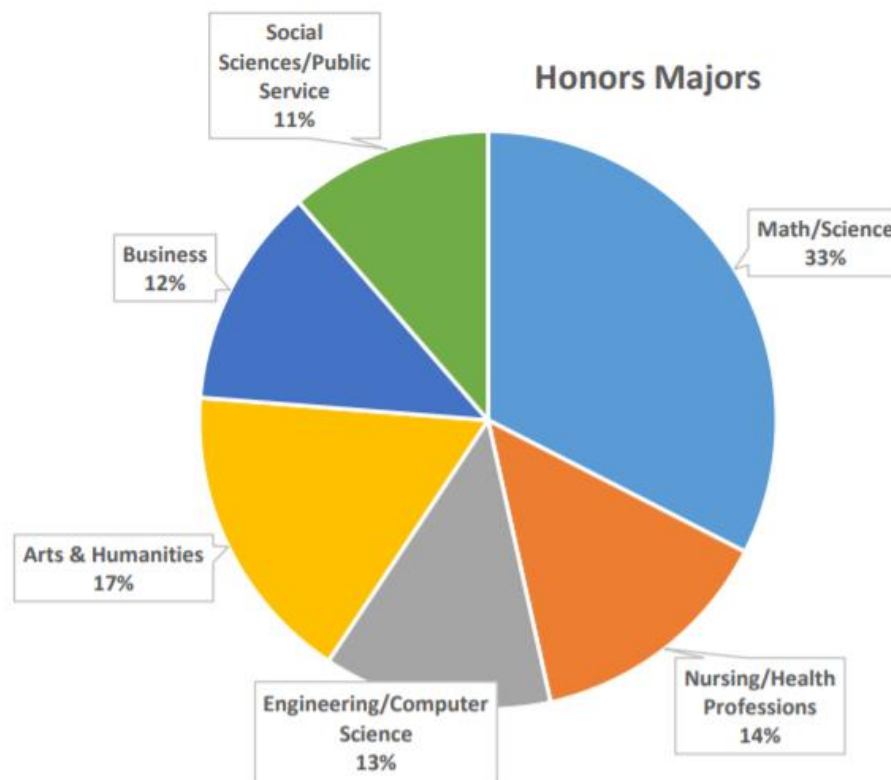
Figure 2. GVSU FMHC's Student Majors

Over the past eighteen months, the GVSU Frederik Meijer Honors College has been shifting the administrative structure of the program. Dr. Jeff Chamberlain, former Director of the Honors College, stepped down from his position as Director, with Dr. Roger Gilles named as interim and now current Director of the Program. Under Chamberlain's direction, the Honors College doubled in size, introduced a series of freshman general education courses, and developed the two major housing buildings as described (Gilles, 2018). In his final year, Chamberlain and assisting faculty members invited the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) to conduct a review of Grand Valley's Honors College.

While the NCHC observed many strengths of the GVSU Honors College program in relation to the support systems implemented by the faculty, the Council determined that there

existed a division between the Honors Students who live in Niemeyer vs. the Honors students who live in other north campus housing options. They recommended the establishment of a student governance organization that would serve to bridge this gap (Hiskes, Rosenblum, Lanier, 2017). However, we would like to assert the claim that the proposed student governance needs to do more than simply unite the living-learning centers housing Honors Students. It needs to represent the differences of the Honors Students in a more comprehensive administrative capacity, and communicate the diverse beliefs, opinions, and needs of the Honors Students to the Honors faculty and administration.

In meeting with Dr. Gilles, Director of the Frederik Meijer Honors College, he expressed a sense of personal disassociation with the Honors students and their experience in the Honors College. More importantly, he felt that this disassociation was representative of the entire Honors faculty/administrative-student relationship. This is a critical issue when considering the cornerstone of a strong Honors College is the communication between the faculty, administration and students involved. Dr. Gilles expressed a desire for finding some sort of method of representation between Honors College administration, faculty, and students, which could bridge the chasm and help facilitate improved Honors College development. We believe that is a problem we can solve.
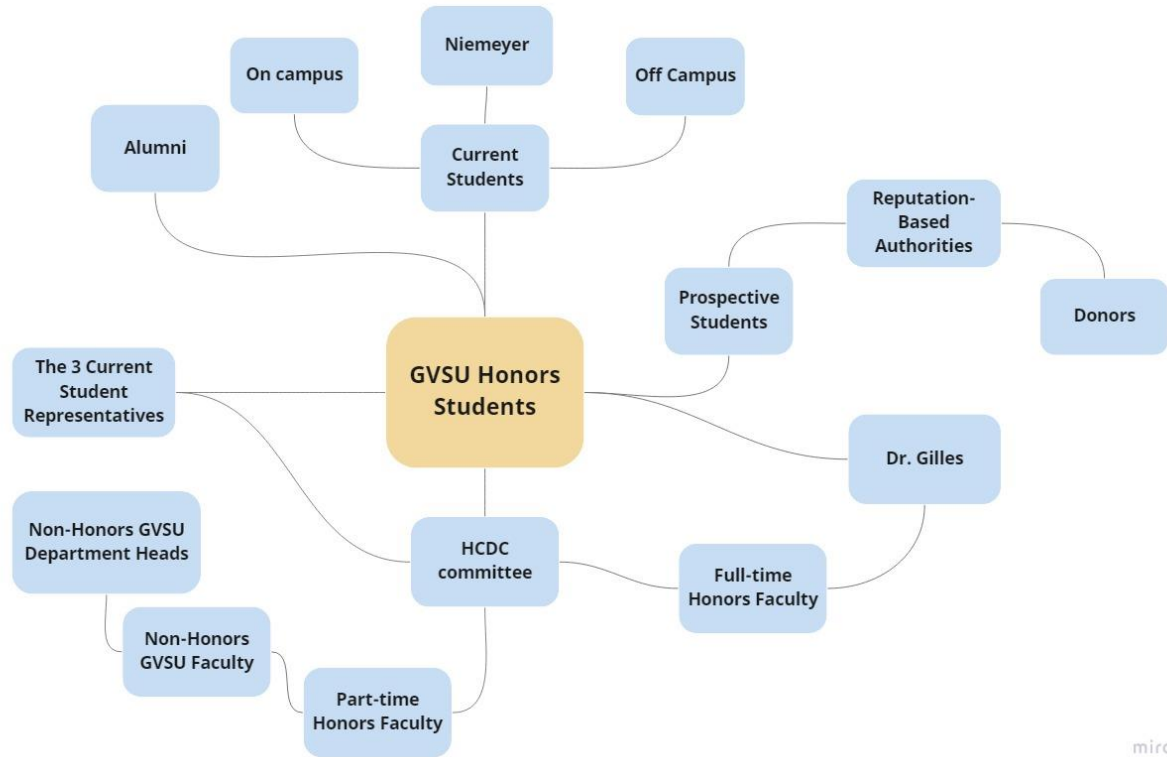
Problem Statement

There is great diversity in the beliefs, origins, needs and residencies of the GVSU Frederik Meijer Honors College students. *How can we enable better student and faculty collaboration to effectively express the beliefs and aspirations of Honors Students?*

A stakeholder map, which is a visual representation of the problem statement ecosystem, is shown in Figure 3. Students of the Frederik Meijer Honors College at Grand Valley State University are at the center of our design challenge stakeholder map as we work toward a system of effective representation within the Honors College. Current Honors students at the institution will be chiefly affected by changes made involving representation, therefore it will be vital to consider these stakeholders' perspectives in the solution. Variability in perspectives among current Honors students may exist as a result of where they are living; off campus, in the Niemeyer Living and Learning Center, or somewhere else on campus. The new system of representation within the Honors College will also influence prospective Honors students through its effect on the reputation of the institution. The families of potential and current Honors students may also have stake in this new method of representation, as their thoughts and ideas may be conveyed through the students they associate with. University reputation-based authorities such as the Provost, who is responsible for academic budgeting, will also be affected due to the new system's influence on the Honors College's reputation. The Associate Vice President of Development Services involved in university fundraising, as well as the Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs leading university curriculum development, will play a role as decisions and potential programs or events are proposed through the new system of representation with students in the Honors College. Students will effectively be more involved in the decision-making process in some areas in the Honors College and this will affect the current Honors Curriculum Development Committee (HCDC), including the three current student representatives. Full-time, part-time, and non-Honors faculty also have the potential to be

involved and affected by the increased communication with and decision-making power that

Honors students will hold in the new system.

Figure 3. Problem Statement Ecosystem, Stakeholder Map

Research Methods

To begin researching for ways to seize this opportunity within the Honors College, we

will incorporate the methodology of the design thinking process described by David and Tom

Kelley in *Creative Confidence.* The most important step in tackling this issue is to approach it

from the user's perspective. In the human context we will be able to better understand the needs

of our users, the Honors College students and the faculty and administration that support them.

To empathize with the students, faculty, and administration, we intend to interview stakeholders

in the Honors College to collect qualitative material. This primary research will help us understand the met and unmet needs of students, faculty, and administration, allowing us to further refine the problem statement. In addition, acquiring insight and information from students, faculty, and administration, we will discover additional constraints in our design process. Aside from primary research, we aim to investigate governance and communication among other Honors Colleges through secondary research to understand structure consistencies. After research is completed, we will continue to use the design thinking process to identify needs through the insight gained. Any innovations or prototype concepts that develop from the synthesis of the research can be tested with the stakeholders for further modification and accommodation. It is important that we reevaluate and revise previous methods to successfully achieve our design goal.

Constraints

When considering student contributions to Honors College governance, a large constraint lies in response bias. The way the Honors College is currently run, only extremely involved and vocal students are ever able to work with faculty, administration, and staff.   By default, these students represent the entire Honors community, even though these vocal students do not necessarily hold the same beliefs as their peers. Uninvolved Honors students are a difficult community to gather information from due to their involvement, or lack thereof, in the Honors College. It is important that we try to eliminate generalization of Honors College students when acquiring information and ensure that we reach out to students that are not as active in the Honors College. It is essential that both positive *and* negative feedback from previously

uninvolved students is collected to be able to refine our problem statement. Beyond student opinions, the power of final decision making still lies with full-time Honors faculty and administration.

Outcomes

Participation in the Frederik Meijer Honors College is awarded with Honors distinction upon graduation. Our goal is to create an Honors College environment that is much more than an extra component to a degree. We want to create healthy and consistent representation of students, faculty, and administration, where everyone has an equal chance to voice their opinions and opportunities to drive change in Honors College academics and affairs. We want to have students, when asked about their Honors College experience, express their successes during their time at Grand Valley. We want no students to feel isolated, in the dark, or unaware of how they can affect change within the Honors College!

Relational Mapping Strategies

As a cornerstone component of the design thinking process, the definition phase utilized two different mapping strategies to identify key people and key insights for the further development. Specifically this manifested itself into the Stakeholder Map and the Affinity Map as demonstrated below.

Stakeholder Map

The Stakeholder map was used to identify key stakeholders involved with the Frederik Meijer Honors College. A Stakeholder is an individual who has some level of involvement within the Honors College, or who will be impacted by changes in the Honors College. Through the mapping as demonstrated in Figure 4, the stakeholders were group based on their interactions with the Honors College. Generally speaking, these stakeholders manifested themselves as faculty members, groups of students, and other administration members. By mapping and identifying these groups, specific individuals within these categories could be approached for the interviewing phase of the research process. This mapping system also assists in verifying that all groups of stakeholders are interviewed, and that none of them gets overlooked.
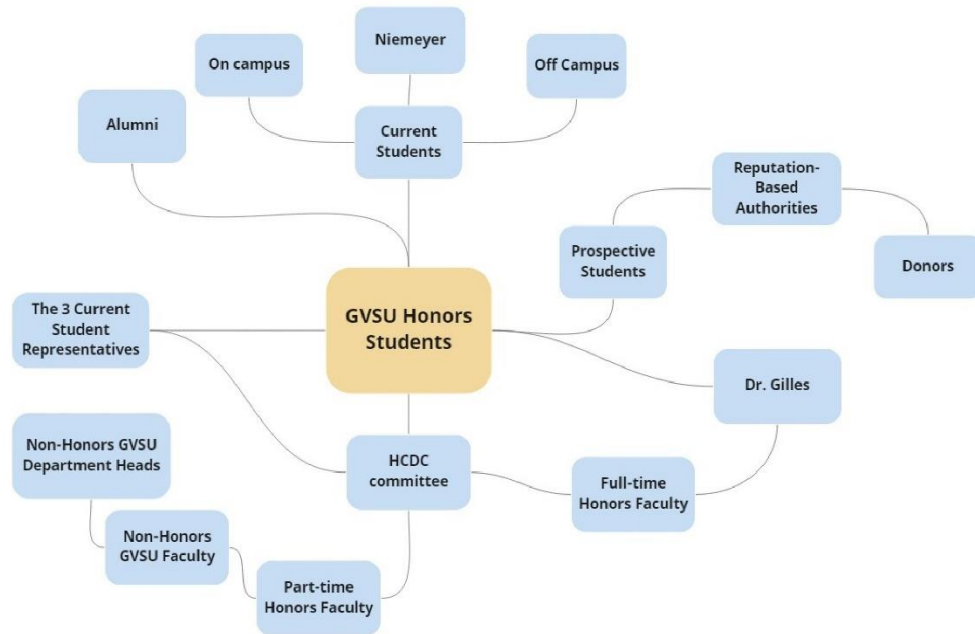
Figure 4. Team stakeholder map of people associated with the Honors College.

Affinity Map

Just as the Stakeholder Map was used as a correlation method in identifying relationships among persons in the Honors College, the Affinity map was used to identify trends contained within the insights extracted from primary and secondary research. Contained in the Affinity map (Figure 5) are a series of sticky notes. Each note represent insights gained from one research experience: that being a personal interview or a research bibliography. After these insights had been collected and presented on the sheet of butcher paper, the affinities between the insights were identified, i.e. the patterns in the data. This helped to identify needs statements from the common affinities.

Figure 5. Team Affinity Map

Collaborator Debriefs

Collaborator debriefs are an opportunity for the team to survey key stakeholders to yield a response to proposed innovations. The format is an informal presentation of the teams work to a small groups of different stakeholders at three key points in the process: review of insights, development of needs statements and top 5 innovations, and finally refinement of the innovations to top two prototype concepts. Conducting the debriefs is essential as these debriefs yield feedback necessary for adjusting aspects of the innovations. Ultimately, this worked well because it helps to bridge the mindsets of the team innovating the solution and the people who will be impacted by any change.

Collaborator Debrief 1

Design Thinking to Meet Real World Needs

Debrief One

Debrief Preparation Articulating and Revising the Initial Vision	
Design Challenge Debrief	**Team Problem Statement** There is great diversity in the beliefs, origins, and residencies of the GVSU Frederik Meijer Honors College Honors Students. How can we organize these diverse values into a method of communication that communicates the beliefs and opinions of the Honors Students to the Honors Faculty and Administration? **Key Insights**

	• Students are often anxious about interacting with faculty and staff • Students enjoy getting to know professors in a more casual and comfortable environment • Student role ambiguity disrupts efficacy
Questions for the Stakeholders	What are some ways that you have experienced that increase student enthusiasm and participation within the Honors College? • What experiences have you had where Honors faculty and administration engage in meaningful interaction with students in a low pressure environment?

Debrief Feedback
Capture What's Meaningful to Advance Effective Innovation

Instructor	One on one meetings between students and faculty early in the semester serve very beneficial for the rest of the course. How can we translate an interaction like this into something applicable for the Honors College as a whole? Also, how can we promote student ownership of ideas and opinions as a way to increase a sense of agency?
Class	Professor enthusiasm about a course is a great way to bolster student participation. If a professor is enthusiastic about a course and is also able to change the way a class is run from day-to-day, student participation and comradery will increase as well. Secondly, many students connect to faculty through office hours. How can we better communicate the benefit of office hours?
Stakeholders	It would be most comfortable for faculty to be able to meet with students with some sort of structure in a laid-back environment, versus having to meet and fend for themselves. How can we foster communication between faculty and students in a laid-back environment to reduce anxiety for both students as well as faculty?

Post-Debrief Reflections

Integrate the Feedback & Ideate Next Steps	
DIVERGE: How did the feedback provided *deviate* from your team's current insights?	1. Faculty can experience anxiety when meeting students in a laid-back environment with no structure. 2. Although not in direct conflict with our insight, Team 3 determined that many students thought that email was a viable option for student-faculty communication. This was surprising because many of the interviews we had emphasized more meaningful interaction than a simple email.
CONVERGE: How did the feedback *align* with and enhance the team's current insights?	1. Students expressed concerns with anxiety when meeting with Honors faculty. 2. Students want to be involved and want to form relationships with faculty. 3. Face-to-face interactions between faculty and students fosters more in-depth communication. 4. Time constraints are a large concern for students involving participating in the Honors College governance.
APPLY: How can you *use* the feedback provided?	1. Feedback has reinforced many of our current insights and research. 2. This will allow us to direct our research and to find possible stakeholders to interview that will provide us with further information about voiced concerns. 3. Knowing that faculty members get anxious meeting with students may help to develop more effective solutions, i.e. an unstructured student-faculty interaction may be difficult for many of the stakeholders involved. 4. By knowing that a time constraint is both a student and a faculty obstacle, perhaps a solution can be constructed that would maximize time use with both students and faculty.
ACT: What are your next steps?	1. Recruit new stakeholders to interview that may provide more insights that align with what was brought up in the debrief. 2. Utilize insights from the debrief to fuel our innovation prototypes to present at the next debrief.

	3. Further understand the anxieties that professors have when meeting with students to identify the root problems driving this anxiety.
	4. Compare the items that take up both student and faculty time. Perhaps they could be done at the same time where students and faculty work together towards their respective or collective goals.

Collaborator Debrief 2

Design Thinking to Meet Real World Needs
Debrief Two

Debrief Preparation	
Telling the Story	
Design Challenge Debrief	**Team Problem Statement:** There is great diversity in the beliefs, origins, and residencies of GVSU Frederik Meijer Honors College students. How can we enable better student and faculty collaboration to effectively express the beliefs and aspirations of Honors Students? **Top 3 "Needs" Statements:** 1. Students need self-validation within the Honors program. 2. Students need definitive roles that are mutually agreeable between faculty and students. 3. Students need to be aware of the support available to them. **Top 5 Innovations:** 1. Anonymous Message Boards (around Niemeyer and Holton-Hooker) 2. Idea Competition 3. Freshman Sequence-Specific Advising Groups 4. Creating a Growth Portfolio 5. Semester Student Spotlights

Summary Illustration	*Optional (consider how you might visualize your findings thus far)*
Questions for the Collaborators	1. What type of incentives can be implemented that are feasible and not forced? 2. What do you think is the underlying cause for the lack of student self-validation?
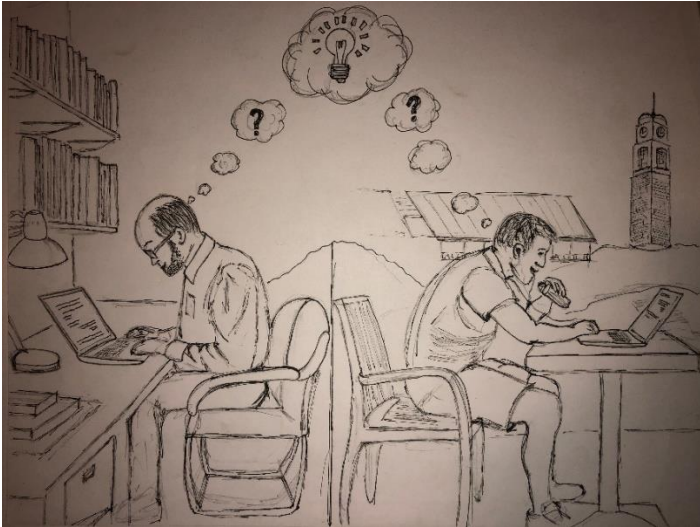
Debrief Feedback Capture What's Meaningful to Advance Effective Innovation	
Instructor	1. The idea competition may not have to be Honors students pitted against each other, rather, it could be students collaborating and competing nationally. 2. Students and faculty need definitive roles, the system is currently a power structure vs a collaborative structure. 3. Look into perspectives of Honors students who are less involved to get their insight.
Class	1. Adding advising groups to other honors classes such as junior seminars may be beneficial to get their perspectives. 2. RAs already have a lot of responsibilities so it may not be feasible for them to manage message boards.
Collaborator	1. Relying on incentives may prevent organic collaboration. 2. Offering extra credit for incentives would not be feasible as there are many unique courses that have different ways of grading. 3. Faculty could suggest provocative questions to be answered on the discussion/message board.
Other Stakeholder(s)	1. In ANCHOR, it would be beneficial to have definitive roles for the relationship between faculty and students. 2. An idea competition offering extrinsic rewards may not promote collaboration, so this idea may not align with the problem statement. 3. Students need to feel like they have purpose, are secure, and like they have potential in order to feel validated and involved.

Post-Debrief Reflections Integrate the Feedback & Ideate Next Steps	
DIVERGE: How did the feedback provided *deviate* from your team's current insights?	1. A lot of push back against "Idea Competition"- organic collaboration should be supported over competition amongst students. 2. Having anonymous forms of communication might add to "degrees of removal" and have a lesser impact than direct communication. 3. Message boards might be too much of a burden to put onto RAs and other housing staff. 4. Having advising groups for all classes instead of just freshman sequences might be beneficial. 5. Diversity may not be addressed, only certain people may participate
CONVERGE: How did the feedback provided *align* with and enhance the team's current insights?	1. Current student committees seem to be small and the roles of their members lack a straight-forward purpose and definition. 2. Adding advising groups to other honors classes such as junior seminar to get those opinions 3. The Honors College is sometimes viewed a power structure opposed to a collaborative one 4. There is a need for faculty to hear more student voices 5. Students are often very reliant on incentives 6. If students have self-validation, they may feel more involved
APPLY: How can you *use* the feedback provided?	1. Rethink the "Idea Competition" – Can the whole Honors student body compete as one against other Honors Colleges in the country? 2. Do research about Undergraduate Research within other Honors Colleges as a part of curriculum 3. Consider idea that may not pose a burden or too much extra work to RAs on campus 4. Brainstorm ways to support smaller groups and organizations to have more definitive roles 5. Redefine our needs statement
ACT: What are your next steps?	1. Fine tuning and redefining our innovations. 2. Continuing to gain stakeholder feedback on our innovations and possible changes. 3. Revisit our affinity map and our "yes and" activity to draw insights and more connections in our past research 4. Find people that are not engaged with Honors as much to interview

Design Thinking to Meet Real World Needs
Debrief Three

Debrief Preparation Envisioning the Future	
Design Challenge Debrief	**Team Problem Statement** There is great diversity in the beliefs, origins, and residences of GVSU Frederik Meijer Honors College students. *How can we enable better student and faculty collaboration to effectively express the beliefs and aspirations of Honors Students?* **Top two prototype concepts:** 1. Course-specific advising groups 2. Online forum/ Q&A
Summary Illustration	**Course-specific advising groups**

	Online forum/ Q&A
Questions for the Collaborators	1. What questions do faculty members actually have for students? 2. How can we use the message board to create sustainable and on-going communication between faculty and students? 3. Who would be the most appropriate person to act as the group advising facilitator? Whether it be a student, faculty member, or Honors advisor? Or who else might be better suited for that role?

Debrief Feedback **Capture What's Meaningful to Advance your Prototypes**	
Instructor	1. Course-specific advising groups may be feared by some faculty. However, having these groups meet throughout the course could be a way to improve the experience of both faculty and students before it is too late and the course is over. 2. Advising groups should be structured in order to increase efficiency and avoid a plethora of extreme opinions- as seen through mediums like RateMyProfessor.com. 3. If an online forum is implemented, it should focus more on student-student or student-administration communication, as this could transform into a form of governance. 4. The Pew Faculty Teaching & Learning Center could be a valuable resource for our team.
Class	• Time is a big factor when it comes to Honors students and participation… an online forum might not take off right away. • Online forum could have separate sections for student questions/responses and administration questions/responses. • In advising groups, some students may become overpowered by other students who speak up more often.

Collaborator	• When it comes to advising groups, there is strength in numbers. • Must make sure that prototype concepts are able to make the changes that address the needs identified in the research. • Online forum should be student-led, with faculty and administration being called in when needed. • Online forum needs to be a "compelling place" where people are interested in participating. • Utilizing a faculty member's interests or areas of research is a great way to strengthen faculty-student communications.
Other Stakeholder(s)	• Suggestions/feedback should often be taken with a grain of salt. • There are many professors and students that are open to constructive criticism, but there will always be some who are not open to putting themselves out there.

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. We were not aware of the resources offered at the Pew Faculty Teaching & Learning Center. 2. While we imagined an online forum being an easier method of communications, some students said time constraints still might make it hard to gain participation. 3. Student feedback might not always be beneficial, especially when only those with extreme opinions contribute. 4. Online forum should be student-led rather than faculty-led. 5. Some faculty may not support sequence-specific advising groups.
CONVERGE: How did the feedback provided *align* with and enhance the team's current insights?	1. There is strength in numbers when it comes to advising groups; may encourage some students to speak up that normally would not do so. 2. Some professors may not be open to constructive criticism and may push back on our ideas. 3. There must be something behind the online forum that encourages continuous use. 4. Student-administration communications are important when it comes to student governance. 5. Allowing students and faculty to discuss common interests is a great way to foster communication.
APPLY: How can you *use* the feedback provided?	1. Look into the services offered by the Faculty Teaching & Learning Center. 2. If we move further with the Online Forum, we need to encourage that it is student-run.

	3. We need to insure to the best of our ability that our final prototype concept will allow for an equal opportunity for students to express opinions. 4. Our final prototype concept needs to hold the interest of its participants in order to be sustainable.
ACT: What are your next steps?	1. Redefine our Course-Specific Advising Group prototype concept. 2. Redefine our Online Forum/Q&A prototype concept. 3. Look over our redefined prototype concepts and decide which one will be our top choice. 4. Continue to conduct research to further finalize our prototypes.

Top 5 Innovations

Idea 1: Anonymous Message Board

This innovation is targeted to meet the needs of students in the Honors College regarding being informed about the resources that the Honors program has to offer. Through much of our team's research, we found that students are often anxious to directly interact with faculty. The implementation of message boards around Niemeyer, Holton Hooker, or an online platform will enable students to have voice, and directly respond to questions posed by other Honors students or Honors faculty (Figure 6). The content of this message board or online thread will pose as both a resource for student feedback regarding the Honors College experience, as well as a source of ideas for things that could be changed in the future. This system of communication does not intend to bypass the idea of face to face communication among students and faculty, but rather create an alternative for students that are not available or always comfortable directly sharing opinions. Students and faculty will have the option to submit anonymously when responding to general feedback based questions or creative prompts. Our research has indicated that there can be a level of intimidation produced by the hierarchical structure of the Honors College. In addition, this innovation addresses another need which is students and faculty being anxious to interact with one another and that interaction with faculty may potentially be intimidating. This will allow students and faculty to mediate their anxieties while still expressing valued opinions.

Figure 6: Anonymous Message Boards Placed For Student Input

Idea 2: Idea Competition

Our research has identified that students need to have some form of self-validation as incentive to engage in Honors related activities. To address this need, we will develop an idea competition. A traditional idea competition would place individual students against one another. As Honors students already experience highly competitive and polarizing activities through their academic pursuits, we propose that students engage in an idea competition within the Honors College that drives *collaboration* with other Honors students and faculty members. Students and faculty of similar interests can team up and work together on innovations that will impact the workings and events of the Honors College. Activities like these will allow students to interact with one another in a low-pressure environment, which aligns with our research that Honors students are interested in maintaining relationships established in freshman sequence. In addition, by working with other students and faculty that share similar interests, students will experience self-validation through having their Honors College participation and experience count towards something that they are both interested in and has meaning to them. Implementing

idea competitions that emphasize collaboration skills could potentially bring forth other

innovations for continuous improvement of the Honors College. In addition, during the first

collaborator debrief, our stakeholders brought to light the idea that faculty can be anxious to

interact with students when there is no purpose other than socializing. By having an activity or

goal during idea competitions, faculty and students will work together seamlessly with less

feelings of awkwardness and discomfort that are often felt during social events that lack a

specific purpose (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Students Engaged In an Idea Competition at GVSU

Idea 3: Sequence Specific Advising Groups

This innovation tackles all three of our initial identified needs statements: students need

self-validation within the Honors program, students need definitive roles that are mutually

agreeable between faculty and students, and students need to be aware of the support available to

them. Through our research interviewing current Honors students, we found that the main cause

of a poor Honors experience was a bad freshman sequence. Many students felt they were being

overworked, or that their professors and course load were tougher, while other sequences seemed

rather easy and even fun. It was for this reason that we thought of freshman sequence-specific advising groups as a valuable resource for both disgruntled and satisfied students alike. An advisor (not the professor of the course) will meet with the class for the first 10-15 minutes of class about 3-4 times a semester (Figure 8). This advisor will serve as a confidential means of communication between students and the Honors administration, allowing students to voice their honest opinions about the class without anxiety. This will also allow for less bias, as the advisor has no stake in the course being discussed. While a student's experience freshman year is often very indicative of his/her view on Honors overall, it would be beneficial to also include advising groups for classes containing upperclassmen, such as the Junior Seminar. These upperclassmen hold more knowledge about the Honors College and student life in general, and may have valuable insights that faculty and administration could build upon. Through these facilitated class discussions, students will feel validated as they have a sense of agency about their education. They will have more definitive roles, understanding their responsibilities as a student and their power to voice their opinions. Lastly, students will better understand the resources available to them through an advisor outside of their normal classes.

Figure 8. Students meet with each other and a professor to discuss feedback of the course

Idea 4: Creating a Growth Portfolio

The growth portfolio is an innovative design targeted at compounding student input throughout their Honors experience. Quite simply, this idea takes the shape of a self-reflection that students will be required to incrementally complete. Creativity level, confidence level, extra-curricular involvement level, and more intrinsic character traits can be tracked throughout a student's educational career. The first survey will be given to students during the welcome week of their first semester of the Honors College (Figure 9). This survey will gage an Honors student's strengths, goals, and opinions. A synthesis of these surveys will be stored in a student portfolio and made available to the student and Honors College faculty. The driver behind this innovation is our research which indicates that Honors Students aren't feeling validated. In other words, they feel that their opinion and involvement in the Honors College doesn't hold much weight. By asking students to complete these surveys, faculty can identify trends in student strengths and weaknesses. They can then use this knowledge to shape the Honors program in its entirety to aid student growth. Also, these surveys can be used as a means for continuous improvement of the Honors College. By polling students on their experiences before, during, and after Honors College, the faculty can use the student experience to govern the Honors College. Lastly, by using a digitized survey platform, in-depth analysis of the survey data can be conducted. For instance, by scanning the surveys for key words and common responses, emerging student needs can be identified and serviced accordingly.

Figure 9: Students develop a growth portfolio to catalog their growth in the FMHC

Idea 5: Semester Student Spotlights

The Student Spotlight innovation is designed to promote feelings of self-validation and inclusion among Honors Students (Figure 10). The student spotlights will feature a different Honors student each semester, and will highlight their achievements and describe a little about them. This will allow students to feel appreciated and connected to each other and the Honors College, and it will help students better understand how they can be involved. This innovation will foster a sense of community within the Honors College and will include all Honors Students, living on and off campus. Students will be nominated by Honors faculty and will be chosen for the Spotlight by the editors of the student spotlights, which would potentially be the Honors Advisors or another Honors faculty member. The student that is chosen for Spotlight each semester will meet with the editor to discuss achievements that will be included within the Spotlight. The Spotlights will allow students to feel like they are a part of the Honors College as a whole and feel validated within the community.

Figure 10: A student is highlighted for academic achievement in the FMHC

Top Two Innovations

Course-Specific Advising Groups

The Course-Specific Advising Group prototype concept encompasses all three of our initial identified needs statements: students need self-validation within the Honors program, students need definitive roles that are mutually agreeable between faculty and students, and students need to be aware of the support available to them (Figure11). For students of the Honors College to truly feel and understand that their words do not go unheard, it would be beneficial to have access to a third-party system that facilitates conversations related to course feedback from students. Periodically throughout the semester(s), a representative that acts as a facilitator will visit a class within the Honors program, perhaps at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester. During this time, facilitators will provide students with guided questions regarding the course as a whole, similar to how faculty receive surveys at the end of the semester, but in a more personal setting. Students will have the option to participate in the conversation depending on whether or not they have feedback. By having a third party facilitate a conversation such as this, it mediates the ambiguity students may have about what occurs when faculty receive feedback. In addition, Course-Specific Advising Groups create a more trustworthy system of communication, with assurance that feedback provided is going directly to faculty or staff. By having a support system like this, students will be acting with agency within the Honors program. Implementing this prototype concept will enhance, not bypass the system of

communication and student voice within the Honors program. Course-Specific Advising Groups will increase the transparency of information so that students have self-validation by feeling it is their duty to take part in the continuous improvement of the Honors College at Grand Valley.

Figure 11: Students meet with a professor to discuss their feedback

Online Forum/ Q&A

Figure 12: Students interact with an online forum to demonstrate their feedback

    The Online Forum/Q&A prototype concept addresses needs found through our team research, and is aimed at allowing students to have a common place to share concerns and to create dialogue with Honors faculty. Honors students expressed that finding time in their busy schedules to meet with faculty during limited office hours proved to be difficult. Additionally, students tend to be anxious and apprehensive to arrange formal meetings with faculty. The Online Forum addresses these concerns by providing a space through a Google platform that can be accessed at the convenience of both students and faculty (Figure 12). A link to the Google forum platform will be provided on the Honors College Blackboard site and the Honors College website for ease of access. This prototype concept will allow faculty to ask questions and receive feedback from students and it will foster discussion and connection between Honors students and faculty. The forum will include a feature in which the student can choose whether or not to post anonymously when asking a question or replying to another post. This will eliminate anxiety or nervousness for students that have concerns over being identified. This will be a safe online space where students, as well as faculty and Honors College administration can ask any questions they may have, and it will give students an avenue to be heard. One of the need statements that came from our research indicated that Honors students seek self-validation. The Online Forum provides a place specifically designed for students to be able to voice their opinions and for comments made to receive feedback and validation from Honors faculty and administration as well as other Honors students. Students will now have an avenue in which they can advocate for change and receive tangible feedback.

Top Prototype Innovation

Course Specific Advising Groups

The Course-Specific Advising Group prototype concept addresses all three of our identified needs statements: students need self-validation within the Honors program, students need definitive roles that are mutually agreeable between faculty and students, and students need to be aware of the support available to them (Figure 13). For students of the Honors College to truly feel and understand that their words do not go unheard we will implement the Course-Specific Advising Groups (CSAG). The CSAG will be beneficial as it creates a third-party system that facilitates conversations related to both course feedback and student opinions on Honors courses, conditions, and on the College in general. Three times a semester (the beginning, middle, and end) a trained representative will facilitate a class discussion within the Honors program. Honors faculty will be required to provide class time for CSAG activity. During this time, facilitators will follow guided questions to support students in conversation regarding their Honors course, experiences as an Honors student, and open up the conversation for any suggestions about changes within the FMHC. These group sessions can take from student opinions similarly to LIFT evaluations, except higher accountability and more personal relationships would allow CSAG's to force action. Students will have the option to participate in the conversation. By having a third party facilitate a conversation such as this, it encourages the sharing of honest opinions while still mediating and keeping conversations both civil and

productive. In addition, Course-Specific Advising Groups create a more trustworthy system of

communication, with assurance that feedback provided is going directly to faculty or staff. By

having a support system like this, students will be provided with opportunity to act with agency

within the Honors program. Implementing this prototype concept will enhance, not bypass the

system of communication and student voice within the Honors program. Course-Specific

Advising Groups will increase the transparency of information so that students have self-

validation by feeling it is their duty to take part in the continuous improvement of the Honors

College at Grand Valley.

Figure 13: Students and professors meet in private and altogether to discuss their opinions

Team Video Link

https://vimeo.com/330636916

Call to Action Presentation
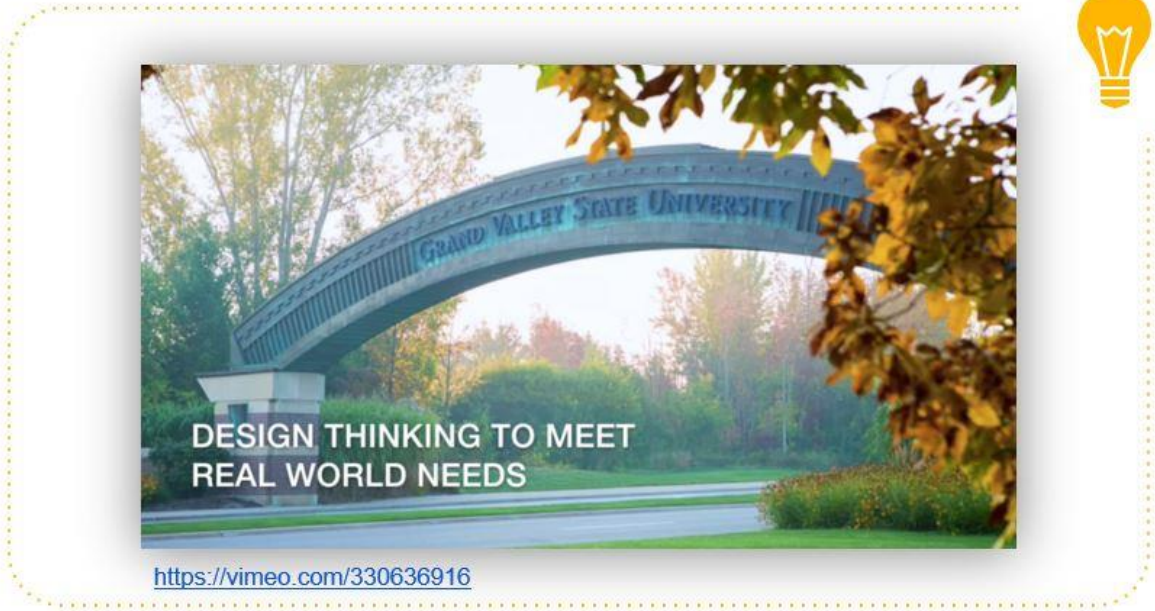
Overview

Video
Problem Statement
Storyboard
Call to Action

https://vimeo.com/330636916

Please take a peek at our video introducing our process over the course of this semester.

Problem Statement

There is great diversity in the beliefs, origins, and residences of GVSU FMHC students. How can we enable better student and faculty collaboration to effectively express the beliefs and aspirations of Honors Students?

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Our Problem statement was the result of a multi-faceted definition process. Throughout the empathy stage of the design thinking process, over 20 interviews were conducted with students and faculty. By grouping common interviewee responses through affinity mapping, needs statements were then developed.

Course Specific Advising Groups

★ Addresses needs expressed by stakeholders
★ Extremely feasible
★ Facilitates communication between faculty and students

We decided to choose Course Specific Advising Groups as our final prototype concept. This prototype concept addresses our needs statements that students 1) need self-validation, 2) need to be aware of the support available to them, and 3) need to share defined, mutually agreeable roles with faculty. What makes this prototype concept so valuable is its feasibility. The costs associated with implementing this prototype concept are minimal, yet the results will yield high reward. By implementing our prototype concept, the level of communication between faculty and students is guaranteed to improve.

So let me tell you about Janet:

Janet is a transfer student from another university, and is new to the Frederik Meijer Honors College. She's sitting in class with a tons of thoughts running through her head. She's confused about the way the professor is teaching, and from her experience at another university, she has some ideas on how the professor could improve his lecture.

Knowing this, Janet tries to meet with her professor during his office hours, but their schedules don't match well. On another occasion, Janet tries to build the courage to talk to her professor after class, but he's busy helping other students. She talks with a fellow student about her ideas and together they try and find out how to share ideas at Honors College, but there is nothing posted in the Honors College halls to help. Meanwhile, Janet goes home and drowns in her homework. She's frustrated because she's not adjusting well to the Honors College, and she doesn't feel like she has anyone listening to her.
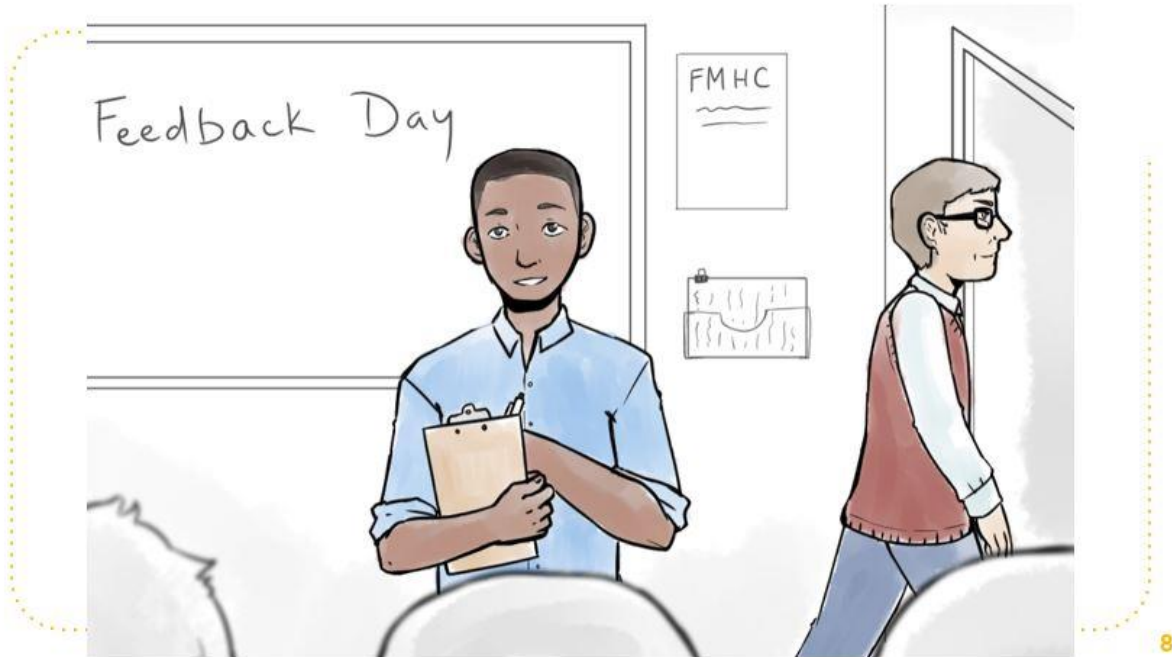
But fortunately for Janet, early in the semester, the FMHC holds their Class Specific Advising group. So, Mr. K., from the Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center, comes to the class 20 minutes before lecture is finished and meets with the students to get their honest feedback, both positive and negative, about how the class is going.
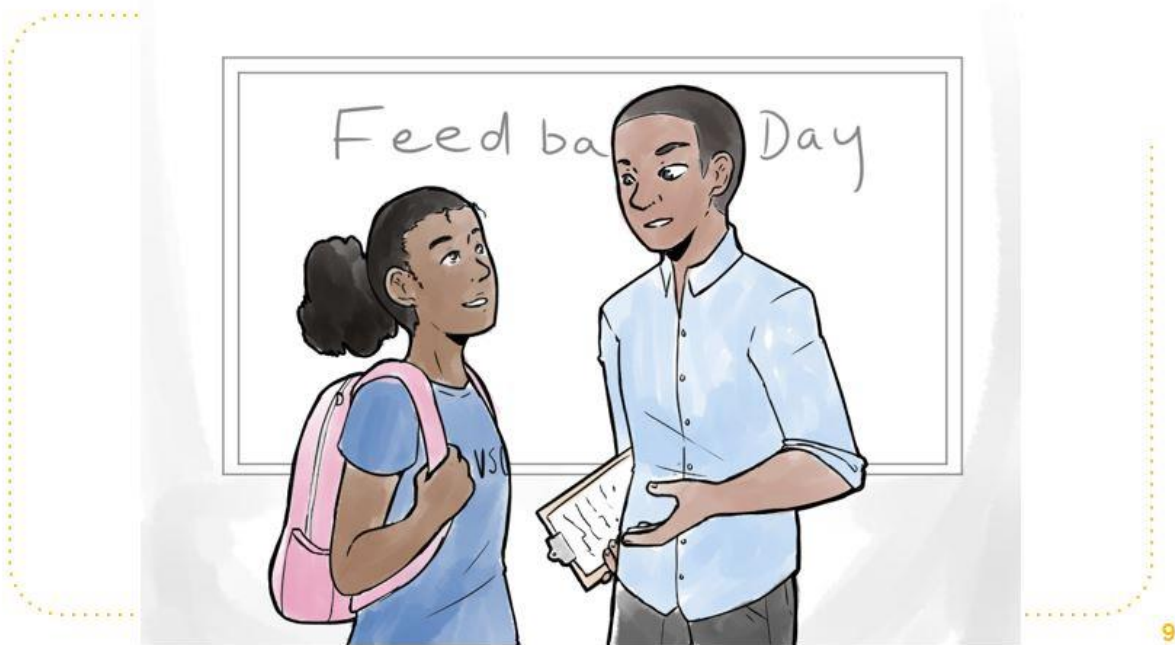
Wanting to keep her struggles private, Janet meets with Mr. K. after the class advising session ends. Mr. K. has learned it's important to stay a little late just for that reason.
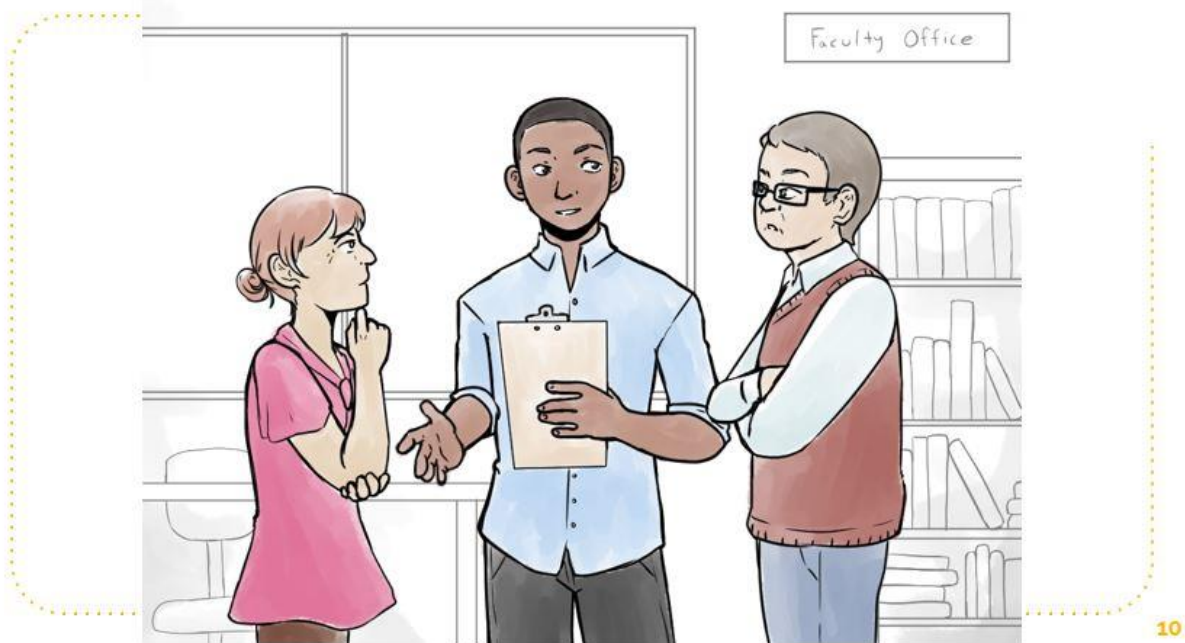
After Mr. K's meeting with the students, he holds a meeting with the professor and other faculty members to relay the feedback from the students. The professor and faculty members are extremely grateful. They have been desperately trying to hear from their students because they care about using their input to improve the quality of their teaching and the impact of their course. The perceived divide between getting and having this information has been a long standing challenge!

The best part about it is Janet's professor loved her ideas (as they were delivered through Mr. K.). In fact, it even helps him teach the whole class in a way that resonated with more of the students. The results were staggering! Janet is now actively engaged in her classes and both she and her professor are loving it!

Benefits

- Facilitators mediate conversation for increased productivity
- Students can communicate in a group or individual setting
- Students gain an enhanced sense of agency within FMHC

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There are several benefits delivered through implementation of this prototype concept because it will change the way students and faculty feel about the Honors College. In addition, it will create a sense of agency among students, encouraging and increasing student engagement. Students will be able to feel that they own their education, and feel validated by what they have to offer to the Honors Program.

Student and faculty communication is desirable. Class Specific Advising sessions will facilitate this desired communication.

We have presented to you a prototype concept that is supported by both student and faculty feedback, and we have great confidence that implementation will positively impact the Honors College. Implementing Course Specific Advising Groups will effectively facilitate student and faculty communication in the Honors College, and will allow the Honors program to achieve a higher level of engagement and involvement. In order for something new to take effect, it is necessary that all parties collaborate and work together. We ask now for your support and effort in making this prototype concept a reality!

Questions?

Innovation Symposium Findings

Call to Action Envisioning the Future	
Brief Description of How Your Presentation was Received	The stakeholders seemed very enthusiastic about our idea, but it was not on top of the list when it came to priority implementation. The stakeholders offered a lot of feedback and questions that will be very helpful in the continuation of this prototype concept.
What was the Teams Specific Call-to-Action	By making our prototype concept a reality, we can create a sense of agency amongst students and increase effective communication within the Honors College as a whole.
Attendee Questions	1. What would you say this prototype is more suited for- more student validation or better student governance? 2. Have you discussed with the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center the logistics of this prototype? How many facilitators would work on a project like this?

Innovation Symposium Feedback Capture What's Meaningful to Advance your Innovation	
Verbal Feedback	1. If this was to be implemented, keep in mind that the Honors College runs about 50-60 course sections a semester. 2. What would you do if a professor refused to let facilitators interact with the class or did not attend meetings/ consider feedback? 3. It might be interesting to have different facilitators depending on the topic of the meeting, for example, a student might be a good facilitator for a meeting discussing Honors College life in general.
Written Feedback	1. How do you encourage faculty to utilize the feedback meeting and to make adjustments to the class based on what feedback is given? 2. Student mechanism for support. 3. Great idea- how would we handle the scale of 50-60 sections? 4. Get a few professors to buy into this and share/ champion the idea. 5. How do you factor in bias? 6. Advice: be VERY clear about purpose of the discussions. 7. Read "Seven Cs for Effective Teaching" by Christopher Emdin, ASCD.
Visual Feedback	1. Stakeholders listened intently during presentation, taking notes on their ideas as they watched.

	2. Many non-verbal signs of agreement and interest; head nodding, leaning in, etc.

Post-Symposium Reflections
Integrate the Feedback & Offer Final Recommendations

DIVERGE: How did the feedback provided *deviate* from your team's current recommendations?	1. While we knew many facilitators would be involved, we were unaware that as many as 50-60 honors courses run every semester. 2. We knew that some professors would be less accepting of this prototype than others, but we did not think ahead of what would happen in a scenario where a professor refuses to implement these groups. 3. The facilitator does not have to be the same person throughout the whole semester; in fact, there might be times where a student facilitator is beneficial. 4. How would we make sure bias is accounted for? 5. We spent a lot of time and research trying to figure out how to maximize student participation. While doing so, we did not gain a lot of information on how to increase faculty participation and enthusiasm.
CONVERGE: How did the feedback provided *align* with and enhance the team's innovation?	1. Some professors may not be open to such criticism- they have anxieties just like students! 2. In-class facilitator-led dialogues must be guided with specific questions in order to be effective. 3. The Faculty Teaching and Learning Center holds similar advising groups and would be both a great resource and a good model of how to take this prototype to implementation. 4. There needs to be better communication within the Honors College!
SYNTHESIZE: How can others *use* the feedback provided?	1. When conducting research or attempting to implement a prototype of their own, others can be sure to counteract bias as much as they can. 2. Absolute acceptance of a prototype all at once is impossible, and this should be kept in mind as ideas develop. 3. The size of the Honors College must be taken into account when student-faculty communication is considered.
RECOMMEND: What next steps does your team recommend to stakeholders?	1. Read "Seven Cs for Effective Teaching" by Christopher Emdin, ASCD. 2. Contact the Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center to discuss prototype feasibility. 3. See if there are any Honors student orgs with a particular interest in being involved with this prototype.

	4. As this prototype is moved forward, it is essential to make sure advising group discussions have a connection to governance in some way, whether directly or indirectly.

Team Closing Statement

It has been a privilege this semester to pursue designing a solution for better communication to fulfill student needs in the GVSU Frederik Meijer Honors College. As you can see from our extensive research, our innovations were founded in insights from students, faculty and administration. We hope that our research has served as a resource to your work, and we look forward to seeing the change in the Honors College that will continue to evolve the model of student governance.

Thank you,

Team Tenacious

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Appendices

Dialogues

Dialogue 1

Stakeholder Group:
HCDC Student Representative
Estimated Age:
_X_ 18-30 ____ 30-40 _____40-50 ____ 50+
Gender:
Female
Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
To understand the role of the student representative in the HCDC. Also, to learn about the concerns and opinions of a student who currently is a student representative. This opportunity will also allow us to gain insight on current student/faculty communications within Honors governance committees.
How Does Conducting This Work Reflect on Your Team Problem Statement?
This reflects on our problem statement as it allows us to understand the current roles of Honors student in the governance of the Honors College. Through the experience of an HCDC Student Representative, we can examine the positive and negatives of the current way students are incorporated with Honors College faculty, staff, and curriculum.
Summary of Research:
From this interview, I learned about the process of student recruitment for the HCDC. Currently, any students involved in Honors College governance were recruited through

their leadership positions in other organizations, such as ANCHOR and the Honors Mentor Council. In person communications seem to facilitate a more open dialogue, as these methods of communications are used in committee meetings, where the interviewee feels her voice is listened to and considered. Student anxieties about interacting with staff and faculty as well as a lack of knowledge on the way the Honors College is run seem to be a large deterrent for student involvement. Lastly, student participation in curriculum development seems to be very necessary, and would benefit both students and administration.

Important insights:

- Most Honors students involved in governance committees are already in leadership roles in student-run organizations, most likely within Honors.

- Honors faculty, at least those already collaborating with students within committees, seem to generally be accepting and open to student ideas and opinions.
- Students are often anxious to interact with groups of faculty and staff.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: What attracted you to the Honors College before you came to Grand Valley?

Interviewee: Originally, I didn't even know where I wanted to go, I only knew about Grand Valley because a girl from my dance studio also went here, but I didn't even know that the Honors College existed until I came to the scholarship competition. At the scholarship competition they took us on a tour of Niemeyer and told us all about Honors and everything. After the scholarship competition, I applied and the Director emailed me the next day and I was in.

Interviewer: How did you first become involved with the HCDC?

Interviewee: The Director emailed me because I was on the Honors Mentor Council the year before. It's an organization that does the mentoring for the incoming freshmen for welcome days. I was a mentor last year, and then they wanted people to apply for the council, so I was on the public relations committee. We did a lot of stuff like planning the ice cream social, and all sorts of other fun stuff for the mentor council, but then the Director, as soon as he convened the committee, he wanted student representatives, so it was me, and a student from ANCHOR, and one more student.

Interviewer: How do you communicate with the Honors staff and faculty, and how frequently?

Interviewee: With the committee or in general?

Follow up: In general; however, are there any differences between your everyday communication and the communication within the committee?

Interviewee: I'm in one Honors class this semester. I'm in my junior seminar. I have Jane Toot, so I have class with her. Through the committee it's mostly via email this semester because both of our meetings have been canceled because of the ice. At the committee, it's in person communications.

Interviewer: How was your role on the HCDC described to you?

Interviewee: The Director basically sent out an email that said he was looking for student representatives on this committee, and just said we'd have to attend biweekly meetings. He didn't ask specifically me, I think he asked for one person from the Mentor Council who was available during the meeting times on Wednesdays. I think I was one of the few people who were actually available at that time. Once the Mentor Council President submitted my name to the Director, I received the email about when the meeting times were.

Follow up: Did you get to speak on any issues at these meetings or were you there to just listen in?

Interviewee: The Curriculum Development Committee, a lot of it was about how Honors curriculum is going to change starting Fall of 2020, I think. We heard the few different plans they had, and we go to have some input on what plans we thought were best out of the few, based on our experience in Honors so far. One of them had a senior project required one credit course where you learned about the senior project, and I thought that would have been helpful, because I'm currently doing mine and I pretty much had no idea what I was doing until I submitted the proposal, and I only found out that information through the website. The senior project isn't really clear to a lot of people, so I think that would have been helpful. I'm not sure if that ended up in the final plan or not. One of the other issues that we talked about, there were two new proposed junior seminars, so me and the other student representatives got to put in our opinion of whether we would take that class, whether the course description sounded interesting, whether, because we are all from different majors, it would be interesting to people from different majors. Those were two things we also got to do that were really cool that weren't technically about what it started for, but we also got to put our input in.

Interviewer: Do you feel that this role has been fulfilled as it was described to you?

Interviewee: Yes. At first it was scary because it's all faculty and three students, so it was kind of intimidating. Once they started asking direct questions that pertained to the student experience, or about courses I may have taken in the past, because one of the new junior seminars is a math one, I probably wouldn't take it because I'm an English major, but they were also talking about the math requirements and which classes were required, and I took one of the math requirements so I got to talk about that. At first it was scary, but as the committee has gone on, I feel like I've been able to voice some of the things that I've been thinking. It wasn't like I was being silenced or anything, it was just kind of intimidating because all of the professors have so much knowledge about Honors and about education and I feel like I don't. Definitely at the end here I have been more able to participate.

Interviewer: What other challenges have you experienced in fulfilling the student representative role on the HCDC?

Interviewee: A lot of it deals into anxiety, but my lack of knowledge about certain requirements. They would talk about syllabus of record, and that's been a lot of the discussion and I don't really know what that is, so I can't contribute that way. Everything else has been great, all the meetings have been fine, they're in the Niemeyer MPR, and they're easy to get to. We basically communicate through those meetings and then we get the minutes emailed to us the day before, so there's never any confusion about what's going on. It's all been fine, just my lack of knowledge of the education system in general has been a hindrance in that way, but I don't think that the student's role was ever to contribute in that way. Ours was for more of the perspective on what classes would be most beneficial to Honors students.

Interviewer: What kind of feedback do you receive from the faculty members of your constituents in the HCDC?

Interviewee: I feel like my input is definitely acknowledged and appreciated, like I've never had anyone talk down on anything that I say or contradict, they're all very encouraging and supporting of anything that all of the student representatives have to say. It's been good.

Interviewer: Are there any changes would you make to foster better communication within the committee?

Interviewee: I really don't think so. There's a lot of participation from all the members. I don't think there's a member that hasn't spoken or hasn't been vocal about things that they need to say. Of course, the Director and faculty unit head lead because they've

convened the committee, they have certain points that they need to say, but everyone else participates well. I think we meet enough times to get everything that we need to get done. I don't think that there's anything that I would change.

Interviewer: What is your level of commitment to the committee, time wise?

Interviewee: Hour long meetings, biweekly. They're on Wednesdays. It's not a ton of time, but it's definitely enough time to get what we need to gone.

Interviewer: What are some examples of times you felt emotionally or intellectually engaged within the committee, if any?

Interviewee: Because they are changing certain requirements for Honors, it made me kind of frustrated at times, because I wanted the changes to be made while I was in Honors. Especially with the senior project, clarifications, or there was one option where there's more involvement in the second year, and I wish that would have been available when I was in my second year, because I didn't get a lot of involvement in Honors my second year just because that's the way the curriculum in set up right now. I just wish the changes would have been enacted when I was still a part of Honors, but I understand why they need to be that way. The other issue that we talk about is course evaluations for the courses, because I don't think some of the Honors courses get evaluated as often as they should, so it's kind of frustrating when I take a difficult course that doesn't stay on the syllabus and they're just putting the motions in place to evaluate the courses that are difficult. I wish that those had been put in place earlier so that the experience of people that have been taking those classes could have been a little better.

Interviewer: How would you recommend students be recruited and engaged in the HCDC?

Interviewee: I think it's just based on leadership within Honors, not specifically in the committee, so the Honors Mentor Council, they take applications in October. You start from being a mentor, they take applications for that in February or March, so that's a good way to get into the mentors and then you can do the Mentor Council, or it's e-board of ANCHOR, or just any way you can be involved in Honors in a leadership role within any of the smaller organizations I think would be a good stepping stone to be on this committee.

Interviewer: Can you give an example of a positive contribution that you or your peers have made to the committee?

Interviewee: I don't know if I have a specific one, but when we were talking about the different options for the new curriculum, all of us talked about how we wanted clarification for the senior project, or how it's hard with certain majors to also be in Honors, especially engineering or any of the sciences with a ton of credits because there's not a lot of credit hours that you can take per semester without over working yourself. I think the new curriculum balances the credit hours well with other majors, especially because a lot of Honors [students] are STEM. I think our positive contribution would just be making sure that the student's voices are heard, because I think the perspective is a lot different when you're a professor, because the professors teach, they do research, they do a ton of work, but they're also not the ones actually taking the classes and trying to balance it with other majors and minors and extracurriculars. I think our positive contribution is providing a voice for the students and making sure that the courses that were being offered were interesting and useful to people of all majors within Honors.

Interviewer: What/who do you think will be out greatest opponents in enacting change in Honors College governance?

Interviewee: I'm not sure there would be, at least from the people on the committee. Everyone seems dedicated to making sure that Honors is moving forward in a positive way. Especially because this is the Director's first couple years being the Director of the Honors College, so I think everyone is kind of committed to making sure that all the changes that are enacted are positive and moving towards a more effective Honors programs that is more accessible to more people.

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

The stakeholder could not think of anything else I should have asked.

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

Yes, she agreed to be contacted again if needed, and said that email would be the best way to reach out.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Another current Honors student
- Current president of the Honors Mentor Council
- Other student representatives in the HCDC

Possible next-steps:

- Reach out to the other stakeholders recommended to us in this interview.
- Compare insights to that of other HCDC members.

Dialogue 2

Stakeholder Group:
Honors Students/Previous Honors Students

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

Gender:
Male

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
This individual was a former Honors College Student who had voluntarily left the program. The objective of this interview was to understand what role the Honors College Governance played in his decision to leave the Program. In addition, the goal was to gain insight on his experiences while he was an active Honors Student.

How Does Conducting This Work Reflect On Your Team Problem Statement?
By interviewing this student, we were able to gain insight through a former student's perspective of the Honors College Governance. Quite simply, this perspective helps to reveal that curriculum isn't representing the interests of the students, which is important because it reveals a weakness of communication in the Program. Identifying these strengths and weaknesses are crucial in determining how Honors College Governance can be used to better foster student involvement and communication to develop a stronger Honors College.

Summary of Research:
While an Honors Student currently involved in the Grand Valley Honors College may experience many interactions with Honors Faculty, the perspective of a student who has left the Honors College may, in some cases, account for more interactions. This was the case for the student interviewed. Through his experience, the student felt that the Honors College didn't present any advantage to him. The course curriculum that interested him was available outside of the Honors Program and he seemed to receive no other form of academic reward for his efforts. While his interactions with Honors faculty was generally positive, he did recall two instances of tension while in the program. Though admittedly, he believes that these interactions were exceptions to the program as a whole. Ultimately, he speaks highly of the Honors College and nearly describes the experience as positive, but the main points of contention that he believed the College could improve on the curriculum and the evaluation forms. He didn't quite feel like his opinion was being

heard. Instead of being a part of a symbiotic, collaborative relationship with his professors, he seemed to be along for their ride. This is a valuable observation and may be used in further development of the design prototypes and future solution.

Important insights:

- The Honors College Curriculum didn't seem to represent the ideals of the student.
- The Faculty and Staff of the program were generally friendly with some exceptions.
- The student believes that the evaluation process could be reformed to better communicate the opinions of the students taking the class.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: So what attracted you to the Honors College before coming to Grand Valley

Interviewee: So I knew people ahead of time that were going to be in the Honors College. Yeah, I guess they were kind of doing it and so it's like, 'you know that's a good opportunity and I should try it too.' I didn't think that I had the ACT score to get in, but I applied anyways and that's when I got an email from the Director. And it was cool. I just thought it was more like a prestigious thing that might help in the future.

Interviewer: Did you live in any Honors housing?

Interviewee: I did live in Niemeyer.

Interviewer: And can you describe it?

Interviewee: I really liked living in Niemeyer. I mean there were a lot of really good things and a lot of really bad things. I guess it was really nice having my classes all right there. I think three out of my five classes freshman year were there. It was just a really like newer building. It was always really clean and it was nice having your own room too. Just everything about it, just having the space that a lot of other dorms don't have. That was nice.

Interviewer: Did you make use of all the space that was there, or do you think that a lot of it was underutilized?

Interviewee: I think that we used the space pretty good. I guess in the bedroom, you only had so much space you couldn't really do it. There wasn't a lot of options for different things. But, living room wise, I mean, I played soccer in my living room so sure yeah it was good.

Interviewer: Can you tell me some of the differences that you saw between Honors Students and non-Honors Students.

Interviewee: Absolutely, So it felt like a lot of the Honor students, the ones I classes with-- sometimes the ones that I had classes with they were pretty sociable and nice to be around. But then the other half of them just were kind of weird to be around, and not to be mean, but you can tell sometimes like nobody really wanted to talk. I guess at the same time that's pretty much everywhere, but it seemed like it was more so like that in the Honors College than in my other classes.

Interviewer: Why do you think that you ran into some groups that were really sociable out while others were kind of more isolated?

Interviewee: I don't know, I guess it's just the different personalities. I feel like some people are just more outgoing. The first couple weeks of college, I feel like, kind of dictate how you are around people you know. If you can make a lot of friends, then maybe you're more sociable than if you really struggle making friends in those first couple of weeks then you kind of isolate yourself. It was a little bit different for me. I didn't have a ton of friends but when I was around people I'm still like sociable.

Interviewer: Can you tell me a little bit about why you left the Honors College?

Interviewee: So I didn't see any benefit. There are two reasons. One I didn't see any benefit, and two: I didn't have the grades for it. So first off, it felt like I was really limited to what I was able to take. I mean, some of the classes seemed cool. But a lot of them, especially later on in your time here at the Honors College, didn't seem like they were really interesting classes. As opposed to right when I when I was in myBanner and just messing around, and I selected that I wouldn't be in an Honors College. So I searched for my electives and it just gave me so much opportunity. I will take classes like 'sports statistics' and 'history of rock and roll' and all these things that like sounded really cool that I wouldn't have had the opportunity to take had I stayed in the Honors College. And then on top of that, I didn't have the grades; my first semester I struggled. I took almost all Honors classes and I shouldn't have done that. Like for my business courses I took the Honors versions of it, which was cool because I literally crawled out of bed and walked to class. But the speed was a lot quicker and I didn't keep the grades to stay in the Honors College. And I wouldn't have been able to keep the grades to stand, still.

Interviewer: So, I take it that you're glad that you left?

Interviewee: Absolutely.

Interviewer: Can you tell me some examples of times that you felt emotionally or intellectually engaged within the Honors College?

Interviewee: I felt like some of the conversations that we had. And in particular, I had a live, learn, lead class. It was a writing class or something like that and I just felt we had a lot of cool conversations there about things that made you think. And it was one of those when the whole class was engaged too, that was cool. It wasn't always just that. I mean there's always the same people that talk. I'm more of a listener. But it's cool too. I did talk in some classes. That definitely was one of them.

Interviewer: Would it seem that that was more one on one conversations or were those more conversations collectively as a class?

Interviewee: Collectively as a class, now that was what was cool about it. Many times we had one on one conversations. I mean we had group stuff and I made some friends and I still see them and say hi. That's cool. I took a science class and the Honors College World Water issues. Eight people in the class. And it was really fun because we got to go on a bunch of field trips around the area for doing water experiments. While we were doing that you just talked to the person next to you and it was really fun because it was only eight of us. We all knew each other.

Interviewer: How did you communicate with the Honors staff and faculty and how frequently? Would you go in person? Would you email?

Interviewee: I guess it depends on what it was. I don't think I've ever met an Honors professor during office hours. I only really emailed them. If I ever did. I don't know. This was two years ago. Yeah I probably email them and most usually professors get back rather quickly. And that was always nice. I guess if you want to consider the front desk people as part of the faculty too-- they're always really nice and easy to get a hold of when you needed them and were able to answer questions whenever I had them.

Interviewer: As an Honors student, did you feel that your opinions were represented to the faculty administration? Or did you think that they were kind of out of touch with what you were feeling.

Interviewee: I guess it just depends on the staff member. There are two instances in which I didn't feel like I was really being heard. One time I was talking to an advisor and that was when I was communicating that I didn't want to be part of this college anymore. I gave her the reasons and I was just trying to figure out what my options were, and I felt like all the options she was giving me had to do with staying in the Honors College and that was frustrating because I don't want to be here anymore. Like I don't want options

that revolve around me staying here. I understand what you're trying to do, but it's like that was kind of frustrating.

And then the other time I had an issue with a professor. It was in my Honors business law class. We had to do a presentation or a project on a business case and my business case had to do with the ADA and had to do with a disabled person having to be a part of a plane. And in the project, the medium that I used was one of those where it was like a bunch of clip art and it just kind of moves through and you can put a voiceover on. And I had to describe a disabled person. I didn't know you could add your own clip art or your own pictures. So I just used the clip art. They didn't have any handicap symbol, they only had a wheelchair. The handicapped symbol is a person in the wheelchair. So I just assumed it would be OK. I asked multiple people, nobody showed any concern. So I put it in the project, and when she went over in class, she just ripped me apart about it. She said that I was being extremely discriminatory and she called me a bigot in front everybody and she was just being mean about it. You know, it didn't seem like she was joking at all. The way she handled her class, previously with students, there really wasn't a whole lot of joking going on. I felt like I was kind of attacked and it was kind of dumb because I didn't feel like I had the ability to stand up to her either. I'm pretty sure she was high up, not just the Honors College, but in the university as a whole. I didn't really feel like I had any power to do anything, so I kinda took it. And then a couple weeks later we had an exam and one of the exam questions was ripping me again, which is extremely childish. The question specifically said, 'In the utterly biased video depicting disabled people in wheelchairs…' That was the intro of the question. I read that, I looked up to her like 'What is wrong with you? Leave me alone. I'm sorry. I'm not a bigot. I'm not a mean person. Anybody that knows me knows I'm not a mean person.' And then, a semester later. I was talking to one of my friends that was in the same class and she said that she talked about that experience. She told her students about this time when she was joking around the student and the student took it too seriously. And that made me really mad. It's like, 'you didn't seem like you were joking at all about it'. And I ripped her apart in the evals. But that probably didn't even matter anyways because I felt like it didn't.

Interviewer: Do you think that that was kind of the norm? Or do you think that she was the exception?

Interviewee: Absolutely the exception. 90 percent of the time-- I'm trying to think of all the professors I've had, all of them were pretty good. I mean. It was the Honors College so they were all kind of hard but none of them were terrible. I really liked all the Honors professors that I did have and I feel like even other professors that are involved in the Honors College. Yeah, that stuff doesn't really happen.

Interviewer: So in comparing. Honors faculty and Honors professors to non-Honors professors, where would you rank their ability to teach, their ability to communicate with the students, and be their ability to be receptive to your opinions.

Interviewee: I guess a little more just because I'm assuming they have less classes and they're usually all Honors Classes. I'm assuming, I don't really know. But it felt like they have smaller class sizes and they know they're teaching on Honors College kids so they know it's like a different relationship, as opposed to a normal professor that probably has hundreds of students. But, I guess in the grand scheme of things it's probably the same or Honors professors are slightly better.

Interviewer: What changes would you make to the operation of the program to foster a stronger form of communication?

Interviewee: I guess… Are you asking what ways they could make it better or?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: OK. So like I was thinking about this. One thing that they could do is to get more, if they're needing more, students' opinions on stuff. It would be beneficial to have a, like when you do those LIFT evals for the professors, if you had more maybe Honors College specific questions when it's an Honors class instead of just being the same as every other class. Maybe do some, I don't know how many how much, or how many students would actually be involved. But like maybe do some Q and A's or just, you know, find ways that students are able to communicate their questions, comments, and things like that but in a way, it could also be nice to be anonymous about it too.

Interviewer: Absolutely. So kind of just last two things here. Who do you think or what do you think is gonna be the biggest opponent in enacting change in Honors College governance?

Interviewee: I feel like that's kind of hard to... I don't know, I feel like some of the professors I guess. I mean I don't really know the ins and outs of this but I feel like a lot of the professors are probably, you know, not super accepting to change I guess. They've been doing X for so long that you know, they probably don't see a need for Y I guess. But then again a lot of the professors, I mean a couple of the professors I had, not a lot of them, I guess only one, but like you have young professors. And I feel like, I don't know. Just after a while. I guess doing like the old style of teaching. But then again I feel like that's kind of hard to say because I feel like a lot of the business classes it was kind of like not high tech, but we use technology more and that was cool. So it's kind of hard to say the old style of teaching, but still just like an old way of running things. I feel like there's need to find a way to just get more students opinions on stuff and be willing to listen and change.

Interviewer: Absolutely. All right. And then do you know of anyone else I should interview regarding their Honors College experience?

Interviewee: So yeah I had a roommate in the Honors College, and he's still in the Honors College actually.

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

 "I think you've actually covered all my bases. If I think of one, I can definitely let you know, though!"

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

Yes, the stakeholder expressed that if we inquire more information, we can reach him through his mobile phone or email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Current Honors Student
- Former Honors College Director
- Honors College Professor

Possible next-steps:

- Contacting current Honors student, roommate of the interviewed stakeholder. He may Offer insight into his opinions of current representation in the Honors College.
- Interviewing current Honors Academic Advisors and Professors to hear the other side of the story.

Dialogue 3

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Honors Faculty/ FMHC

Estimated Age:
__ 20-30 ____ 30-40 __X__40-50 ____ 50+

Gender:
Male

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
Gain insights and opinions on the experiences of Honor Faculty members. Also, to better understand the role that Honors faculty play in the structure of the Frederick Meijer Honors College. This opportunity grants us with past and present experiences from the faculty perspective, which is key in understanding and redefining our problem statement. Learning about relationships from different angles is essential.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
Approaching the problem statement in terms of bettering the communication system between faculty and students, this interview highlights opinions from a faculty member of the Honors College. The faculty of the Honors College are one of our primary stakeholders. Gaining insight from one of the faculty members better allows us to understand the framework of the faculty suite and the Honors College itself.

Summary of Research:
From this interview, I learned valuable insights from the perspective of an Honors faculty member. Understanding ideas about how faculty truly want to see student engagement is an encouraging insight into our problem statement. I am now able to understand more clearly how faculty are interested in being a part of Grand Valley because of the interest the university places on student development. The stakeholder outlined some key details of the 'ideal student' in the Honors College that will provide a framework to my team in creating ways to better the student governance. I also learned how valuable the student voice is to faculty, opposed to it traditionally being thought of as a burden to handle student concerns. My stakeholder also discussed that analyzing trends from each semester is a valuable tool in understanding what works best for students.

Important insights:
- Faculty are open to students reaching out to them
- Students should not be afraid to fail in the Honors College environment
- Implement events for students to attend to feel more comfortable with faculty

Dialogue Questions and Response;

Interviewer: How long have you been teaching in the Honors College of Grand Valley?

Interviewee: In the Honors College, since 2011 officially, although I taught earlier than that, a course or two as a visitor at Grand Valley.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about your faculty career leading up to today, before coming to Grand Valley?

Interviewee: I was in graduate school and taught X at X University, and took a position as a visitor in the X department here at Grand Valley, and then a position in the Honors College opened up and I applied and was eventually chosen. So, it's kind of a short path.

Interviewer: What really attracted you Grand Valley in the first place?

Interviewee: The emphasis upon students. But one part, it is a younger university and so it's still figuring out its identity, but early on it made a critical part of its identity focusing on students developing students and making student leaders. There is a platitude that universities will say, 'Oh we make students leaders', and various iterations of that. When I visited Grand Valley it seemed to be an honest component of the institution.

Interviewer: With what frequency to you interact with students of the Honors College outside of students in your classes?

Interviewee: Outside of classes, if you include events, like ceremonies and at graduation and recognition, I see them there. But, in terms of playing football or anything, not much.

Interviewer: Can you tell me a little about an experience where you or someone you know had a great faculty and student communication system or relationship?

Interviewee: In my mind, what a good student and faculty interaction would be, is one where students are comfortable, or at least encouraged, to engage faculty with questions and concerns related to curriculum when it comes to courses. Even outside of the curriculum in the Honors College, where the emphasis upon developing relationships within the Honors College, as much as we can, or as much as I can as faculty member address whatever the needs are of the student. To address their need as much with my capacity, and to see more students encouraged to interact and engage, and have the confidence to do so. As far as a system or a model, that's a tough one, because each individual comes from an individual perspective with their own concerns, fears, anxieties, or levels of confidence. So do we approach each of them? An open door policy I think is a suitable one. But I guess more so just develop the culture.

Interviewer: What would you like to see improved to enable Honors students, besides an open-door policy, to communicate with faculty?

Interviewee: That is a good question. A newsletter helps, but not everybody reads the newsletter. What sort of a platform would encourage greater communication between faculty and students? That is a really good question to be honest. I mean, there are emerging technologies, but, to cast all of your eggs into one basket, those are always rising and falling in terms of popularity. What we as faculty think are popular are not always what students think are popular. Maybe more events in the office suite where students and faculty to intermingle freely, cookies and coffee. Where it is easy to mingle with students out in the open space, so it is less of an imposed ceremony and more of a natural thing. Then, it would get students into the space without having to schedule an office visit, which would give a sense of less pressure. It would give students a different perspective on what this space represents. I think that would help.

Interviewer: Are you aware of any common complaints between faculty and students or students directing complaints towards that Honors College itself?

Interviewee: That I can share, no. Sometimes the difficulty in mapping out the curriculum, but we are changing that now. So that is something that is in the process of fixing. One of the positive spins of the complaints, for lack of better words, is students coming to faculty and voicing their concerns about the curriculum and what needs they feel need to be met as we start to fine tune it in the future. The more we hear, the better we can adapt to the currents needs of students at least. For curriculum matters, students should contact faculty because, currently, we are all involved in the process. The

advisors are also involved in the process and the Director. So, just grabbing a hold of somebody.

Interviewer: How would describe the ideal behavior of a student in the Honors College?

Interviewee: Always ready to talk. Engage critically, argue, and commit to an assignment or a reading. One that is willing to fail. This seems counterintuitive to most Honors students. But a student that is willing to take the risk, by speaking out and trying something new, or allowing themselves to fail. Or even have the possibility that they might fail. Knowing that failure itself is not the end of the road. So the ideal student would be willing to engage on a critical level and take the risk that is involved when doing that.

Interviewer: What do you do with the student evaluations at the end of the semester?

Interviewee: Given that the evaluations can run from 'I hate you' to 'I love you' and anywhere between, the best strategy is to look for trends. Is there something that students are saying that is happening frequently? Not just something in this semester, but over the course of a couple years. Is there a pattern that is emerging that can be addressed, and if so, how will I address that? If one or two students say 'I hate this assignment' or 'I hated this activity', it is hard for me to make a structural change for the needs of one student when the rest of my students enjoyed or did not have a problem with it. For this reason we look for patterns, and that is what my practice has been to do.

Interviewer: How does having student committee members attend meetings affect the faculty participation at those meetings?

Interviewee: I cannot speak to those students in particular, simply because I am not on that committee currently. I had been on it in previous years, so I can speak to my experience there. Having the student opinion voiced, and having students that are confident enough to voice their opinions, assuming that they are confident enough, is helpful. Because when we see it, head of curriculum matter, we see it from the perspective of the faculty, and what we want people to be getting out of it and how we want to present it. We don't see it from the opposite perspective, on the receiving end. How does one receive this issue? How does one respond to it? So, having students being able to speak from the opposite side of the process and to how they would receive it is helpful to get the more well-rounded perspective of the matter.

Interviewer: Can you foresee any opponents to change in the Honors College and how these opponents may present themselves as obstacles?

Interviewee: As far as student government and leadership, no. I think there will be critics that come out with the curriculum change, but we haven't had a lot of those. But no, I cannot foresee that anyone would want to resist back against students speaking out.

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

The stakeholder did not have any other questions that he thought of that could have been asked during interview.

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

Stakeholder wishes to be contacted by email for any further inquiries and is more than willing to answer any questions that arise in the future.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Advisors in the Honors College

- Other faculty members in the Honors College Office

- Students

Possible next-steps:

- Reach out to more stakeholders in other interviews
- Research about how changes in the Honors College are carried out

Dialogue 4

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Honors Student
Estimated Age:
_X_ 18-30 ____ 30-40 _____40-50 ____ 50+
Gender:
Female
Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
To gain insight on current student opinions of the Honors College. This opportunity will also allow us to gain insight on how Honors College students communicate with faculty and if they feel that their voice and opinions are being heard.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
This reflects our problem statement as it will help us to understand the current communications going on between Honors students, faculty, and administration. It will also give us a student view on what needs to be improved within the Honors College.
Summary of Research:
From this interview, I was able to talk to an Honors student that felt a lot of frustration with the Honors program, and therefore is not currently involved in any Honors student groups or governance bodies. A lot of her frustrations grew from her experience with an excess amount of work for her freshman sequence. From there, she has continued to feel underrepresented when it comes to her thoughts and opinions on the inter-workings of the Honors College. This student, just like many other students, initially joined the Honors College due to financial reasons, as scheduling and gen eds are generally much easier to get through when on the Honors route, and Honors students are often given opportunities to apply for scholarships other students do not have access to. For this reason, it seems that the Honors program needs to find a way to support and keep these types of students, as they feel outcast in the chasm that is the Frederik Meijer Honors College.
Important insights:
• Some Honors students become extremely frustrated with the Honors College after they experience the uneven spread of work amongst the freshman sequences.   • Some Honors students don't feel like they have a voice within the Honors College community, nor do they believe faculty or staff care.

- For many, participation in the Honors College may start purely due to financial reasons.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: What attracted you to the Honors College before coming to Grand Valley?

Interviewee: The scholarship opportunities were better in the Honors program than in the normal program. Also, the opportunity to get multiple gen eds out of the way in one class was appealing so I would have more time to focus on classes for my major and minor.

Interviewer: Did you live in any Honors housing? Why or why not?

Interviewee: I did live in Niemeyer my freshman year. I chose to live there because the girl I wanted to live with wanted to live there.

Interviewer: What do you think are some differences between Honors and non-Honors students?

Interviewee: I think that the main difference between Honors and non-Honors students is how they chose to complete their education. I don't think that being in the Honors program makes you any smarter or more hardworking than not being in the Honors program.

Interviewer: What are some examples of times you felt emotionally or intellectually engaged within the Honors College, if any?

Interviewee: During my sequence freshman year, the amount of writing I had to complete was emotionally challenging because it caused a lack of time for me to do the things that I wanted to do.

Interviewer: How do you communicate with the Honors staff and faculty, and how frequently?

Interviewee: The only form of communication I have with Honors staff is communication with the teacher I currently have and also the emails I receive weekly that I don't really read.

Interviewer: Do you feel that your opinions are represented to the faculty and administration in of the Honors College?

Interviewee: No, I don't. They don't really ask about my opinion on much of anything.

Interviewer: What changes would you make to the operation of the Honors program to foster stronger communication?

Interviewee: I don't really know how it could be changed, but I think that changing it would strengthen it.

Interviewer: What do you believe is the program's biggest strength?

Interviewee: The programs biggest strength is allowing students to complete multiple gen eds at once. This allows students to focus more upon classes for their major and/or minor.

Interviewer: In what areas do you believe the Honors College could improve?

Interviewee: The freshman sequences are not structured in a fair or even way. Some are much more work than others, and the workload is uneven but the credit seems to be the same.

Interviewer: What was your worst Honor's experience?

Interviewee: For the final for my sequence, I had to write a long paper during finals week. This caused a lot of stress because I had to study for finals and find the time to write. These are both huge time commitments, so I didn't sleep much, especially the night before the paper was due. I was extremely exhausted, and then I had to move out the next day. It sucked.

Interviewer: What/who do you think will be our greatest opponents in enacting change in Honors College governance?

Interviewee: It's a mess because everything is unequal and confusing. There should be multiple sequences that are set up the same way so it's fair, instead of having students learn different things and calling it even. The amount of work some students receive is far more than others. There is too heavy a focus upon writing structured into the curriculum. Students in the non-Honors program do not focus as much upon writing as students in the Honors program do, and I believe that this is not strengthening our education at all. It is

very time consuming, and I think that if there was less writing, that more students who entered the Honors program would end up completing it. This was the main problem of everyone I knew who dropped the Honors program.

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

The stakeholder could not think of anything else I should have asked.

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

Yes, she agreed to be contacted again if needed, and said that texting would be the best way to reach out.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Other Honors Students

Possible next-steps:

- Reach out to suggested Honors students
- Consider ways to make the weekly Honors newsletter more desirable to read

Dialogue 5

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Honors Student

Estimated Age: ___x_ 20-30 ____   30-40 _____40-50 ____ 50+

Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:

Gain insights for our problem statement from the perspective of someone that has been a member in the Frederick Meijer Honors College for the past three years. Understand and listen to all the opinions and experiences from the student perspective about the quality of their experience in the FMHC and at Grand Valley.

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

We are looking to detect and analyze common trends and insights that will address and welcome new potential solutions for the problem we have been given. Our questions are tailored around the experience of the student as a whole, to ensure that we retain information about the key aspects in their Honors career.

Summary of Research:

This individual has been a member of the FMHC for the past three years since attending Grand Valley in fall of 2016. They have had an overall pleasant experience with the Honors program, however, have expressed some concern that not having consistent communication with the professor from their sequence is worrisome. They would like to see a system of communication that better enables students to keep in contact with their Honors professors for future research or recommendation letters for secondary education programs. In addition, the student feels that it may be beneficial to implement a system of communication over the internet where teachers are able to Skype or FaceTime their students participating in online classes.

Important insights:

- Feeling disconnected from professors after not being taught by them for multiple years
- Students living in Holton Hooker may potentially feel distanced from things that are happening in Niemeyer Living and Learning Center
- Students living in Holton Hooker may feel no different than other Honors students

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: What attracted you to Grand Valley and the Honors College before coming here?

Interviewee: I wanted to stand out a little bit, and increase my uniqueness when applying to future secondary schools. I feel that the Honors College at Grand Valley is recognized and would potentially give me a competitive edge in the future. I also thought that I could handle the Honors College, that it wouldn't be too hard, and so I thought I might as well go for it.

Interviewer: Why did you pick Grand Valley over any other schools you were applying to at the time?

Interviewee: I knew people already who were going to Grand Valley, and I thought it would make the transition easier.

Interviewer: Can you tell me a little about your living situation when you first came to Grand Valley?

Interviewee: I ended up living in Holton Hooker for my freshman year. I chose not to live in the Honors College at Niemeyer because I wanted to be around where all the other freshman were, even though freshmen were going to live in the Honors building it was kind of further away from the communities I thought I would be more interactive with. I lived in Holton Hooker because it was the newest, and I thought that it would be fun to live in a new place that wasn't dirty or old or broken.

Interviewer: What are some of the differences between Honors and non-Honors students you have noticed?

Interviewee: In Holton Hooker on the third floor there were a lot of Honors students that lived there. I lived on the first floor. So I feel like I was still living with Honors

students. The only difference to me was the walk to the Honors building. I knew that people who lived upstairs from me had classes with me that were in Honors or not, so I felt that there wasn't much of a difference between us because we were still doing and learning the same things, apart from the normal students not being in my sequence. I don't really think there was a difference between living in Niemeyer or Holton Hooker because I was still around the same people.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about instances that you have felt intellectually engaged with Honors faculty or administration?

Interviewee: Since my sequence was a smaller class, we had more discussions and I felt that the class was more intimate I guess. I only went to my professor's office hours a couple times, mostly because I did not want to walk all the way over to Niemeyer and had only a couple difficulties in the class. It was kind of a hike to get there. I feel like in the class, because we were all there for multiple hours two times a week, I felt like I could get to know the other students in my class better. I didn't do anything extra or specific that intrigued me to communicate with the professors more.

Interviewer: How have you in the past and how do you in the present currently communicate with faculty?

Interviewee: Since I didn't really go to their office hours much, I would always just email them or ask them in class. I spent so much time with them throughout the weekdays because of how much classroom time we had, I always had time to ask them questions and didn't feel that it was necessary to go to their office all the time. When I took my Junior Seminar, I feel like it might have been nice to have the option to Skype or FaceTime my professor because I took it online over the summer because I was home. Over email it was kind of tough and I didn't have that option to go into her office hours so maybe a face to face communication system through the computer could have helped a lot with clarity or questions.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about your experiences in the Honors office in Niemeyer?

Interviewee: I went last year with a lot of questions about studying abroad. The Honors office answered a lot of the questions I had. I wouldn't say that I have gone enough to create a relationship with any of those advisors. My advisor there was different both times because I don't think one of them was there at either time. But I am not quite sure if I have one specific Honors advisor. I went for studying abroad and planning out how I am going to complete the Honors College curriculum.

Interviewer: How do you feel that your opinions and concerns addressed to the Honors College have been translated?

Interviewee: I don't think I really had any opinions to bring in, it was mainly just questions. They did answer my questions though, to the extent that I wanted them to be answered. As a whole, I haven't had many concerns either. My concerns were only about what classes I needed to take next to be sure that I would have all my requirements for graduation.

Interviewer: If you were to change any of the operations within the Honors College to foster stronger, more effective, communication between staff and faculty what would you do?

Interviewee: I would say maybe the FaceTime part, or the over the internet face to face. Especially if people take summer classes or online classes in general. Another thing that I was thinking about recently was about the prerequisites in the Honors College. Since students usually take a sequence that covers a lot of general education requirements, they do not really have many "non-major" professors aside from their sequence. Since I am applying to a Medical school this summer, I do not really have any professors that I have kept in contact with because one of my only non- science professors is my sequence professor. The last time I saw my sequence professor was two years ago, so he might not even remember me. I worry that he may not remember me when I contact him for a letter of recommendation for my secondary education. I think if we did anything it could be finding a way to keep in contact with professors after having a class with them in our first part of college. I think it would be a good idea to potentially make it so that the professor you had your sequence with could also be your Junior Seminar instructor, or for Senior project. That way, it might be easier to continuously communicate with a professor over time.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about what you think the biggest strength is in the Honors College and what made you connect with it the most?

Interviewee: The biggest strength for me was the small classrooms sizes. I see people around campus that I had those small classes with and feel like I have built better relationships with them than people I just see around and vaguely remember from a lecture hall. Also, when the class size is smaller like that, I feel more comfortable answering or asking questions in front of the class because I know I am not being a burden to an entire lecture hall. It really helped me to be engaged.

Interviewer: What was your worst Honors experience?

Interviewee: Nothing that really reflects on the Honors College. I really only had bad experiences not being able to handle my sequence very well, but that is really it.

Interviewer: What do you think would be our greatest opponent in enacting change in the governance of the Honors College?

Interviewee: I think the biggest thing for the Honors College to overcome is upholding those relationships that they are trying to build.

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

The stakeholder did not have any questions they thought I should have asked.

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

Stakeholder prefers to be contacted by email for any further inquiries and is open to more questions in the future.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors Student (RA in Niemeyer)

- Honors Student

- Honors Students

Possible next-steps:

- Students listed above
- Advisor in the Honors College
- Resident Assistants in the Honors College

Dialogue 6

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors Student
Estimated Age: ___x_ 20-30 ____   30-40 _____40-50 ____ 50+
Gender: Female
Primary Goal of this Opportunity: Gain insights for our problem statement from the student perspective. This student has been a member of the FMHC since fall of 2016. Listen to uncover their experiences now and in the past regarding the Honors College, and potential solutions to any of the issues that have arisen for this student.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? It is out team's goal to propose a solution for the student governance of the Honors College. It is essential that for us to propose a solution that is worth implementing, we gather as much data as possible from students in the Honors College to understand what has worked and not worked for them in the past in terms of communication.
Summary of Research: This individual has been a member of the FMHC for the past three years since attending Grand Valley in fall of 2016. This student has had little to no difficulties in all of her experiences with the Honors College. She believes that professors presenting opportunities to do things with students outside of class opens doors into better relationships between the faculty and students, because of an experience she had with her professor outside of the classroom setting where she was able to know him as a real person. Her biggest flaw she saw in the Honors College was the environment in Niemeyer, where she found she made very few friends throughout her freshman year and felt a bit ignored in the part of Niemeyer that she lived in. As a whole she has had a great experience in the Honors College, and believes the only potential thing opposing change are professors reluctant to change their ways after so many years.

Important insights:

- Student enjoyed time getting to know professor outside of class and felt it made a difference by getting to know the professor as a real person opposed to an instructor.
- Discussion based style of learning may be more helpful for student engagement as a whole in the Honors College.
- Niemeyer may isolate some students while help others, need to research more about what we can do in Niemeyer to have students engage better

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: What attracted you to Grand Valley in general and what especially about the Honors College when deciding to attend here?

Interviewee: I was deciding between MSU and Grand Valley, and I looked into both of their programs and Grand Valley had a really good PA school. What drew me to the Honors College was it gave me a bit of a competitive advantage against other students at Grand Valley that would also be applying to PA school here as well, so I feel like when I came here I thought that it would further me in schooling after undergrad.

Interviewer: Can you describe your living situation when you came to Grand Valley and why you chose to live where you did?

Interviewee: I lived in Niemeyer my freshman year. I picked to live in Niemeyer because it had an apartment feel to it with individual bedrooms, and that was really important to me because I like my own space. I liked it because you had your own space to do any studying that you wanted to without having to be interrupted by roommates.

Interviewer: What do you think the difference is between Honors and non-Honors students?

Interviewee: Well the biggest difference I think of, especially when I was a freshman, is how Honors students have to go through their sequence. The sequence takes up so many of your credits as a freshmen. Everyone else had to take WRT 150 and classes like that, so I feel like we got a lot of General Ed classes out of the way, which was pretty important to me. Living in Niemeyer I also realized that I didn't have many friends outside of my normal roommates because most of the people in our wing in Niemeyer didn't really want to be bothered, so I know that I didn't even know most of the people around me freshman year.

Interviewer: What are some examples of times you felt intellectually engaged in the Honors College or with Honors faculty?

Interviewee: In my freshman sequence, we would have large group discussions instead of my professors just lecturing on and on about the material. This was a lot different than any of the other classes I have taken because you have to engage in the discussion and think outside the box for some of the answers to the questions they were asking.

Interviewer: How do you communicate with the Honors faculty and with what frequency?

Interviewee: I would usually just email my professor during my freshman sequence if I had any questions and my Junior Seminar was actually online over the summer. The only way I could communicate with my professor for the class was through email. I remember going into my professor's office hours for my sequence a few times though. I went maybe twice a month or so. I have also gone one time in the office for advising which helped me a lot because it really helped me plan out what Honors classes I should be taking and how to fill the rest of my General Eds.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about how you feel when you seek out help in the Honors College?

Interviewee: They seem to be very willing and open to answering questions, and what I found the most was that they really want to help you to not feel unsure about what classes you have to take in the future. They were really engaged in listening to anything I said and try to help me understand what I could be doing to better myself

Interviewer: What do you think we could do in the Honors College to foster stronger communication between students and the faculty?

Interviewee: Maybe some more field trip based activities that could be run by the Honors College for certain classes or for all students in the Honors College. Because when I was a freshman we went on a field trip to Dearborn for the Islamic Center of America because our class was Middle East Behind the Headlines. On that trip we went as a class and I thought that was really cool because it gave me a different perspective on my professors. It made me feel like my professors were real people too and it was fun because I got to know them. I think this could help some students that are maybe more shy in the classroom setting. If they could get out of their dorm or apartment in a comfortable setting where they can get to know their professor like I did you get to

realize that your professors are cool people too. I think it is important to do this outside the classroom, because that's what made the difference for me.

Interviewer: What do you think is the Honors program's biggest strength and what did you connect with in the Honors program the most?

Interviewee: The biggest strength was that it allowed me to interpret material better, especially stuff that I really wasn't comfortable with coming out of High School, like poetry. Stuff that I have never really been exposed to, and I liked that because of the way it broadened my intellectual abilities with different subject besides just science.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about your worst Honors College experience?

Interviewee: I wouldn't say this really fits the category of 'worst' but I think that it was just a little bit disappointing to me that after an entire year of living in Niemeyer, and considering that I think I am a pretty social person, that I still knew nobody besides my roommates and my RA. I feel like people talk about Niemeyer as a community where everyone knows each other, even though that was the exact opposite of my experience. I think the Honors College could try a little more to get people out of their comfort zone to make friends or something, because all I remember is passing people in the hall and smiling at them and they wouldn't even make eye contact with me, and it didn't really make me feel very welcomed in Niemeyer.

Interviewer: Who/what do you think would be out greatest opponent in enacting change in the governance of the Honors College?

Interviewee: Maybe professors that have been doing things the same for a really long time and aren't really willing to change their ways or go out of their way for students. I don't know. Maybe some people wouldn't want to go the extra mile or take more time than they already do out of the day to be with students more.

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

The stakeholder did not have any questions they thought I should have asked.

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

Stakeholder prefers to be contacted by email or the phone number she provided for any further inquiries and is open to more questions in the future.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors Alumni and former RA of Niemeyer

- Ex-Honors Student

- Honors Student

Possible next-steps:

- Students listed above
- Advisor in the Honors College
- Resident Assistants in the Honors College

Dialogue 7

Stakeholder Group/Location:
HCDC Student Representative

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

Gender:
Male

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
The primary goal of this opportunity was to gain a basic understanding of what current forms of student representation in the Honors College looks like. Specifically, how are Honors Students being represented through the HCDC and ANCHOR.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
The insights revealed throughout this interview were directly on par with the type of research needed to develop a method of bettering communication in the Honors College. By understanding the current methods of governance, communication, and representation, we can determine the best solution to the problem. In this way, the most encompassing solution can be implemented.

Summary of Research:
This interview provided information from a middleman's perspective between the students and the faculty. As a student member of the HCDC, the interviewee described the processes and routines of the HCDC. This revealed that the student representatives don't have much power and generally serve as consultants to student opinion. Instead of being a collaborator with the other members, it appears that the student members are tools for the success of the council. In addition, the interviewee described the structure of ANCHOR and the level of involvement he plans to take the organization to. Simply, participation and funding seemed to be the biggest problems that ANCHOR faced. With the improvements to the ANCHOR Organization, the president believes that ANCHOR is an assembly in which the solution to the communication problem/ student governance could be solved.

Important insights:
• Student Representatives appear to have minimal power in the HCDC.

- The Faculty are nice, but they don't lean into the students in a way that promotes mutual growth.
- The Honors Council could increase the amount of work they delegate to the Honors Students and ANCHOR.
- ANCHOR is established, but they struggle with member attendance.
- The students don't know that the HCDC has student representatives.
- The current goals of ANCHOR do not reflect being a representation of the Honors Student Body to the faculty, but they are interested in growth in this direction.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: What role do you play in the Honors Curriculum Development Committee?

Interviewee: Well right now my role is kind of minor. I'm on as the ANCHOR representative, there's another student on there that represents the student body. But other than her and me, it is all professors or members of the Honors College in the office there. And what's nice is, they ask us when they need a student opinion. But other than that we sit there and listen to what's happening.

So lately, They are changing the Honors program, as I'm sure you have heard. They're changing everything! So when they ask, "how would students like this?" or "how would students feel about this? Or that?", they ask us. That's basically our position, to speak on behalf of the students.

As for ANCHOR and my position on ANCHOR, when they have a curriculum resolved and figured out, we will use ANCHOR as a method of explaining the curriculum to the incoming students and hopefully, it will be a resource for students to schedule their classes or understand the curriculum.

Interviewer: What attracted you to Grand Valley?

Interviewee: I originally came here because I live in Michigan. I didn't want to go to MSU and I didn't want to go to U of M; Grand Valley just worked out. U of M was too close, it was literally 15 minutes away.

Interviewer: How did you get involved in HCDC?

Interviewee: I knew [faculty member], I took the "behind the Middle East in the headlines" sequence. I knew [Director of the Honors Program], [Honors Student] was involved, she's the president of ANCHOR. So I kind of just got pulled into it. When we were speaking at the orientation for the incoming Honors Students, [Director of the Honors Program] was talking to us about it, and I said, "[Director of the Honors

Program] I would love to be involved!" And he said "okay, we will start putting you on the emails!

Interviewer: How do you communicate with the Honors staff and faculty, and how frequently?

Interviewee: Well, definitely once a week. This Friday I have a meeting with [Honors Faculty], she's the counselor. I'm in there at least once a week speaking with [Honors Faculty] or speaking with [Director of Honors College]. I see all of them everywhere all day. I live near Meijer, I will live in Niemeyer next year. But it is frequent. The meetings are every week, but with the snow days, and school cancellations, we haven't had a meeting since last semester. Hopefully we have one this semester!

Interviewer: And you are referring to one-on-one meetings? Or Council meetings?

Interviewee: No, council meetings. We fill that entire table [points to large table]. There might have been one today, honestly.

Interviewer: And that is usually every other week?

Interviewee: Yes**.**

Interviewer: How was your role on the HCDC describe to you?

Interviewee: It wasn't, they just invited me on to speak on behalf of ANCHOR. The curriculum has come a long way, it was just us throwing ideas out there at different sessions, but now It is refining and reaching out to each individual Department. So right now our part is small.

Interviewer: Do you see yourself as a student representative? Please explain.

Interviewee: I would like to do more. Next year I plan to do more. When I am president of ANCHOR next year, I am pretty sure no one on the E-board is planning to stay on. So I'll get a fresh start. I think I have a platform for ANCHOR that will be very cool. This will hopefully get all or half of the incoming freshmen involved. And when we have a body of fifty to a hundred people, we can obviously have tremendous power with the office, with the College, or whatever we wanted to do.

Interviewer: What do you want to do?

Interviewee: The issues ANCHOR talks about follow Live. Learn. Lead. We live here, we learn here, there are classrooms. We Lead. because we are the Honors College. We are educated, we try and do cross Department education. I think we are missing on Live. If you go to any of the other freshman dorms, the doors are open. They have Community bathrooms, there's people in the halls. Niemeyer is quiet, the doors are shut. I can walk home to my dorm at 7 p.m. and bank on not seeing anybody.

So my plan for ANCHOR, so don't steal this-- AMCHOR gives a presentation in front of all of the Honors students at orientation, 500 students. I'm going to tell them that "it is what you put in". And so hopefully, what I want to do, is say "hey, everybody Venmo me a dollar, every week". We are in school for approximately 30 weeks, so that's normal dues if you were in any other club. If we have a hundred or a hundred and fifty people, we could buy bean bag chairs, games, and when you get this collection of people that are excited to hang out, that's when you do service opportunities. Or that's when you bring in the speakers. I like that the problem is there's all these service clubs that have 10 people because they advertise service, and nobody wants to do that. It's not exciting. But if we meet every week from 10 p.m. to midnight in here, and it is all Bluetooth speakers, food, bean bag chairs, and people doing homework. Every three weeks, we do a service opportunity or something like that. I think that would make ANCHOR so special, and it would make Niemeyer a community where we have our doors open, people are using bean bag chairs in the hall or something like that. If I was in the Honors College, and I heard they have these two hundred person get-togethers, they all have bean bag chairs, they have pizza--- I would be jealous.

Interviewer: What kind of feedback do you receive from the community? From both the faculty and the students you are representing?

Interviewee: Well, I don't even think the students know that I represent them. Only those people in ANCHOR know that I am a part of this committee. I think the student representative is the other female on the panel. I'd like for them to know, I have had several people come up to me through the Mentor Council or through ANCHOR and ask me for help. And I love to help, I left a tutor! I am a tutor! I'd love to help with scheduling, or anything! I just don't think they know that I am in that position. Feedback from people on the board, I know some of them personally outside of the board, but they like us, they are friendly! I think they are interested to hear what we have to say because sometimes they will propose an idea in the students will respond with "we don't like that!", and the faculty will be surprised!

[On one occasion] they were talking about how students don't communicate when they have homework. And I spoke up and said, "actually, that is wrong". When you have a sequence, and everyone is assigned the same homework, we are in each other's room

talking to each other. There is communication. And I think it's important for them to hear our input on these things.

Interviewer: What is your power of influence on the committee?

Interviewee: Minimal, but they do listen to our ideas. We can't make any decisions, but they do listen to us and ANCHOR. Our opinions are valued, it is nice.

Interviewer: Do you have voting powers?

Interviewee: I can second things. In a parliamentary procedure, I can vote, I can speak.

Interviewer: Would you make any changes to the operation of this committee?

Interviewee: I think more students. I think there's an educational side here. I don't have a PhD in education. There are parts of the curriculum that I shouldn't have a say in because we might not like it because it's hard. But I think outside of the curriculum, with Niemeyer, and the activities we can be doing. We have an entire building with around a thousand people. We could be having nightly get-togethers where we say, "hey everybody, come to the MPR for music and homework". They don't capitalize how many people live here and we have the space. We all want to be friends, we just don't have a way to be. I think that's the biggest problem.

Interviewer: What is your commitment level to the committee?

Interviewee: I'd love to stay on next year! But I don't put any time into it other than reading the emails and attending the meetings. [The emails contain] the minutes, and what we are going to discuss, so it's a little bit of digestion right before hand. They are sent out an hour before.

Interviewer: What are sometimes when you felt educationally or intellectually engaged in this committee?

Interviewee: A really unique experience that happens with the departmental Honors classes. For example, I took Honors accounting 213, and those are specific classes that are taught to only Honors students. It was great that I got out of accounting 240, just because it was an Honors class. I think they can communicate the value of these courses more, because it is small number of students, mine was 16 students. We would talk. I have my professors Snapchat. You can't get that in the non-Honors College, you're going to have 40 students. MSU, you're going to have 200 students. At U of M, you are going

to have 400 students. So I think those departmental Honors classes that are offered here, are so valuable!

Interviewer: How would you recommend students be recruited and engaged in the HCDC?

Interviewee: I think regular forums. If you have a forum once, you see the flyer, and you think do I care about that?" No. If you see that we have a forum with the Director, and the Honors chair, and the people that can make decisions, once a month-- you may not have a problem now, but if you have a problem next month, you can bring it up at the regular forum. I think a regular hearing of what the students have to say is important. If you say oh we have some problems, we are going to meet once to address them that is stupid. It needs to be regular because it is constantly changing, just how this College is constantly changing.

Interviewer: Can you give an example of a positive contribution that you or your peers have made to the committee?

Interviewee: The biggest problem we had was addressing the second year. Your first year is a sequence, and then it is a drop off. It is a total drop off of being in Niemeyer, being in Honors College, in taking Honors classes. Your second year is taking one class, your third year is your Junior seminar, and then it's your senior project. So we talked about how to have a more involved experience, how to have a more four year experience in Honors College. I told them, in my second year I was involved in Plants and Society. It was a great class, but I felt like my time could have been better spent. Maybe in my major? Or maybe in a more inclusive three credit or four credit Honors class? So I think that's what our biggest contribution was: making the second and third-year more inclusive, and pulling those juniors and seniors back into Niemeyer.

Interviewer: How many years total will you be here?

Interviewee: I am a junior, and next year I will be a senior.

Interviewer: How ANCHOR many members do you have? And how many active members do you have?

Interviewee: About 20, with _____ active, it totally depends. If we have a panel, and we advertise, it maybe 20 to 30 people. For the regular meeting it could be five people show up, it could be 10 people show up, it depends on what we are doing and how much we

advertise. For a lot of the times, if we put on an event we are putting them on for the community or we partner with the Mentor Council, we can get good attendance to those.

Interviewer: How would you describe the goal of ANCHOR at Grand Valley?

Interviewee: I think it's all about Community. There is service tied into it which is great. We had a speaker come in last semester and talk about personal income taxes. And when you get a job how health insurance works. Am I dependent? Your tax return, your W-4. So it is educational and service. But I think ANCHOR should be about community first. Let all the Honors students be friends, then when we are friends, that's when we can do something!

The third floor of Honor's Holton Hooker is Honors kids. And they are alienated. They are a 10 minute walk. We have appointed a person as our relationship Ambassador, and we are trying to figure out how to get the Holton Hooker kids more connected next year. Either appointing a board member from Holton Hooker or having two separate meetings every week.

Interviewer: One proposed solution to the communication problem in the Honors College, is to implement an Honors student government. Do you think that is an organization that would step on the toes of ANCHOR? Please explain.

Interviewee: Not necessarily. Because that's not really what our job is, we are more about having fun and being involved in the community. I'm sure that we could be intertwined, but I don't think that toes will be stepped on.

Interviewer: Is that a role that you think ANCHOR could play? Would like to see ANCHOR move into more of a position of administration/facilitation?

Interviewee: Yes. Next year, I want to take ANCHOR to the next level. I would love to have a 100-person club, a 200 person club, where we can all meet regularly and have a channel of Feedback where me as the President, or whoever is the next President, can talk to the Honors chair or people in the club, or we can invite professors to our regular meetings, or we can invite [Director of Honors College] to regular meetings. I think that we can be a community and a student governance. I think the student governance could tie in very easily if we have a club that size.

Interviewer: What do you think will be the greatest obstacle in initiating change in the Grand Valley Honors College?

Interviewee: I don't think any of the Honors College is a problem for us. I think they should delegate more. I think they should let us do more. There are students that want to be involved, that want to have a body. They want to vote, they want to make a change, and they want to do things for themselves. And I don't think that they will let us have that role. The other thing that I think is an issue is we want them to be more involved with us. And we tell them that. Their response is, "okay, how about we do a student governance body?" That, to me, sounds like a solution for them to not be involved. So, I think if next year, ANCHOR becomes a bigger group, I think there needs to be faculty there. I think they need to make a presence.

Interviewer: Where do you guys get your funding for ANCHOR?

Interviewee: It's Tricky. Funding is actually really annoying. This is my number one problem. For service projects, I can only get funding if it only benefits Grand Valley students. So if you want to make tie blankets for homeless veterans, they will not fund you. Because it does not directly benefit Grand Valley students. How are we supposed to give to the community if Grand Valley will not give us any funds for that? Obviously other clubs collect dues, but that is hard for us in the Honors College. We just got approved to collect dues, but it's already late in the semester. That's our biggest problem, we can't get funding to do the events our members want to do.

Interviewer: What is the one thing that I haven't asked you, that maybe I should have?

Interviewee: I think you hit it really well when you asked, "how can we improve the communication?" Imagine if the professor's ate lunch in here. If all the professors ate lunch in the MPR and all of the Honors students knew. If three-quarters of all of the given Honors professors are eating lunch in here at any given day that would be so cool. You could just come and talk and be like, "hey, it's not about homework. It's not about class. But you are a person too, and you're educated! Can we just talk?" I think the Honors Students would value that tremendously. That Professor could be your friend, they could help you with jobs, and they can help you with networking! The professors could just eat in here, or meet with students once a month, or have one night of the week where a sequence Professor has dinner in the MPR. The students would feel way more open talking to them, way more involved in the class, and would probably have a better learning experience! I think that is what should be attended to.

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

See above.

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

Yes, the stakeholder may be contacted through email correspondence.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:
 	
   • Mentor Council Chairman
 	
   • Honors Faculty Chair
 	
   • ANCHOR Holton-Hooker Ambassador

Possible next-steps:
 	
   • Interview Mentor Council Chairman
   • Interview ANCHOR Holton-Hooker Ambassador

Dialogue 8

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Honors Student

Estimated Age:
__X__ 20-30 ____ 30-40 _____40-50 ____ 50+

Gender:
Male

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
Students that are affected by the changes made in the Honors College are important to interview because their opinions and expectation are the needs our team aims to meet. Honors students provide insights to us through their past, present, and future endeavors within Honors. It is important to gain as much background as possible when designing a system that tailors to the needs of students, faculty, and administration.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
Students are one of the primary stakeholders that will be most affected by changes within the Honors College. It is important to gain as much background as possible when designing a system that tailors to the needs of both students and faculty.

Summary of Research:
This stakeholder has been a member of the Honors College for 3 years and has had an overall positive experience with Honors. The student is relatively social and preferred to live in Holton Hooker over Niemeyer, had a generally laid back sequence and Junior Seminar that made his journey through Honors a smooth process. Because the stakeholder has had little to no difficulties with the Honors College, he rarely contacts faculty and only out of necessity. The stakeholder reinforced the idea that he believes it may be necessary to have an incentive for students to communicate more with faculty and believes that if there were more faculty that fit his major he would be more apt to communicate with them. Student also fears that if a student government would be put in place students may participate strictly for the title opposed to truly enacting change within the Honors College.

Important insights:

- Contacting faculty is typically out of necessity
- Honors sequence has large contributing factor to the Honors experience as a whole
- Students need some form of incentive to want to make a change and engage more with faculty

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: Tell me about what attracted you to the Honors College before coming to Grand Valley?

Interviewee: I didn't know we had an Honors College actually, I was just interested in the school. I started looking online and saw that we had an Honors College and I checked the requirements and it seemed like something I could definitely do. I don't know whether it was a challenge or just the fact that I would be bummed out if I didn't do it. I wanted to do the highest level of education I could at this school. I knew I wanted to go to grad school so I thought it may help.

Interviewer: Tell me about your freshman campus residency experience. Honors housing and why or why not did you choose to live where you chose? Can you describe your living situation as well?

Interviewee: I lived in Holton Hooker, which was the first year that it was available for us. I chose to live there because I knew that I didn't want to live in the Honors College because I had talked to someone who went to Honors and they told me to not live in Niemeyer if I was relatively social because it was very closed off. Holton Hooker was amazing, I lived on the third floor which was mostly all Honors students. It was very social and there was a lot of mingling with people in the Honors College and not in the Honors College. It was a better location than Niemeyer for me personally, because almost all of my classes were over there.

Interviewer: In your experience here at Grand Valley, what do you believe are some of the key differences between Honors and non-Honors students?

Interviewee: I have always felt that there is less of a difference than the Honors College tries to make it out. You go into those rooms with all the sticky notes and there are all these reasons why the Honors kids are better than the Gen Eds and I know so many people that didn't do Honors because they didn't know about it or didn't care about it and they all seem just as well rounded and intelligent as kids in Honors. So because of that I don't think there is too much of a difference between the students, but

maybe for people going into college there are definitely a lot of Honors students that have their eyes set on something after undergrad or something in particular they really want to do. So the Honors College is definitely a draw for sure with these students.

Interviewer: Please describe some examples of times you felt intellectually engaged with faculty and the Honors College?

Interviewee: During my sequence I felt the most engaged, because it was a lot of discussion based and really easy, which is the main reason I chose that sequence so I wasn't overwhelmed coming into my freshman year. It was more conversation type sequence with discussions that I thought were really interesting. That was probably the most engaged I felt with the Honors College. My professor was really cool too. It wasn't so much rigorously academic which I know a lot of the other sequences were. For the most part none of my Honors classes have been very challenging at all. I hear so many people complain about how hard and unfair their sequence was but I liked mine a lot and felt that it really did a good job of keeping everyone engaged in the conversation. It seems like the sequence either made or broke your freshman year.

Interviewer: How do you communication with the Honors faculty and staff and with what frequency do you communicate with them?

Interviewee: For frequency, very rare. But when I do have to contact them it is strictly out of necessity. I haven't since freshman year talked to my sequence professor at all, and for my Junior Seminar, it was Art and Modernity, it was kind of required to go into office hours and talk with them, but I didn't mind that because she is really nice. I met again for the first time in a year to set something up for my Senior Project. But besides that, there is really no need for me to communicate with them to be honest. It sounds bad but any time I talk to faculty it's faculty that are a part of my major.

Interviewer: Please elaborate about any of your past experiences in the Honors suite and office?

Interviewee: I never went into the office outside of my personal schedule, which was for my Senior Project. But I don't think I ever went in there to organize anything else because I had my schedule pretty laid out. I rarely go in there just because there isn't a necessity to do so, and it is always out of the way.

Interviewer: What changes would you make to the Honors program to foster stronger communication between faculty and students?

Interviewee: I think there really just needs to be some sort of incentive to talk to faculty. Not that we wouldn't want to, but why should we go out of our way to? At least for me personally, there aren't any professors that I know of that are into the same things that I am in terms of my path of education, so there is not much of a reason for me to talk to Honors faculty about those things. I think faculty have so much to offer, but I have noticed that so many of the people I have had classes with have similar interests academically to me. I feel like most of the Honors faculty are more 'Humanities' based interests, which makes it hard to go ask for advice because our lives are centered around getting into some science type of grad school. I think maybe for me personally that if there were faculty in my major I would be far more inclined to go talk with them more often than I have.

Interviewer: What do you think has been one of the Honors College biggest strengths?

Interviewee: I think that my favorite thing about it was how the sequence was sort of loosely structured and scheduled so that the professors had some wiggle room to work with the class. Which could be for the better or the worse, but my sequence went in a very positive way. I felt that I was there to learn things and that the focus was to not have readings and assignments done by certain dates but to work through the more genuine participation aspect of the course.

Interviewer: Please describe your worst Honors experience.

Interviewee: Honestly I have had a pretty positive experience because all of my Honors classes have been really easy. I think this is mostly because of my major and preferences, but I had an Art class and I always wondered 'why am I here?' We had a random French piece of art that we were assigned to that was downtown and had to go multiple separate times and I didn't really find much value or interest to that because I thought, 'why not just look online?' But in terms of bad experiences, that is about it, which is pretty good I'd say.

Interviewer: What do you think would be our greatest opponent in enacting change in the Honors College?

Interviewee: I would probably say a mix of students not really caring and faculty not wanting to change. I would say that a lot of students just want to slide through Honors and do not care that much and just want the check mark on their resume. I can imagine also if there was some sort of student government that communicated back and forth with faculty that some students would do that just to do it, and not really care about it that much but take a position to have some sort of title or resume builder. We all know

those students that participate in clubs just so they can add another extracurricular to their list.

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

Stakeholder could not think of any other questions that should have been asked.

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

Stakeholder prefers to be contacted by email or phone.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors Student, RA

- Honors Alumni

- Honors Advisor

Possible next-steps:

- Student that did an Honors Study Abroad trip
- Honors Advisor
- Honors Alumni

Dialogue 9

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Full-Time Honors Faculty

Estimated Age:
_ 20-30 __x__ 30-40 _____40-50 ____ 50+

Gender:
Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
Gain insights from the perspective of faculty members and ideas they may generate that could increase the efficacy of our innovations. Faculty can provide interesting, and knowledgeable feedback concerning the action and direction within the Honors College. Not only is a full-time faculty member of specialty in their specific field of interest, but also specialized in the knowledge of the operations of the Honors College itself.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
To address our team problem statement, we need to understand the views, opinions, concerns, and insights that several of our primary stakeholders have to offer. To ensure that our innovation prototypes meet the needs of the stakeholders, we first have to identify the areas in which our stakeholders would like to see improvement within the Honors College.

Summary of Research:
Throughout the course of the interview, the stakeholder really emphasized the importance of face to face dialogue and how it betters the communication between students and faculty. She encouraged a similar idea that was brought up by another full-time faculty member, where the Honors College should incorporate more events that encourage students and faculty to mingle over dinner or food. She found this especially valuable during her time at school, and believes that for students to get the maximum experience from the Honors College that it is essential for them to talk and be proactive about their challenges and experiences with faculty.

Important insights:

- From the perspective of this faculty member, face to face communication is the most preferred method that fosters better communication
- Organized events that may encourage student and faculty interaction over dinner or with food would be valuable for students and faculty
- Students opening up to faculty about school related problems is not a weakness but rather an attribute of an ideal Honors student to voice their concerns

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: Please tell me a little about teaching in the Honors College?

Interviewee: Sure. I came to Grand Valley in 2012, and started teaching part-time in the X department. I have been in Honors as visitor since 2013 and I became a full-time faculty member in 2014, I believe. So about 5 years.

Interviewer: Please tell me about your faculty career leading up to today?

Interviewee: When I finished my dissertation I was a faculty member at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. I taught in the Department of Art and Art History. I have a husband that is an academic, and he got offered a Dean position here, and so I followed him here. That's how I got to Grand Valley.

Interviewer: What were some of the external factors that attracted you to Grand Valley?

Interviewee: Not really, I was what they call a 'trailing spouse', which sounds awful but that's what we're called.

Interviewer: With what frequency and methods do you communicate with students here outside and inside your classroom?

Interviewee: I communicate a lot by email with students because they email me a lot. Outside the classroom, a lot of students come and talk to me during my office hours. By virtue of being here in the office I run into students and chat with them.

Interviewer: Please tell me about an experience where you or someone you know had a great system of student-faculty communication?

Interviewee: I love when students come into my office hours, so I guess just talking with them and following up with them with emails. A lot of students, if I do something for them like write a letter of recommendation or a letter for a grant, they will often give me hand written notes and I think that method of communication still goes a really long way in terms of a good communication experience. In general though, a lot of email and a good amount of face to face communication with on occasion a phone call.

Interviewer: What would you like to see in the Honors program to better enable the student faculty communication?

Interviewee: One of the things I would like to have are more informal gatherings of students and faculty. When I look back to my undergraduate and graduate school years, that was something that was particularly meaningful to me. For example, when I was at the University of Delaware as an undergraduate, each semester all of the majors were invited to their own private dinner. It was held on campus and had campus food, but a faculty member would come and meet us and for an hour or so we would sit around and talk. That kind of informal connection made me feel like the department cared about what I was doing and was concerned enough to check in informally at least once a semester. Those dinners are still etched in my mind because of how valuable they were to me. I like the idea of informal gatherings of student and faculty members. When I was in graduate school, one of my best friends and I would organize a social each semester and plan it with lots of food and drinks and have faculty come and talk to us about what they were teaching. It was so nice to get to know them on that personal level and I think that is so important.

Interviewer: Please describe to me any common complaints you have heard from students or faculty within the program? How do you typically hear these?

Interviewee: A lot of times students will say that the classes are 'too hard for an art credit'. Most of times when students talk to me they will tell me about stresses they have in their lives, anxieties in the classroom. We try to problem solve that, and brainstorm ways to approach these problems. But I haven't really had many students actually complain about Honors to me. Even when I went to Haiti with a group last May I never really found them complaining about anything.

Interviewer: What do you think are the best ways for Honors students to voice their opinions?

Interviewee: Come to office hours. I can't tell you how important it is. I don't want to beg my students to come to office hours, but I think that students try to seem 'too busy' and too busy so that they can't take 15 minutes to go and talk to their faculty member.

A lot of the difficulties in communication or the perceived difficulties in communication would be obviated by students actually approaching me. I mean I sit in here, and obviously get work done, but often think 'Huh, 3 hours have gone by and not a single student has come in to talk to me'. I know that some faculty members require their students to come to office hours and I think I might start to do that. I just think that opening those lines of communication is important.

Interviewer: How would you describe the ideal behavior of an Honors Student?

Interviewee: The ideal student will understand what he or she needs to do and accomplish. They need to know the hoops that have to be jumped through, and I don't mean to put down the kinds of things you have to do in Honors, but just to be aware and to educate themselves. The ideal student would talk to their professors. The ideal student would have a plan, but not be so wedded to that plan that they wouldn't take opportunities that arise. But for certain, just making sure that the student meets with faculty members and meets with advisors. I think that would go a long way with helping Honors students really thrive within the program.

Interviewer: How do you use your student evaluations in Honors and in your class in particular?

Interviewee: What I try to do is throw out the very best ones and throw out the worst ones, and then look at the critical mass. What did most students think of the class? There will always be students that love it or hate it, so I always try and look at the critical mass. If the critical mass say they all hated a reading, I will consider changing that reading. If they say, we really love when we have debates in this class, then I may shift my focus and see if another debate can be fit into the class. I think that the more concrete suggestions that students give in evaluations make them more valuable to me. I absolutely read them and evaluate them and take them into consideration. I still usually throw the best and the worst out unless several of them are the worst or the best.

Interviewer: How does students attending meetings effect the faculty participation?

Interviewee: I love having the student perspective in there. I am not the one who always remembers to say it but inevitably one of my colleagues will say, 'What do you think about this? Would you take a class like this? Does it sound interesting to you?' It is really good to get the student perspective. It is essential. I don't think it would be useful in our faculty only meetings, but in things like the HCDC it is very helpful.

Interviewer: What do you think, or who do you think, could be our biggest opponent in enacting change in the Honors College?

Interviewee: I generally think that universities can be resistant to change, because they are essentially big bureaucracies, right? You have the administration and the academics and eventually the students and so on. I think one of the challenges right now is going to be budgetary concerns. There are fewer and fewer high school students coming out of high schools so more colleges competing for fewer students and I think sometimes to enact change you need to invest. That might be a challenge. I don't see anyone in Honors that has really thrown up any roadblocks to change. It seems to me like most of the faculty here want to be innovative and do proactive things. Even if they are not interested at first, they tend to get on board.

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

The stakeholder could not think of another question that should have been asked.

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

Stakeholder agrees to be contacted by email or in office for any further inquiries and is open to more questions in the future.

More connections this stakeholder provided:

- Former Honors Faculty and Residency

Possible next-steps:

- Contact former Honors faculty
- Full-time faculty members
- Members of ANCHOR

Dialogue 10

Stakeholder Group/Location:
President of the Honors Mentor Council
Estimated Age:
___X_ 20-30 _____   30-40 _____40-50 _____ 50+
Gender:
Female
Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
This interview's goal is to gain insight from an Honors Student who is heavily involved in the Honors College and is in a leadership position. This will help to gain insights about how the Honors College currently communicates with students, and how faculty and Honors students interact and how often.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
Our team's goal is to create an effective way for Honors students to voice their opinions and to communicate with the Honors College administration. Learning about the current communication happening between students in leadership and faculty will allow us to build off of the current system in order to create a better one that will allow more students to become involved.
Summary of Research:
The interviewee expressed general positive feelings toward the methods and level of communication between the Honors Mentor Council and the Honors College faculty and administration. The council and faculty have frequent meetings as well as email back and forth. This could prove to be a great model of communication to pull ideas from when creating a new system. However, this is representative of a very small number of students within the council, and the interviewee expressed concerns with getting Honors Students involved in events. This could also be an obstacle for us in getting students to participate in Honors College governance.
Important insights: • Student participation levels may be an obstacle for our goal of student involvement. • Students have expressed their desire to remain involved through their sophomore and junior years with the Honors College.

- Direct, weekly meetings with Honors administration has greatly improved the functioning of the Mentor Council.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: What attracted you to the Honors College before coming to Grand Valley?

Interviewee: Small class size really attracted me and I liked being a part of an even smaller group on an already kind of small campus. I really liked the faculty interaction that I've heard about through Honors. The dorms were a nice perk too.

Interviewer: Did you live in Niemeyer?

Interviewee: Yeah I did. I lived there for my first two years.

Interviewer: How did you first become involved with the Honors Mentor Council?

Interviewee: So I was a mentor my sophomore year and then they sent out emails requesting people to be on the Mentor Council and I really wanted to find a leadership role with Honors. I've always liked being in a leadership position. So then, in my junior year, that November of my sophomore year I got inducted onto the Mentor Council and then the following November I was elected as president. I've really liked all the experiences that I've had through that.

Interviewer: How do you communicate with the Honors staff and faculty if at all and how frequently?

Interviewee: I work with them pretty frequently. I probably communicate with _____ multiple times a week. We have a lot of events going on. Every other week I have an hour long meeting with _____, me and the Mentor Council secretary both meet with her. We just keep them up to date on everything. We have biweekly meetings on Sundays as a council and I kind of send them a synopsis of what we did. Just try to keep them updated.

Interviewer: And so when you say _____ you said is that your advisor?

Interviewee: Oh ____. _____ is the Honors advisor.

It is a newer thing that we are working with her. ANCHOR is partnered with _____ (the other Honors advisor) and then we got partnered with _____. It's a new thing this year, but it's working out really well.

Interviewer: How was your role on the Honors Mentor Council initially described to you? What did they say were your duties as president?

Interviewee: So I guess basically my major duties are to organize the meetings that we have as a council and collaborate closely with the Honors office. I work the closest with the Honors office on a regular basis and then we've been really trying to work with other groups this year too, so that's another big thing that I'm left up to. And then just maintaining all of the mentors and maintaining the name of Honors is a big thing that the president's in charge of. Just kind of making sure that everyone's living up to their expectations.

Interviewer: What challenges have you experienced in fulfilling your role as the president?

Interviewee: One of the biggest challenges has been getting involvement for other activities that we are trying to plan, because we've had a lot of feedback that people want more opportunities to connect with their mentors and other students within Honors. We've just been having a hard time getting them to actually attend the events that we do have. So I'd say that's probably been the biggest challenge.

Interviewer: How do you go about communicating with the students and spreading the word about your events?

Interviewee: Normally we go initially to the mentors, so I email every single mentor what the event is. We have a flyer made and then we've been using social media a lot. We have a Facebook page for the mentee class, so like the class of 2020. So we post it (the event) on there and then we post it on the mentor page too. And then we recently just had the idea of creating an Instagram. So we started it initially as the Mentor Council Instagram, but then Honors College just took it over. We're going to do a mentor Monday event. So there's going to be a bio of one mentor every Monday and then we're also going to advertise on there because we've been finding that people haven't been using Facebook as much. We also print out flyers before every event and hang them up in Niemeyer. Sometimes in Holton-Hookier.

Interviewer: What kind of feedback do you receive from the faculty members or your constituents in the Honors Mentor Council?

Interviewee: We've received a lot of positive feedback from the faculty members. I think they really like the welcome days program and how it kind of introduces the freshmen into a positive light into Honors. A lot of them really like when we do a sequence meetup where they can actually go and meet the students that are going to be in their sequence and ask questions. I think a lot of them think that's a really neat opportunity. It's kind of a

more casual environment to actually meet your students. From the faculty we've heard a lot of great things and the Honors faculty have really liked the way that welcome days and the mentor program has been expanding and changing.

Interviewer: What changes do you think you'd make to the operation of the council to foster stronger communication? Or do you think it's going well?

Interviewee: I think that the changes that we made that we're now working closely with _____ have been helping a lot. I think sometimes previously we would come up with these ideas and then we'd take them to the Honors office and it wasn't really something feasible. So now we kind of know ahead of time what we can do. We'd kind of like to do more Honors-wide events. We talked about doing study sessions in the MPR. We wanted to get more than just the freshmen, because a lot of times we've heard that people, once your move on to your sophomore, junior year you don't really have any connections within Honors unless you're involved in things like the Mentor Program. We've really been interested in that and finding ways to do that.

Interviewer: What would you say your level of commitment to the Honors Mentor Council is? How often you have meetings?

Interviewee: We have a meeting every other Sunday as a council and I have a meeting every other Monday with _____and then I just go in and out of the Honors office periodically. I probably correspond with them at least every other day either through e-mail or just checking in.

Interviewer: What are some examples of times you felt emotionally or intellectually engaged with the council if any?

Interviewee: I guess like when we actually have our events, I feel pretty engaged because we planned all of these things and actually seeing them come to life, especially during welcome days. It's kind of crazy to think that we planned all of that. It's actually like 500 people attending. So that's pretty cool. And especially for me, I lead all of our meetings so I'm pretty engaged the whole time, and having to keep the meetings going and keep everyone on topic.

Interviewer: How would you recommend students be recruited or engaged with the Honors Mentor Council?

Interviewee: We send out an email to all of the mentors and then from there we review their applications and then we also have interviews. It would be kind of nice to have some recommendations from faculty members or things like that, just because sometimes

we don't really know who they are. It would be nice to have an idea of who we're interviewing. But it's turned out pretty well so far.

Interviewer: Please give just one example of a positive contribution that you and your peers have made to the council?

Interviewee: I guess I'll use the most recent one. We are collaborating with the Honors advisors for an event this Monday actually called Schedules and Sundaes, because they kind of have a hard time getting word out to freshmen and we kind of have a hard time having enough things to do. So we're having them meet in Holton-Hookier in a lab and we're going to have ice cream, but then the advisors will also be there to help answer any questions. So it's kind of just a neat way to get them to talk to the advisors without having to go make a scary appointment.

Interviewer: What level of impact do you think that the Honors Mentor Council and the Mentor Program have on connecting and informing students about the Honors College?

Interviewee: I think that it has a really high-level impact, especially your first week there because those are the first connections that you make. And I always use the example, I met my best friend during Honors welcome days and I still live with her and talk to her on a daily basis. So I think it just kind of forces them to go out and make those connections. And I think it just really helps calm people down.

Interviewer: What or who do you think will be our greatest opponents in enacting change in the Honors College governance and communication with students?

Interviewee: Maybe the students will kind of be the biggest roadblock just because in order to change it they're going to have to want to make changes and be involved. So I guess just finding the right people to actually be involved and stick with the changes I guess.

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

Stakeholder did not express any questions they would have wanted us to ask.

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

Yes, by email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors Mentor council secretary

- Two other new members coming onto the Honors Mentor Council
- Mentioned getting in contact with _____, the Honors advisors

Possible next-steps:

- Connect with people interviewee provided

Dialogue 11

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Part Time Honors Professor
Estimated Age:
___ 20-30 ____ 30-40 _____40-50 __X__ 50+
Gender:
Male
Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
The goal of this opportunity was to identify some of the experiences that a part time Honors professor would have specifically regarding the communication barriers and administrative obstacles in the way of initiating Honors College change.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
The role of a part-time Honors professor can provide additional insight into the diversity of students and faculty. By identifying these diversities, we can work to innovate comprehensive solutions to our problem.
Summary of Research:
Unfortunately, this Part time Honors faculty member was more detached from the Honors College than we thought. His course had since ended and he hadn't been involved with the Honors College since. However, he did provide useful insight into the delicate balance of the administrative side of part-time Honors professors. This system was a mess, and may confirm suspicions that opponents to change may be found in these outlands. Additionally, he highlighted curriculum shouldn't be student driven.
Important insights: • Some Honors faculty don't observe a communication problem within the Honors College. • Some Honors faculty believe students shouldn't control their own curriculums because they aren't experienced in the fields. • Some University professors don't believe an Honors College should exist. • Opponents to change in the Honors Department may be the department heads of non-Honors programs.
Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: How long have you been teaching in the Honors College?

Interviewee: I think we were teaching for about 17 or 18 years. It has all been within the [Honors Course Name]. [Honors Faculty Member] designed the course, and invited me to be one of the members of the team teaching the course. It was a four semester sequence that was spread out over a two year period. Unlike the other sequences in the Honors College which were compressed into one year. I think we ended up getting a lot of engineering students in that sequence because it fit into their very busy schedule. And that worked fine. It was one of the advantages of the two year system. Spreading it out meant you stuck with the same group of students for some period. People go through a lot of changes when they come in September. First year of college would pass and then two years later we would see them. A lot of intellectual maturing goes on during that period and it was quite exciting and stimulating, and very effective to work with the same group of people for four semesters like that. Everybody knows everybody and [Honors Faculty Member] cultivated that.

Interviewer: Is he still on sabbatical?

Interviewee: No, he's back off sabbatical, but he's doing a reduced teaching loads and a phased retirement. I was thinking that was his plan. That's why we ended the [Honors Course] because he was retiring, going into sabbatical, and then he was going to start the phased retirement. So we decided to phase the [Honors Course] out of operations. Originally the course had five professors teaching it. We had [Honors faculty] from the English department, [Honors faculty] from the Philosophy Department, [Honors faculty] from the art department, and we had [Honors faculty] who was a specialist in medieval history. And then we had [Honors Faculty] from the music department. That went for a few years like that, but then they said it was a little too expensive having five people share and it was reduced to four.

Interviewer: Tell me a little bit about what attracted you to Grand Valley and this position.

Interviewee: I was in philosophy. And at that time that I went on the market this was in the late 1980s, there were a lot of people coming out of the PHD programs in the United States in philosophy and very few positions in the United States. So, over a four year period I applied to over 400 jobs and I eventually got one at Grand Valley State University. When that came through, I was quite excited about it. I started out here in a visiting one year appointment in 1989 and they had a tenure track position open up. So I taught here for one year as a visitor, and I applied for the new tenure track position that opened up while I was here. And they selected me, so I was quite pleased. And I just had a very good experience at the school: very good faculty and very enthusiastic student body.

Interviewer: Let's work into your time at the Honors College. Describe for me a little bit about what the difference is in being a part time Honors professor versus a philosophy professor in the Philosophy Department.

Interviewee: Well you are teaching Honors students and it's a cut above and a higher level of engagement. So more can be demanded, more can be expected, and more is delivered by the students. And also being part of a team teaching a course was very exciting and very effective. We sat in on each other's lectures. In our home department, I taught a course in medieval philosophy, and in fact I did the same course in the Honors Program spread out over the four semesters. I used the same books and essentially delivered the same lectures. The Home Department medieval philosophy course is a 300 level course. But I think the Honor students rose to the occasion. I mean, I was teaching them a junior level course in the Honors program and people rose to the occasion and there was a very high level of engagement on the part of the Honors students and being part of the team. So it wasn't just Medieval philosophy. It was medieval history, it was medieval art, it was medieval literature, it was medieval music. I was sitting in on the other professor's lecturers and then sort of trying to adjust what I was doing in philosophy to what was going on in history and literature. And them doing the same thing to kind of sync up. Then over the years, we became more and more coordinated. So, the course got better. Over the years, as we listen to each other's lectures and carried out this board meeting, but then it really kind of rebounded on the philosophy course I taught in the home community for our majors in philosophy. And I brought a lot of the history and literature references so it was good for everyone.

Though administratively the way it worked out was very complicated because it was a four semester sequence of courses and we ran two sequences at the same time. So every fall semester we would have the first semester of a sequence and the third semester. Then every winter we would have the second course in the sequence and the last course in the sequence. So we're always running two of these sequences together. Now administratively, the way it worked out was each of the four semesters involved concentration on a particular aspect. The first semester was history. Second was philosophy. Third was art. And I think the fourth was literature. But each professor also lectured in the other three semesters. The semester that was heaviest on philosophy, I would get course release from the home unit. So I would only teach two courses that semester. Winter semester I only taught two courses in the philosophy department. The fall semester, I would teach three courses in the philosophy department and my participation as a team member in these two courses would count as overload. Some years they would do a comp. as if you're an adjunct teaching a course. So I got like [Dollar Amount] for teaching those.

Then they changed the requirements. This is too complicated to go over the details, but they had what was called the area of significant focus. You had to do that in addition to your doing your research. I would count this as my significant. I would get

released from the home unit to teach this course and then the College of Interdisciplinary Studies would actually pay my salary for teaching this one course. This is going for all four of the profs teaching them, so it's very complicated administratively.

Interviewer: So this was the program for all four professors?

Interviewee: I believe so, except for [Honors faculty] who was the course supervisor. He always got a one course release every semester for doing that. Then because the history was so heavy, initially the history professor got a one course release both semesters from the home unit. Eventually they stopped doing that which made the history professors reluctant to teach in the course because it was it was such a heavy overload.

In the Honors program, there's some people who are there dedicated professors in the Honors department and then they have people who are teaching courses in the Honors program from other departments throughout the university. Now, there are some problems with this because administratively it can be a headache. Who's paying for what? This person is not teaching in the home unit. This was a big problem in history, the person is not teaching in the home unit. Well, we need somebody to teach these courses in the home unit. So it's costing the home unit to have people in the Honors program.

Interviewer: How was that difficult for your boss?

Interviewee: It didn't create problems in the philosophy department. The philosophy department is always very accommodating and it just worked out fine.

There is a problem, I don't think this is so true anymore, but there was a time when we first started this up, there are professors in college in the university in general who are opposed to the idea of an Honors program. They think that it was elitist. That there shouldn't be any kind of special privilege of students and didn't want to participate in this sort of thing at all. I don't think you get that so much anymore.

There are some Honors faculty who are very prideful of the Honors students, and then there's some professors who have a more democratic sensibility. It's like we want a mainstream for good students and not pull them aside and make a kind of elite college within the university. I mean, it's a different educational philosophy.

Interviewer: Now that the Honors Course has ended, how do you plan on being involved with the Honors College?

Interviewee: I'm not. There aren't any plans for me to come back in, although there are people in the philosophy department who are involved in the Honors program.

Interviewer: How many professors are in the Philosophy Department?

Interviewee: There's over 20 full time people. But [Honors faculty] was a member of the philosophy department. She actually taught [Honors course] way back when. I believe she's head of honors department or Honors Program. I don't know if you're planning to interview her, might be a good one keeping an eye out for.

Interviewer: When you were in the Honors College, in what ways did you see a disconnect between students and faculty? Was there any sort of communication barrier?

Interviewee: I don't know. My impression was that things were pretty tight. People had no qualms about coming by office hours and then [For his specific course] we required outside activities. I mean one time when I was about, [Honors faculty] was on sabbatical, we had movies and pizza and everybody in the class showed up. It was pretty casual, pretty informal. Yeah, pretty friendly communication. And I can't think how it might be improved upon. My impression was that the outside activities contributed something to that. Having a movie night or hearing how everybody got to go to a play-- and I think having the two years having it stretched out helps that too.

Interviewer: One of the things that we're finding out, one of the insights that keeps coming up is we find that students are typically anxious to talk with professors. And actually on the other side too, that some of the professors are just anxious to be with students. Is that something that you experienced either in yourself or in your fellow faculty when you were in the Honors College?

Interviewee: No I don't think so. I don't think he did this every year, but sort of at the end of the year, [Honors faculty] would have people over to the house. Or some kind of end-of-it-all party and it just seemed to break the ice. By the end of the four semesters, people were pretty comfortable with each other.

[Interviewer and Interviewee discuss course content unrelated to the Design problem, and it is revealed that the interviewee serves on the University Curriculum Committee, a fact that the interviewer did not know]

Interviewer: How do the faculty in the University Curriculum Committee set courses based on what students interests, opinions and beliefs are?

Interviewee: See that's one of these things, the courses and the curriculum is not designed for the student's interests. You know chemistry. You know what kind of

chemistry courses the students want to see. Well you know you've got to learn chemistry and you learn it this way because there's a sequence you have to learn in. You learn this first and then this and then this and then this and then this. It's all very structured and it's almost all out of the professor's hands. It's like, look: here's chemistry and here's how you learn chemistry. And that's that. That's why if you look at chemistry programs everywhere the program is the same. And that's true of all disciplines really.

Sometimes you'll get a course when the students have expressed interest. It has to be advanced majors in this discipline, have expressed an interest in studying something in this discipline that you know we haven't offered it before. And in that case there may be either a special topics course or if it goes on long enough then actually a proposal for a course that was generated by student interest. But it has to come from students who know something about the field, in order for it to make any sense.

Interviewer: Where would you kind of place Honor students in that continuum? Because some people would say that Honor students are the academically inclined.

Interviewee: Yes, but that doesn't mean they know what's best for Honors students to take in college. Ask incoming Honors students, how do you want the Honors program set up? The only appropriate response on their part is: I have absolutely no idea. So I think that the idea of the Honors program is that you're getting the general education in an Honors version of it.

So in a sense, well what do we mean by the general education? How does that figure into one's education in general as you have the education within a discipline and then a general education in addition to that? Two questions then, what is that consistent in? And how does it relate to the specialized field? And those are gigantic questions.

What do you think of the Honors Program? Well what is the general education program? And that is in some ways in kind of a turmoil. Not just at Grand Valley State University but in the whole United States. So all of the universities have general education requirements. And they're different wherever you go. And sometimes there doesn't seem to be any rhyme or reason to it. Take a course in this and a course in that. It just doesn't make any sense. And to a certain extent that's true. You end up with this salad bar menu of all these courses and all these other fields. Now you know, what's an alternative to that?

Well one alternative is to have a core set of core courses. Everyone takes the same four courses. And these are kind of foundational overviews. So, it might be World History, World Literature, and The History of Science or in general, the greatest works of world literature. But that's not been the popular movement. Sure some of this has to do more generally speaking, with the fragmentation of all the disciplines. Every single discipline has become, in a sense, more and more fragmented. So, you don't just have biology, your

series of emphasis within biology. You get more and more micro fields within a field and that's happening in every field.

The problem with doing a general, for instance history course, is it ends up becoming like a high school history of the world class. We don't want to do that either. One of the things that I wish they had done this more was the history professors did not talk about historiography at all. They didn't talk about the nature of historical inquiry. And that would be appropriate in a general education course. This was something I could never click into when I was a younger student. I think it was because this very foundational issue was never addressed. What do you mean by art? What do we mean by history? What do you mean by general education? Right. So you're gonna have to address that issue.

In trying to figure out all we're going to do with the Honors program well we're gonna have to ask: What would be an improvement? And we're in this period of intellectual history in the United States right now where this aspect of higher education is kind of up for grabs. Sure, it's being debated and discussed, and changes are being made everywhere. In the sciences, the curriculum is rather structured.

If nothing is up for grabs, and probably if you looked at engineering programs at other schools you'd say, Oh it's pretty much the same thing. The sciences are or are going to be peculiar in this regard. We know that you have to know this first and then this and then this. Then you can go on to specialized but it's all pretty set. And it's set by the knowledge base itself.

Interviewer: What are the best ways that the Honor students can voice their opinions about curriculum, if they have a brilliant idea about the structure of the Honors College, etc.? What do you think the best way that they can go about conveying that?

Interviewee: Well I don't know, does the Honors program have meetings of all the students?

Has anyone ever proposed: why don't we have a once a semester gathering of students in the Honors Program to voice concerns or rights?

I think if you did it once a semester and maybe you'd have to have a student government. Maybe there's got to be some kind of student governing board in the Honors program. And then there'd be an every semester meeting of every one of the forum. And then maybe, you know, you'd present something to everyone assembled and then everyone assembled can give voice to their concerns. And then perhaps have some mechanism set up where you prepare them for the semester meeting. Send us your concerns that you want brought up at the next meeting. You know, I think if you met too often, I think you might get some burnout there.

Interviewer: Do you have anyone that you think I should interview and get more insights through?

Interviewee:

[Honors Faculty Chair]

[Honors Faculty Member]

[Former Honors Director]

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

Interviewee: Well I think maybe this business about the Honors curriculum is the general education curriculum for Honors students and what then is the general education curriculum supposed to be? That's an enormous problem. And an enormous question, but I think I would incorporate this in your report somehow. You've got to say something about what general education is the big picture and then-- Okay what is an Honors general education?

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

The interviewee may be contacted again for future inquiry through email communication, or by stopping in at his office hours.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

[Honors Faculty Chair]

[Honors Faculty Member]

[Former Honors Director]

Possible next-steps:

- A lot of the content of this interview revolved around curriculum. We went down this path because a student interviewee said that he didn't believe his interests were represented in the curriculum. So, further research is needed into the role that curriculum plays into the relationship dynamic between students and faculty. Is this a big enough issue to continue investing time and resources, or was this an extraneous case?

Dialogue 12

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Prospective Honors Student

Estimated Age: _X_ 18-30 _____ 30-40 _____40-50 _____ 50+

Gender:
Male

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
The primary goal of this interview is to gain insight on what prospective students look for before attending a university/ Honors College, and if our innovations meet any of those criteria. It was also very interesting to compare the thoughts of a student heading into college to the thoughts of past students we have interviewed that are already immersed in their college experience.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
This work reflects our team problem statement by allowing us to hear what a future class of the FMHC might desire in terms of student-faculty communications.

Summary of Research:
It seems that many prospective students do not look too deep into their prospective university's Honors program ahead of time- they want to join because they consider it an accelerant to their education and figure it is the right choice to make. However, prospective students seem to generally appreciate the importance of faculty-student interactions through their high school experience, and will expect effective communication in college. Lastly, self-validation does seem like an important need for all students, and occasional individuals might not be the way to successfully validate a student body.

Important insights:
- While a smooth-running Honors program might allow for a high retention rate, it is not necessarily what brings students to a school.   - Individual moments of recognition, such as our proposed Student Spotlights, are not desirable amongst all students.   - Even prospective students have a sense of the hierarchical structure of universities.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: Why do you have interest in attending an Honors College while in University?

Interviewee: I'm not really sure why. I just think it might give me the upper hand as I purse a career and allow me to learn more about what I'm interested in.

Interviewer: How much power do you believe Honors students should have over the Honors College as a whole?

Interviewee: They should definitely be able to voice their opinions, but they probably shouldn't have much more power than a teacher or professor.

Interviewer: How important do you feel student-teacher interactions are to your education?

Interviewee: I would say pretty important. I think I usually do better in a class when I have a good relationship with the teacher. It makes learning more enjoyable too.

Interviewer: What are the biggest challenges you currently face looking at colleges to attend?

Interviewee: Mainly just what programs they offer. If they don't have a program I'm interested in I don't want to go there. I also look to see if their programs are highly rated or not.

Interviewer: What do you hope to gain from your future college experience?

Interviewee: I hope to gain experiences that help me in my future career. I also want to learn more about all the things that interest me.

Interviewer: Looking at our 5 innovations, which one would you be most interested if you were to become a GVSU Honors student, and why?

Interviewee: Probably the idea competition. It just seems like a cool event that would be fun to be in and see everyone's work. I would want to do it.

Follow up: We initially thought of the idea competition as being Honors students competing against each other, but having the whole Honors College compete as a whole against another university was another possible idea. Which of the two would you prefer?

Interviewee: I think the one just in Grand Valley. The schools against schools one could really be really cool but I don't know how you would make that work. Seems like a lot of extra work especially if you are doing it every semester.

Interviewer: Which of our innovations do you feel does not relate directly back to our problem statement?

Interviewee: I think the Student Spotlights. Its sounds like a good idea but I don't know how it would make communication better between faculty and students or how it would cause more self-validation. I know that I don't like it when there's a lot of individual attention on me like that. It would be a cool thing to see but I'm sure some people would be like "oh, look at all the cool stuff this person is doing, why am I not doing anything like that" or "why am I not as smart as them?"

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

Stakeholder said he could not think of anything I should have asked.

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

Yes, and his phone would be the best way to reach him.

Connections this stakeholder provided:

- Other prospective students.

Possible next-steps:

- Reach out to other prospective students for interview.
- Rethink our Student Spotlights in relation to our problem statement.
- Consider logistical issues of the Idea Competition if we are to move farther with that innovation.

Dialogue 13

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Honors Student
Estimated Age: _X___ 20-30 ____ 30-40 _____40-50 ____ 50+
Gender: Male
Primary Goal of this Opportunity: This interviewee was an Honors College Member who wasn't very actively involved in the Honors College. Knowing this prior to the interview, the purpose of the interview was to identify the reasons why he wasn't very involved and if our innovations helped to remedy his lack of involvement.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? This student represents a diversity in that he isn't well connected with the Honors College. By taking into his considerations into the development of our innovations, our final innovation will only get better.
Summary of Research: This Honors student was very receptive to the Innovation that met him where he was: The anonymous message board. This may be in correlation with the fact that he revealed that he wasn't very involved in the Honors College both within and outside of the classroom. His Honors experience has only been a few classes and he typically avoids extracurricular Honors activities because of the type of people that attend them. The interviewee believed that these events attracted nerdy freshman, which he wasn't particularly interested in building a relationship with. This was interesting because it offered potential insight into the mind of a detached Honors Student, which is a common status of post-1st year Honors Students.
Important insights: • Extra-curricular activities are perceived as being a place where nerdy freshman meet. • Web-based services provide an easier method of interface for the user, particularly for someone who isn't actively involved in the Honors College.

- Most event-based innovations will only yield the same involvement as any other on-campus club (as perceived by the student).

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: Tell me a little bit about your time in the Honors College.

Interviewee: I feel like it helped me. It helped me because it helped get stuff out of the way. But it kind of helped me a little bit because I ended up switching majors my second year. My second year I officially declared Biomedical Sciences. So I am kind of a year behind, but at the same time not, because I kind of sped up the Gen Ed process. So I'm more like a semester behind, whereas without it, probably like a full year. I mean it helped to streamline the process a little bit and get me in contact with a lot of really good professors that I really liked. One of my professors ended up being my piano teacher for a little bit.

Interviewer: How involved in the Honors College are you right now?

Interviewee: Oh geez. Not really much. I mean, I'm going to be taking my junior seminar this summer but that's the first Honors class I've taken a little while.

Interviewer: So have you ever been to any of the Honors events outside of the courses?

Interviewee: No. Well, I went to a couple lectures but it was on America. I don't know if it was Honors or not.

Interviewer: Okay, so we had pasta with the profs.

Interviewee: Oh yeah. I haven't done any. Those things? *laughs* No.

3rd Party Observer (Friend of the Interviewee) in the room actually attended the event. He describes Pasta with the Profs as an event littered with nerdy Freshmen and a band that didn't quite sound good together. It seemed communication was very minimal at the event.

Interviewee: Honestly like most of my experience was summed up in one scene right there. Honestly yes. There were a bunch of nerdy freshmen at of the Honors events. I felt like 75 percent were that kind of type. Which it's bound to happen. You know they get good grades in high school and then they get into that culture of getting good grades and stuff. But these are the ones that got good grades because they didn't go out and meet

people and do stuff as much. Which paid off you know. But that was like 75 percent to 25 percent was like people like me who got good grades in high school but was the part of the class that actually does stuff. So I'm playing sports, I'm getting good grades. But those kids aren't.

Interviewer: Would you say that's the reason that you don't go to events nowadays?

Interviewee: I feel like structured stuff like that by nature isn't going to be good. I think that has to be sort of spontaneous. Like [Housing Complex] has free taco Tuesday and then you go there and it's like a lobby full of strangers and not so good tacos. It's just weird because it's like it's designed to be a good space for people just for complete strangers to just come together and but no one's like that. Especially now, I feel like I'm more like that than most of the people now. Then when I go, it's like I'm looking at people who just have no interest in like being that way. It's like why do you come?

Interviewer: Absolutely. Well that's the problem that we're trying to address is that disconnect. And so okay what we're finding, is that if students could communicate their opinions to the faculty we could solve problems; we can get better classes. And like the classes is just one example of it.

Interviewer explains that he is looking for feedback for each of the five innovations. These innovations are described in the sections above.

Interviewer: So our first idea was to have an anonymous message boards and online, web-based platforms. RA's will pose a question and then people will respond to that.

Interviewee: Great Idea! I think people do that online more than like anything written. It'd just be easier to get it. It would probably have to be some kind of entity outside of blackboard. Like [Apartment Complex] has their own Web site. Yeah. And it's like if you live here you know they could set something up through their Web site that does that. Also anonymity in situations like that is awesome. I mean you can share your idea. There's never gonna be hard feelings.

Interviewer: Do you think people would take the time to actually respond to stuff? Like we get the Honors College Newsletter but [Honors Student] hardly reads that.

Interviewee: Yeah. It'll be different though. It all depends on if you educate the students to what exactly you're offering. It's like, we're offering you the power. And that is important. For example, if we were voting on a new professor: You could read this short couple of paragraph bio, click yes or no if you want them or not. You know it's not like a

newsletter that's just like completely voluntary like I couldn't give a crap about what's happening. So why do I need to read it?

Interviewer: So then idea number two is we're going have sequence specific advisors. So in your freshman sequence we noticed that a lot of freshmen are nervous to talk to the professors, well actually all ages of students. So we thought we could implement a mediator. Then they could talk to the faculty and it could be a way to step around your professor. There would be meetings after class like once a month or something with that person. Describe how effective that might be?

Interviewee: Man that is a little further out there just because it's like restructuring how the school runs. I feel like that's the main difference between high school and college. The Professors don't really answer to many people and they have a little more freedom, whereas in high school, if I have a problem with the teacher, I go to the Principal. There's not a principal to necessarily go to unless it's like a director or something high up.

You know I've had bad professors. It's like "oh no, it sucks" but it's like "let's get through it". I don't know though because there's the student in me saying "Man, I hate this professor". But then my dad is just like talking to my other ear saying "you just gotta get through it". What are you going to say when the person who's you know delivering your wife's baby isn't being as gentle with your wife as you think you should be? It's hard to just nit pick every little thing when other people have all the power. It's like, we can't be the consumer paying for this college and then expect everything to be just how you want it.

Interviewer: And then the third one we're thinking is an idea competition where we get the Honors College students to compete against one another. And like the winner gets like a gift card or prize or something or something like that. There could be ideas regarding like the structure of the Honors College or we could have just like general ideas. Then everyone competes against each other. We're just trying to get people involved in that sense. Do you think people would be interested in that?

Interviewee: I think they'd be as involved as they are in clubs. What percentage of the student body is involved in clubs? I think it holds the same effect as any other event that people can reach out to be involved in that people don't. It is another thing that people can get involved in if they want to, which is cool. It's a cool thing to provide people that want to do it but I don't have much interest.

Interviewer: Number four: So it sounds like they had done something like this in the past. But the idea was that we would have a Student Spotlight. Students would be highlighted for good things they do outside of class. They'd be nominated by professors

and then we'd name that student the Honors College student of the month. Do you think people would want to be that? Maybe have a reward incorporated too?

Interviewee: OK yeah. That would be sweet. Honestly, even something just like a little. Yeah it doesn't have to be like 250 dollars. It can be Fifty dollars. It would be cool, yeah well actually, it's just going to go to the people who like have a drive. The people that say "I have been doing this stuff my whole life". It's going to be the ones that are gonna win anyway. But it could work.

Audio File Failed. Interviewer Explains the Innovation Proposal Regarding Personal Growth Portfolios, A New Audio Recording Is Started

Interviewer: In what ways do you think this Innovation will be effective?

Interviewee: It gives students a chance to look back on themselves. So would the survey be academic? Like how do you think your writing skills are?

Interviewer: Yeah a little bit of that, but more so like personal skills. For instance, how is your confidence? How do you think your people talking skills are? Or like what's your opinion on the Grand Valley Honors College? How satisfied are you? What areas would you improve?

Interviewee: Yeah, you know it's all in the survey. And I don't know effective it is. You have all these surveys, then the leadership needs to do the work. And then like good stuff comes out of you doing that stuff with the leadership. Yeah, I don't know.

Interviewer: Do you think people would care enough to respond?

Interviewee: Oh yeah. I've got no idea. Like I said, it all depends on the survey. If you have like a really good, well written survey that's super specific, OK. But they can't be like OK, how's your confidence doing? No matter what they put on there that doesn't tell you what to do next. And I don't know how much power the next step will bring you because it's like you know college is kind of short.

Although it is a period in some cases of extreme change. But I don't think going to class and my interactions with professors have changed me all that much. So I kind of question the power of something through GV that's like supposed to help me with my personal goals.

Stakeholder response to "what is the one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?"
Interviewee: You know, I don't really know man. I think you did fine.
Will this stakeholder agree to reconnect for further inquiry? How do they want to contacted? Communication is absolutely welcome, email will work great.
Three more connections this stakeholder provided: • The 3rd Party Observer (Although he has been previously interviewed). • Potentially a "Nerdy" Freshman
Possible next-steps: • Need to identify if this "Nerdy Freshmen" claim is an individual's opinion or a common insight. If it is a common insight, this may be grounds for adjusting our needs statement.

Dialogue 14

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Honors Mentor Council Secretary

Estimated Age:
____X 20-30 ____ 30-40 _____40-50 ____ 50+

Gender: Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
This interview's purpose was to gather a unique perspective to get a better understanding of an existing leadership program within the Honors College. This perspective will allow us to gather more information about the current pros and cons within the Honors Mentor Council, and we can use this information to design a fitting solution to our problem statement.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
By examining what is going well and what is not within the Council through this perspective, we can apply these insights to our own solution. The Mentor Council is an existing route of communication and interaction between faculty and students, so it will be beneficial to observe its strengths and weaknesses.

Summary of Research:
The council has been recently moving toward a more direct line of communication between the Council members and the Honors advisors. This has allowed the Council to run in conjunction with the Honors office, making it easier to know what is feasible and to coordinate staff desires with those of the mentors and the Council. The Council is working toward being more inclusive of upperclassmen and not just focusing mainly on freshman during welcome days, and this will create a greater connection between older Honors students and the Honors College. The faculty members, the Honors advisors, only meet directly with the president and the secretary of the council, and don't directly observe the meetings of the Honors Council.

Important insights:
- It feels like there is still a gap of communication between the mentors, the Council, and the Honors faculty.   - The Council members feel a sense of accomplishment and shared "morale" with the Honors advisors and office when their big project of welcome days is finished.

- The secretary and the president are the only ones who speak with and meet directly with the Honors advisors

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: What attracted you to the Honors College before coming to Grand Valley?

Interviewee: There are probably two main reasons that I wanted to come to the Honors College. The first one was, I wasn't quite sure what I wanted my major to be so I loved that the sequence you do your freshman year knocked out such a huge amount of Gen-eds that it allowed me to kind of play around with different majors. If I didn't have my sequence I probably would have been behind for graduation. I really loved the housing and I liked like Niemeyer's layouts.

Interviewer: So did you stay in Niemeyer then?

Interviewee: Yeah, I had a style that was like the two bedroom but there were four of us and they don't even offer that anymore.

Interviewer: How did you first become involved with the Honors Mentor Council?

Interviewee: Well I weirdly enough didn't have a very good mentor experience. My mentor kind of forgot about us a week in, but I was a mentor in high school so I knew that I really enjoyed that and I wanted to kind of take on a leadership role within Honors. So then I became a mentor and then when the applications came up to be on the Council I figured I was already going to be a mentor again, so being on the Council is just kind of a nice step up looking to that leadership.

Interviewer: How do you guys communicate with the Honors staff and faculty and how frequently?

Interviewee: So that's something we've been working on this year a lot. Usually we've been a student run program, so like the mentors and the Council oversee and created the welcome days. The Honors office usually just supported us financially and would start reserving rooms and stuff like that and communicating with the mentors but now they really want to start having more activities throughout the year. So now we've started having biweekly meetings with _____ in the Honors office and we're always in direct communication with _____. So it's just kind of between those two and then we've been doing more with the Director and stuff like that. We've definitely opened up a much bigger communication with the Honors office this year.

Interviewer: How was your role on the Honors Mentor Council initially described to you?

Interviewee: I'm the secretary so basically, we don't have a vice president, we just have a president so I kind of take on the role of the V.P. in a way. So I manage meeting minutes and when we go to meetings and stuff like that, I'll be the one to take notes and then make sure that different aspects of what's going on is properly communicated to the rest of the members of the Council. And then I really am just there to help our president with whatever needs to get done whether that be emailing, communicating with mentors, coming up with new idea ideas and stuff like that.

Interviewer: What challenges have you experienced in fulfilling your role?

Interviewee: I know I've always enjoyed being an organized person. I think what is interesting is especially within Honors, you have very strong minded people in leadership positions. So it's kind of a different dynamic in that way. So you have to learn how to take different people's perspectives and their opinions and stuff like that, and just balance them with your own. So that was kind of interesting just because I'm on a board for another club and there you can see that there are some people that are just there kind of just for a resume builder, they're not there because they care, so they don't really have an opinion. And then this is the first position that I've really had such direct communication with an adult like that with the Honors office. So that's kind of brought a professional challenge to the position.

Interviewer: What kind of feedback do you receive from the faculty members and your constituents in the Council?

Interviewer: In terms of what?

Interviewer: Like when you meet with _____ or _____ what do you guys discuss, like how does that meeting work?

Interviewee: A lot of it has to do with getting feedback from the mentors and the freshmen that come in. They're asked what they enjoyed about the welcome days and the whole process of being a mentor and what they didn't like. So then we just kind of try and adjust for the upcoming year. We just try and make it better for everybody and we move things around and brainstorm different activities. The Honors office is pushing towards next year having a mentor in the program be more for upperclassmen as well. So like we have the welcome days just for freshmen and we really want to start extending into the school year with like study sessions where they can meet more faculty within Honors and then have like a welcome back day kind of thing for sophomores. We're trying to make the Mentor Council create events that are more inclusive to the entirety of Honors not specifically freshmen. So that's kind of what they want us doing.

Interviewer: When you get feedback from the freshmen that you talked about, do you meet with them or like how do you get feedback?

Interviewee: It's a survey.

Interviewer: If any, what changes do you think you'd make to the operation of the Council to encourage more communication with administration? You said you've already been kind of ramping that up this year.

Interviewee: We kind of threw around the idea of having one of the advisors come to our actual meetings. We have meetings on Sundays, and we kind of vetoed it because we think that like having that authoritative figure would kind of hinder the way that we worked as a council. But I think maybe it would be beneficial every once in a while because the president might have these meetings with the office and we take notes, and then we kind of relay the information to the Council. It feels like there's kind of a gap between them and the Honors office. I feel very connected to it while the rest of the Council is still like they're relying on us to relay information. So just kind of maybe if we had some way to touch base with the entire Council so they felt more included in the process of it.

Interviewer: What's your level of commitment to the Honors Mentor Council?

Interviewee: We have biweekly Council meetings and then so like once we have a Sunday meeting for the Council, and then the next week during the week I have a meeting with the Honors office. Each week I have some sort of meeting for the Council, relative to the Council, and then the president and I are planning on doing a presentation at a mentorship conference. So we're going to start planning for that soon so it'll become a little more involved and then as we start hiring the mentors for next year, we do trainings so it starts to pick up towards the end of the year.

Interviewer: What are some examples or one example of a time that you've felt emotionally or intellectually engaged with in the Council?

Interviewee: I think during welcome days we were very focused on getting through every day and just like having a team that I felt very supported by. We had a great Council this past year and we all were very good at communicating and we felt comfortable with each other. And then at the very end we had the closing ceremony and then it was suddenly weight lifted off of our shoulders and the Honors office was the same way, and it was just like this kind of morale between all of us that we did it! We got it done and everything went smoothly. And so I guess that was kind of an emotional connection, like feeling proud with them for this thing we had planned for and it came into existence and it worked.

Interviewer: How do you recommend students be recruited and engaged in the Honors Mentor Council or how are you currently going about this? What's the hiring process like?

Interviewee: We send out an application and then we just kind of reach out to current mentors and say like if you had a freshman in your group that you think would make a good mentor. We try and get

them to recommend to those freshmen like hey you should apply. The Honors office does advertise it in their newsletters and on social media. You have to be a mentor for a year before you can apply to be on the Council and then you can't be graduating or if you're graduating next year. So like this will be my last year on the Council because next year they'll be working on the following years welcome days and I won't be there. It's kind of like you have a two year window where you could be on the council. We do applications for that and then for a mentor there's no actual interview we just do applications and then the Honors office will select who is going to be a mentor. Then for the Council we get to interview potential Council members and that's completely our decision as to who makes it on.

Interviewer: Can you give an example of a positive contribution that you or your peers have made to the Honors College overall? You had mentioned welcome days.

Interviewee: Yeah I think we're doing a much better job of just making Honors feel more like open, I guess, because a lot of times people will say like they don't see... Niemeyer is supposed to be like a living and a learning community and sometimes people feel like the Honors office is very closed off but because we're such a small community within Grand Valley you want people to feel welcome within that community. So I think the Mentor Council or the mentors in general helped build that living community.

Interviewer: What level of impact do you think that the Honors Mentor Council and the mentor program have had on connecting and informing students about the Honors College?

Interviewee: I think we have a good amount of impact. I think that because it's a lot of information for freshmen to get in their first week and they do transitions, so they get a lot of information about Grand Valley in general. But I think what we can strive to be is like, I try not to throw so much information at a freshman through the first week just kind of what they need to get through. But you want to be a connection for them throughout the year, if they have questions. So a lot of times some mentors can kind of be overwhelming and continuously remind them but you know you're just kind of looking to be like a guiding force so that you can just be a presence so that you're a connection for them if they have questions later. So it's really up to the individual and how beneficial or how much they take advantage of having a mentor and helping the program there.

Interviewer: Like I said before our goal was kind of as a group we were kind of looking to improve communication and maybe come up with a different way of Honors governance or communication with the faculty and students. So what or who do you think will be the greatest opponents or obstacles in enacting change in the Honors College governance?

Interviewer: Like what would be a barrier between for communication kind of?

Interviewer: Yeah or like what do you think are problems we might run into?

Interviewee: I think probably the biggest one is just timing because I mean a student's schedule versus like a faculty member (nine to five) is very, very different. So that's something I know that Honors has been really great about, like they know that if we want to host events and they want to be there to kind of meet students, they can't expect us to make it at 10:00 a.m. So they've gotten a lot better with that. But I really think just timing is going to be hard.

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 contacted?

Yes, by email.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- More members of the Mentor council

- The Mentors themselves

Possible next-steps:

- Students who are less involved

- Honors Mentor Council members

- ANCHOR members

Dialogue 15

Stakeholder Group/Location: Honors Student, RA
Estimated Age: __x__ 20-30 _____ 30-40 _____40-50 _____ 50+
Gender: Female
Primary Goal of this Opportunity: The primary goal of this opportunity was to gain insight about what involvement means and looks like to someone that is frequently involved in the Honors College. We also aim to receive some feedback on some of the innovations that we considering to solve some of the issues that we have researched in the Honors College. Gaining a perspective from someone that is around freshman and lives in the Honors College will help us understand if some of our team's innovations are plausible.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? The innovations that are explained to the person being interviews are methods in which we could see improvement of student governance and faculty and student communication within the Honors College. We want to better understand obstacles and both positive and negative feedback regarding these innovation ideas.
Summary of Research: The stakeholder showed a lot of interest in the majority of the innovations. She provided insights into why there may be higher participation rates in some things opposed to others, and links this to the affinity of some students that are very immersed in the Honors College to continue to participate in Honors College events. The stakeholder valued the idea of the Idea Competition the greatest because she believes that it would be a good way for professors and students to do something fun together that has a purpose. In addition, she supports this idea based on a friend of hers that participates in a leadership fraternity summit where they do similar activities in groups and can pitch their ideas on how they would handle a given issue in a particular way as a leader.

Important insights:

- It is difficult to incentivize events that are held in the Honors College
- There will always be students that do not have interest in participating in innovations that are outside their comfort zone or immediate school interest
- Students want self-gratification and recognition for their achievements

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: Can you describe to me what you believe is a good relationship between faculty and students?

Interviewee: Yeah, of course! I think for me personally it's about keeping in touch. I have honestly always been that type of person that just loves to visit my professors and talk with them in their office. I think that is probably one of the reasons I decided to be an RA in a way. I think that I thought that as a freshman, I would like to have someone to look up to that can help me reach out and make those connections with other people. But overall I guess I think it's what a student put towards the professor and their effort to show involvement that makes a relationship great.

Interviewer: I am going to explain to you some of the innovations that we came up with based on our secondary research bibliographies, our prior interviews, and from needs statements. The first idea is to create message boards either around Niemeyer and Holton Hooker or to have them on an online database or Google Platform. What do you think about this?

Interviewee: Honestly I think that is a great idea. I think it would really help students out that are a little more uncomfortable with talking to their peers, or are just looking for ways to feel a little bit more involved.

Interviewer: Can you describe any difficulties that you think may arise from this?

Interviewee: At least for me personally as an RA, no. I could see how some RAs wouldn't want an extra responsibility to have to check on a message board, but at the end of the day I can't imagine that much harm would come from anything like this. I mean obviously RAs are a great tool to use in something like this. What were you thinking of putting on the message boards?

Interviewer: We are thinking about putting up prompts for students to answer that could be both feedback and personal experience. It could also serve as a place to have questions answered by other students as well. Do you think it should be anonymous?

Interviewee: I can definitely imagine that a lot of student would prefer it to be anonymous. A lot of people start to get worried that when they are seen on the internet they could be vulnerable. But I think if you could post anonymously it may get a higher response rate because then people aren't looking on the site and either seeing the same person reply over and over or seeing every individual name. This could also be a great source for some students that are struggling and need help. What would be even cooler is if some of the professors could join in on it too, it may give them a better idea what it is like to be in the position of a student!

Interviewer: Another one of our ideas is to potentially try out an idea competition. However, we would prefer not to focus on having GVSU Honors students against other GVSU Honors students. We were thinking that it could be an event where people with similar interests, including faculty, could be on teams and work together to solve problems or address a prompt given. What do you think about some like this?

Interviewee: I like it. I think that like a step above on campus research opportunities where you work under a professor. I think that is a bit more fun. I think people would have an affinity for that over one on one teaming up with a professor for Student Scholars Day. I like the idea of the prompts too. I know that in one of fraternities here they go to a leadership summit and they work in groups and are given prompts and my friends have told me how fun it is. They can work to explain how they would handle it as a leader and be awarded for it. It would also be mutually beneficial because students and faculty could be more involved with one another. It would be synergistic.

Interviewer: Another one of ideas is to create sequence specific advising groups that could be made up of students and they would meet periodically with advisors to gain better transparency with both positive and negative feedback from courses. This could potentially continue throughout the Junior Seminar's as well. How do you think something like this would fair?

Interviewee: Yeah for sure. I like the idea a lot, but I think my concern would be the way that kids are chosen or asked to be in that position. You may not be able to get a real representation because some people may be inclined to go in and say they love everything while other students will just say they hate the class and the professor. That would probably be my biggest concern thought.

Interviewer: We also came up with an idea for students in Honors to create a growth portfolio to find more of the meaning of their experience in the Honors College. This

could include entries from the beginning of freshman year, throughout their time here as a student, and when they graduate. What do you think about something like this?

Interviewee: I think it is a good idea. My only concern is, are people really going to put in the time and effort to do it? I think that so many people are already really involved and these people would probably take something out of this but the people that aren't as involved may think of something like that portfolio as being another burden, just another thing they have to get done at some point. If you could find a good way to incentivize it maybe. Maybe if people sent in their reflections they could be featured in the newsletter. Students could get that self-gratification that they are doing something right.

Interviewer: That definitely leads to my next question. What do you think about having semester Student Spotlights where students can showcase their achievements?

Interviewee: I think that would probably be one of the biggest incentives for Honors students. Honors kids are very seeking in their goals and aspirations and I think that to have something where people see and recognize the work they are doing could be a really good motivation for some people.

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

The Stakeholder could not think of anything else that should have been asked.

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

Stakeholder agrees for further inquiry, prefers to be contacted by text or phone call

More connections this stakeholder provided:

- Honors Student

Possible next-steps:

- Freshman who live in Niemeyer
- Alumni
- Honors College Director

Dialogue 16

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Honors student and Honors Mentor Council member

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

Gender:
Female

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
To hear the opinion of an involved Honors student on our current top 2 prototype concepts, as well as ask them about their own experience with Honors. Since this stakeholder is in the Honors Mentor Council, their opinion is very valuable as she has extra experience with Honors students and often hears the complaints and concerns of her fellow students.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
This work reflects our problem statement as we are gaining knowledge from a stakeholder close to the issue concerning our top 2 prototype concepts. Gaining these insights will help us to facilitate better faculty-student communication, as stated in our problem statement.

Summary of Research:
This interview was very informative on the inter-workings of the Honors Mentor Council. As a mentor, this stakeholder definitely feels that there is a disconnect when it comes to communications within the Honors College. The stakeholder preferred our Online Q&A/Forum innovation over the Course-specific advising groups, as they would probably be a good gateway for more reserved students to have a voice. The stakeholder also suggested that an online forum of Honors students could be a communal support system, with students helping each other through a lot of problems. Faculty and administration could also benefit through this medium, as it could be a space where common questions are answered.

Important insights:
- Online forums might be more successful in encouraging student participation than course-specific advising groups.   - The Honors Mentor Council could be a valuable resource when considering the needs and wants of freshman Honors students.

- When we come to a final prototype, it may be difficult to communicate to others what we plan to do/ how our innovation works.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: What is your role within the Honors Mentor Council, and how long have you been a member?

Interviewee: I'm on the public relations committee. The Honors Council does elections every November-ish, we don't want to do them at the end of the year because we have to plan for the next year. So, I've been on it since November. I started being a mentor at the end of last year, so this last summer going into the fall I was a mentor, and then I applied to be on the Council.

Interviewer: How has being a member of the Mentor Council benefited your college experience?

Interviewee: For me it's been really great, because it really exposes you to all the professors and the higher-ups in the Honors community. It's been nice to get to know those people one-on-one because they're super beneficial to have in your corner, I think. It's just a very rewarding experience in general to be able to work with, not only the freshman, but with the mentors, and being that point of contact that they can come to if they have questions or if they need to work through something. It's really nice, it builds confidence.

Follow up: I'm just curious- are there certain professors or faculty that are assigned to work with the Mentor Council?

Interviewee: We'll reach out to professors, like if we're trying to plan something specific or if we have questions. If anything, we work more with Advisor 1 and Advisor 2 in the Honors office and then Faculty Member in the Honors office. She's (Faculty Member) is like our coordinator. We have our own meetings with just the Council, and then on the weeks we don't have the meetings the president and the secretary go in and meet with Advisor 1 & 2 and give a rundown of what we talked about.

Interviewer: How many of your mentees would you say you keep in touch with after orientation?

Interviewee: Not a lot, which is something that we're going to try to change moving into the fall. We tried to do some meet-up events once the new Council started, but at that point, a lot of the mentors and mentees lost contact, so it was a really low turnout. We figured that in the fall we're gonna hit the ground running, like "okay you have to attend some events with your mentees, you better get involved." But, there's probably like two of them that I still talk to pretty regularly, like if they need something. The other ones just kind of floated off, they're self-sufficient.

Interviewer: What are the biggest challenges you face as a mentor?

Interviewee: The biggest challenge is, I personally tend to be an awkward person. So, especially maybe for those mentees that aren't so comfortable, it can be hard because then I just want to talk and fill the empty space, but sometimes it takes a little effort on my part to really relate and empathize and make them feel comfortable. It's just making sure, for me personally, that everyone in the group was actively involved, because you had some people that it was great, they were super involved, super engaged, but then they would overshadow the others that would end up just tagging along. It's a little hard to make sure, like, "hey what do you want to say?"

Interviewer: Looking at our 2 prototype concepts, which one do you think would most positively influence your Honors experience?

Interviewee: I really like the online forum idea actually. I feel like there's a lot of questions, not necessarily simple ones, but they could be, or more complex ones, that the Honors Advisors have to answer over and over because it's a little hard to access that information. It would be kind of nice to have some sort of forum where one person asks it and other people can reply or contribute, and then Advisor 1 or 2 can contribute if they want and answer it that way. Sometimes it feels nice to get those answers from students as opposed to an advisor, because sometimes that's a little more intimidating.

Interviewer: Which of our prototype concepts do you feel do not relate directly back to our problem statement?

Interviewee: I'd say the second idea (freshman sequence-specific advising groups) seems like a good idea in theory, but then how would it pan out necessarily? I feel like it would end up with a lot of students getting overshadowed and maybe just a few students getting their questions answered, as opposed to maybe just more clearly communicating how and when they can go see the advisors on their own or if they want to go group advising or something like that. I do agree that there is a lot of difference between the different sequences, so it would be nice if they had some point of contact for advice on

their sequence or what their sequence counts for. Something that would be more clearly communicated to them in the beginning.

Interviewer: What do you believe would be some of our barriers to enacting one of these prototype concepts?

Interviewee: The barriers I think are just clearly communicating these ideas. I know the Honors Office has the newsletter, but I feel like a lot of people miss it. I don't know, I feel like that's gonna be your main issue, making people aware, especially the online thing, or making them more aware of the resources for sequences and all that. It's just gonna be hard to convey that. Part of me thinks posters, that kind of works sometimes.

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

Stakeholder could not think of anything else I should have asked.

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

Yes, and her email and phone would be the best method of contact.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Other Mentor Council members

- Honors Advisors

- Honors Professors

Possible next-steps:

- Reach out to stakeholders provided
- Take these insights into consideration when picking our top prototype concept.

Dialogue 17

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Honors Alumnus, Former RA

Estimated Age:
__X__ 20-30 ____ 30-40 _____40-50 ____ 50+

Gender:
Male

Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
Our team is looking to gain feedback on our top two prototype concepts that have been narrowed down in the past week. A former RA and Honors Alumnus will have experience in the Honors community and the living community and may be able to understand what will be and what will not be effective.

How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
As we are approaching the final weeks of our design challenge, we are searching for potential solutions to the problem statement our team has formulated. To do so, we need feedback and advice to make sure that the prototype concepts we are proposing will actually address the problem statement at hand.

Summary of Research:
The stakeholder was very interested in our top two prototype concepts. In particular, they was most pleased to hear about and online message and Q&A forum that both students and professors could take part in. They noted that in their time as an RA, putting up messages on the white boards or posters in the hall was one of the lesser preferred methods of communication among the Honors students, and they preferred to be sent a text or be a part of a group chat to communicate. They believe that opening this up to the entire Honors College would make students overall more aware of what is going on and find a stronger outlet of communication with faculty. For the Course Specific Advising groups, they thought it would be a great opportunity for students to truly share their opinions without facing the scrutiny or anxiety about complaining to a professor that may not care.

Important insights:

- Students preferred communication is through text
- Time is an issue for both students and professors, which a Q&A forum addresses
- Selection bias may be present when considering advising groups

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: (Explained innovation summary of "Course Specific Advising Groups".) What do you think about implementing something along these lines into the Honors Program?

Interviewee: Well, the first thing that sticks out to me that potentially could cause an issue in these courses in the selection bias, like who gets to participate in something like this. The best explanation I could offer to fix something like that would maybe be to have students rotate through the position so that the voice of a greater number of students is heard. Overall, I guess I like it. What courses would it be for?

Interviewer: It would mostly be for courses that are required in the Honors curriculum, like all of the sequences and Junior Seminar classes.

Interviewee: Okay, yeah. I think that could maybe work. I know for me personally and people I knew freshman year that we all loved the sequences we had but obviously there were a lot of other people that didn't really feel the same way about that. I think the most important thing would be to not have a set number of people to go and talk to advising or office staff, and that the people should change because that might end up being too much on just a few students in the class. If it were to rotate and feedback was consistent among different people there could then be a way to use the information.

Interviewer: (Explained innovation summary of "Online Q&A Forum".) Do you feel that this would help students? What do you think of trying something like this among Honors students and faculty?

Interviewee: I mean, that seems like a really simple answer to a lot of miscommunication issues, but when I think about it more that would be super useful. When I was in Niemeyer none of my residents ever wanted to participate with any of the things I wrote on the white boards, because I guess it just wasn't in their interest. If I had to get a hold of someone I always had to send a group text out or text students individually. So I think having a spot that students could just use on their phones or computers in their rooms or on campus would be cool. I think it would be even better if you could specifically look up people to message as well that are also Honors students,

because then if you are even trying to get a message through to someone you're able to do that. I like that a lot honestly because the Honors College could monitor the activity and also comment on questions and stuff to clear up a lot of confusion for students. All of my residents were so shy and nervous to talk to other, except for like you, so it could help those kids get over the barrier of talking to others even.

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

Stakeholder did not have any other questions that thought should be asked.

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

Yes, he agrees to be contacted by phone call or text for further inquiries

Possible next-steps:

- Debrief with other stakeholders
- More feedback from student committee members such as ANCHOR

Dialogue 18

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Honors Student
Estimated Age: __X__ 20-30 ____ 30-40 _____40-50 ____ 50+
Gender: Male
Primary Goal of this Opportunity: The subject of this interview was to gain an in-depth perspective of our top two prototype concepts for solving our overarching problem. The Honors student interviewed in this dialogue is a self-described moderately involved Honors student. By getting their perspective, we could identify if these innovations would appeal to someone of their involvement level.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement? By gaining a greater understanding of the Honors College and our prototype concepts from a moderately involved Honors student, we can continue to stitch together the multitude of student views and opinions, this work being just one component of the final product.
Summary of Research: This student thought that the two prototype concepts were both very promising methods of engaging the Honors Students in an effort to foster communication. Chiefly, they thought that communicating this opinion was a valuable process that should be included in the process of overall governance of the Honors College. They offered concrete examples of how the prototype concepts might improve. They were particularly in-favor of partnering the student surveys with the pre-existing LIFT surveys. They thought that by having these two surveys operate in tandem, it could help emphasize participation. Additionally, of the student advising groups, they were a big proponent of a personal connection based advising process. In their opinion, by sharing majors and other commonalities, the advisor would be more effective in helping the advisee.
Important insights: • They believe Student Surveys should be partnered with the LIFT Surveys. • They believe that Student Advising groups would be best run by students for students.

- They believe Advisors who share characteristics with their advisee will be more effective.

Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: Tell me about your time in Honors College.

Interviewee: I took the sequence [Course Name] and that's a four semester class. There is originally four different professors who taught that. It was history, literature, art, and philosophy. I'm in my junior year and that class was for freshman and sophomore year. Right now, I'm taking my Junior Seminar.

Interviewer: Have you been in any other Honors courses other than that class?

Interviewee: No just so it's just those two OK.

Interviewer: So to tell you a little bit about the problems we're solving, we're noticing that there is a communication problems between students and faculty, and that the faculty want better perspectives from students. They want student opinions. So we have two prototype concepts that we have constructed that we would like you to review. The first prototype concept that we are considering is an online based Web platform that would be used to survey students upon faculty questions. It would be an anonymous survey sent out to all Honors students. It could be a subsection of Blackboard or it could be a completely separate entity. This would be an outlet for students to explain their thoughts on how things are going throughout the semester. They could voice their concerns with any upcoming events or things that aren't going well. They could express concern for professors or any other kind of positive or negative feedback that they have. Can you describe what you think some of the strengths of this prototype concept are?

Interviewee: Yeah, I think I think that would be good especially because you mentioned that the students would have the opportunity to discuss strengths and weaknesses of the professor in the class. I think students are very willing to jump at that opportunity. At the end of the semester, you need to fill out the LIFT survey. Thank you. And also there is a lot of participation in that. And the professors get a lot of feedback from that. I think that would be good to get some constructive feedback on the course as a whole.

Interviewer: What do you think the biggest weakness of that is?

Interviewee: You mentioned having that survey throughout the semester. And I talked about how students would jump at the opportunity to get some constructive feedback from the prof. Although if I would say that if it's much different than that, I think participation would be a lot lower. So I think the best opportunity would be to kind of

pair that with the LIFT surveys to get especially the Honors College students. And nobody else. You might have to only be in the Honors courses themselves which I feel might alienate one or two people who aren't taking any Honors College in that in that semester or in that year.

Interviewer: So let's look at your last semester that you took before prior to this one. Let's take a look at your last semester at Grand Valley, so non-Honors courses included. How many courses did you take?

Interviewee: Let's see, three I believe.

Interviewer: And in how many of those did the professors give you in-class time to fill out those LIFT surveys?

Interviewee: I think one did for sure. I can only recall one but I wouldn't say that it was all three.

Interviewer: Did you fill out all three LIFT surveys?

Interviewee: I did.

Interviewer: Do you always fill out your LIFT surveys?

Interviewee: I do.

Interviewer: What would you do to improve or alter this prototype concept?

Interviewee: I think it's really important that you're looking for feedback as the semester goes along. I think the most convenient opportunity for students to do that would be paired with the LIFT survey. Like I said, I think participation during this semester would be low even though the students are completely aware that it benefits them. It's tough to see immediate tangible results though from the student side. So I think that might just deter them even though they would know that it's important.

Interviewer: How do you think the students would respond to some sort of feedback from the professors? So if there was a way that we could identify. Let's say that a survey went out and if we have 100 surveys that went out to the Honors College and out of those one hundred, twenty five of them said that we need to implement Proposition 8. After Proposition 8 has been discussed and the faculty want to implement that. Do you think it

would be a good idea for the faculty to give feedback to the students? That "hey, we received your survey and we're going to use your opinion to implement Proposition 8". Do you think that that could be good in building that faculty-student relationship, in that the students see that their opinions are being valued?

Interviewee: I think it would have to be that way. Without that feedback, for the students then it's just one way and the faculty get what they want and that then they understand what the students want. But a lot of the times what the students want is a lot more nuanced than just a vote. And without that constant communication between the two of them, what ends up happening might be what the Proposition stated, but it's not exactly what the students thought it was going to be. And if that's the case, then it might not really help the students at all or at least to the degree that they were hoping for, and it might not help the professors either.

Interviewer: How many times after filling out a live survey, have you received feedback from the faculty on your survey?

Interviewee: Not on my survey, but I've heard stories of professors sharing what they get and sometimes it's just like a student cussed them out and they take it to other profs and they laugh about it and they tell it to their classes. But nothing more than that. I think it's fairly anonymous, I mean sometimes they know by who is writing.

Interviewer: So how many times have there been changes implemented based off of LIFT surveys that you've experienced?

Interviewee: Yeah, none, because then I pass the class and then I never see any change happen in that class. There have been classes where a prof says "you know what", this is a new textbook, it has more examples, better questions, better word phrasing. I got this from feedback from the LIFT survey from last semester and I think it's gonna be really good for you. That's about the extent.

Interviewer: What drives you to fill out surveys?

Interviewee: That's not what drives me. It's neat to see that change does happen from them. I mean we fill them out because they say fill them out. And also because I feel like maybe it doesn't help me, but I hope someone else down the road. And it's nice just to cast my voice my concerns in some way even if it doesn't lead to any change. I know I did my part of it.

Interviewer: Our second prototype concept that we are involved in is creating a sequence or a course specific advising group. This would be an opportunity for students to go to a

third party instead of going through their professor to voice their concerns about the course. Or voice their opinions about non course related things. And that third party advisor would communicate that to the rest of the faculty. What do you think are some of the strengths of that?

Interviewee: I think it's really nice to have someone paired with you.

Interviewer: Who do you think would make the best advisors?

Interviewee: I'll answer that one quick. I would think an upperclassmen, preferably in the same major as the advisee. Which might be difficult to find, but that would be the biggest impact I think.

Interviewer: What do you think the biggest weaknesses of that innovation?

Interviewee: Finding the student or the faculty member you have representing those people. And then having them dedicate the time for that because I know I'm extremely busy, and if I was paired with a freshman engineer I'd try my best to help them out. But there's just some things I can't do because I'm downtown and have my own stuff to do.

Interviewer: Is that a role that you think ANCHOR members could fill?

Interviewee: I think it would be good for them to try. I think all of what I just said applies even to ANCHOR. I mean students have their own schedules and we need to be respectful of that. But I think ANCHOR as an organization seeks to represent the Honor students already, and being paired in a class setting like that would only help that help them gain more student concerns.

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

Interviewee: I think you should have asked me how many students shouldn't be paired with one adviser.

I think three at most. No more than that. I think the adviser would start pulling out their hair.

Interviewer: Do you envision a close personal relationship between the advisors and the advisers?

Interviewee: I would like to see that happen. That's why I prefer an upperclassmen of the same major but I know I had a mentor when I first came, and I've never spoken to them

since orientation. So maybe that will happen. Maybe that won't. I think it really just depends on the individual. I don't think you're going to get around that.

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

Yes, through Text message or email communication.

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- [Honors Student]

- [Honors Student]

- [Honors Professor]

Possible next-steps:

- The interviewee believed that a large number of students participate in the LIFT survey, is this true? If the survey doesn't have a good turnout, then it may be a bad idea to partner the two together. However, if it is a popular survey, riding the coattails may be a good development to the prototype concept.

Dialogue 19

Stakeholder Group/Location:
Honors Student
Estimated Age:
_X__20-30 ____ 30-40 _____40-50 ____ 50+
Gender:
Female
Primary Goal of this Opportunity:
This interview was aimed at getting feedback on our top two prototype concepts from an Honors student who has had some experience in creating innovations. This will provide a unique perspective that will allow us to enhance our prototype concepts even further and work out potential concerns.
How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?
The direct perspective of an Honors student will allow us to get valuable feedback coming directly from a student that will be affected by our top prototype concept. Additionally, an Honors student with some experience with Design Thinking will have insight based on background knowledge.
Summary of Research:
The prototype concepts presented were well received and several valuable concerns were brought to light. With the message board, the physical boards were viewed as a potential challenge while the blog or message board through Blackboard or online was praised. The prototype concept of the class specific advising groups was preferred of the two prototype concepts, and the interviewee even expressed that she wished something like this would have existed when she was a freshman in her sequence to voice her concerns. A valuable point was brought up about potential conflict between professors of the class as well as the faculty leading the advising group for each class.
Important insights:
- Conflicts between professors may arise   - Anonymity may be an issue involving the online message boards   - Students may not participate in the online message boards as much as we would like
Dialogue Questions and Response:

Interviewer: So I just explained our two prototype concepts to you. I'd like to know, what were your initial thoughts on the first prototype concept which was the message board idea?

Interviewee: I really liked the idea in general just because I think it offers an available location to the students because it is true that some Honor students do not live in Niemeyer. Even some freshmen don't even live there their first year. So I think especially that first year definitely there's a disconnect between the two living centers, and I think that would help draw less of a disconnect between students and faculty in Honors. The only thought I really wasn't sure of was that in person message boards, I think I really enjoy the idea of the one through blackboard but the in-person ones I think would be hard to manage. I think personally it is because it could get ripped down by students. I mean that's a big thing with college students in general just like trying to destroy things. I don't know that one would necessarily be as effective in the nature of what you guys are looking for. Just personally in the questions that you gave as examples, I think definitely just maybe sticking to it online would be a more effective route in the long run.

Interviewer: You kind of already touched on it but were there any other concerns that came to mind or problems that you think might arise with that the message board idea?

Interviewee: So you talked about it being on Blackboard and it being anonymous or not anonymous. Anonymity is a good thing or a bad thing depending on what the question is like. You don't want to make it super overwhelming for students knowing that they are going to be named and if it's a very serious question, I definitely think that's something you'd have to play with too. Mainly like what constitutes an anonymous answer versus a non-anonymous answer. And I also think another thing is awareness of the idea on Blackboard. I know a lot of people use Blackboard but I don't necessarily know if they would take the time out of their day just to go and answer something just because it's put up there. I don't know if necessarily an incentive for students to use it, but definitely I think you would need something that encourages students to participate in it just because it is one of those things that you wouldn't really get a lot of control over them actually participating. Yeah you can post a question but it might not always get answered right away or if it needs to be answered in a timely manner.

Interviewer: So the second prototype concept that I described to you was the class specific advising groups. What were your first initial thoughts on that?

Interviewee: I really enjoyed that because I personally did have a rough experience with my freshman sequence freshman year. I really enjoyed the class and I made a lot of friends out of it but it definitely would have been nice to have someone to go and talk to. Not that I couldn't have gone and talked to Meg my advisor, which I did, and talked to her about the difficulties and things I could have been doing differently, but I think just having someone there in person being able to talk to you right away and knowing that they have your interests in mind while also making sure your education is also going well too. I think that just the overall relationship that would be built there I think between both your actual sequence professor and another professor outside of that. I like that you guys decided to include the junior seminars and maybe I don't know if you have talked about the senior projects either but I

definitely think that's a great idea too because freshmen are freshmen. There is so many different perspectives and they're unique and everyone's experience is different. So some juniors might have had a better experience in their seminar and some may not have. So I think definitely the variety and diversity of the groups you would get would be really cool.

Interviewer: What concerns came to mind if any about the second prototype concept?

Interviewee: One concern I thought of was professors often tend to be very competitive. Especially with research and stuff so I don't know if it necessarily would translate to this kind of idea or innovation but I definitely know they get competitive. So I don't know if it would cause a weird relationship between the actual professors of the class or sequence versus the class advisor. It's good for the students to have that other person but I don't know necessarily if it will translate well between the professors. So I don't know how you get around that especially if it is a sequence that tends to be difficult and a lot of students struggling and not liking it because I know there's a few of those. I think it would be hard for some of the actual professors to hear criticisms and I don't know if they wouldn't necessarily do anything about it just because another professor is telling them. I feel like that's something that you definitely need to work out; the relationship between the two. Just because I'm not necessarily sure how they would play out with each other.

Interviewer: Is there anything else that you'd like to share or comment on that I didn't ask you?

Interviewee: I guess going back to that last one, the sequence advising. So you talked about it being built for the 10 to 15 minutes before class and there's definitely a lot of students that go from class to class to class during the day. Specifically like for me this semester I have 10 minutes between my classes and I'm running back and forth from to class. I know there's a lot of students that do that. Is that the only method you're thinking of as of right now like in the 10 to 15 minutes before class for them to talk to them, or is there more avenues for these students to meet with the advisor Professor?

Interviewer: Yeah I will definitely consider that because I know that timing has been a really big issue for both students and faculty.

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 contacted?

Yes, email

Three more connections this stakeholder provided:

- Relatively uninvolved Honors students

- Sequence faculty professors

- Part-time Honors faculty

Possible next-steps:

- Revise prototype concepts considering concerns mentioned

Research Bibliographies

Research Bib 1

Citation:
Longo, Nicholas., Gibson, Cynthia. 2011. Student Voice and Leadership *From Command to Community: A New Approach to Leadership Education in Colleges and Universities.* p126-144.
Reason for including this source in your work:
Passages included in the book provide fresh insights into the ways that students can develop better communication skills within a major or program, as well as the promotion of 'co-educators' at the university level. There is an emphasis placed on faculty members to be fully committed to a program that promotes student opinion and instruction.
Main argument:
The recognition and inclusion of student voice at university is a fundamental aspect in promoting civic engagement. Outcomes associated within a community primarily made up of students requires one's own sense of civic identity, which can be promoted through the idea that students are here to inform educators as well as educators are here to inform students. For this process to be successful, the authors urge that no preexisting curriculum be pieced together, but rather start from scratch and focus on ultimately the student learning outcomes.

Important Ideas:

- Students should feel as though they are equal with professors to promote the idea that students are co-educators and can help teach other students and professors
- Education for the leadership and voice of students is encouraged by creation of opportunities and experiences that put students in the position to enact change
- An effective community is one that encourages civic engagement so that students feel integrated into the program
- For a system of transparency and support at the university level, it is necessary that faculty show full commitment to change
- For students interested in research or not, faculty mentors are encouraged to promote better communication between student wants and administration

Evidence:

This section of the book describes a program called "Citizen Scholars Program' that encourages students to select one or more organizations that they do research in and collaborate with to earn insights in forms of communication within and organization and key leadership skills. This collaborative work serves as a capstone for students and leads them to understand the role of community partners and mutual understandings.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

Terms:

civic engagement, leadership education, demographic shifts, democratic citizenship, cohort-based programs, civic identity, student voice, action-oriented leadership

Quotes:

"We argue that new leadership education, with its key focus on civic identity and civic action, is best done in sustained, developmental, cohort based programs" (129).

"The recognition and inclusion of community partners in a civic engagement curriculum must move beyond making an agency a site for student learning, toward a relationship in which community members are fully integrated into the program" (130).

"Collaboration with community also creates opportunities to engage with diversity, explore interdependent work, and build authentic relationship" (131).

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
- Promotes the 'user' experience in the student's positions. Explains that to get anywhere successfully, there needs to be new ideas brought to table that are centered on the student learning experience.	- Not directly focused on student governance, but rather student inclusion. Focuses on multi-year plans that would be difficult to apply to the FMHC and the students themselves.

Connections:

- Our design team is given a task to create a prototype for student governance in the Honors College, this book gives ideas to the foundational aspects to communication between students and faculty, which is something we strive to make better at Grand Valley
- Community programs outlined in the reading in the form of student cohort groups could be valuable for communication between Honors students of different backgrounds and living locations
- For a successful communication program between students and faculty, there needs to be a commitment to change and progress from both students and faculty. This could be an important step for enacting change in the FMHC.

Questions/Concerns:

- In what ways can faculty members allow students to teach aside them to promote transparent communication between faculty and student body?
- Can students and faculty form teams together to attack community goals?

Research Bib 2

Citation:

Lizzio, Alf & Wilson, Keithia. 2009. Student participation in university governance: the role conceptions and sense of efficacy of student representatives on departmental committees. *Studies in Higher Education*. 34/1: 69-84. http://web.b.ebscohost.com .ezproxy.gvsu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&sid=5adf097f-f1ea-462c-95de-329e99d9170d%40pdc-v-sessmgr01.

Reason for including this source in your work:

This article focuses on the roles of students within student governance committees/ organizations, which I believe will be extremely helpful as we try to innovate a successful method to incorporate Honors students into the governance of the Honors College.

Main argument:
This article argues that a lot of faults in student inclusion in governance lie in role ambiguity. Faculty and administration have created roles for students to voice their opinions but these roles are often not well defined, and can seem more performative than useful. Better communication between faculty, administration, and students as well as more substantial roles for students would help to prove these issues.

Important Ideas:

Student involvement in university organizations and committees has functional, developmental, and social benefits.

- Educational institutions, especially in higher education, have a very hierarchical structure that often disregards student ideas and thoughts.

- Different students have different motivations for pursuing (or not pursuing) a representative role; however, those who do become representatives occasionally feel unwanted or delegitimized by faculty members.

- Role ambiguity leads to less efficacy.

Evidence:

Twenty students who had been appointed to roles as student representatives within their educational institutions were interviewed. When asked to rank "how effective do you feel in this role?" on a 7-point scale, the mean response was only a 4.85, supporting the authors argument that these roles are not utilized to the best of their ability. The student

participants also described a lack of awareness among their peers about their positions, further proving that these roles often come off as performative rather than an actual medium for change

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

Efficacy: the ability to produce a desired or intended result.

"The legitimate positions that students should be ascribed or entitled to claim are somewhat contested, and clearly have implications for the enactment of a representative role"

"Two important points need to be made. Firstly, staff perceptions (real or imagined) influence students' felt sense of efficacy and legitimacy as representatives. Students describe a sense of having to 'negotiate around' staff attitudes (e.g. need to read how they are reacting to you), and some, perhaps inevitably, see their role through staff eyes (e.g. you can find yourself trying to fit in with what they want you to be … after all, they have more power). Students also reported the negative impact of subtle, dismissive or patronizing comments made by academic staff (e.g. it's hard for you to really understand this issue) or their pejorative attempts at humor (e.g. this will look good on your CV)."

"Departmental student representatives function as only one part of a university's governance process. Much of the role conflict and ambiguity reported by student representatives in this study can be understood in systemic terms; that is, local difficulties and challenges can be, in part, symptomatic of wider institutional ambiguity or incongruence. Thus, efforts to improve governance at the departmental level need also to be contextualized and informed by a coherent 'whole-of-university' governance philosophy and strategy."

Strengths:	**Weaknesses:**
- By interviewing students about their own personal experience rather than the faculty overseeing those roles, Lizzio and Wilson are able to dive deep into the reality of student-held representative positions.	- While the article makes great arguments of what changes need to be made to improve student roles in governance, it seems rather abstract without any specific examples. Secondly, interview responses were seemingly similar across each student, it would be helpful to have a more than 20 students interviewed to have larger amounts of data.

Connections:

- The student and faculty/administration opinions included in this article can help us to start empathizing with our targeted stakeholders.

- Our eventual prototype will benefit from the insights of this article, making sure the student roles suggested are of substance.

- A strong theme in this article is the importance of *good* communication between students, faculty, and administration. This is directly related to our original problem statement.

Questions/Concerns:

- How can we make sure that our innovation is favorable to both students and faculty?

- How can we avoid role ambiguity and increase efficacy of student roles?

- Can student roles go beyond just representative in nature?

Research Bib 3

Citation:

Spurrier, Robert. 2008. The Newest "Basic Characteristic" of a Fully Developed Honors Program. DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska-Lincoln. p191-198.

https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1077&context=nchchip

Reason for including this source in your work:

This is a well-developed and actively updated document outlining the characteristics of successful Honors programs as published by the National Collegiate Honors Council. While this article is targeted at the newest addition, it thoroughly outlines all of the characteristics in the appendices.

Main argument This document highlights that the newest addition of a characteristic that is common of successful Honors College Programs is that successful programs provide preferential enrollment for "active" members. This will encourage involvement of Honors Students in the Honors Program, a cornerstone theme present in the listed characteristics. The other characteristics outlined in the appendices are themed around administrative structure and further fostering communication between all involved entities.

Important Ideas:

- The Honors College needs to act as an intellectual canvas for students and faculty. Students should be able to pursue in-depth learning practices while Honors faculty should use the Honors College as an opportunity to test unconventional courses. Learning is the focus, creativity is the method.

- The Honors College must be subject to continuous review and amendment. It is not a static body, but an active one.

- There must exist councils of Students and Faculty that work together to share insights and opinions. These groups should work close with the director and the director must work closely with the Deans of the university.

Evidence:

This article is produced and approved by the National Collegiate Honors Council, which is the exact organization former GVSU FMHC Director, Dr. Chamberlain asked to conduct a review of GVSU's Honors College. They are a very established authority on the Honors programs across the nation.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- "The program should have in place a committee of Honors students to serve as liaison with the Honors faculty committee or council who must keep them fully informed on the program and elicit their cooperation in evaluation and development. This student group should enjoy as much autonomy as possible conducting the business of the committee in representing the needs and concerns of all Honors students to the administration, and it should also be included in governance, serving on the advisory/policy committee as well as constituting the group that governs the student association." (p194)

- " The director or other administrative officer charged with administering the program should work in close collaboration with a committee or council of faculty members representing the colleges and/or departments served by the program" (p194)

- "A fully developed program will provide priority enrollment for honors students who are active in the program in recognition of their unique class scheduling needs" (p195)

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
- This article provides an exemplary outline of successful Honors Program characteristics. This article is very concise and clear in its entries, which can be used as a guideline for Honors Program development.	- Considering this article is presented as a list, there lacks supportive arguments. Fortunately, the publisher is an established authority, but examples of these guidelines being successful would be helpful for argumentative sake.

Connections:

- This article articulates structural changes that might need to take place in order to foster a student driven representative council.

- This article stresses the importance of distinguishing "active" and "non-active" Honors students. This appears to be a distinction Grand Valley does not make, and could potentially be useful in a form of governance.

- Not only does the article state that a student governance council should be incorporated, but also that it should have as much autonomy as possible.

Questions/Concerns:

- Which of these characteristics should our team aim to adopt from this list?

- Which universities have used these guidelines and can testify their success?

- What kind of obstacles will be present in establishing student governance autonomy?

Research Bib 4

Citation:
Austin, C. Grey, 1991 "Honors Programs: Development, Review, and Revitalization" NCHC Monographs Series. 31.

Reason for including this source in your work:
This work outlines foundational guidelines for forming an Honors College. It outlines multiple approaches to the structure of the organization and the roles of its members.

Main argument:
Throughout the development of successful Honors Colleges, colleges that are formed with organizational integrity are those who succeed while others may fail. Ultimately, the Honors College should provide an educational challenge to students who may excel in the non-Honors Curriculum. Ultimately, the program should be structured as a give-and-take relationship between professors and students. The experience should be mutually beneficial for both the parties as well as the university as a whole.

Important Ideas:

- The Honors College is established to challenge excelling students.

- The Program should encourage educational advancement in the areas of student interest. These ideas may be approved by faculty advisory boards, but must reflect the interests of both the students and the faculty.

- The Honors College should be careful not to take advantage of faculty members or students; the program is designed to be mutually beneficial, not parasitic.

- Collaboration between students and faculty is at the heart of a successful program: this is because students need to take an active role in the governance of the Honors College.

- The Honors College Program needs to be organized like a highway. There should be ease of access for students to enter and exit the program as they see fit.

Evidence:

This is another article released by the NCHC, the National Collegiate Honors Council. This Council serves as a support element to Honors Colleges and acts as an established Honors Authority. This organization was invited to perform a critique of Grand Valley's Honors College Program by the former Director of the program.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- "Although the open program is more complex to administer than the membership program, its potential for serving able students, particularly transfer, minority, and non-traditional students, is greater." (p23)

- "If a program funded in this indirect way is to function effectively, it is essential that the Honors Director report as directly as possible to the chief academic officer and have that official's full and visible support. Continuity in the office of the Honors Director is an asset" (p21)

- "a high degree of community can be found, but care must be taken to prevent Honors from becoming isolated from the central academic functions of the campus" (p18)

- "The Honors Contract is a device that permits students to build their own curricula in consultation with faculty members, and it is subject, usually, to the approval of a faculty committee" (p14)

- "The mainstay of departmental honors is independent study in a tutorial relationship with a faculty member - an apprenticeship with a practicing scholar and an invaluable experience for the prospective graduate student" (p14)

- "The development and maintenance of the desired atmosphere in an Honors center or in Honors housing require that the Honors Director and professional staff be willing to move away from desk and classroom duties to meet with student committees and councils, to give students a role in Honors governance, to encourage faculty to visit the Honors center, to develop formal and informal programs, and simply to relax and enjoy student friendships. Participation in the Honors community should be as rewarding for staff as for students" (p19)

- "Students should find the encouragement and the chance to excel as soon as they enter college, but the process of predicting who will respond to Honors work is uncertain at best; the program should be structured so that entry and exit (without the onus of failure) are possible at any time" (p23)

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
- This document provides as series of approaches to Honors Program Development and governance. This may give key insights into the types of modifications that need to be made to the current GVSU Honors College.	- This document is particularly structured as a technical document. Other than the authority of the NCHC, the document doesn't provide examples of Programs who have implemented these ideas.

Connections:

- Students need to have involvement in deciding the curriculum for their Honors Program or they may be uninterested.

- Because predicting student involvement and attendance is inaccurate, the Honors College should be easily joinable and exit-able.

- With the rise of community college Honors Program, having the four year university allow ease of access for transfer students will help to promote Honors College Development.

- As the Director of the program, Dr. Gilles needs to be in direct collaboration with the president of the university.

- The Honors College is a mutually beneficial program for students and professors, so don't exploit the willingness of the professors to be involved. This can turn the Program stale.

Questions/Concerns:

- What role does Dr. Gilles play right now? (As the Director of the Honors College)

- How involved are the students in selecting the Honors curriculum?

- Do the Professors feel burnt out and exploited?

Research Bib 5

Citation:
Ratsoy, Eugene W. & Bing Zuo. 1999. Student Participation in University Governance. The Canadian Journal of Higher Education. Volume XXIX, No 1: 1-26. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ616590.pdf.
Reason for including this source in your work:
This article details a study that investigated the scope, process, and effects of student participation in university governance. This may give insight to how other universities addressed involving students in the decisions of the university.
Main argument:
This study showed that students are capable of administering their own affairs as well as satisfying various student needs. Additionally, they were able to protect the political interests of the students that they represented.
Important Ideas:
• Both environmental and personal factors affected the impact of student participation in university governance • Student associations as organized forces had much greater influence than did the students at large. • Students were extensively involved in university academic and administrative decision-making at different levels.
Evidence:
Five bodies of literature related to student participation in university governance were reviewed as a part of this study. These included theories on decision-making, theories underlying participative decision-making, democratic theories, university governance models, the evolution of student participation in university and college governance, and student rights and legislation pertaining to student involvement in university governance.
Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:
"The concepts and theories underlying participative decision making, along with the writings on student rights and the legitimacy of student involvement, provide a convincing rationale for student participation in university governance" (page 4) "Semi-structured interviews were the major data-gathering technique" (page 5)

"Protecting student interests and promoting the welfare of students are two major functions of each of the student organizations" (two major student government organizations of the University of Alberta were being referenced, page 11)

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
- This is an extensive study that provides lots of insightful research revolving around student involvement and governance in colleges and universities.	- This is only one study, so it cannot be taken as absolute fact even though it is peer reviewed.

Connections:

- Though this study is not about Honors college governance specifically, this research about student influence in a non-Honors setting may still provide helpful insights.

- There are several examples of student organizations within this journal whose aspects might be applied to our solution to our problem statement for this class.

- This journal also addresses student motives to participate in university governance, and this may also apply to the students at GVSU in the Honors College.

Questions/Concerns:

- How would non-Honors governance observed in this study differ when applied to the Honors College?

- Would the results of this study be very different if conducted at GVSU or in the Honors College specifically?

- Would the perspectives and motives of Honors students vary from those of non-Honors students?

Research Bib 6

Citation:

Miles, Jennifer M., Miller, Michael T., & Nadler, Daniel P. 2008. Student governance: towards effectiveness and the ideal. *College Student Journal*. 42/4: 1061-1069. http://web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/ehost/detail/detail?vid=4&sid=e2d5efda-25c9-4a6f-9b24-89ebe57dd060%40sessionmgr4009&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#db=aph&AN=34876573.

Reason for including this source in your work:

This source is beneficial because it examines what makes student governance bodies effective and practical. It takes examples from current college governance organizations and attempts to determine what characteristics should be incorporated into education institutions to support the growth of student involvement.

Main argument:

This article argues that many student-held governance positions and organization are ineffective. Despite the high level of faculty, administration, and student collaboration seen in the 1960's-1970's, colleges currently offer no such opportunities for the sharing of ideas and opinions between the student body and the university "higher-ups". In order to succeed, student governance bodies must be an essential part of the way a university runs, and student excitement and subsequent participation must be promoted as well.

Important Ideas:

- Due to increased faculty oversight of student positions and organizations, students are less passionate about become involved with their university.
- The competing interests of higher education (student advancement vs. profit) do not lend easily to shared governance, especially with students.
- Many college campuses currently only have student involvement within student-run organizations that often raise and regulate their own funds and do not affect other governance bodies.
- Faculty and students alike are often led to believe that a shared governance is not something highly valued by their institution.

Evidence:

"And despite their relevance and currency in contemporary higher education, there is a strong movement to restrict the delegation of authority and the right to be involved in decision-making."

This highlights the author's argument that the way student governance bodies are run has been drastically altered since the mid-to-late 1900's. Instead of continuing a collaborative relationship between the student body and the university, authority is now more strictly delegated to those with the most financial power or those who have had influence over the university for the longest amount of time.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

"These student governance bodies must find a way to evolve and become a part of the fabric of the increasingly commercial and corporate-like university."

"These study findings overall repeated the need for student governance bodies and their leaders to be purpose-driven in finding a meaning and role for their bodies and their efforts. In the ideal characteristics identified, there was strong agreement among all responding **s**tuden**t** leaders that efforts need to be made to articulate the interests of many students. Similarly identified in the ideal characteristics of student leaders was the need to represent the interests of all students. Broadly, as with other elements of higher education leadership, the students in this study called for leadership that is equitable and broad-based."

"During the last 30 years, however, student involvement in institutional decision-making has eroded to the extent that student empowerment has largely assumed a placating role with authority delegated to oversee student-related activities and fee disbursement. In what has been described as a spiraling effect, this relegation of authority has in turn led to fewer students participating less passionately, and a growing attention to self-service activities."

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
- Takes into account the opinions of students from **multiple** universities. - Also considers the faculty point of view, including the exclusion faculty often face from decision-making as well.	- Parts of the article seem to question the ability of college students in general to be good members of governance committees due to personal maturity levels. While possibly true from some students I believe it is a very broad and unproven statement to make.

Connections:

- Insight into faculty frustrations with college governance will help us to better interview and interpret insights from our faculty stakeholders.

- We can use the examples from the 1960's/1970's as a start for research and research specific examples of student governance bodies in order to brainstorm for our current innovation.
- We can research the way that universities promote competing interests, and how this poorly affect the ability to include students in governance processes.

Questions/Concerns:

- How can we increase student excitement and participation within the Honor's College?
- What are some faculty opinions and ideas that are often left unheard?
- How can universities begin to truly value and promote faculty, administration, and student collaboration?

Research Bib 7

| **Citation:** |
| Vile, John R., (2011) "Preparing a Master Plan for an Honors College" Honors in Practice -- Online Archive. 145. http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/nchchip/145 |

| **Reason for including this source in your work:** |
| This article outlines the insights and experience of John R. Vile, the Dean of the Honors Program at Middle Tennessee State University. He specifically reflects on a report he produced and released to his department heads at the University, and shares his account of developing the Honors Master Plan at MTSU. |

| **Main argument:** |
| Although many strong Honors Programs have been developed without one, John R. Vile's experience has taught him that having a Master Plan in place for the Honors College is what helped develop his successful program. The heart of this argument is not what a Master Plan is, but rather to emphasize the new insights he learned while making his. |

| **Important Ideas:** |
| The Financial Concerns of his students were far greater than he expected. Many of his students needed to work while in school to support themselves. This led to the development of more scholarship programs. The biggest differences between Honors Programs does not lie in the administration or procedural methods, rather the culture and diversity of the students. Getting input from the students was a huge stride in understanding what the students needed to succeed and develop a stronger program. By knowing the problems the students were facing, the faculty was able to develop solutions to those problems. John R. Vile recognized the authority of the NCHC and developed his Honors Program on the core characteristics of a successful Honors College as Described by the NCHC. |

| **Evidence:** |
| The success of John R. Vile's Honors program was measured through the student response at his university. Particularly in the excerpt regarding Honors College |

enrollment at the university. By further developing the program, the enrollment actually increased!

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- "'student experiences and outcomes are more varied among students within institutions than among institutions' (6). Indeed, it found that 'less than 10% of the total variation in effective educational practices is attributable to institutions.'" (p184)

- "These changes have turned the numbers in a positive direction without sacrificing quality" (p185)

- "Almost all of our students reported that small class sizes—we cap lower-division classes other than our lecture series at twenty and upper-division classes at fifteen—were important to them" (p186)

- "Although we attributed declining enrollments to changes in admission standards, we found that we could reverse the trend by being more proactive in recruiting incoming students and by asking departments to schedule more classes" (p190)

Strengths:	**Weaknesses:**
- This article does a great job at highlighting the insights from research. This is valuable because these insights can be drawn from and many can be applied to our university.	- These are the insights provided based on the research conducted at MTSU. Fortunately, the consistency between Honors Colleges is grounds for generalizations, but it is still a drawback.

Connections:

- By changing the Program Content, the Honors College may be able to increase its attendance without lowering its standards.

- Honors Colleges vary most significantly between the students who attend them, not the programs themselves.

- The Honors student's class size was very important to them.

- The Financial burden on students may distract from student involvement and participation in the program.

Questions/Concerns:

- Are the students in the FMHC financially burdened?

- Are the students interested in the current courses?

Research Bib 8

Citation:

German, Rachel. 1995. Co-Curricular Involvement Characteristics of Bowling Green
State University Honors Students. EDRS.

https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED386138.pdf

Reason for including this source in your work:

Although this document is verging on being outdated, the insights contained in the
content of this research paper are valuable to understanding the Honors Student psyche.
By understanding these personality characteristics, the best solution can be developed to
our design problem.

Main argument:

The heart of this article was to shift the target of Honors program from a strictly
academic approach to a well-rounded approach. The research presented in the document
reveals that Honors Students at Bowling Green State University are extremely active in
co-curricular activities outside of the classroom. Therefore, the involvement
mindset/personality of Honors Students can be engaged by faculty and programs to
provide the best learning experience for Honors Students.

Important Ideas:

- In order to fully engage students, the entirety of a student needs to be addressed.
  This means addressing student interests outside of the classroom.
- Honors Students are more interested in co-curricular activities than their non-
  honors equivalents.
- This article emphasized the vocabulary of "co-curricular", not "extra-curricular"
  because the value that activities outside of the classroom are being measured at is
  greater than just a peripheral activity.
- If involved academically successful Honors Students are actively involved outside
  of the classroom, then academically insecure Honors Students may benefit from
  more co-curricular engagement.

Evidence:

The evidence presented in this document was based off of a study conducted by the
author and the Bowling Green State University. A series of students were surveyed on
their extra-curricular involvement, and the data received is what the conclusions are
drawn upon. The data received from the survey is appended to the document.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

"Even the personalities of honors students have been documented as having a strong need for achievement, approval and autonomy (Palmer & Wohl, 1972)"(p4)

"We must be certain of our support of [students' involvement outside of the classroom] of a student's life because it is perhaps the single most important factor influencing a student's persistence in college" (p4)

"Information gathered here also shows the diversity of the interests within this honors program. All categories evidenced some level of participation the highest being the Academic and Departmental organizations followed by the Honors Student Association" (p9)

"From these findings we can consider the great importance of organizations sponsored by honors programs and the departments which support their curriculum to conduct a large level of programming where students of like ability can interact and challenge each other" (p9)

Strengths:	**Weaknesses:**
- This document provides insights into the Honors Student psyche and helps to clarify characteristics that define a successful Honors Student.	- This document is verging on being outdated. Many institutions have recognized the insights provided in this document and have tried to implement program developments based off these.

Connections:

- Honors Students are more involved with co-curricular events than non-Honors students.
- The diversity of student engagement was significant as the different Honors Students were involved in a collection of co-curriculars.
- Of the students surveyed, the most popular co-curricular activity in which the students were involved was the Honors Student Senate.
- Honors Students may be able to help foster academic insecurity by involving themselves with more co-curricular activities.

Questions/Concerns:

- If an Honors Student Senate was implemented in the FMHC would it be the most popular co-curricular activity?
- Follow up to the question above: Were Honors Student Senate Members more willing to fill out the surveys at BGSU, or is this a generalizable characteristic?

- What was the structure of the BGSU Honors Student Senate that enticed Honors Student to get involved?

Research Bib 9

Citation:
Planas, Anna., Soler, Pere., Fullana, Judit., Pallisera, Maria., & Vilá, Montserrat. 2013. Student participation in university governance: the opinions of professors and students. *Studies in Higher Education*. 38/4: 571-583. http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy. gvsu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=9&sid=ca2c515b-f3e6-4233-be3a-44faf17d 49c9%40sessionmgr102

Reason for including this source in your work:
This source is included because it has valuable information on the varying opinions of students and faculty when it comes to university governance. It utilizes questionnaires and discussion groups to learn of the opinions of university students. It then takes the differences of opinions to try and propose a better system of governance.

Main argument:
Student participation in university governance has changed greatly from past decades. Non-conventional students and an increasing need for students to work outside campus have changed both the willingness and ability for students to have equal opportunities for participation. Socio-cultural factors also contribute to this phenomenon, further adding to the lack of diversity in student governance and subsequent lack of accurate student body representation. Faculty are also often loss in the shuffle- as universities are in constant competition, the increasing use and often rapid changing of technology and teaching styles can leave faculty disoriented or even uninformed of many university issues and projects. Something that may alleviate these problems are a clear and concise method of communication between faculty, students, and administration. With more student informed and knowledgeable, they may be more inspired to get involved. Also, making sure meeting spaces between faculty and students are not only available, but also comfortable and as accessible as possible, is very important to improve communications.

Important Ideas:
- Modern universities students do not all fit the same mold, and often have an array of responsibilities outside of their university that prohibit them from being very involved on campus.   - Lack of knowledge of university issues and projects is seen across students and faculty, and causes low rates of participation.   - In order for student governance to be beneficial for students and for the university, governance bodies must allow students to have a sense of agency, as

well as grant them with valuable and resume-worthy skills, depending on their position within the group.

Evidence:

"The Urraca Report (Urraca 2005) is deserving of special mention, it being one of the clearest and most up-to-date references to students' interest in highlighting their limited involvement in university governance and their desire to change this situation. More recently, Martı́n (2007) has presented research conducted at the Autonomous University of Madrid aimed at ascertaining norms of participation both inside and outside the university, on the basis of 513 student interviews. The results are concerning: around 70% of students have never voted in university elections (either for rector or representatives), and 40% claim there is a lack of information."

This report back the findings of the authors, confirming a lack of both student involvement and a lack of information present to students.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

"The results of our study show that students demonstrate scarce knowledge of the spaces and mechanisms for participation (see Table 1); although differences are apparent between faculties, most students responding to the questionnaire say they are not well informed (56%) or not informed at all (24%) with regard to this issue."

"In the opinion of teaching staff, a first element favoring student participation is for them to be aware of the importance of their presence on certain bodies, such as boards of studies."

"Universities might consider making greater efforts to guarantee the provision of quality information. This means providing clear information with regard to the rules and regulations of all boards and governing bodies involved in the functioning of the university, and providing more and better information on the rights of students…"

Strengths:	**Weaknesses:**
- The article conducts a study, and the results match the results of many other studies on the same topic. - The article takes into account the complete environment of a university, including both faculty and student opinions.	- The study that takes place in the article is from a group of students at the University of Girona, which has a student body half the size of GVSU's. Does the size of a university change any factors when it comes to student participation?

Connections:

- The focus on meeting places connects to our past focus on the benefit of casual and comfortable meeting places between faculty and students.
- A lot of the insights from this article match those in our stakeholder interviews- students do not feel like they are important or that governance is worth participating in.
- Many Honors students we have talked to also feel that they are lacking on information when it comes to the governance of the Honors College.

Questions/Concerns:

- Is there truly a way to bolster participation from students who are rarely on campus outside of class?
- Why don't faculty and student opinions match?

Research Bib 10

Citation:

Bejou, David & Bejou, Azam. 2012. Shared Governance and Punctuated Equilibrium in Higher Education: The Case for Student Recruitment, Retention, and Graduation. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*. 11: 248-258. http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/ ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=5&sid=14de2ae4-1a50-493b-b946-719ff90aeb80% 40pdc-v-sessmgr06.

Reason for including this source in your work:

This source is included because it takes into account the many problems faced by universities. By taking these problems into account, we can gain valuable insights on how to create an innovation/prototype that stands the test of time.

Main argument:

Higher education institutions of today face unique and modern challenges- with so many societal and technological changes, universities face a problem when trying to retain students. In order for these institutions to continue to thrive, they must meet a "punctuated equilibrium", where they can maintain financial stability and student participation.

Important Ideas:

- Universities of today face a multitude of issues, including fierce competition, scarce funding, and low retention rates.
- Shared governance between students, faculty, and administration could help to alleviate a lot of common problems faced by universities.
- Due to the financial needs of these institutions, students are often treated as "cash-cows", where university heads put on appearances just to make sure that alumni donations continue to come in each year.
- By viewing students as "customers", as they are paying for their education, marketing research can serve valuable when considering what steps to take next with shared governance.

Evidence:

The four phases of customer relationship management (CRM) as explained in the article (Exploration, Expansion, Commitment, Continuation or Dissolution) very much match the way a student is recruited to attend a university, and furthermore how a university tries to retain students after acceptance. This supports the author's argument that the

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relationship between a student and a university he/she attends is very much a transaction, with a seller and a buyer.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

"The key to creating a delicate balance and facing these challenges is the adoption and practice of shared governance principles. Shared governance must focus on informed decision making, transparency, open lines of communication between and among all components of the university community, accountability, and mutual respect and trust."

"From the academic point of view, students are products developed by faculty members. However, from the service side of an institution, students are customers who expect to receive high-quality and prompt service. Some university administrators blame the academic side for the student retention problem, when in fact it is the service side of the university that failed to deliver the necessary and basic services to students."

"Institutions of higher education face many challenges both internally and externally. These challenges have led to punctuated equilibrium. The most critical of these challenges is to recruit and retain qualified and diverse students. For higher education institutions to survive and thrive during this paradigm shift, they must practice and embrace the principles of shared governance to create teams of faculty, staff, administrators, and students to work together toward this goal."

Strengths:	**Weaknesses:**
- Author David Bejou applied the CRM model to several universities, and successfully increased student recruitment, enrollment, and retention through shared governance.	- Only one reference in the article is from work from a different author. The others are all work from the same author, and could result in bias.

Connections:

- This resource was a great indicator of how proper shared governance is beneficial for the university as well as the students.
- A lot of discouragement within the student body is due to financial issues, as many people go into a lot of debt just to attend a university/ program where they don't feel they have agency. Now, we know that universities often act based off of their own financial issues, and can try to bridge the gap with a mutually beneficial solution.
- After seeing the use of a CRM model on the issue of shared governance, it may be beneficial to look for more interdisciplinary articles (as long as the material is still

relevant of course), as university-student relationships within themselves are multi-faceted.

Questions/Concerns:

- Would the university be willing to disclose problems that cause a halt in shared governance? Would there be hesitancy to share these issues with students?
- In general, do GVSU students feel they are being treated as customers or taken for granted?

Research Bib 11

Citation:

Planas, Anna., Soler, Pere., Fullana, Judit., Pallisera, Maria., & Vilá, Montserrat. 2013. Student participation in university governance: the opinions of professors and students. *Studies in Higher Education*. 38/4: 571-583. http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy. gvsu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=9&sid=ca2c515b-f3e6-4233-be3a-44faf17d 49c9%40sessionmgr102.

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Higher education institutions of today face unique and modern challenges- with so many societal and technological changes, universities face a problem when trying to retain students. In order for these institutions to continue to thrive, they must meet a "punctuated equilibrium", where they can maintain financial stability and student participation.

Important ideas:

- Universities of today face a multitude of issues, including fierce competition, scarce funding, and low retention rates.
- Shared governance between students, faculty, and administration could help to alleviate a lot of common problems faced by universities.
- Due to the financial needs of these institutions, students are often treated as "cash-cows", where university heads put on appearances just to make sure that alumni donations continue to come in each year.
- By viewing students as "customers", as they are paying for their education, marketing research can serve valuable when considering what steps to take next with shared governance.

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- After seeing the use of a CRM model on the issue of shared governance, it may be beneficial to look for more interdisciplinary articles (as long as the material is still relevant of course), as university-student relationships within themselves are multi-faceted.

Questions/Concerns:

- Would the university be willing to disclose problems that cause a halt in shared governance? Would there be hesitancy to share these issues with students?
- In general, do GVSU students feel they are being treated as customers or taken for granted?

Research Bib 13

Citation:
Iowa State University Honors Program: https://www.honors.iastate.edu/ City University of New York's Macaulay Honors College: https://macaulay.cuny.edu/

Reason for including this source in your work:
As we have gone farther into our design thinking process, I was curious to see the ways some of the top Honors institutions in the country operated. After doing some research, both Iowa State and CUNY seemed to have Honors programs that are heavily praised by faculty and student alike. I took a deeper look into these programs to see their successes and how the FMHC could follow suit.

Main argument:
By examining these two Honors programs, there seems to be an emphasis on student engagement and inclusiveness. At Iowa State, an Honors Student Board relays the thoughts of students to faculty, and research amongst students is required and celebrated. At CUNY, student government helps address issues, and communal living spaces flourish.

Important ideas:
- Both programs had either a form of student government of an Honors student Board, which seemed to greatly promote student interests.   - The Macaulay Honors College (CUNY) has a webpage strictly for student activities, which includes the option to host gatherings in their communal space. Along with this, there is a multitude of equipment that can be rented out for free for these events. This seems to be extremely welcoming and foster student engagement.   - Research at Iowa State seems to be beneficial for student-faculty communications, as well as overall student engagement and academic advancement.

Evidence:
Iowa State's Honors College has a requirement for an Honors project that is very similar to the senior project requirement for FMHC students. However, there is a difference in the way it is handled that I believe results in less confusion. Iowa State's Honors students start their experience with research Freshman year, as shown through this link: https://www.honors.iastate.edu/program/fhp/first-year-mentor-program

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

"Student Development at Macaulay represents both the literal and the "what's possible" within a diverse community of highly motivated, talented and inquisitive young adults. Our primary goal is to provide guidance, advice and resources to students to create successful out-of-classroom activities throughout their undergraduate experience." (https://community.macaulay.cuny.edu/studentactivities/)

"The Honors Student Board (HSB) is the student voice of the Honors Program and serves as a liaison between Honors students and the University Honors Committee… All members of the Honors Program are members of HSB." (https://www.honors.iastate.edu/program/involvement/hsb)

"Honors students have the opportunity to gain access to research opportunities as early as freshman year through the First-Year Mentor Program. Undergraduate students play a significant role in Iowa State's research mission. They work alongside top-notch faculty and staff who are exploring new ideas and find solutions to real problems."

(https://www.honors.iastate.edu/research)

Strengths:	**Weaknesses:**
- Seeing examples of Honors colleges is beneficial, as they are a unique subset of any college/university. - Many of the programs at these universities are plausible to be implemented in the FMHC.	- There is no way to confirm that the practices at Iowa State and CUNY would be successful at GVSU, as there are many variables in play, including student body size.

Connections:

- As these Honors programs are some of the highest ranked in the country, it would be beneficial to strive towards their work.
- Our innovations should bolster student participation, as these programs have demonstrated.
- Clarification and expansion of the Senior Honors Project could be extremely beneficial.

Questions/Concerns:

- Is a form of student government necessary? Can these needs be fulfilled through an expanded form of ANCHOR?
- What currently holds the FMHC back from reaching the level of achievement seen by these programs?

Research Bib 14

Citation:

Rinn, A. N. (2005). Trends Among Honors College Students: An Analysis by Year in School. *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education*, *16*(4), 157–167. https://doi.org/10.4219/jsge-2005-479

Reason for including this source in your work:

This was a study conducted in an effort to identify the emotional states of an Honors Student throughout his/her Honors career. The specific section we were interested in was the research surrounding "Self Concept", which is very closely related to Self Validation. By understanding the Psych of an Honors Student at his/her different academic levels, we can determine the effectiveness of our proposed innovations, and use the differences in self validation to further develop our innovations.

Main argument:

Many prior researchers have determined that Honors Student "Self Concept" is a dynamic emotional state that changes throughout each year in the Honors Program. Additionally, they argue some of this "Self Concept" takes a dive during freshman year, then progressively increases until graduation. This study, however, concluded that the program takes an additional dip in confidence during the Senior year. These two dips are both caused by the "Big fish, little pond" effect.

Important ideas:

- Levels of Self Concept significantly drop for incoming freshmen. This is due to a shift in educational atmosphere. If prospective Honors Students are surrounded by average achieving students in High School, they may lose some self-confidence when surrounded by high achieving individuals.
- There also exists a drop in Self Concept when transitioning from a junior to a senior. This may be due to uncertainties of the future or an overall excitement from the juniors regarding the specialization of their major.
- By recognizing the trends in student Self-concept, faculty can work to provide more attention to the students whose self-confidence is lower. This can heighten the overall Honors experience.

Evidence:

In addition to including their experimental results in Table 1, this study also references prior research of 60 other works. These other works were used to build the foundation of the argument and the experimental study showed the advancements made to the research.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- **"**Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) cited evidence to suggest college students' academic self-concepts decline during the freshman year. From here, they argued students' academic self-concepts increase, such that by the end of a student's senior year, his or her academic self-concept is greater than it was at the beginning of the freshman year" p(158)

- "When a gifted student enters a gifted program after having been part of a mixed ability level program, he or she may find himself or herself surrounded by peers of equal ability. This may challenge his or her prior conceptions of ability and lower his or her academic self-concept." (p158)

- "Most research consistently indicates an increase in college students' general self-concept throughout the college years" (p159)

- "Again, the increase in self-concept may have been a function of either general maturation or a process of selective mortality (Reynolds, 1988)" P(159)

- "While senior Honors students had higher academic self-concepts than freshman Honors students and sophomore Honors students (M = 6.58, M = 6.35, and M = 6.40, respectively), junior Honors students had the highest academic self-concepts (M = 6.99). The decline in academic self-concept seen from the junior year to the senior year was statistically significant." (p164)

- "Knowing seniors may experience a slight decrease in academic self-concept, for example, might cause faculty and administrators to provide extra attention to the academic needs of Honors seniors, such that their Honors experiences will not be diminished in their final year of school." (p165).

Strengths:	**Weaknesses**:
This article strongly identifies trends of the Honors Student Psyche. The study on Self Concept is very supplemental to the design of our proposed innovations.	While Self Concept was one of the three major focuses of this study, it wasn't the sole focus. For this reason, the entirety of the research was not helpful, only some sections.

Connections:

- Honors Students who experience a lower level of Self Concept are more desperate for self-validation. This study was absolutely supported by our prior interviews and research. There seems to be a steep drop-off in involvement for freshman. Meaning, freshman may experience greater benefit in additional assistance.
- If the seniors are experiencing lower levels of Self Concept, it may be worth adjusting our "sequence specific advising" proposal to include higher level Students.

- Perhaps the root cause of student needing more self-validation is a result of transitioning stages (and years). An additional innovation may be implementing a stronger transition program.

Questions/Concerns:

- While GVSU FMHC already holds a transition program for incoming freshman, would there be a benefit to extending the operation of that program further into the semester and also creating a similar transition initiative for upper classmen?

Research Bib 15

Citation:

May, W. P. (2010). The history of student governance in higher education. *College Student Affairs Journal, 28*(2), 207-220. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/docview/737539301?accountid=39473

Reason for including this source in your work:

Though this piece is not directly involving an Honors Program within college, it describes a brief history of student governance as an integral part of higher education. It highlights the struggles of students to hold power over their education in order to provide insight into the development of student self-governance.

Main argument:

Student self-governance had evolved in many ways. It describes the history of governing organizations such as literary societies, honor systems, student assemblies, class or student councils, and student associations. It also divulges the history of student governance in higher education as it pertains to women and minorities.

Important ideas:

- Student associations are similar to the national government in that they have executive, judicial, and legislative branches.

- Within student councils, the representatives elected would preside over student assemblies and the student body as a whole.

- Student assemblies were used to discuss and vote on matters of concern, and the entire student body would gather to do so.

Evidence:

Please complete.

Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

"Literary societies did not resolve all of the students' contentions regarding their higher education experience. Students were frustrated with the lack of authority over their own lives"

Literary society: had significant and lasting influence on universities by opening libraries, initiating honors systems, and providing a voice for students

"By the 1900s, honor systems had become an integral part of student self-governance and have continued to evolve and adapt to the ever-changing higher education environment ever since."

"Student self-governance then evolved from unwieldy mass assemblies to a more representative form of governance: the class council"

Class councils: allowed for easier governance of larger and more diversified campuses as well as larger student populations.

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
This article gives a really great explanation of how early universities were governed and it is helpful to see why the previous forms of governance did not work and so they evolved and changed with time.	Early universities were very different from modern campuses, so some of the information that worked for these early schools will not apply to modern Honors Colleges.

Connections:

- As the population being governed increased, the governing system needed to change and be segmented to represent the student body as a whole.

- Student associations are structurally similar to the national government and are effective in many cases when governing a very large student population.

- Student governance may effect minority groups differently and it is important to include them and consider their influence.

Questions/Concerns:

- How would a student association form of governance operate within the Honors College at Grand Valley?

- Is there a concern for minority groups within the Honors College and how can we address that within our solution?

- What would be some pros and cons of having more members in the student government versus less members?