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# The Faculty Landing Page: Easy Access to Both Faculty Administrators Schedules

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# *The Faculty Landing*

*Page*

**EASY ACCESS TO BOTH FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS SCHEDULES!**

**FROM THE MINDS OF: THE POSSIBILITY ARCHITECTS**



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# Meet: The Possibility Architects

## Our Group Members

**Ryan VanOss:** Ryan is the team leader and one of the team's presenters. He is a third year Honors student working to achieve his BSE in Electrical Engineering. He currently has an internship at Tower Pinkster, and has been working on a number of projects with the company. Ryan enjoys playing the piano, watching movies with friends, and board/card games.

**Sydney Sprau:** Sydney is one of the team's researchers and process facilitator. She is currently a second year Honors student studying Nursing/Allied Health Sciences. Sydney works at a Senior Living Community as a Resident's Aide and she also volunteers at Kids Food Basket. Sydney loves helping people in any way she can! She also loves to dance and can be found spending a lot of her time with Grand Valley Dance Troupe as well as volunteering at her previous team's studio. Sydney enjoys reading, hanging out with friends, and spending her free time at the beach when its warm!

**Charity Foster:** Charity is one of the team's researchers. She is enrolled in her third year studying Biomedical Sciences and African American Studies. Charity is very involved on Grand Valley's campus and serves as a Resident Assistant. She also works for the office of Student Life and serves as a desk attendant for the 20/20 information desk in Kirkoff, while also leading an on-campus bible study called the Impact Movement. Outside of school and work, Charity enjoys spending time with her family and watching movies.

**Rachel McKay:** Rachel is a returning student who brings enthusiasm and years of real-world work experience to the team. She currently serves as the Accessibility and Inclusion Manager for the Grand Rapids Children's Museum, where she has worked since 2014. Much of her daily work aims at creating equitable pathways to the social-emotional benefits of play, and this playful inclusion-based lens carries through to her coursework as well. She is a Junior by standing and has returned to GVSU as a major in Liberal Studies with an emphasis in Natural History and Social Justice, studying the intersections of disparity and access in human interactions with the natural world. Outside of work and school she spends her time carving linoleum blocks for printmaking, playing board games with friends, and exploring the woods with her partner and dog.

**Madelyn Conklin:** Madelyn is one of the team's researchers and the team's videographer. She is a second year Junior studying Criminal Justice and Psychology while also being enrolled in the Honors College. Outside of school, Madelyn can usually be found working at Insomnia Cookies baking fresh cookies for starving college students or at her internship at Howard Law Group assisting in paralegal work. She also enjoys working out, and she is part of GVSU's Boxing club on campus.

# Opening Statement

Dear Reader,

Thank you for your interest in The Possibility Architects. Our work with Grand Valley State University Frederik Meijer Honors College over the past several months involved finding the best way to support students in contributing to the governance of the Honors College. We explored various views through conducting interviews with our valuable stakeholders, searching for secondary research, labelling unidentified needs within the Honors community, and collaborating with our stakeholders at various points throughout the process. Through this process we developed many different iterations on what would eventually become our top innovation prototype concepts. In this way we were able to approach the task empathetically and were better suited to provide a prototype concept that can increase student-faculty collaboration in authentic, compassion-driven governance within the Honors College. When investigating effective governance, our team arrived at a more upstream strategy. We believe that effective governance is based in authentic relationships, so the first step in improving governance should be providing avenues for communication that can help these relationships flourish. Therefore, we found that before the agency of the students can be directly advanced, there must first be significant and lasting growth between the students and faculty/administration concerning their relationships and the mutually held trust therein. We believe that building trust will aid in the agency of students in the Honors College in the generations to come and we are proud to deliver this success to you. On behalf of the students and the administration of the Honors College who take hold and implement our prototype concept, thank you for investing your time into seeing our innovation become a reality.

Sincerely,

The Possibility Architects

# Design Brief

## Background and Context

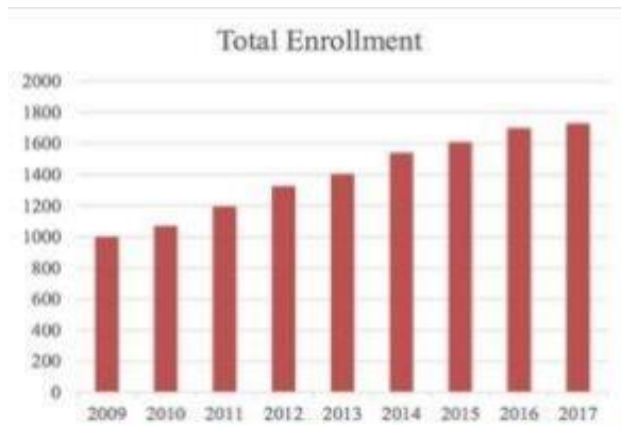
Grand Valley State University is home to the vibrant learning community of Frederik Meijer Honors College (FMHC). The mission of the Honors College is to “inspire and empower motivated students to be intellectually curious lifelong learners who make positive contributions to their local and global communities” (Gilles, 2018). The Honors College is an alternative option to the general education program that allows students to challenge themselves. FMHC provides exclusive integrated living and learning environments to promote the intellectual curiosity of students during their years at Grand Valley State University. Importantly, “the college strives to create an Honors experience in which students ‘thrive’: it maximizes their experience by engaging them deeply in learning to succeed in their academic and vocational goals; by establishing positive relationships with their faculty, peers, and others” (Haas, 2015).

In order to foster the foundations of inclusion and higher learning, FMHC offers personalized instruction, learning/living centers, undergraduate research, and cultural experiences. Classes are normally capped at 25 or less, and often have two professors (FMHC website). The classes also attempt to approach topics from many different disciplines and push their students to think across traditional boundaries. FMHC offers students the opportunity to fully immerse through “living-learning” facilities; the Glenn A. Niemeyer Living and Learning Center on South Campus and the Holton Hooker Living and Learning Center on North Campus (Figure 1). The learning-living centers provide students with an inclusive environment to nurture their academic mind. This optimal environment allows students to reach their full potential to “live, learn, lead”. There is also the Frederick Meijer Office of Fellowships provided to all students and alumni of GVSU, which serves to support students in attainment of Fellowships and Scholarships, specifically promoting underrepresented students in higher education (FMHC website).

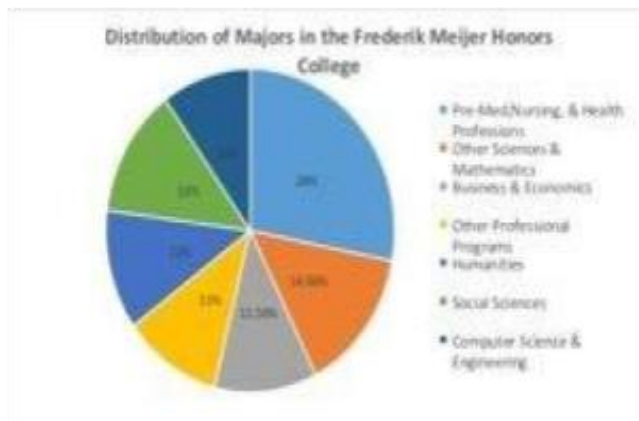


**Figure 1:** Niemeyer (left) and Holton Hooker Living-Learning Centers (right)

The Frederik Meijer Honors College Annual Report from 2017 states that the FMHC is comprised of approximately 1700 students. Honors College enrollment has grown steadily each year since the founding of FMHC in 2009 (Figure 2), with an average of 420 intellectually exceptional freshman choosing this option as their Grand Valley home. Average GPAs of incoming students is 3.957, which has increased since previous years (Chamberlain, 2017). “Freshman students complete a two-semester foundational interdisciplinary sequence. This course sequence builds community among students, establishes formal and informal mentoring relationships with faculty, and substantially defines the Honors experience for a majority of the Honors students” (National Collegiate Honors Council, 2017). The Frederik Meijer Honors College has a wide range of diversity in majors alone, with Honors students engaged in every major offered at the university (Figure 3).



**Figure 2:** FMHC Enrollment from 2009-2017



**Figure 3:** Distribution of Majors in the FMHC

However, this past year the Frederik Meijer Honors College has started to implement many changes. A report from the National Collegiate Honors Council in 2017 recommended that the Frederik Meijer Honors College work on improving the curriculum, governance of the College, increase visibility both on and off campus, as well as a few other areas. Specifically, the governance structure of the FMHC is in need of further development. Therefore, the FMHC has devoted time to using the Design Thinking process to develop and foster creative ideas to get students and faculty to efficiently interact and communicate about FMHC governance. Roger Gilles, the Director of the Honors College, shared that one of the biggest hurdles in this issue is the difficulty of communication between faculty, administration, and students. He emphasized that there is a great need to help professors and administrators communicate with students in the Honors College. We see this as a critical component of the governance issue; without student voice driving decision-making at the Honors College, the Honors College can't possibly serve the needs of the students!

## Problem Statement

Despite the obvious successes that the Frederik Meijer Honors College has enjoyed in recent years, there are noticeable ways in which it can grow, the most visible of which, is the current agency that the students claim in the Honors College. Lack of student agency, or governance, is likely the manifestation of a deeper problem, however. We seek to solve the inability for the Honors College students and faculty/administration to develop rich and meaningful relationships, through which the students will be able to voice their concerns and thus help govern the Honors College. We believe that effective governance is built on authentic relationships. **Our aim is to foster an environment in which these relationships can flourish, with an emphasis on creating barrier-free opportunity for faculty/administration and students to openly communicate.** Through an empathetic approach, we will gain better knowledge and understanding of what past, present, and future FMHS students want and need to participate in improved communication. We aim to amplify student issues and ensure faculty and administrative involvement in dialogue, eliminating communication barriers that leave both students and faculty in the dark.

## Ecosystem



**Figure 4:** Stakeholder Map 1<sup>st</sup> Draft

As this project is aimed at mitigating communication barriers between Honors faculty, administration and students, we aspire to create solutions for the GVSU Honors College as a whole. A successful communication plan must be derived through collaboration of all stakeholders involved as shown in the draft Stakeholder Map shown in Figure 4.

As we are solving for improved communication within the Honors College, our primary stakeholders will be those who are directly involved with the Honors College, mainly students, faculty, and administration. The student body of the FMHC is the most obvious stakeholder, as any solution to this problem will be designed to directly affect them. Resident Assistants in particular will be impacted, as they are both authoritative figures and caretakers of the students; therefore, they will need to be able to respond effectively to students. Honors faculty and administration will be impacted directly by having direct and clear communication with students.

The secondary stakeholders are those involved in how the Honors College fits into the larger culture of GVSU. These stakeholders will include departmental heads of majors represented within Honors, faculty outside of Honors, non-Honors students, GVSU administrative staff, other RA groups, and FMHC's ANCHOR Community Council along with other student-led organizations. The tertiary set of stakeholders will be the larger surrounding community, including those involved in post-graduation employment, examining the larger role the Honors College plays in the fabric of the workforce and how it supports the Honors College reputation. The secondary and tertiary stakeholders will be impacted by any changes made or concerns that may be brought up through improved communication between students, faculty, and administration within the Honors College.

## Research Methods

Our team will use Design Thinking methodology to conduct empathetic and effective research. To gain deeper insight and uncover any hidden insights, we will conduct interviews with identified stakeholders. These interviews will help us gather ideas to define the best possible solution to our problem statement. The Introduction to Design Thinking Process Guide shows that this method is valuable because “Engaging with people directly reveals a tremendous amount about the way they think and the values they hold” (Kelley & Kelley, 2). Following the suggestion of Kelley and Kelley in *Creative Confidence*, we recognize that even these steps may not tell us everything we need to know to create a solution that best solves the problem at hand, so we will conduct field observations to deepen our



knowledge. We will conduct these observations by attending (pending permission) current Honors student and faculty meetings, like ANCHOR Community Council meetings, Honors Curriculum and Development Committee meetings, and/or Honors Faculty Council meetings to observe how communication between faculty, administration, and students is currently fostered. To bring all of this together, we will also explore what Kelley and Kelley refer to as “hybrid insights”, by bringing a human-centered approach to any data collection we perform. “Hybrid insights allow us to embed stories in the data, bringing the data to life. It brings the ‘why’ and the ‘what’ together ... coupling insights based on empathy with analytic confidence within relevant target markets may be a way to take the best of both research approaches” (Kelley & Kelley, 89). Our team will support this work by conducting secondary research to find information on best practices from other Honors colleges. We will be examining case studies, annual reports, and any other relevant literature to gain an understanding of other models that have been proven useful in the field.

## Constraints

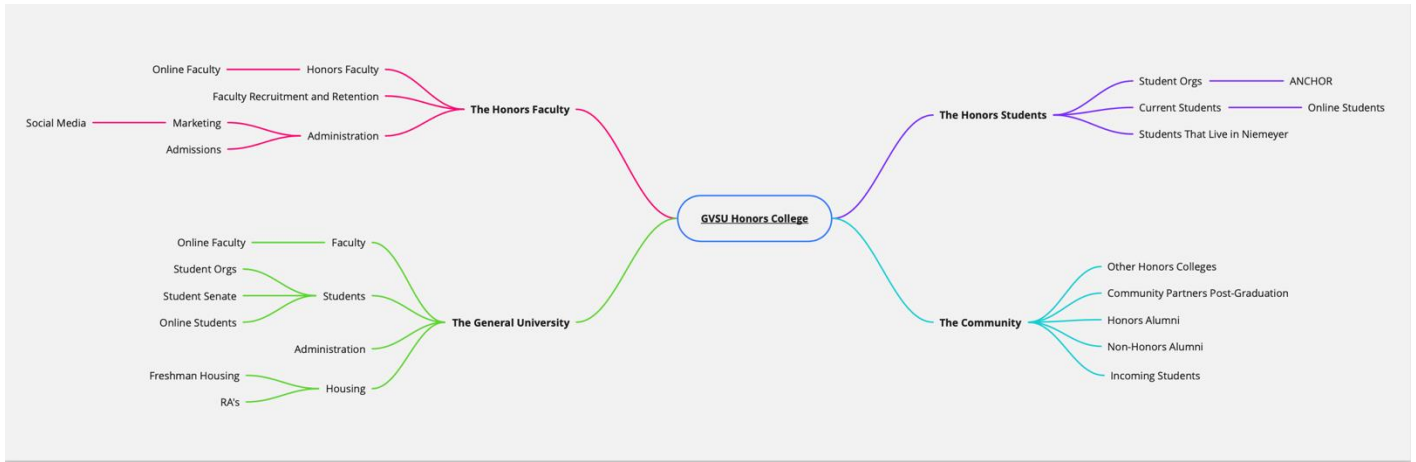
As with any project, there are certain constraints that may impact solving for improved communication within the Frederik Meijer Honors College. First, our team recognizes that the timeline of the project only allots us 15 weeks to design a preferred solution to the problem statement. This limited time constraint will result in our team utilizing an intense and quick-paced design thinking process. We also want to respect the time and effort other organizations in the Honors College, such as ANCHOR, have dedicated to improvement of the Honors College experience. Thus, we want to create a desired communicative outcome that does not step on any other organization’s toes that are already established. Another major constraint we face as a team is to follow the Frederik Meijer Honors College mission statement throughout our design thinking process. Given that this solution is aimed at improved communication, not all issues or concerns brought up by students can or will be addressed by faculty (e.g. curriculum changes and hiring/firing practices). Another constraint is that any proposed solutions cannot consume Honors College administrative time and ultimate decision-making remains with Honors College faculty and administration.

## Outcomes

With the current gap in communication identified as an area of concern between the FMHC’s faculty, administrative, and student bodies, the potential academic and extracurricular heights obtainable within the Honors College could be stifled. By providing a way to foster empathetic and engaged communication between Honors faculty, administration, and students, the FMHC will benefit greatly through enhanced experiences. Particularly, and most importantly for the students, as they will develop a higher caliber of leadership and communication skills, making them far more marketable in their future endeavors. As well, improvements in communication within this context will improve empathetic listening, intercultural communication, and intergenerational communication for all those involved in the process. In turn, this will reflect well on the Honors College, ensuring the level of academic integrity will remain high. In addition, enhanced communication will play a part in ensuring that Honors students are contributing to the governance of the Honors College by fostering citizenship, building community, increased academic success, and intercultural competence inside of the Honors College. Honors student alumni will take what they learned through Honors and will contribute to the world as well as one day give back to the Honors community. This will position the Frederik Meijer Honors College as a national leader in the Honors college community, establishing a new norm for communication excellence!

# Stakeholder Map

A stakeholder map is a graphical representation of different groups of people from Grand Valley that will specifically be interested in and affected by student agency in the Honors College. Within specific groups, we identified specific subgroups that will be impacted by our research and subsequent innovation. We used this stakeholder map to conduct interviews with individuals falling within these identified groups, as well as support identification of stakeholders during collaborator debriefs, at which stakeholders responded to the insights, innovations and prototype concepts we developed through the design thinking process.



**Figure 5:** Final Stakeholder Map

# Affinity Map

An affinity map is a tool for collecting insights from our research and seeking similarities, or “affinities” between them. More specifically, we practiced the process through summarizing research information we received either from articles selected through databases or from our stakeholder interviews and collecting these on butcher paper. These sticky notes were then arranged into categories in order to identify patterns and see which needs were the most prevalent.

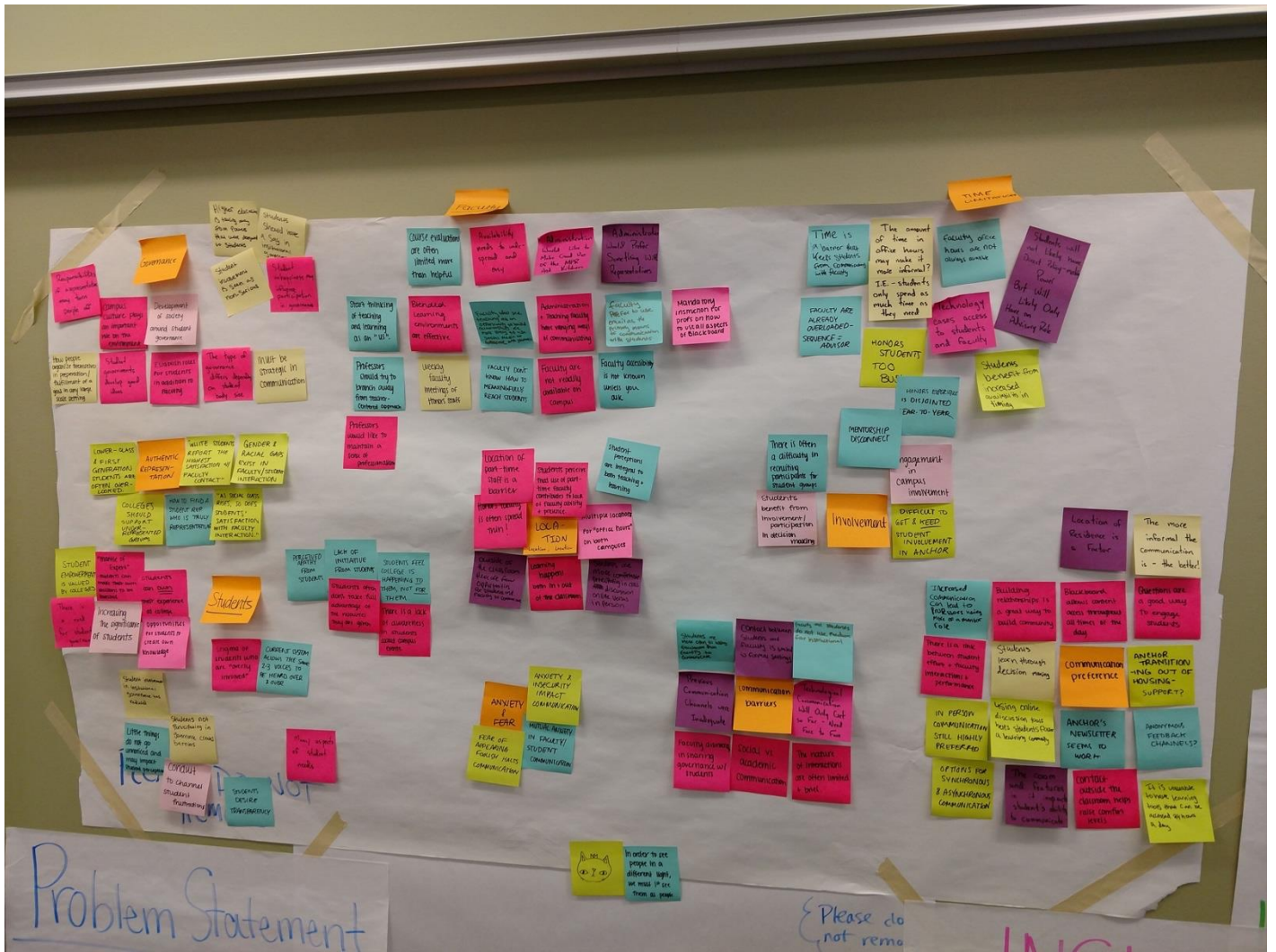


Figure 6: Affinity Map

# Collaborator Debriefs

Collaborator Debriefs were an integral part of our team’s design thinking process. It is an informal presentation to a small group of stakeholders at transitional stages in our design process that are intended to provide our team with feedback. Debriefs occurred after our team had developed key insights from research and interviews, after we had developed our top five innovations, and after we had narrowed it down to our two top prototypes. For each debrief, after we presented our findings, we presented the stakeholders with questions to gain specific feedback on our insights or innovations or prototype concepts. Following the debriefs our team would come together and discuss the feedback we received, reflecting and making any necessary adjustments.

## Collaborator Debrief #1:

Debrief Preparation Articulating and Revising the Initial Vision	
<b>Design Challenge Debrief</b>	<p><b>Team Problem Statement:</b> We will improve communication between the FMHC faculty, administration, and students by providing students the opportunity to voice their personal concerns and issues, while also pushing the students, faculty, and administration to build stronger relationships.</p> <p><b>Key Insights:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student and Faculty identities impact communication</li> <li>• Face-to-face communication preferred but is inaccessible at times</li> <li>• Email is a viable solution for Honors students and faculty</li> </ul>
<b>Questions for the Stakeholders</b>	<p><b>Questions for Stakeholders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What would you describe as the biggest barriers to communication between students and faculty?</li> <li>• What advantages/disadvantages could an increase in communication between students and administration have on the Honors College?</li> <li>• How do you think an increase in communication between students and administration could impact the Honors College?</li> </ul>

Debrief Feedback Capture What’s Meaningful to Advance Effective Innovation	
<b>Instructor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentor relationships usually do not continue</li> <li>• Aid of faculty, but creation of curriculum by students</li> <li>• Benefit through requiring one-on-one sessions with all students</li> <li>• Faculty may also be anxious about interactions</li> </ul>
<b>Class</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students lack spare time for events</li> <li>• Disconnect between faculty and students with events</li> <li>• There needs to be a common goal for varying personalities of students/faculty: both the unspoken and the outgoing</li> <li>• Keep websites and media up to date (searching FAQs)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students can be anxious to interact with faculty</li> <li>• There needs to a more relaxed low-pressure environment for students and faculty to meet</li> <li>• Students would benefit between a change in location of events to bring more students together (both Honors and Non-Honors)</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact your advisor for ideas and general concerns</li> <li>• Mentors more specific for information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Also implement mentors for transfer students</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Seek out faculty working in living-learning centers</li> <li>• Desire to spend time talking to individuals who have a desire to innovate but willing to receive help along the way</li> <li>• Structure where students can feel like they are taking initiative and have an impact</li> <li>• Comfort working with people toward something rather than trying to lead</li> <li>• Small structures in relationships and classrooms will be helpful in reducing anxiety</li> <li>• Email and electronic communication make up for the time barrier <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Consider importance of the conversation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Collective experience rather than experience within sequences or junior seminars should be the focus</li> <li>• Open door policy helps feel more welcoming</li> <li>• More open communication with students may but a larger workload on faculty</li> </ul>

<b>Post-Debrief Reflections</b> <b>Integrate the Feedback &amp; Ideate Next Steps</b>	
<b>DIVERGE:</b> How did the feedback provided <i>deviate</i> from your team's current insights?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A lot of individuals felt that it was extremely easy to disregard emails and ignore, even though it has been found that a majority of people tend to lean on emails as a primary way of communication.</li> <li>2. Faculty may also be anxious to meet with students. This has not been the case so far with interviews that we have conducted. Most professors believe that they still have that hierarchy over students and should be seen that way.</li> <li>3. More open communication with students and faculty may put a larger workload on the faculty. Although this may be true, most of the faculty that we have contacted and been in touch with are more than happy to work towards an increase in communication with their students.</li> <li>4. The idea came up that there needs to be a large sense of connectivity. However, a lot of students feel connected just through different organizations or groups that they participate in. The Honors College is really the only part that may not be experiencing this deeper level of connection between a large population of students.</li> <li>5. It was often repeated that there is a disconnect between students and faculty. This is definitely true, however, there is a larger disconnect between students that live in the Honors dorms and those that do not. The</li> </ol>

	<p>difference between living in Niemeyer and Holton Hooker seems to be large and could be playing an unknown role.</p>
<p><b>CONVERGE:</b> How did the feedback <i>align</i> with and enhance the team's current insights?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is a major lack of time for both students and faculty to either want or be able to participate in events outside of class.</li> <li>2. Email and electronic communication is an easy way to make up for the time barrier.</li> <li>3. Students are often anxious and scared to meet with faculty and professors. Afraid that they will either sound or seem "stupid" or foolish.</li> <li>4. The collective experience of Honors should be the main focus rather than the great experiences students have in either their freshman sequence or junior seminars. The Honors College is a program for all of a student's time at Grand Valley not just small patches.</li> <li>5. It was found that the time that works best with students to communicate with professors is later in the day or at night, however, the professors do not want to commit to a schedule like that as it may infringe upon their personal lives.</li> </ol>
<p><b>APPLY:</b> How can you <i>use</i> the feedback provided?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sometimes as humans we don't know that we don't want the easy answer. Sometimes meeting in person is far superior because it brings to light latent issues. With this in mind, it is important to get students and faculty motivated and in tune with face-to-face events and contact.</li> <li>2. Students want to feel like they are taking the initiative and actually doing something important. With this information, it is important to prove to students that improved communication would have a positive impact on their own education and experience here at the university.</li> <li>3. Even though the efficacy of email and electronic communication seem to have mixed feedback, it still seems to be the primary mode of communication for quick and easy problems that can be solved. We think this is an important insight in trying to get the word out there and make sure students are more aware of events that are going on in both Honors and outside of it.</li> <li>4. An idea that was repeatedly brought up was the differences in housing for students and the experiences that result from that. This is extremely important in getting students that live in these different housing options involved in activities and events. The most important aspect is also the RA's in these buildings. With that being said, it is important to make sure that we recognize the Honors College is not just limited to its home at Niemeyer.</li> </ol>
<p><b>ACT:</b> What are your next steps?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interview RA's from various housing units on campus.</li> <li>2. Find ways that motivate and inspire students to make an impact on their own experiences.</li> <li>3. Research different ways try to expand our scope of interviews to include administrators and/or faculty from other Honors Colleges, to see how they interact with their students.</li> <li>4. Start to narrow our interview questions and become a little more pointed with our research. Time to use this feedback from multiple sources and start to compile different possible solutions to the problem at hand.</li> </ol>

## Collaborator Debrief #2:

Debrief Preparation Telling the Story	
<b>Design Challenge Debrief</b>	<p><b>Team Problem Statement:</b> Our aim is to help build relationships to help further develop the communication between students and faculty/administration of the Honors College.</p> <p><b>Top 3 “needs” statements</b> (from insights/affinity map):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honors faculty and students need modes of communication that address and mitigate mutual fears and anxieties around communication.</li> <li>• Honors students and faculty need more time allocated to meaningful communication.</li> <li>• Honors students and faculty need a bridge between varying locations that they are able to meet.</li> </ul> <p><b>Top 5 Innovations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a “DO SOMETHING” environment.</li> <li>• Redesign Honors spaces to be comfortable and collaborative.</li> <li>• Have year-long challenges between students and/or faculty and/or student organizations. Can be expanded to include sequences and whatnot.</li> <li>• Generate “professional schedules” for professors/administration and students that are easily accessible (through a Google calendar widget on Honors website) and include both office hours and events recommended by professors.</li> <li>• Create an “out of office” office hours that are informal and easy ways for students and faculty to collaborate and discuss ideas surrounding the Honors College with less anxiety and intimidation.</li> </ul>
<b>Summary Illustration</b>	NA
<b>Questions for the Collaborators</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What kinds of physical design elements would make you feel more relaxed and less anxious in a space?</li> <li>2. What makes you personally feel less anxious when communicating?</li> <li>3. To what extent do you think a more publicly visible technology-based scheduling platform could impact the ease with which students and faculty meet?</li> </ol>

Debrief Feedback Capture What’s Meaningful to Advance Effective Innovation	
<b>Instructor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office hours in itself is termed as a construct and an idea of power structure</li> <li>• Office hours don’t always work for students</li> <li>• Make the term “office hour” clearer and more open to students</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have sentence starters in a collaborative space so that it gives people an idea of what to talk about and help alleviate the tension in starting a conversation</li> <li>• Make people set their phones down</li> <li>• Incorporate the community and really build relationships with others outside of the Honors College</li> <li>• How can you build off of an imprint that you made many years ago (started with the freshman)?</li> <li>• Make the topics that students and faculty discuss apply to both academia and governance and make sure they are more relaxed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Could be done through rotating through questions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• With all of the people in the Honors College, if we had an easy way to see when people are free to communicate, there could be a good 20 hours or more a week to talk to people</li> <li>• Have a beginning of the year mixer with faculty</li> <li>• There needs to be the idea of a two-way street for both the students and faculty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The issue with this is that not everyone feels this way...</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Be straight forward about what constraints both the faculty and students have</li> </ul>
<b>Class</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universally designed language that creates less barriers</li> <li>• ANCHOR is looking to also create a friendly environment that has comfortable and collaborative aspects</li> <li>• Co-created environments from the get-go with both students and faculty</li> <li>• Orientation is sometimes a struggle for students involved in other extracurricular activities</li> </ul>
<b>Collaborator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students need self-validation</li> <li>• Students need definitive roles</li> <li>• Incorporate a growth portfolio with student assessments throughout their Honors experience</li> <li>• Faculty need to hear students voices more officially and more formally</li> <li>• ANCHOR's role seems undefined and they do not necessarily understand what role they play in the Honors community</li> <li>• Make sure innovations are bringing together students and faculty rather than pushing them apart</li> <li>• Is there a need to not be anonymous? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Could there be some kind of favoritism that could come from this?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• We NEED to engage more than just freshman students</li> <li>• Designing FOR and Designing WITH</li> <li>• We have more to offer after our freshman year</li> </ul>
<b>Other Stakeholder(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ANCHOR is aiming for a collaborative location of the typical time frames</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PA school interview reversal of roles</li> <li>• Sometimes first-time student’s may not understand what “office hours” really are</li> <li>• Anxiety can be high when students go see faculty</li> <li>• Use something that we already have... (don’t reinvent the wheel) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Helps create more of Do Something environment</li> <li>○ MPR is a great place to utilize</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Career Center already utilizes a technology-based platform to communicate with students</li> <li>• Get the professors out of their expertise to appear more “normal” which could allow for a more relaxed environment</li> </ul>
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<b>Post-Debrief Reflections</b> <b>Integrate the Feedback &amp; Ideate Next Steps</b>	
<p><b>DIVERGE:</b> How did the feedback provided <i>deviate</i> from your team’s current insights?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One thing that deviated from our initial findings was that a factor with the anonymity of people was due to concern about favoritism between the faculty or administration and certain students.</li> <li>2. Another thing that deviated was that there seemed to be a concern about having anonymity at all. When prompted with a similar question, a student gave the answer that it wasn’t really relevant to him, as he still would not have acted in his situation.</li> <li>3. One thing that disagrees with what we’ve found thus far is that we as students have more to offer as non-freshman.</li> <li>4. One piece of feedback that didn’t necessarily disagree with any past research, but did not agree with it either, was that orientation can be a burden to those students who have commitments prior to the start of the school year.</li> <li>5. In a similar fashion, the feedback that the group received concerning the need for self-validation was not found in our past research either but could explain some of the motivation that some students would have for instigating a conversation with faculty.</li> </ol>
<p><b>CONVERGE:</b> How did the feedback provided <i>align</i> with and enhance the team’s current insights?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We received constructive feedback from one of the stakeholders stating that the spaces where conversation between students and administration take place constrict the communication. The stakeholder then expanded on this by stating that the term “office” brings with it the connotation that there is someone in a position of power and another that is not.</li> <li>2. Other collaborator’s feedback also aligned with the fact that the spaces can inhibit the ability to freely converse by stating that ANCHOR has noticed the same tendencies and are taking measures to encourage students to participate in ways that create a more inviting space, such as not wearing shoes or bring blankets to common areas.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. We heard again that the faculty and Honors administration need and want to hear the students' thoughts and concerns in a more formal and structured way.</li> <li>4. We received further feedback that aligns with our technology-based innovation through a collaborator stating that the GVSU Career Center already has a technology-based method of communication.</li> <li>5. We received positive feedback on our spaces innovation because it has a "design with" idea as opposed to a "design for" idea, which may have otherwise limited the effectiveness of the innovation from the beginning.</li> </ol>
<p><b>APPLY:</b> How can you <i>use</i> the feedback provided?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We can use the feedback we got for the spaces innovation to begin drafting a foundation for why this should be one of our final two innovations.</li> <li>2. We can use the feedback received for the need for student self-validation to further develop the innovations that we already have to include this, which would benefit the students primarily, but through this, would also impact the administration and faculty as well.</li> <li>3. Using the feedback about how getting professors to talk about things other than their field makes them "normal," we could use this by reasonably getting them out of their comfort zone so that it encourages students to do the same.</li> <li>4. Using the feedback about making a student portfolio throughout their entire Honors experience, we could use this to encourage conversation between students and students, and students and faculty. This would likely be more of a foundation to a conversation than anything else, but still useful.</li> </ol>
<p><b>ACT:</b> What are your next steps?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One next step to take is to do some research into how other colleges encourage student participation in governance or simply to enhance the overall sense of belonging in the organization.</li> <li>2. Another step that we could take is to begin formulating some structure to these innovations and flush-out what these might look like in greater detail so that we can confidently cut them down to two innovations.</li> <li>3. A third thing that we can do is to experiment with how these five innovations interact with each other, given the feedback that we received from the collaborators. By doing this, our two innovations will become more nuanced and can provide a deeper experience with those involved.</li> </ol>

**Debrief Preparation  
Envisioning the Future**

**Design  
Challenge  
Debrief**

**Team Problem Statement**

Our aim is to help **build relationships to help further develop the communication between students and faculty/administration of the Honors College.** We believe that effective governance is built on authentic relationships. Our aim is to foster an environment in which these relationships can flourish, with an emphasis on creating barrier-free opportunity for faculty/administration and students to openly communicate.

**Top two prototype concepts:**

- Co-Creation Lab
  - “Do Something” environment will play a large role in this to get both students and faculty involved in Honors together
  - Formation of an Honors Nexus will also play a role in drawing out faculty/administration and students together in a more relaxed environment
- Faculty Landing Page
  - Google Calendar type widget
  - Easier access to faculty/administration professional calendars
  - Can also showcase interests and events of the faculty/administration

**Summary  
Illustration**

**Visual 1: Co-Creation Lab**



## Visual 2: Faculty Landing Page

**Honors Faculty**

The Frederik Meijer Honors College features 10 permanent full-time faculty, 2 part-time Faculty-in-Residence, the Meijer Endowed Chair in Entrepreneurship & Innovation, and dozens of exceptional faculty drawn from departments and programs across campus.

**Professor XYZ**

Office: 123 GVSU  
 Phone: 123-456-7890  
 Email: [professor@gvsu.edu](mailto:professor@gvsu.edu)  
 Interests: Griffins Hockey, Traveling, Reading, Yoga, and Dogs

### Questions for the Collaborators

1. What changes to the Honors College spaces might bring students and administration closer together and what kind of limitations do you see with this?
2. Which party (students/administration) should take the initiative for increased communication?

## Debrief Feedback

### Capture What's Meaningful to Advance your Prototypes

#### Instructor

- Where do your innovations address your needs statements?
- Anxiety associated with this space in a way...
  - Faculty are focused on their expertise
  - Throwing professors into a place they are less comfortable could be a challenge; they like to be recognized as experts
- Levels the playing field for creating a space with less power dynamic
- Doesn't just have to be faculty...include administration as well
- Don't underestimate how introverted some faculty are and how hard it is to stretch them out of their fields
- Don't see faculty being comfortable being goofy
- What is the task in the makerspace?
- Leverage faculty expertise a little bit...let them pick a topic and have them share their interests or hobbies, etc.
- Could community partners be included as well?

#### Class

- A really great opportunity for student and faculty to work together on their Honors senior project
- A great meeting space for hands on collaboration
- Comfortable space in the fact that they don't have to worry about appealing as a "well of knowledge" in their field
  - Depends who's watching
- Have both students and faculty showcasing things that they know

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Levels the hierarchy issue</li> </ul>
<b>Collaborator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● On to something with the co-creation lab</li> <li>● Vulnerability / herding cats to dangerous places <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Create an environment that provides something they are going to want to be a part of</li> <li>○ Works both ways</li> <li>○ We are all people</li> </ul> </li> <li>● What is incentivizing people to spend their time there? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Stress that the activities could be related to what do they do with their spare time</li> </ul> </li> <li>● How will they know they are in this place? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Schedule time there?</li> <li>○ Why should I do that?</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Is this a logical solution? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Especially science majors</li> <li>○ Difficult to “coerce” staff into doing this</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Meeting of professors in random fields outside of your own</li> <li>● Good idea to provide more interface</li> <li>● Set the table for easy wins...narrow and deep <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Share your vision and ask for help</li> <li>○ Get them in their lane and let them have fun</li> </ul> </li> <li>● As a team you would need to market very specifically for what your goal is with the do something environment to get people to show up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Have both students and faculty showcasing things that they know</li> <li>○ Levels the hierarchy issue</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Students are also very hard to convince to come</li> <li>● Get more out of starting with students</li> </ul>
<b>Other Stakeholder(s)</b>	N/A

<b>Post-Debrief Reflections</b> <b>Integrate the Feedback &amp; Decide on Your Best Solution</b>	
<b>DIVERGE:</b> How did the feedback provided <i>deviate</i> from your team’s current insights?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One way that the feedback diverged from our current insights was that we anticipated the faculty and administration to be equally as outgoing and willing to meet in another space as the students would be.</li> <li>2. A second piece of feedback that diverged with our current insights was that our team was under the impression that faculty and administration were open to the idea of presenting faculty in situations that were possibly uncomfortable. This would lead to faculty and</li> </ol>

	<p>administration being outside of their expertise and as an “un-expert” to their peers to a point, but we were unaware that they were not open to putting themselves into uncomfortable situations, even amongst themselves in fear of damaging their reputations as experts in certain topics/fields.</p> <p>3. Our team also thought that the idea of having an unknown task for both the students and administration to do together would be constructive because they would discover solutions together, but the team received feedback that having an unknown task could hinder the conversation as it would likely lie outside of the faculty/administration’s interest and expertise.</p> <p>4. Something that doesn’t necessarily diverge from our insights, but isn’t supported by them either, is that we should involve community partners to encourage the participation of the students and faculty/administration with events in the newly designed Honors space.</p> <p>5. A more abstract piece of feedback that we received that diverged from our current insights is that the redesigned space prototype should be second on our list, rather than first, as the stakeholders at the debrief found the online prototype easier to grasp and implement, since it could result in a more immediate impact.</p>
<p><b>CONVERGE:</b> How did the feedback provided <i>align</i> with and enhance the team’s current insights?</p>	<p>1. The team received positive feedback that the prototype for redesigning the Honors spaces tries to attack a fundamental issue that through this idea, becomes more of a forethought.</p> <p>2. We also received feedback that the redesign solution would work well, on the condition that we cater more to the faculty/administration by asking them to contribute something that they are interested in rather than to simply perform a random task with a student.</p> <p>3. Feedback on the Faculty Landing Page was very positive, especially because it would not only be a place to schedule meetings, but also to gain insights on what a faculty member or administrator’s interests are outside of their field. This also allows for the opportunity to include part-time Honors faculty as well to participate and engage with students.</p> <p>4. Our current insights also pointed to how the students were ultimately responsible for instigating communication between faculty,</p>

	<p>administration, and other staff, which was upheld by the feedback from the stakeholders.</p> <p>5. Our current insights point toward the Faculty Landing Page being an effective and easy solution, which was also validated by the stakeholders present. So much so that was suggested that we pitch the solution not only to the Honors College, but the general university as well, as many students could benefit from this.</p>
<p><b>APPLY:</b> How can you <i>use</i> the feedback provided?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We can apply what we learned from the feedback to go back and re-evaluate our innovation of the Do Something environment to take into consideration how faculty might feel when participating in this type of environment.</li> <li>2. The feedback that we received could also help us to focus more on the Faculty Landing Page innovation because the feedback that we received strongly validated the need for this innovation.</li> <li>3. The feedback provided could also be used to help us ask better questions when conducting interviews and can help us determine specific areas to research to see if our innovations will be effective.</li> <li>4. The feedback provided could also be used to help the team determine what our top prototype concept will be!</li> </ol>
<p><b>ACT:</b> What are your next steps?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One next step that we could do is to reach out to faculty to get their insight on how they would feel about hanging out with students in a Do Something environment.</li> <li>2. Another step that we can take is to get more feedback from faculty about the Faculty Landing Page. It would be good to know if faculty feels that the Faculty Landing Page would be useful like most students do, or if they would choose not to use it.</li> <li>3. As a team we can also begin to weigh out the pros and cons of our top two prototype concepts and begin to narrow down what our top prototype concept will be.</li> <li>4. It's also important for us as a team to see if we can synthesize things from our top two prototype concepts to see if they will fit into one innovation. By doing this, we will be able to keep the things we find important to us from each innovation.</li> </ol>

# Top 5 Innovations

## Innovation #1: Create a “DO SOMETHING” environment

A Co-Creation Lab environment would bring faculty and students together for informal, creative, and playful problem-solving activities aimed at fostering greater communication and rapport-building. This environment could either be a pop-up experience at rotating locations or a permanent drop-in experience at a designated location depending on interest and availability of space. The Co-Creation Lab environment would embody the tenants of the Maker Movement and similar tinker lab philosophies, creating a place for organic exploration of novel materials that accommodates a broad spectrum of skill levels (Figure 7). Activities could include tinkering activities, art activities, puzzle-solving, and/or traditional craft exploration. To create the Makerspace, the specific elements of this environment would be the product of a co-creation process between a focus group of Honors faculty and students, selected through a combination of marketing flyers and email recruitment. This focus group would go through a brainstorming and affinity-mapping process to identify 5 elements they would like to see incorporated into the space. Honors College resources would be used to source materials, reallocating materials rather than reinventing the wheel, or making new purchases so that there is no budgetary drain involved in bringing this project to fruition. We would work with faculty and students who are passionate about the project to design, source, and implement the space. The project would debut with a community celebration, using all available communication channels to advertise the event and establish a culture of community engagement with the space. To keep momentum on this community engagement, there would be a Facebook page and an Instagram page dedicated to the Co-Creation Lab’s daily activities. These pages would celebrate the successes and failures of co-creation experiments. Daily creation prompts would be posted to encourage participation and continue collaborative engagement. The experiences shared in the Co-Creation Lab would allow faculty and staff to experience barriers-free communication. The activities in the environment serve as a conduit for conversation so that neither party finds themselves at a loss for where to start in a conversation. This approach would also facilitate faculty-student bonding by providing opportunity to problem-solve and learn side by side.

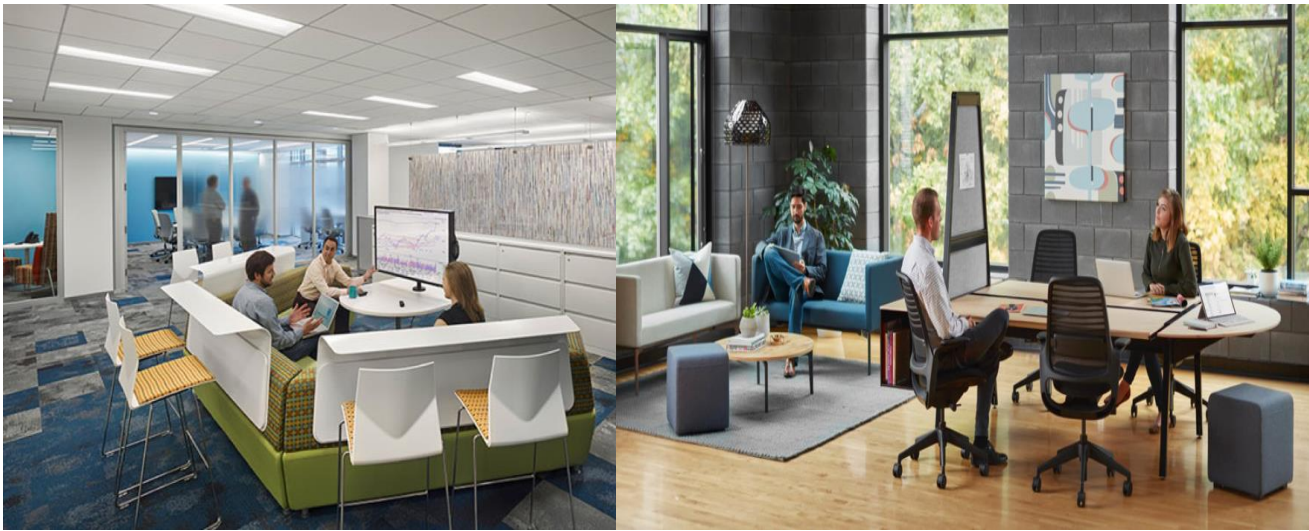


**Figure 7:** Two views of guest at work (and play!) at the Tinkering Studio, a makerspace in The Exploratorium museum of science, art, and human perception in San Francisco, California.



## Innovation #2: Redesign Honors spaces to be comfortable and collaborative

Reducing anxiety between faculty and student communication is vital for getting students to contribute to the governance of the Honors College. Students contribute to governance by speaking with faculty and voicing their concerns about various issues within Honors and then engaging in dialog to better understand and solve. If students are too afraid, or too full of anxiety to speak with faculty, a change needs to occur to help reduce anxiety. One way to reduce anxiety between faculty and students would be to redesign physical spaces to be more comfortable and collaborative. When students see professors in formal environments it can cause anxiety. This is because formal environments can create a power divide, which in turn can make students feel intimidated when speaking to professors. If the environment within the Honors College were more informal it would reduce anxiety. Therefore, the common spaces within the Honors College will be redesigned to include more comfortable seating and warmer, inviting colors. Adding these elements to Honors spaces will foster more community between students and faculty because students will feel more invited and relaxed, which will allow for more organic conversations, allowing for students and faculty to get to know each other better. Spaces will also be designed such that traditional academic power structure is eliminated. An example of this is common spaces within the Honors College having circular tables with chairs. With this arrangement, students and faculty are positioned at a more equal level which encourages interaction between students and faculty (Park & Choi, 2014; Figure 8). This type of seating arrangement makes it easier to establish trust between students and faculty which will contribute to the increase in interaction between faculty and students.



**Figure 8:** Two views of spaces that are designed to be comfortable and collaborative; reducing the power dynamics in relationships.

### Innovation #3: Have year-long challenges between students and faculty

When researching how to increase the communication between the administration and faculty of Grand Valley State University's Honors College and the respective students, it was found that the most informal methods of communication were the most promising avenues, as these created a much more relaxed environment and eased student anxiety the most. It was also found that having a conversation with an embedded objective benefitted the administration and faculty in a way that eased most of their anxieties and hesitation when it came to communication. In an effort to bring the two needs together and be solved through one solution, a year-long challenge of students against the faculty was chosen. This solution will create an informal environment in the short term, while maintaining the long-term goal of presenting a focused objective for communication for both the administration and the students.

The structure of this must have three parties involved, one made up of students exclusively, one made up of administration/faculty exclusively, and the third made up of both students and administration/faculty that would serve to help oversee and judge the other two parties through this challenge (this is to make the judging as impartial as possible). Beyond this, the structure of this year-long challenge can be fairly informal, although there must be some official "meetings" dedicated to work on the challenge so that the students and administration can interact with each other and help build the relationships necessary for the administration to hear what the students think about the direction and overall governance of the Honors College. The nature of this innovation can revolve around a multitude of fun projects, competitions, or interactions. Some examples of these could be having a year-long competition between the students and administration/faculty over who has the better record at Euchre, or some other activity that brings the two groups together in a friendly, competitive environment. For those who might not participate in physical challenges, there could be reading challenge of some kind that could pair students with a professor or an administrator. The different types of challenge can encourage both introverts and extroverts to participate and help grow connections between students and administration. These challenges could result in a fun outing at the end of the year, where Niemeyer's back courtyard could be used for a dunk-tank for the losers or for a pie-in-the-face (Figure 9). Rewards could also be handed out for those who participated in the non-physical challenges with a gift card to Barnes & Noble or a voucher to the Laker Store.



**Figure 9:** Two views of challenge-like activities that promote relationship and community building.

## Innovation #4: Generate “professional calendars” for professors/administration and students that are easily accessible

One of the difficulties that was presented through extensive interviews with Honors faculty and fellow students was that finding time to meet was often a struggle for both parties. The time that professors offer to students is often valuable and a resource that goes unused by a majority of students, i.e. office hours. In order to help with this struggle of making time and using resources that are available, we will create a “professional calendar” for all Honors faculty and advisors that will help alleviate anxiety and stress for both the students and faculty. This “professional calendar” will be found under the Meet the Staff section on the current GVSU website (Figure 10). As of right now, the website only provides a small headshot of a professor with their title at the university and their contact information. By creating a widget using Google calendar that appears right alongside the rest of their contact information, it will give students a better understanding of the best times to meet with professors and even schedule an appointment. Having the Google calendar as a widget will allow for anyone to click on a professor’s calendar and open it through logging in with their GVSU account. Additionally, the information provided on faculty will include the interests and hobbies of the professors/administration to support developing conversation starters. Along with interests, hobbies, and their office hour schedules, professors could also share any events that they are passionate about or support on their “professional calendar,” inviting students to share in these experiences outside of the office. We believe this innovation will help to mitigate the anxiety and fears that both students and faculty experience in communicating and relationship building because it is an easy platform to utilize. With one push of a button, students will already be opening doors to building relationships with professors, more directly and easily than they ever have before!



**Figure 10:** A look at what the new webpage would look like with an addition of a Google calendar widget!

## Innovation #5: Create an Honors Nexus area for office hours that are informal and easy

Throughout our primary and secondary research, we have identified difficulties students face when trying to get in touch with faculty and set up times to meet. These include distances they have to travel to meet with the professor, the limited amount of time their professors are available, and the anxiety-inducing look of a professor's office which implies a power dynamic that can lead to anxiety for the student and make both parties uneasy during the conversation. If we allow students and professors to meet in less formal physical spaces supporting more open communication, students will feel more comfortable when meeting with faculty and will be able to bring up any issues they have without fear of an objecting response. Additionally, locations of most professors' office hours pose difficulty for students who spend almost all of their time on one campus, or who live closer to one specific campus, or students who actually live on the Allendale campus. It can be beneficial for professors to have places that they routinely meet students on both campuses so that students can easily have access to their professors. For example, students can meet professors in between classes and not worry about having to drive a half hour or ride the bus for an hour to get to another campus to meet. Because of the more comforting environment and the easy access to professors, creating an Honors Nexus area can be very beneficial in alleviating the stress during communication between faculty and students while also drawing them out to a more relaxed environment that allows relationship building (Figure 11).



**Figure 11:** An image of faculty and students meeting outside of the “office” and having a reduced power dynamic between the two. This promotes greater relationship building and reduced anxiety in both participants.

# Top 2 Prototype Concepts

## Prototype Concept #1: Co-Creation Lab

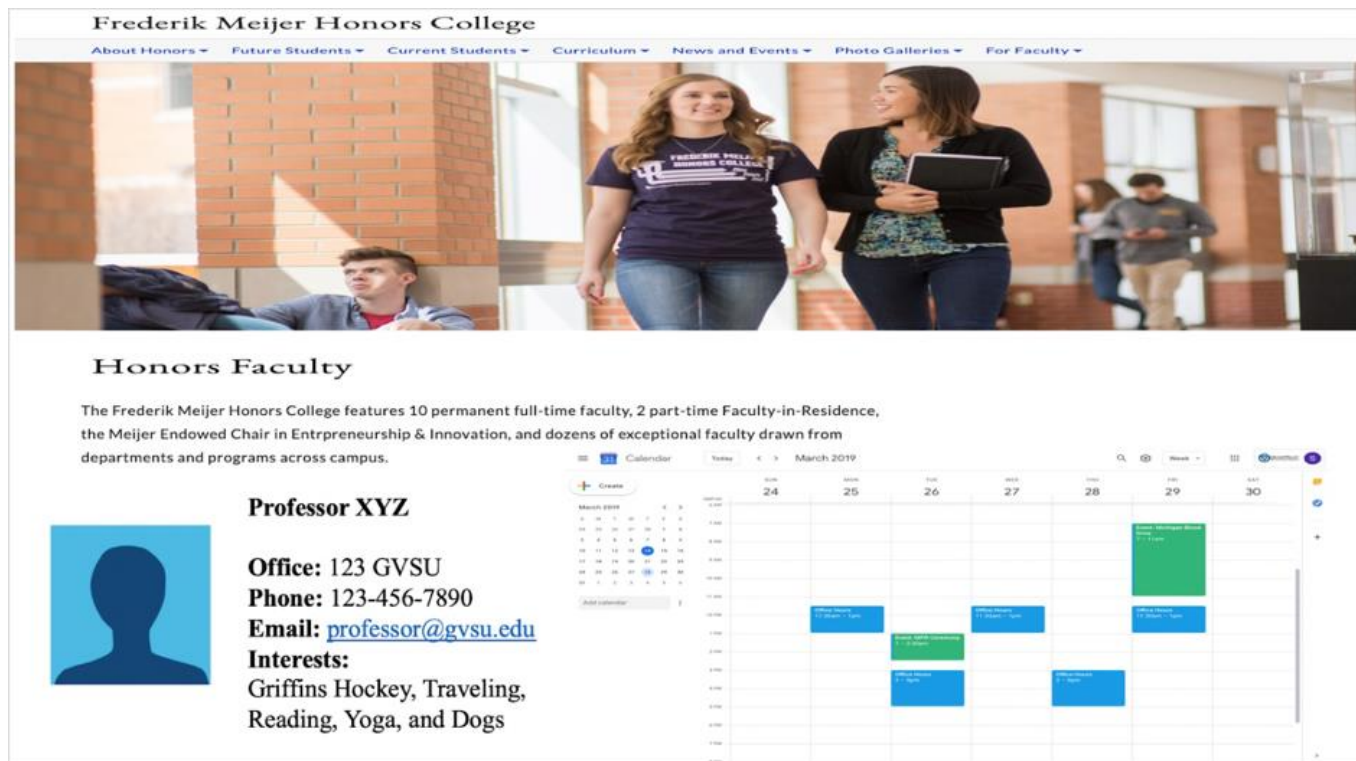
Our first prototype concept concerns creating a Co-Creation Lab that encompasses a “do something” environment (Figure 12). This will help to bring faculty, administration, and students together for informal, creative, and playful problem-solving activities aimed at fostering greater communication and rapport-building. This environment will either be a pop-up experience at rotating locations or a permanent drop-in experience at a designated location depending on interest and availability of the space. This space will also form an Honors Nexus where faculty and administration can meet to discuss both academic and personal issues in a more relaxed environment. Faculty can also sign up on a rotating schedule to teach about areas that they have knowledge about outside of their academic specialty. For example, faculty can teach on sewing or cooking if they have knowledge in this area. By doing this, students will be able to learn and interact with faculty in a non-academic environment which can help foster relationships between students and faculty. The Co-Creation Lab will also be able to serve as a safe place for students to showcase their research and interest to other students which can also help to build relationships. In addition to the Co-Creation Lab being a place for faculty and students to learn, this space will also serve as a fun environment filled with minor craft and problem-solving activities for students and faculty to engage in. Team building activities will serve as a conduit to engage both students and faculty in conversation and generate an easy way to build relationships outside of the academic realm. This approach will also facilitate faculty-student bonding by providing opportunity to problem-solve and learn side by side.



**Figure 12:** A storyboard illustration of what the Co-Creation Lab might look like. With a variety of activities to participate in and a gallery of first attempts, this Co-Creation Lab would be a space that promotes bonding over problem solving and learning strategies.

## Prototype Concept #2: Faculty Landing Page

The second prototype concept that our team came up with is a “Faculty Landing Page” (Figure 13). This prototype concept will build off of the current Honors College website’s faculty page by adding content that rounds out the professional and personal context for each faculty member. Additions will include a professional calendar, like a Google Calendar widget, that will make it easier for students to schedule one-on-one meetings with faculty by visually displaying office hours as well as out-of-office availability, allowing them to schedule an appointment at any time and at any location that is beneficial to both parties. This will allow for easier access to people and their availability will be updated in real time. Faculty will also use this feature to promote events they are participating in, such as lectures or student engagement initiatives. With this feature added to the Honors College website, both the need statements “Honors students and faculty need more time allocated to meaningful communication” and “Students and faculty need a bridge between varying locations that they are able to meet” will be addressed. This solution also caters to the fact that students tend toward asynchronous communication with authority figures, as our research shows, and also helps to eliminate the sense of wondering that some students have about whether or not the faculty member/administrator will be in their office. In order to further reduce communication anxieties, this landing page will also give space for faculty to list some of their personal interests and recommendations, like books or podcasts, to generate conversation starters if needed, while also building a more personal and authentic relationship.



**Figure 13:** This is a visual of what the Faculty Landing Page might look like. The page would include a professor/administrator’s interests, office hours, and events that they would like to promote; all while being updated in real time.

# Final Prototype Concept

## The Faculty Landing Page

Our team final prototype concept is the Faculty Landing Page (Figure 14). This impactful addition to the Honors Faculty page will create barrier-free and lessen anxiety around communication between Honors faculty, administration, and students. Currently, the FMHC website is sparsely populated with faculty information and therefore it is difficult to find office hours or any information on Honors professors/administration/staff. The Faculty Landing Page would include all Honors faculty that teach an Honors Course as well as administration. Working in the Frederik Meijer Honors College establishes a different standard and expectation and they should be available and focused on the Honors students. Also, the current Honors Faculty page includes limited information on part-time faculty, lacking even a photo next to their names. With our prototype concept, the Honors College website will implement something like a Google Calendar widget (there are many other platforms that could be utilized) for Honors faculty and administration that displays their contact information, office hours, teaching hours, locations they are able to meet, research focus, current senior project advising, campus events they recommend, and events that are hosted by their department. We will integrate this calendar widget with a scheduling function, like Doodle 1:1, that will allow students to choose from the faculty member's various available meeting locations (on and off campus options) to easily request an appointment with their professor at a time and location that works for both parties. This feature will allow for students and other faculty to visually see hours and meeting times that are available and accessible. This ties back to our initial needs statement that Honors faculty and students need modes of communication that address and mitigate mutual fears and anxieties around communication. This is because our solution caters to the fact that student tend toward asynchronous communication with authority figures and also helps to eliminate the ambiguity that many students face about whether or not the faculty member/administrator will be in their office. Although this may be easy to implement, faculty and administration will need to remember to update their calendars in real time; providing that they may not be in the office if something comes up or if another event has them bogged down for some time. The only information that would be expected are office hours, class times, other spaces they are available to meet, and some personal information if they choose to divulge.

Our team also decided to add a few more features alongside the calendar widget to increase the dynamics of relationship-building and to further aid anxiety-free communication. These features would include the professor/administrator's course work taught, published works, research initiatives, organizational affiliations (both within GVSU and out in the larger community), and personal interests such as their recommendations for books, podcasts, movies, or music. These small additional features, along with the calendar widget, serve the purpose of demystifying faculty to students who may be intimidated by initiating interactions and scheduling meetings. Allowing faculty to list their personal and professional interests helps to provide easy topics to serve as conversation starters when meeting with students, a need echoed by both students and faculty in our primary research. The faculty profile portion of the Landing Page will give students and other faculty/administrators an opportunity to see a more well-rounded view of faculty members that is both personable and professional. Having professional works listed on each staff member's Landing Page will not only highlight the academic excellence of the Honors staff but will allow students to familiarize themselves with their faculty's areas of expertise as well as their passion projects. With this impactful change to the website, students and faculty will be able to communicate with ease and through only one push of a button!



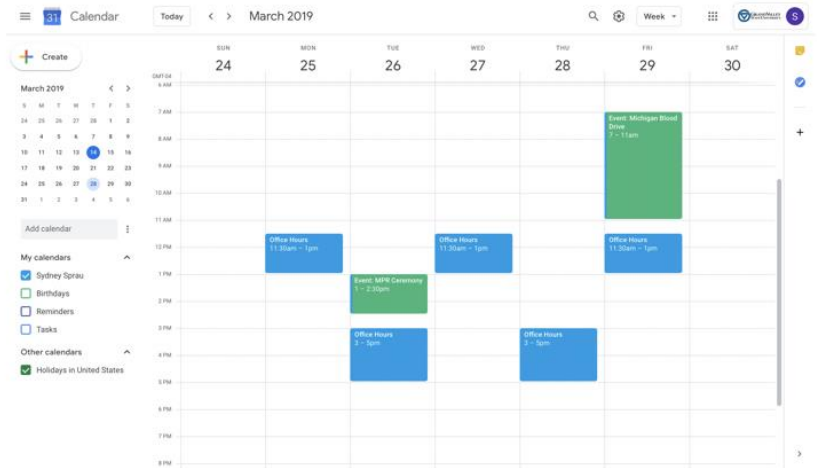
## Professor XYZ



**Office:** 123 HNR  
**Phone:** 123-456-7890  
**Email:** [professor@gvsu.edu](mailto:professor@gvsu.edu)

**Make an Appointment!**

**Personal Information:**  
**Courses Taught:** HNR 313/314  
**Published Work:** ...  
**Current Research:** Impact of Design Thinking On Honors Students  
**Favorite Movie/Book/Song:** Creative Confidence by Tom and David Kelley  
**Other Interests:** Hiking and Travel



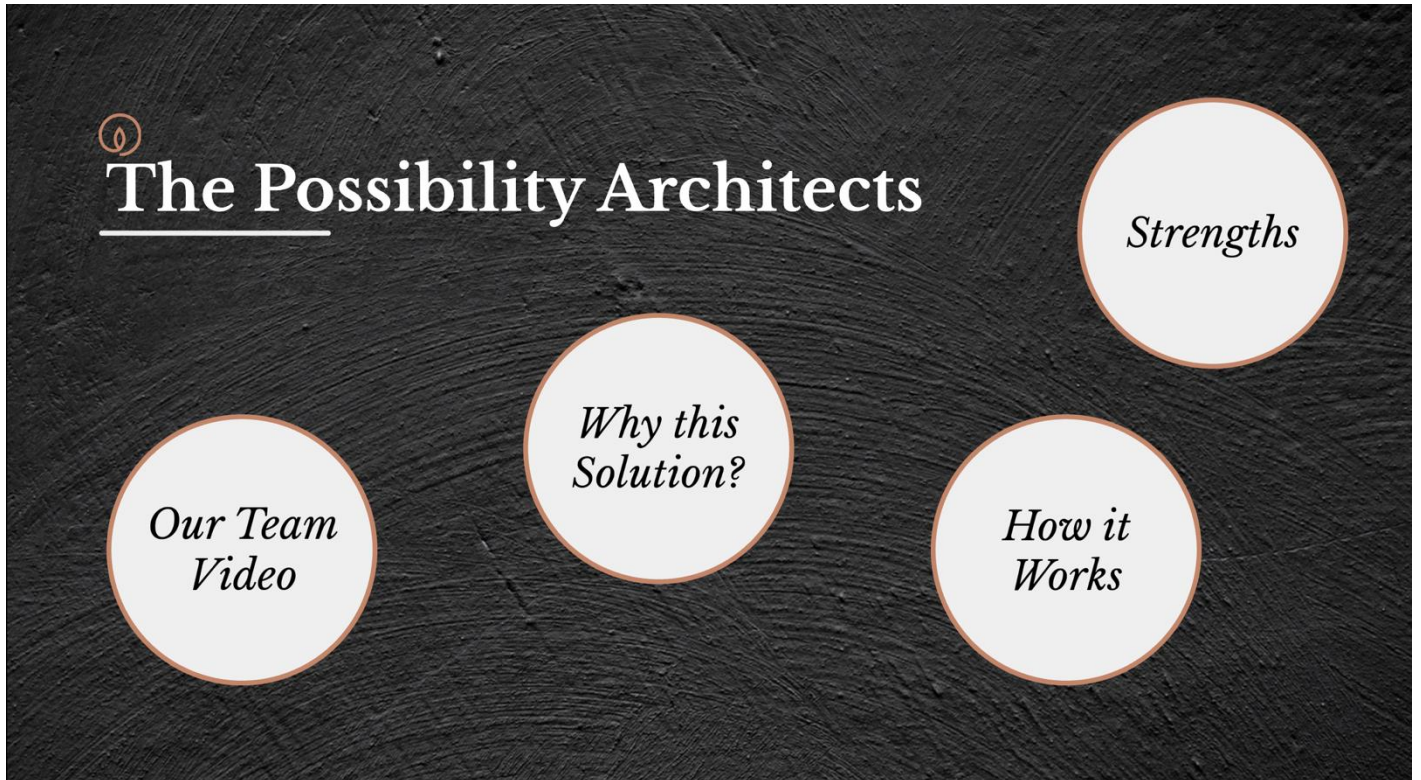
**Figure 14:** This is an idea of what the Faculty Landing Page profile would look like. It would of course include the calendar; but also include some various personal information topics that the faculty/administration can fill out if they choose. It also has a Make an Appointment button, so students can do so easily!

# Video Link

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/my-drive>

# Innovation Symposium (Call to Action) Presentation

Presentation Link: <https://prezi.com/p/q12f6iwkzbwu/hnr-313-presentation/>



## *The Faculty Landing Page will:*

*- Highlight faculty and  
administration schedules*

*- Foster barrier-free  
access to schedules*

*Needs  
Statements  
Met*

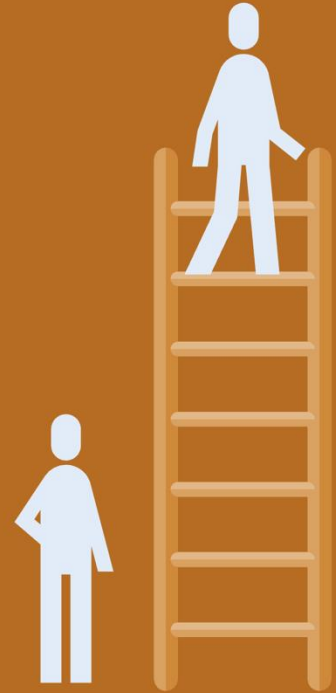
## *Time-Based Availability*

*Honors students, faculty, and administration  
need more time allocated to meaningful  
communication.*



## *Avenues for Empowerment*

*The Honors College (as a whole) needs to prioritize the empowerment of students.*



## *Geographical Availability*

*Student and faculty need a bridge between varying locations that they are able to meet.*



## *Barrier-free Communication*

*Honors faculty and students need modes of communication that address and mitigate mutual fears and anxieties around communication.*



## *Reconstructing Dynamics*

*The Honors College needs to embrace a student-centered approach.*



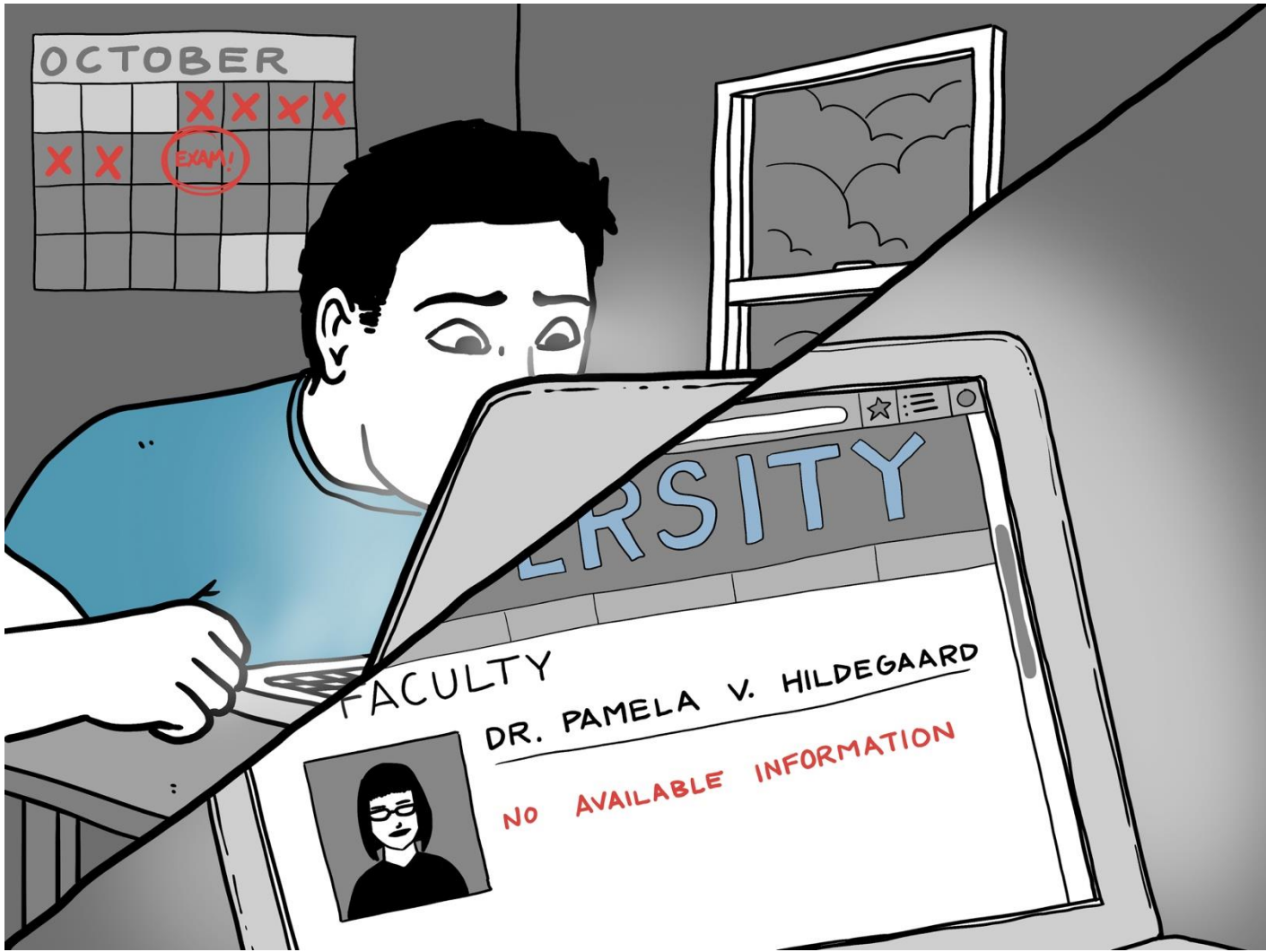


It's Fred's first day in class and he feels uncomfortable and nervous – these feelings can also become exaggerated when there are students in the class that do not feel the same way.

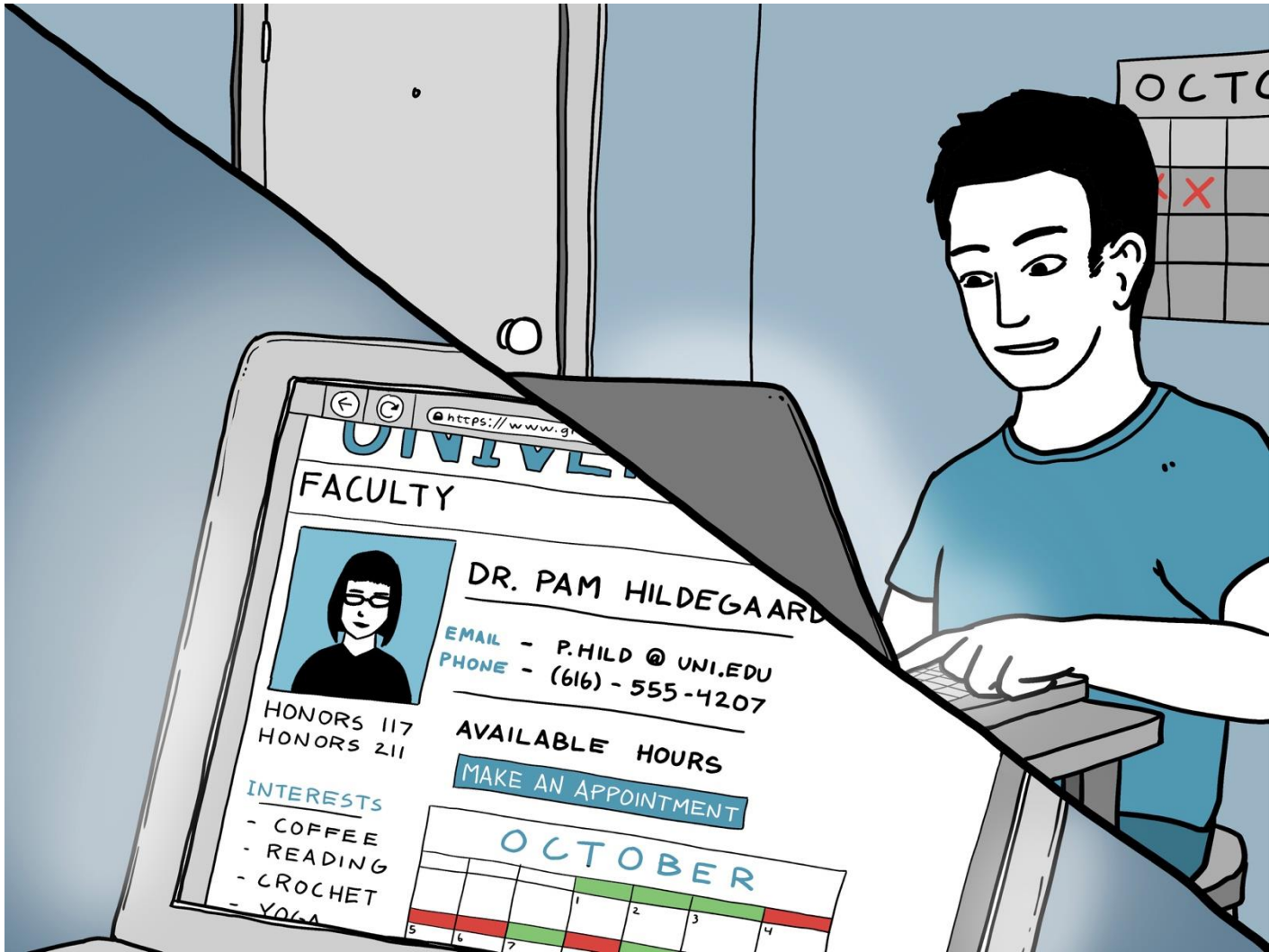


Fred goes to the course syllabus and tries to go to Dr. Hildegards' office hours for help, only to find that she had a lunch meeting.





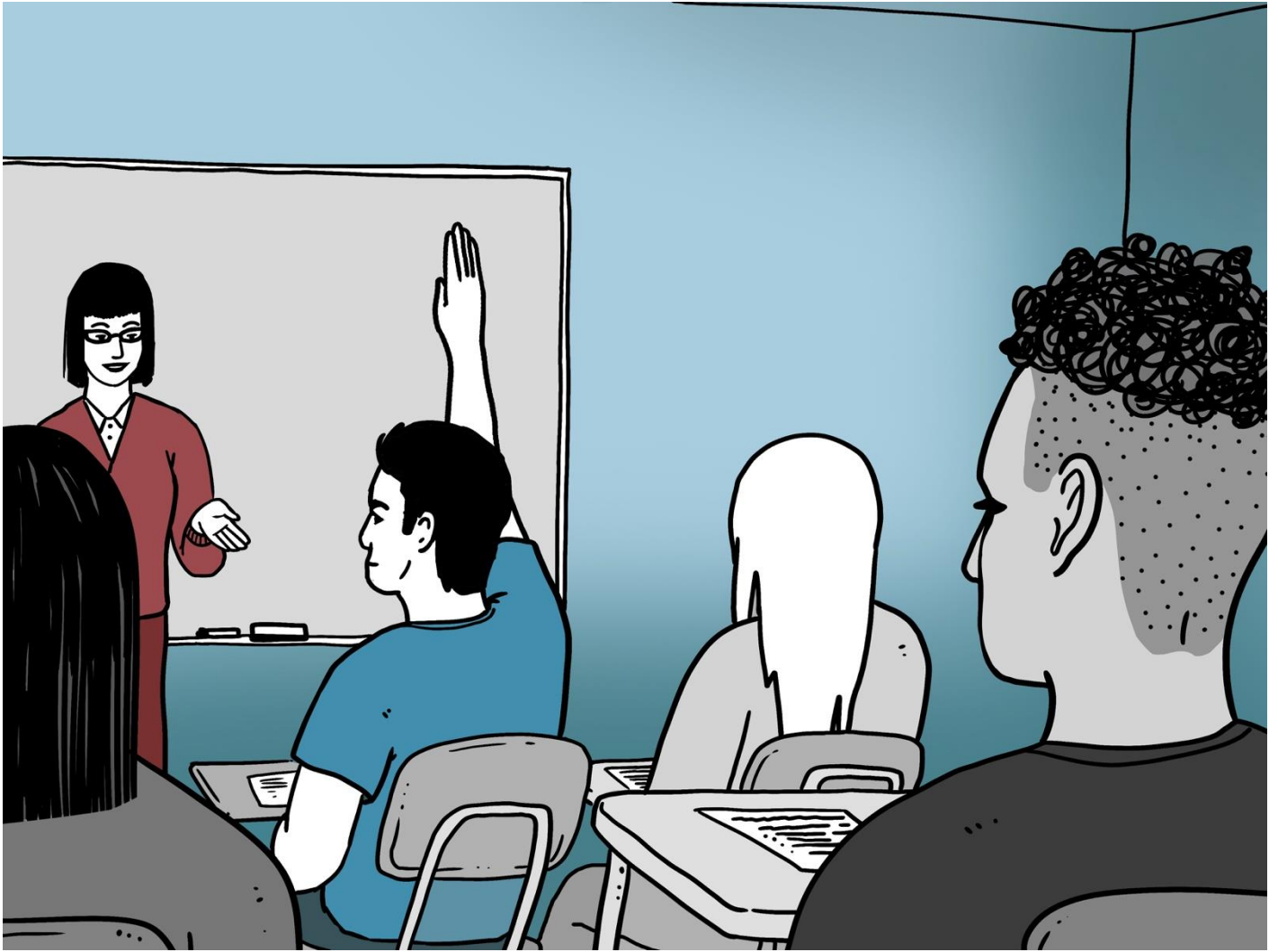
Fred searches for ways to connect with Dr. Hildegard by looking at both the current Honors faculty web page, and the course's information site on Blackboard – both were insufficient.



With the new Faculty Landing Page, Dr. Hildegard's availability and interests are clear for Fred to see. So not only does he know what time works best to meet, but he also has an avenue for building a meaningful relationship with his professor through shared interests they may have.



Fred and Dr. Hildegard choose to meet in a neutral space on campus and are able to discuss issues that Fred has over shared interests such as reading – building trust between the two.



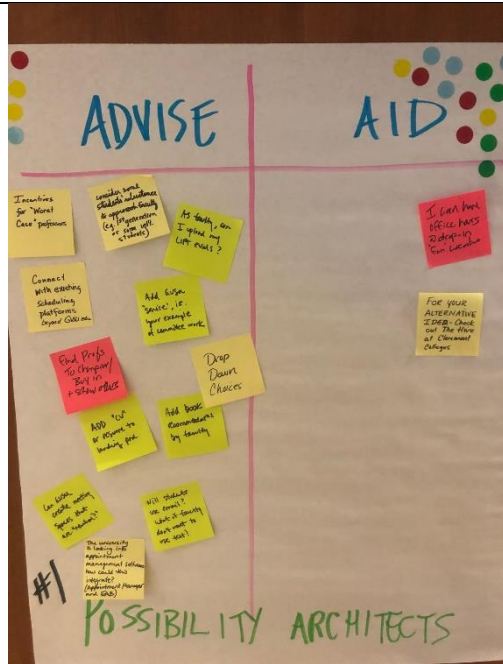
As a result, Fred is now more comfortable in class and is now much more communicative and engaged.

# Presentation Feedback

<b>Call to Action Envisioning the Future</b>	
<b>Brief Description of How Your Presentation was Received</b>	It was received well, with the caveat that some faculty/administrators may find it difficult to stay up to date with their calendar.
<b>What was the Teams Specific Call-to-Action</b>	The team's specific call-to-action was to promote meaningful relationships between the students and the faculty/administration of the Honors College in an effort to further students' agency in their institution.
<b>Attendee Questions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How would you get the "worst-case" scenario faculty/administrator to input information?</li> <li>2. Would there be a template for the personal information section that faculty/administration have to fill out?</li> <li>3. Can GVSU create spaces that are "neutral" to meet?</li> </ol>

<b>Innovation Symposium Feedback Capture What's Meaningful to Advance your Innovation</b>	
<b>Verbal Feedback</b>	<p>There were some faculty members who shared some concerns that the schedules would eventually fail to be updated at regular times.</p> <p>There was also feedback that some faculty/administration would use this for other faculty/administrators, so that they could further their professional careers with their colleagues.</p>
<b>Written Feedback</b>	*See Visual Feedback section

**Visual Feedback**



**Post-Symposium Reflections**

**Integrate the Feedback & Offer Final Recommendations**

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

1. One of the initial comments was about the “worst case” professor. We hadn’t really thought about a professor’s unwillingness to participate, since calendars are already a daily commitment. As a team we were hoping that these professors and administrators would find this as somewhere to keep everything in one place rather than adding extra work.
2. Keeping with the same note, the team did not anticipate that some of the faculty don’t even know where their current faculty biography is located, let alone how to change it to update it.
3. Another member also brought up the point about whether or not students would want to email. However, through all of our primary and secondary research we learned that students tend to prefer asynchronous modes of communication. We are sure there are a select few that do not, however, the majority of the research we conducted contradicts the idea that students would not like to email.
4. Another comment that was made, was “what if faculty decided to stop updating this page?” After this comment was made, we asked the administrators in the room how often they updated their calendars and many of them responded and said that they update it every day. The

	<p>faculty landing page can serve as the calendar that professors use for their personal calendars instead of having to update two calendars.</p> <p>5. It is also important to consider the reluctance of some students and faculty to participate. Not every student is the same and some first-generation students or even international students may not know how to approach faculty/administration. However, we think that the Faculty Landing Page would be a way to mitigate these fears or reluctances because it will help to form relationships first via asynchronous methods and then followed by synchronous methods to make that relationship even stronger.</p>
<p><b>CONVERGE:</b> How did the feedback provided align with and enhance the team's innovation?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One of the administrator's present at the symposium mentioned that the Honors College is currently looking at appointment-based platforms. This is one of the areas that led us down the path of the Faculty Landing Page. We were hoping to create a space that was quick and accessible and allowed students to make appointments with professors/administrators that were good for both of them.</li> <li>2. Another commenter mentioned adding an area for research that professors are conducting. It is often hard to find areas of research that are interesting and available. Just like how the previous information regarding faculty's office hours and other meeting times were previously hidden and difficult to find, this could be an avenue for students and faculty to enhance the research they are doing and find people to participate as well.</li> <li>3. One of the administrator's suggested that faculty should list a recommendation of books on the faculty landing page. Listing a recommendation of books can help facilitate conversation between student and faculty.</li> <li>4. An idea was mentioned to expand on the already existing scheduling platforms that most of the GVSU faculty use. This was our plan all along, because we are aware that there are many different platforms being utilized across the campus currently. The best way to implement this is to create/find a platform that works well with all of the existing platforms to make it easier on all parties.</li> <li>5. The professors/administration that were present at the symposium liked the idea of meeting students in a neutral place on campus. This leads to a diminished power dynamic that is often seen in the classroom and the office as well. It also is easy because the places will be located on campus, meeting both the student and professor needs. This also will help to reduce the anxiety and fears and create a bridge between all of the varying locations of Honors students at Grand Valley.</li> </ol>

<p><b>SYNTHESIZE:</b> How can others <i>use</i> the feedback provided?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Others could use this to know the availability of meeting spaces. The most immediate use of this online calendar could be used in the town-hall style meetings that another group proposed. This calendar could be used to book these meetings.</li> <li>2. The Honors College can use this innovation in a smaller, more controlled setting to test its impact. If this is proved, the university may start to seek a similar solution for booking meetings with faculty/administration and/or meeting spaces.</li> <li>3. The team could use the feedback given to us by not only making it easy for the students to check the availability of faculty members/administrators, but also should look into the making and updating of the online calendar streamlined for the faculty/administration at the same time, so that it becomes less of a burden for the stakeholders.</li> <li>4. The Honors College can take the feedback given to us about some faculty/administration not knowing how to update their current faculty page by giving a short information session on how to use the innovation's online calendar interface.</li> </ol>
<p><b>RECOMMEND:</b> What next steps does your team recommend to stakeholders?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One of the initial next steps would be to start talking with some of Grand Valley's own Computer Science majors within the Honors College to see how the Faculty Landing Page would pan out and how easy it would be to implement this to the already existing webpage.</li> <li>2. Our team also would like to recommend that the stakeholders look into a template with the information they would like faculty/administrators to fill out for the personal information section of the Landing Page.</li> <li>3. Find ways to create more neutral meeting spaces on the Grand Valley and Honors campuses.</li> <li>4. We would suggest that our stakeholders ask other faculty members if they would be interested in trying this faculty landing page.</li> </ol>



# Concluding Statement

With our innovation in place, we firmly believe there will be immediate and long-term improvements in student-faculty communication within the Frederik Meijer Honors College. As an immediate outcome, the implementation of the Faculty Landing Page will provide an anxiety-free channel for students and faculty to schedule time to meet face-to-face. This improved communication channel, as a long-term impact, will lead to more empathy-based governance and more mutually-beneficial outcomes within the FMHC. Our vision is that both Honors students and Honors faculty/administration will come together to give the student body a voice in the governance of the FMHC, and that this process will provide the parties with a renewed sense of belonging to something larger, thereby continuing the legacy of building trust between the students and faculty/administration.

Sincerely,

The Possibility Architects

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# Appendices

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## Dialogue Summaries

### Dialogue Summary #1:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b>  Honors Alumni
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b>  The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain a better understanding of what exactly this particular stakeholder saw in the Frederik Meijer Honor's College regarding communication between the student and faculty bodies. This includes how they experienced this communication, how they wished it would have otherwise operated, and if they would consider it to be a step in the "right direction."
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b>  This work reflects constructively on the team's problem statement, as the interviewee's comments on certain issues will be taken into consideration when crafting a solution to the problem. This viewpoint in particular, can be useful because it is from someone who has had experience with the problem at hand, but no longer has any significant ties to the organization.
<b>Summary of Research:</b>  From this interview, it can be found that the need for communication between the Honors College student and faculty bodies may not truly exist, despite the obvious benefits that it has on the students when it comes time to apply their studies after graduation. The interviewee did have suggestions about how to implement a conduit for communication, such as investing the energy into a maintaining a Slack chat or holding open forums where students can come and discuss issues that they may be concerned about with those that may be able to do something about it.

**Important insights:**

- It seemed like the interviewee acknowledged that there was a lack of communication between the faculty and students, but that there wasn't really a need to fix it (judging from how he said what he said, and from what we talked about after the recording).
- The interviewee placed emphasis on students communicating with the professors, and that it was and should be about the material learned in the course. There was not much of an emphasis on needed to know what the Honors College as a whole was doing.

**Dialogue Questions and Response:**

**Interviewer:** Interview one. Question one. Describe from your perspective what your experience was as far as communication between Honors faculty and you, personally.

**Interviewee:** While I was in the Honors College, I had a few conversations with my professors, they were mostly centered on the topic that we were learning about that week, or you know, the course material.

**Interviewer:** Describe from your perspective what your experience was as far as communication between Honors faculty and others – other students I mean.

**Interviewee:** Oh, other students, okay. I'd say that it was very similar interactions between, I mean paralleling, with my interactions with professors compared to what other students had. There were some who were close to the professors or had more contact, but I'd say it was all focused really around the intellectual material that we were discussing.

**Interviewer:** What would you describe as the biggest barriers to communication between students and the faculty?

**Interviewee:** I would say that time can be an issue. I know you can email back and forth and whatever at any time of day but, well time responsiveness is a big thing. It can be hard to always express yourself adequately over some technological means, but it can be difficult to be able to block out the time where your professor's open and you're open, um, especially the major I was in wasn't very feasible to talk to my professors in the Honors College a lot.

**Interviewer:** As a student, what types of communication did you feel, you felt most comfortable with participating in (i.e. in person, email, or phone)?

**Interviewee:** I'd say I was comfortable talking to them in person, in their office, or after class, or email was fine too - I mean it was better in person but email, I didn't have any issues with personally.

**Interviewer:** To what degree should technology be used in facilitating communication?

**Interviewee:** Well I think technology is important, there were a lot of times where I couldn't talk to my profs face-to-face, so, being able to use email, or you know, through blackboard if that was what was available was very handy. A lot of times I had questions that I needed answered

that just couldn't get to them personally, so I think they should be available, but you know I don't think they should have access to your personal phone number or anything.

**Interviewer:** What frustrations have you experienced when communicating with students?

**Interviewee:** When communicating with students it was hard for us all, it was less on a one-on-one and more as a collective group. Over time our little Honors cohort got pretty close, but it was very hard to talk with everyone at once, you know, you see one person here and there and, you know, everyone at class maybe, but you can't get a full student conversation out, so, it was a trick to come to a group decision or a group understanding of something when it was hard to organize as a group and I don't think there were any tools available to help with that, specifically.

**Interviewer:** Just to satisfy my own curiosity, if I could go off the script for a moment?

**Interviewee:** Sure.

**Interviewer:** You mentioned your Honors cohort and how you grew together closely. Was that just during the freshman and sophomore year, or as you experienced junior and senior year also?

**Interviewee:** Almost exclusively freshman and sophomore year. A good thing to point out, I'm an engineering major, or was in college, when I was at GV, and so for those two years I think the standard is Making of Europe. That's the course that I took and that's that two-year course I think you're familiar with. But it was easy to grow with that cohort during that time, you know, you see each other twice a week for two years you learn about each other a little bit, but after that, I wouldn't say that we kept in much communication. Some of the engineers in that class I kept in contact with so minimal, but the others not really. I'd say that it was really focused around/on the class rather than, I don't know, a larger or greater friendship amongst all of us you might say.

**Interviewer:** What successful communication strategies have you implemented within your own work that you think would be appropriate for students and faculty?

**Interviewee:** Well, so one thing I think is you've got to not be afraid to take the first step. A lot of people can be scared of professor's right after you get a bad grade and you don't want to go talk to them when you know you really failed it. But professors hand out bad grades all the time so, you can go talk to them and they're generally still open, but one thing that I think would really help that I've used at my work would be a group chat platform that's actually responsive more real-time. I don't think Blackboard is equipped to deal with that and email's not a good solution either. Something like, you're probably most familiar with Slack or something like that. Discord if you're younger even. Something like that where you can all kind of get a group together - I could see you having an Honors Slack group and then you could break that out into separate little sub-groups for each class and everyone could jump on in there and have real-time and candid conversation. I think that could be effective.

**Interviewer:** Okay. What benefits do you think an increase in communication between Honors College students and faculty would have on the Honors College.

**Interviewee:** I think it would be helpful. I don't know if I see any tangible thing right now, I mean, it's hard to have too much communication so long as it's within normal boundaries. I think students would feel more open about asking questions in class and they would feel more open about coming to professors when they have, perhaps, knowledge gaps that otherwise they might feel uncomfortable with raising their hand about in a session.

**Interviewer:** What drawbacks do you think an increase in communication between these two groups would have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** I think you'd have to go pretty far to see some real drawbacks. You'd have to have a lot of communication, I mean, you can almost always have more conversation, but I guess there could be a point where there's just too much and then it's detrimental to probably largely the professors who had have to communicate with so many students, you know, they might run out of time to, well, just live their life, even.

**Interviewer:** Because of your position at your company, you have a unique insight into what might make for a good worker, especially if they are still in, or have just graduated from college. In what ways might an increase in communication between students and faculty be advantageous and/or detrimental to a candidate for employment?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, so if students are talking to their professors more, that can really help because when you're a college student and you join the workforce, you might think you know things, but you don't know anything. You know nothing. And that's fine, that's expected from students coming out of college, it's okay. But you need to know and be comfortable with talking to people who are at a much higher level of understanding at that topic. And that's exactly the kind of dynamic that you'd see in a classroom setting. You as a student, you don't really know very much about certain topics, especially when taking a course that you never have before. But your professor, well, hopefully they know quite a bit, and if you can learn to be comfortable with talking about something that you don't know much about with someone who knows a lot about it, and you can have good communication through this experience and you can learn from that, that can really help you in the workforce when you're talking to people who know a whole lot more about the work you're doing.

**Interviewer:** What are issues that you think might be brought to the faculty by the students, and why?

**Interviewee:** I think, increased communication could let the students raise gaps in their understanding a lot easier if they're more comfortable talking. There were a few times in my courses I missed something or didn't quite understand it I just kind of skipped it and let it go by and then either figured it out later on my own or asked another student, or just got a bad grade on a test one time, you know, and I'm sure there are other people with the same question, or something similar, something we could all learn from. So, I think that's definitely an improvement area there.

**Interviewer:** What limitations would you like to see placed on the communication between faculty and students?

**Interviewee:** I don't think faculty should be able to communicate with students in an entirely private manner. I think it should be audible in some sense, you know, your professor doesn't

need your personal cell phone number, they don't need to be texting you personally, they can contact you through your GVSU provided and lightly monitored, or, monitorable interface like the email, or if GVSU ran sort of Slack chat server, they could start off with some trust and you don't really have to watch them, but if you see an issue, that's something that you could look at rather than some private thing where now you've just connected these two people who you don't know anything about.

**Interviewer:** How often do you think this, being the communication between the students and faculty, should occur, and why?

**Interviewee:** Well, I think it should occur whenever it has to, and that's a real cop-out answer, but I don't know, I think it's worth checking in once a month with your students who haven't come up to you prior to that month elapsing. I think that's a reasonable timeframe and not too much of a heavy burden on a professor to just do a quick check in on a student personally.

**Interviewer:** Do you think the faculty should communicate with as much of the student body as possible, or only a selected few and why?

**Interviewee:** If by the whole student body, you mean each professor tries to talk to the whole Honors College that would be too much I would think. I mean, a lot of those students, maybe they'll have an interest in something the professor knows, but I think that's pretty rare and that's going to be a detrimental thing to everyone's schedule at least. But if you're talking about the student body as the students in the class that the professors teach, then I think the professor should try to talk to as many of their students as possible. I think that's a general, you know.

**Interviewer:** If I could go off script once more?

**Interviewee:** Sure.

**Interviewer:** Say the student body is the entire Honors College student body, and the professorship role that you have been talking about is the Director of the Honors College, someone who's accountable to all the students, would your answer change?

**Interviewee:** I think it adjusts, I don't know that it changes entirely. I think that someone in more of a higher position, directorship or whatever, they should hold, open hearing sessions or whatever, where students who would like to can come and have their say and talk frankly with the Director in kind of an open, public forum. And that event, if it were hosted, should be made known to every student in the Honors College, but I don't think the Director needs to check in with every student, just be available for it and schedule some times to talk with anyone who is interested, and maybe have some alternative ways for students to get into contact with them, like a general suggestion box or an anonymous suggestion box would be a good way to source some communication.

**Interviewer:** Who among the faculty do you think should be tasked with the student communication?

**Interviewee:** Well, in a sense it's everyone, but I'd say it'd be headed by the Director. They should really drive an initiative to make student communication perhaps more of a priority than it is now. Of course, it's incumbent upon the professors to actually, and the rest of the faculty, to



actually take those steps to actually do the communication - I think it's a policy driven by the Director. I don't know if the Dean level is too high or who even, President of the Honors College if that's a thing, if that would necessarily be their task, but someone above a tenured faculty. I wouldn't put it on professors to have to take the initiative and try to run that for the whole Honors College.

**Interviewer:** Thank you very much for sharing your insights with us, this will be very helpful to our process. We may contact you again for follow up information if need be. We look forward to sharing our results with you.

**Interviewer:** Oh, one more thing, actually two more things. Is there anyone else we should contact?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I know a couple individuals you could talk to if you wanted. You could talk to my wife, an Honors College alumna, you could talk to her if you'd like. It'd be fine, I can help you set that up, it's not a big deal. There're a couple other people I could get back to you with a list if you wanted.

**Interviewer:** Thank you. One further question here, is there anything else that I didn't ask you that you think I should have? Concerning this whole, communication problem in the Honors College. If there is a problem, I wouldn't want to place that assumption on you.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I would say that I'm - hm. I don't think there's a question that you're missing. I feel like I have an answer or something, but I think you covered every base that I can think of right now.

**Interviewer:** Okay, good. Thank you very much and thank you for your time.

**Interviewee:** Of course.

**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 contact?**

The interviewee agreed to reconnect for further inquiry. This could be done either through an additional interview or email.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- Spouse
- Other Honors alumni (these two were the only ones recorded)
- Old professors (not recorded)

**Possible next-steps:**

- Add a question that asks whether the interviewee thinks the Honors College students should be able to influence Honors College policy (suggestion was not recorded). This was suggested so that the interviewee can address the governance issue more directly.

Dialogue Summary #2:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> Ex-Honors Student
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b> The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain a better understanding of what exactly this particular stakeholder saw in the Frederik Meijer Honor's College regarding communication between the student and faculty bodies. This includes how they experienced this communication, how they wished it would have otherwise operated, and if they would consider it to be a step in the "right direction."
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b> This work reflects constructively on the team's problem statement, as the interviewee's comments on certain issues will be taken into consideration when crafting a solution to the problem. This viewpoint in particular, can be useful because it is from someone who has had experience with the problem at hand, but no longer has any significant ties to the organization. The responses to these questions need to be carefully screened from bias, however, as this is an ex-Honors student, rather than an alumnus who has graduated.

### Summary of Research:

From this interview, it can be found that the communication between the Honors students and Honors faculty that already occurs happens in the classroom and revolves around the material learned therein. Beyond this, the interviewee did not see any true reason for continuing to grow the communication between the faculty and students. On a side note, it seemed as if there were issues about how the faculty might react upon receiving student input (i.e. how truthful they are when they say they want to hear what the students are thinking). This is drawn from the interviewee's two stories of how the Honors faculty seemingly fought the interviewee to stay in it when he/she had clearly already made up their mind, and how the professor that called them a "bigot" was seemingly influential and he/she was doubtful anything they could say would change the situation.

### Important insights:

- In this student's opinion, there really wasn't much of a need to increase the communication between the faculty and the students. The interviewee felt that all of the necessary communication was already happening via the professors and the administration's newsletters.
- This interviewee felt that the best way to increase the communication between these two groups might be to utilize the RA's, as they are already a group in between the students and faculty.

### Dialogue Questions and Response:

**Interviewer:** Describe from your perspective what the communication system was for communication between the Honors faculty and staff, and what your role was in this.

**Interviewee:** The only forms of communication that I felt like when I was in the Honors College was the typical emails that you would receive and then if anything else, the RA's. They would come by and talk about stuff or the bulletin boards in the corners. But beyond that, I mean...

**Interviewer:** What would you describe as the biggest barriers to communication between students and faculty?

**Interviewee:** Um, biggest barriers. Honestly, I didn't feel like there really was any. Or at least that stood out a whole lot. Anything that needed to be communicated they would just email us.

**Interviewer:** They being the professors? Or are you talking the office staff?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, just all of it, really, I guess. But when you talk about just professors – I feel like most of them did a pretty good job communicating.

**Interviewee:** I mean, every professor's different. And they're good and bad, depends who it is, but, from my experience in the Honors College, for the most part, especially the professors, did a pretty good job of communicating what needed to be done, when it needed to be done.

**Interviewer:** Good.

**Interviewee:** And then the faculty, I guess just keeping you up with events and opportunities. I mean, I think they did a newsletter or something like that every once in a while, that you'd briefly skim and close out of it. But things like that.

**Interviewer:** What benefits do you think an increase in communication between Honors College students and faculty would have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** I guess, from a professor to student stand point, they'd have more, I mean, the students would have more of an increase in knowledge of what was expected of them, and then depending on the professor, students should feel comfortable reaching out to the professor about anything. And you usually get a timely response. I know when I reached out to a professor nine times out of ten it was always a reasonable time I had to wait for a response – sometimes it was right away. Their usually good about that. Once in a while you get one that just, I mean sometimes they just miss the email. And from a faculty stand point, of just the newsletters and stuff like that. Students would be more informed about what's going on around campus and the Honors College specifically. But not that... I'll save that for another question.

**Interviewer:** What disadvantages do you think an increase in communication between these two groups would have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** I feel like, when you give students more options of ways to reach out to the faculty about anything, I feel like a lot of people don't actually do it. You know what I mean? When they have those newsletters, no one, I mean no one really reads it. They'll glance over it or the first couple of pages, but it's like...

**Interviewee:** Yeah exactly. So, I guess giving them more options I feel like...

**Interviewer:** Doesn't mean that they're going to take advantage of it?

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Sure.

**Interviewee:** And people have their own schedule. I mean, if they're interested in something they'll usually reach out and figure out how to get involved.

**Interviewer:** How much time would you as a student would you have been willing to devote to increasing the amount of communication between these two groups?

**Interviewee:** If there was ever a meeting about it, maybe I'd go to one, but if it was an ongoing thing that as a student I'd have to be involved with I probably wouldn't be willing to devote that much time to it just because I had my schedule and was involved with stuff my freshman year when I was in the Honors College. I felt like, personally to me, it was never like an issue where I felt like I needed to devote time if there was ever an opportunity to find ways to fix the communication issues, if there were any. I personally didn't think there really were any.

**Interviewer:** Describe an instance in which you have been involved in between different groups that worked really well? What do you think, or pardon me, why do you think that it worked or why did it not work?

**Interviewee:** So, I can be negative about this too?

**Interviewer:** Yeah, absolutely.

**Interviewee:** Freshman year I know, I don't know how much this pertains to the question I guess, but there was a time when I was trying to leave the Honors College and I went to an advisor and I was talking with them about the concerns I had and things like that, and one of the things that I let the advisor know is: I didn't want to be in the Honors College anymore and that was kind of set in stone, I already had my mind decided, or my mind made up. And when I was talking to her, she was giving me advice and stuff it felt like she didn't really hear that part of it. All of the options she was giving was me staying in the Honors College. This isn't what like, I'm letting you know this isn't exactly what I wanted to do anymore. So that was kind of frustrating. Any time with professors I felt like they always did a really good job with email and in class just talking. All of the Honors College professors, honestly, did a really good job. When I look back on it a lot of them stand out that they were really nice and really helpful about stuff. There is an instance where I had a really bad experience with a professor, I'm not going to go into that unless I have to.

**Interviewer:** If you want to, feel free, but if you don't, it can remain private.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, might as well.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Interviewee:** It was an Honors business class I was taking, and I had to do a project, and, in the project, I had to describe a case which had to do with disabled people like, flying planes or something like that.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Interviewee:** It was a long time ago. And the medium that we were using to work on the project was this website called Video Scribe. In that, there was clipart, and I was trying to describe a disabled person and they didn't have the handicapped symbol. All they had was a wheelchair. The handicapped symbol is a person in a wheelchair. So, I just thought that it wouldn't be a big deal. Then when the professor was going through the project, [he/she] ripped me apart about it and ended up being really mean in front of the class to me, specifically about it. [He/She] called me a bigot. [He/She] was being really weird about it. I took it kind of hard. It didn't seem like [he/she] was joking around at all, [he/she] was being pretty serious about it, the way [he/she] acted in the class, and there was no reason to think [he/she] was joking around about it because [he/she] wasn't really a jokester.

**Interviewee:** And then I didn't do anything about it, I just kind of took it. As my freshman year, I'm not going to try to stand up to a professor.

**Interviewer:** Sure.

**Interviewee:** And then, during the next exam, [he/she] even took up the question of my specific case. The question was worded "In the utterly biased video depicting disabled people in wheelchairs, that was the intro to the question. It was just kind of like, "How old are we? You're still holding onto this issue that was two weeks ago?" I had a friend who was in the same class

the next semester, [he/she] told the story of how there was a student who took it too seriously, which makes it sound like it's a joke, but it's like, there's no way that was a joke. So that was really frustrating that – miscommunication, I guess. Because I definitely wasn't trying to make fun of disabled people. And it felt like I was kind of... yeah.

**Interviewer:** If I could go off the script for a moment? If that's alright? If there was a certain avenue that you could have taken to try to, so to say, right the ship with your prof, would you have taken it?

**Interviewee:** So, I did with the evaluations. I definitely reached out, well, reaching out's not the right way... I definitely described almost the entire thing in the evaluation, but then again, I didn't know who was going to be reading that. When I talked to my parents about it, they told me to go to the Honors College admin about it, but it felt like there was really nothing that would have happened. You know? I felt like the professor was pretty high-up. And not GV Honor, but like, or the Honors College, but like, high-up with the university in general. So, it just felt like, one student's not going to... I don't know. I feel like I should've, and if there was a, I don't know, with my personality I don't know if I would've if there was an opportunity for it.

**Interviewer:** Going back to the script: do you think there should be any limitations placed on the students regarding topics to be discussed with the faculty and administration?

**Interviewee:** Not really. If there are any tough topics that, if you were to just ask students a variety of questions where they can remain anonymous, I guess that would be fine. If you were to do a Q-and-A or something like that, that might get hard to talk about specific topics. But I guess, in general, we're all adults here, if there's issues, we need to be able to talk about it. And if we can't talk about it, then, I don't know what to tell you.

**Interviewer:** Who among the student population should communicate with the faculty the most?

**Interviewee:** I would say probably the RA's. I don't know what you have to do to be an RA, but it felt like they were always an upperclassman, and it felt like if a student ever had issues or questions those were the people you'd always go to because they're your peers. And I felt like, I mean, I don't know how much communication they do with faculty, but I feel like out of anybody, those are the people that they'd have their own meetings about stuff.

**Interviewer:** Describe what communication methods you currently use, when you use them, and how frequently?

**Interviewee:** When I was in the Honors College it was just email.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Interviewee:** You know what I mean? If it was just a professor, it was just email. If it was an advisor, set up your appointment and you go in. Beyond that, I feel like there wasn't really other options.

**Interviewer:** And no need for different options?

**Interviewee:** Not really, I don't really see the need for, I mean, I guess it depends on what, if it's

just like a general question to a professor, I feel like email's the best way for it.

**Interviewer:** To what degree should technology be used in facilitating communication? We just spoke about email, so...

**Interviewee:** I mean, definitely a lot, especially with the options you're able to do so much with technology. If you have the right people working on it, I don't know why you wouldn't try to use technology. Just because it's easier. Maybe even if you had a couple extra questions on the LIFT evaluation, that pertain to the Honors College. Things like that would be better. But then again, sometimes you just can't beat good-old Q-and-A's of students.

**Interviewer:** As an ex-Honors student, who do you think should be in charge of organizing the communication between the two groups? And this could either be from a faculty standpoint or student standpoint.

**Interviewee:** I don't see the issue with faculty being the ones to implement it. It'd be hard to have a third party do it. Maybe, going back to the RA's, I feel like that could be a good avenue to go to.

**Interviewer:** Kind of like a middle ground between the two?

**Interviewee:** Yeah. Faculty tells RA information and they relay it to the students and vice versa.

**Interviewer:** Is there one thing that I should've asked you, but I didn't?

**Interviewee:** Not really, I feel like with the communication questions, that was all kind of talked about.

**Interviewer:** And are there any connections you can give me to reach out to?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, my roommate for the last two years is still part of the Honors College. I think he's actually going to do a study aboard with the Honors College too.

**Interviewer:** My team and I would like to thank you for participating and giving us your insight into this problem, we will take all responses into consideration. We will follow up with you as needed and if you are available. Please attend the innovation symposium on April 16<sup>th</sup> to hear your input influences our team's innovation.

**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 contact?**

Yes, the interviewee agreed to be contacted again, preferably face-to-face.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- Past roommate of two years
- N/A
- N/A

**Possible next-steps:**

- Reach out to the interviewee's past roommate and ask for an interview.
- Discuss to what degree the communication between the students and the faculty should be.

Dialogue Summary #3:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> Current Honors Student
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Female
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b> The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain a better understanding of what exactly this particular stakeholder saw in the Frederik Meijer Honor's College regarding communication between themselves and the faculty. This is also meant to strengthen our understanding of how students would like to see increase communication, how devoted they are to move towards this goal, and their current ideas of what communication is like as of today.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b> This work reflects constructively on the team's problem statement, as the interviewee's comments on certain issues will be taken into consideration when crafting a solution to the problem. This interview is also vital to our team's problem statement, as the interviewee is from one of our biggest stakeholder groups. This viewpoint in particular, can be useful because it is from someone who is currently experiencing the struggle of communication and their responses to these questions will naturally help shape the team's solution to the problem.
<b>Summary of Research:</b> This interview offered a lot of insights to the issues of communication posed. This student did not necessarily believe that communication was necessarily a struggle as of right now. It was more a discussion of how technology has recently become more of a basis for communication than it has in previous years. The interviewee also emphasized that technology should be used but only to a certain degree that is professional. That way face-to-face communication can still be used and efficient over the overused media-based communication today.

**Important insights:**

- Communication between faculty and freshman should be emphasized more than it currently is
- The use of Blackboard Altera is helpful/useful
- Discussion of important classes such as Honors Junior Seminar and Senior Projects should be increased
- Degree of professionalism in communication between students and faculty should still remain the same
- Issue of communication was more so within the education system and with advisors and professors of current classes

**Dialogue Questions and Response:**

**Interviewer:** Can you describe, from your perspective, the current systems in place for communication between honors faculty and students?

**Interviewee:** I guess probably just mostly through email. Because, even when I was in my Honors classes, I feel like the Honors professors didn't really tell you what was going on, unless it related to their general curriculum then they never mentioned it. For example, in my sequence on Greece and Rome they didn't talk about general Honors College things but more so ideas that were relevant to the class.

**Interviewer:** What do you feel your role is right now communicating with the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** Uhm. I feel like my role is more like if I have a question then it is my job to reach out to faculty. Or if I have an advising question, then I don't expect someone to reach out to me for help. We are more adults now, so we have to reach out to them.

**Interviewer:** What would you describe as the biggest barriers to communication between students and faculty here at Grand Valley?

**Interviewee:** A majority of it is time. Especially within advising too, if there are not enough advisors for enough students. Also, when professors have short or limited office hours, that can often make it difficult as well.

**Interviewer:** How often do you attend professor's office hours?

**Interviewee:** Office hours were not something I normally attend regularly. It was more if I just had a question. But normally if I had a question it could easily be answered before or after class, so I would ask them during that time.

**Interviewer:** What benefits do you think an increase in communication between Honors College students and faculty would have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** Maybe more opportunities for students. If students got to know their professors and faculty more than their professors can help them find opportunities that fit certain students. Such as internships or research. It would just help build a stronger relationship.

**Interviewer:** How could an increase in communication have disadvantages within the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** I guess probably just still making sure if you are communicating that there is a hierarchy. I don't think that just because you are comfortable with a professor that you should talk to them about personal issues, because it is different than talking to one of your friends. Additionally, there should still be a level of respect towards each other even with an increase in communication.

**Interviewer:** Describe a circumstance in which you have been involved in a situation where communication between different groups worked really well?

**Interviewee:** I work at a daycare and so you have to convey messages to parents that they sometimes do not want to hear. So, it is really nice because if there is something that happens, you can tell your boss and the boss tells the parent. That way at the end of the day the parents already know what happened and they aren't coming in blindsided by the news.

**Interviewer:** Do you think that face-to-face interactions or more media-based communication is more effective if that system works well?

**Interviewee:** I would say always face-to-face because over media or technology you lose a lot of context in messages. And that is where in a situation a professor or student is coming off in a different way than they really meant. However, I do think that technology-based communication can often be helpful when you can't always meet someone face to face, and even just giving the heads up makes future conversations easier about a situation.

**Interviewer:** Going based off of that...there is research that says a lot of students prefer emailing and chatting with their professors versus meeting with them face-to-face. How do you think emailing affects student and faculty relationships?

**Interviewee:** It definitely is a lot faster and I am more willing to ask questions that way if I know it is going to be answered really fast. For example, even tonight I emailed one of my professors and she gave a really quick reply. But then that's where it makes me think, 'Oh was she annoyed or was this just how it came off?' So, it is nice to use technology to get a quick fast paced answer to your questions, but I still think it will never be the same as meeting face-to-face and interacting personally with faculty. Plus, they may not always answer the entirety of your question and leave you feeling even more confused at times than when you first contact them.

**Interviewer:** How much time would you as a student be willing to devote to increasing the amount of communication between you and your professors.

**Interviewee:** I feel like maybe just trying to have a weekly time where I could meet with them. I would not want to change around my schedule to devote time because I am extremely busy, but if it was something that I could already plan out I think it would allow me to be more consistent. Plus, I think it is hard for students and professors to find time that is good for both of them to meet. So even if I were able to make time, it may not always be beneficial if professors don't have office hours around both my class and work schedule as well.

**Interviewer:** Are there any limitations you think should be placed on students regarding topics to be discussed with Honors faculty and administrations?

**Interviewee:** Not limits by the Honors College. But maybe with your specific professors. I again don't think you should talk about personal things that are going on with your life with professors. There should still be that level of they are here to help you professionally, so students should know what is appropriate to discuss and bring to their attention.

**Interviewer:** Who in the student population should communicate with faculty the most?

**Interviewee:** Do you want a specific answer or a broader answer?

**Interviewer:** You can go with it however you would like! Whatever you think is best!

**Interviewee:** Then I would probably emphasize the freshman. Coming to Grand Valley I had so many questions such as the best way to study, time management, what are the best classes to take? Stuff like that. Uhm, and then I think if you start a good communication pathway as freshman it will make it easier as you continue your time here at Grand Valley to go to professors and advisors and be more willing to ask them questions. Instead of ending up at your senior year and having a ton of questions.

**Interviewer:** Describe the communication methods you currently use, when you use them, and how frequently.

**Interviewee:** To communicate with my professors I use email the most. It is usually easier for me to just talk with professors before or after class, sometimes I go to office hours. One of my professors really likes to use Blackboard Altera, so we have used where it is like Skype but through Blackboard. Which is kind of weird, but it turned out really helpful because it was for an online class. And with online classes you don't always get to meet face-to-face, so it ended up being really helpful.

**Interviewer:** What do you do when you use Blackboard Altera?

**Interviewee:** The professor would send out a link at certain times and it would be utilized for group projects. So, at that time that she sent it out, my group members and I would essentially all hop on and have a conference call with our professor. And it was helpful to make sure everyone was on the same page and on track.

**Interviewer:** How often would you be willing to use that for other projects know that you know how to work it?

**Interviewee:** Oh, definitely I would use it a lot more! I think it is a really good for an online class it was really nice to keep the group accountable and make sure everyone was there. But maybe not for classes that actually meet on campus face-to-face.

**Interviewer:** To what degree should technology be used in facilitating communication?

**Interviewee:** I feel like it is fine if it enhances communication between groups, but I still feel like face-to-face is always the best option. However, technology can definitely make things a lot

easier for online classes or for the hours that you may not be able to meet with your professors. I feel like it is fine as long as it is only to a certain degree of professionalism.

**Interviewer:** As an Honors student, who do you think should be in charge of organizing the communication between students and faculty here?

**Interviewee:** Uhm I guess it really just depends on the class and situations to communicate. Especially if you have questions as a student, then it is up to you to reach out and get those answered. But it is also still up to the professor to let students know what is going on and to be approachable enough to engage in conversation. I also think that communication should be mutual, so there isn't one person that should always be in charge of initiating, if that makes sense.

**Interviewer:** Thank you very much for sharing your thoughts with us, this will be very helpful as we go through the design thinking process. If needed, we may be in further contact with you if that is alright?

**Interviewee:** Of course!

**Interviewer:** Also, is there anyone else you can think of that would be willing to offer their insights on this topic as well?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I know a couple individuals that would love to talk with you! All of my roommates are in the Honors College! My boyfriend also took the Design Thinking class as well, so I am sure he would be willing to offer some insights to your team!

**Interviewer:** Thank you! That would be awesome! I will keep in contact with you regarding interviews of your roommates! One last question, is there anything else that I didn't ask you that you think I should have? Concerning the topic of communication in the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I would say that I'm - hm. I think one thing that was super hard for me was learning about the senior project that is required. I felt like when it came up, I had no idea about it or what even it consisted of because nobody ever talks about it. I think it would be extremely beneficial if it was something that was more talked about and expectations were communicated with students throughout their time at Grand Valley. Even if they introduced it to freshman to get their ideas generating instead of waiting until the last minute.

**Interviewer:** Oh, that is interesting. I never thought of that. Thank you very much and thank you for your time.

**Interviewee:** Of course.

**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 contact?**

The interviewee preferred to be contacted over phone or email.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- Roommate
- Boyfriend (also an Honors student that has previously taken the Design Thinking course)
- Another Roommate (all three of her roommates are current Honors students)

**Possible next-steps:**

- Add questions that are more directed at the governance part of the Honors College? The discussion was focused a lot on just the communication of students and faculty, which was in some ways limiting.
- Reach out to the interviewee again to get the contact information for her roommates and boyfriend, for further interviews of valuable stakeholders.

Dialogue Summary #4:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b>  Student
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b>  The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain an understanding of how the Frederik Meijer Honors College's students view the opportunity of having increased communication between themselves and the student body. This is also meant to get an understanding of how they would like this to operate, what topics the students would like to have a say in, and how devoted they are to the goal of increased communication.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b>  This interview is vital to our team's problem statement, as it will be a source of information into one of the biggest stakeholders. As one of the biggest stakeholders (students), the responses to these questions will naturally help shape the team's solution to the problem.
<b>Summary of Research:</b>  After this interview I learned that the main way students communicate with faculty is through email. This is because students feel more comfortable using email than other ways of communication. I also learned that students prefer when faculty have conversations with them rather than just having an announcement. This is because students remember conversations more than they do announcements. Students also feel closer to faculty through conversation over announcements. The student interviewed also said that if students and faculty were to increase communication, it will create more community involvement. Some disadvantages that come from increased communication between students and faculty is that it takes more time and students and faculty might not buy into it. I also learned that what students share with faculty mainly depends on the level of trust they have with the faculty member.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Email is the preferred method for communicating with faculty.</li><li>• Increasing communication between students and faculty will increase community.</li><li>• Students respond better to conversation than announcements from faculty.</li></ul>



### **Dialogue Questions and Response:**

**Interviewer:** Describe, from your perspective, the current systems in place for communication between Honors faculty and staff, and your role in this.

**Interviewee:** The only communication I receive is in the form of emails and classroom contact with professors.

**Interviewer:** What would you describe as the biggest barriers to communication between students and faculty?

**Interviewee:** I would say lack of meaningful connection combined with physical separation.

**Interviewer:** What benefits do you think an increase in communication between Honors College students and faculty would have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** I think it will create more communication within the Honors College.

**Interviewer:** What disadvantages do you think an increase in communication between these two groups would have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** It would use a lot more time, faculty or staff might not buy in. Students will have to come around to it as well. It will be a rough transition.

**Interviewer:** How much time would you as a student be willing to devote to increasing the amount of communication between these two groups?

**Interviewee:** Honestly not that much because I am currently a senior and will be graduating soon.

**Interviewer:** Describe a circumstance in which you have been involved in where communication between different groups worked really well? And why do you think that it worked? Or why did it not work?

**Interviewee:** I am currently an RA and I have to communicate with people a lot. I think communication works the best via email and or group text because it's easy to communicate that way.

**Interviewer:** Are there any limitations that should be placed on the students regarding topics to be discussed with Honors faculty and administration?

**Interviewee:** I think it just depends on how close the student is with the faculty member. The closer they are the more the student will most likely be willing to share.

**Interviewer:** Who among the student population do you think should communicate with the faculty the most?

**Interviewee:** Everyone because communication is a group effort.

**Interviewer:** Describe what communication methods you currently use, when you use them,

and how frequently?

**Interviewee:** I use email just about every day.

**Interviewer:** To what degree should technology be used in facilitating communication?

**Interviewee:** It should be used to communicate times and to reinforce spoken news. My ideal would be that communication is only used to facilitate in-person meetings.

**Interviewer:** As a student, who do you think should be in charge of organizing the communication between the two groups?

**Interviewee:** It should be joint effort between faculty and students.

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

You should have asked me more specific questions about my personal experience with communication among faculty.

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

Yes. They agreed to be contacted via email for further questions.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- Honor Students
- RA’s within the Honors College
- Honors faculty

**Possible next-steps:**

- Look into how students feel about communicating with faculty via video calls
- Interview at least one Honors RA.
- Interview an Honors College freshman

Dialogue Summary #5:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> ANCHOR Representative
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Female
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b> The primary goal of this opportunity was to be able to gain an understanding of some of the current channels of communication that certain students have with the Honors College faculty, and how effective these are, and how the representative has seen it work in the Honors College itself.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b> This research reflects on the team's problem statement by providing answers to how the team might solve the problem by analyzing what conduits of communication already exist in the Honors College, and how this may impact any solution that may come from the problem statement.
<b>Summary of Research:</b> This interview was insightful not only because the interviewee could provide a unique perspective into how the current student representation organization operates, interacts with faculty and administration, and the effectiveness with which it does this. It was found that although there is a specific structure in place to communicate with authorities, these authorities are already relatively easily available, and they do not have as much of a reach as they might want, nor do they have a completely dedicated task.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An important insight is that whatever solution we come up with as a team, there must be a recognizable and achievable goal that the group can strive for</li><li>• This stakeholder highlighted the fact that they believe that this form of student representation/communication with the Honors administration and faculty can lead to a lot of good, so long as participation in the program remains high and the students involved remain passionate about it</li></ul>
<b>Dialogue Questions and Response:</b> <b>Interviewer:</b> How long have you worked for ANCHOR? <b>Interviewee:</b> Three years. The three years I've been here. <b>Interviewer:</b> What made you want to decide to jump into that role?

**Interviewee:** Freshman year I went to their first meeting. They advertised it. I went and they needed someone to fill in a position on their e-board and my friend said "Hey, you should do it." So, I did it.

**Interviewer:** How do you think you've grown in that position?

**Interviewee:** I started out as publications director, which meant I created a newsletter that got put on the Internet. Then we stopped doing that and I became the President for the next two. So, I really jumped! I made a big leap there.

**Interviewer:** What were the decisions around leaving the newsletter?

**Interviewee:** We used to be under housing and then we became a student organization. So, you can only certain members on your board. I wasn't one of them anymore. We decided that it wasn't a worthwhile time for someone to be on the e-board when they could be using their time for something better.

**Interviewer:** How do you feel your role changed, impact-wise, from your first position that you started at as a publications director to now?

**Interviewee:** Well, ANCHOR usually didn't have a lot to publish, so I felt like I would be kind of waiting and waiting for interesting things to put up. That the only person I ever knew who read it was my dad. So, going from that to being President where I feel like I have a lot more agency and trying out my own ideas and it's giving me a different role to kind of experiment with what works and what doesn't work for our goals.

**Interviewer:** How much of an influence does ANCHOR have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** This is an interesting question, and it's also one that we worry about as a club, because it is hard for us to actually get the Honor students to participate. That's one of our big concerns. But we're supposed to be very involved. We're here for the people who live here and who study here - they make up the club. We're there for them. So, we would hope that we have a big impact when they're actually there.

**Interviewer:** What do you think are some of the barriers to getting students involved? Why do you think they're not taking you up on this when it's such a great offer?

**Interviewee:** I think a lot of it is Honors students are very busy. You know a lot of studying goes on here and I think also, too, that there was a certain mentality in this specific building in terms of dorms and the atmosphere. I mean it's very quiet here. Not a lot of people leave their doors open a lot. It's not like everybody sees each other in the communal bathrooms. So, when they're not used to having to interact all day, I think it's hard for them to want to go out at night when we have our meetings and try to get more involved when they probably are just too busy or might not want to leave the comforts of home.

**Interviewer:** What is the biggest thing that you've done with ANCHOR as yourself? What do you think your biggest impact has been so far?

**Interviewee:** What have I been proud of? I started doing something that's actually happening next Monday, and I put together a panel of seniors who are working on their senior projects and I have ANCHOR kind of host them, and students can kind of come in and get a feel of how many different projects - there are a lot of different options. Maybe ask some questions that you get a different answer from an advisor or a faculty member and they're more personalized and I think like the especially the freshmen who are curious about it really thought it was helpful and I was really proud of it.

**Interviewer:** Do you guys advertise at all?

**Interviewee:** We usually have them put it in the newsletter. I love the newsletter especially when we actually have time to make a poster and it's so colorful and everybody looks at them. And then we also usually make posters and ANCHOR's allowed to kind of put them up wherever we want in the Honors building, which is really convenient. We don't have to really get it approved by the office and have it stapled to the one bulletin board that we have.

**Interviewer:** Do you use social media to advertise to students at all?

**Interviewee:** We have a social media page but I'm not sure how popular it was because we created it over break. We kind of started fresh.

**Interviewer:** How often do you guys communicate with faculty?

**Interviewee:** I have a meeting with the Honors College every week to talk about ANCHOR. So that's probably the most. I get an hour every week.

**Interviewer:** Put us in that room a bit. What is faculty's reception to your ideas? Is it a very supportive situation? Do they challenge you on things?

**Interviewee:** Well, since we're no longer under housing, this new thing I could share a meeting with Meg. She's usually pretty open to our ideas and she's pretty much there to help me figure out how to do more, since we no longer have the support of the housing community.

**Interviewer:** When you do communicate with faculty, what is your main way of communicating with faculty? Is it through email, in person?

**Interviewee:** In person. I like to do things in person.

**Interviewer:** How many people are involved with those meetings? Just you?

**Interviewee:** Me and my Vice President.

**Interviewer:** Do you think if that number grew, that it would better represent ANCHOR? And kind of building off that, what do you think an ideal group size would be?

**Interviewee:** Well, obviously I would love for ANCHOR to be huge. I would love for every Honors kid to be a part of it. So, for those meetings with Meg have just been more for planning help and things like that. Maybe not so much as something that I think the club needs to be involved in because it's pretty much just for her helping me get my things done in a timely way and an efficient way.

**Interviewer:** I'm hearing a lot of passion from you in all of this. Do you see this impacting your career choices past college?

**Interviewee:** Well, ANCHOR is my baby, so of course I have a lot of passion for it. In terms of specific things that I do for ANCHOR, you know, obviously that's not very career-based, but I have learned a lot of skills. Talking in front of people and crowds. I feel like I'm good at getting the point across when I need to, and I think that I help people want to be involved and I share my passion for ANCHOR. I think that that will definitely help. Later in life.

**Interviewer:** How many students as of right now are involved in ANCHOR?

**Interviewee:** We have five e-board members, so obviously they're there every time. And then we usually fluctuate between maybe 10 extra people or 15 to 20 for some of our bigger events but that's just our ANCHOR meetings. So, when we put on things like the senior panel board, we advertise those to the community so obviously we can't predict how many people will come for those.

**Interviewer:** What is the main purpose of ANCHOR?

**Interviewee:** We have been trying to decide that for a very long time. We kind of juggle between the whole philosophy of Live. Learn. Lead. Sometimes we get a little bit of a push to be more academic based and they want us to do some academic events and then other times it's been feeling like we need to focus more on the community. So, I really try to incorporate all three of those things.

**Interviewer:** When you say, "sometimes they tell us," have those expectations been clearly communicated from the faculty or has that shifted as well?

**Interviewee:** That's shifted as well, sometimes it is a little bit confusing especially with all the changes that are happening right now but we're trying to stay focused and should not it hinder us in any way.

**Interviewer:** Do you feel like ANCHOR is spread too thin among those different aspects of what you're doing?

**Interviewee:** Sometimes, yes. But we are definitely now moving towards more of a community. Trying to get everybody involved into doing something more in that respect versus the living and learning which you know living should be: your housing. It's people like your RA's and the learning is the Honors College. So, I think that we're really trying to focus on that, but it is difficult sometimes to incorporate and plan events and, you know, trying to get people involved in things that involve all three.

**Interviewer:** I'm always interested in this, especially in the Honors College part of the great college – this is kind of an isolated part of the greater college. What do you see as an individual, or speaking for ANCHOR, see for the role of Honors in the context of the rest of the college? How much do you think the work of ANCHOR can influence the rest of the college?

**Interviewee:** I'd say right now we're definitely focused more on just trying to get the Honors students to be part of it. And it's really a community for them. So, I think that's really our focus.

**Interviewer:** How long have you been fighting that fight - to get students involved?

**Interviewee:** All the time. Every day.

**Interviewer:** Do you think it's getting better or are there less students that are coming as time goes on?

**Interviewee:** Well, this is from three years. The first semester always has a lot more members than the second semester, which is understandable it's hard for a lot of clubs to keep their membership up, especially, you know, second semester everybody starts to feel that drag and nobody wants to go to a meeting at nine o'clock. So, second semester we definitely see lower numbers, but I guess I wouldn't say that I've never had no one.

**Interviewer:** How much have you been able to reach out to past Presidents for advice?

**Interviewee:** Oh, I don't want to trash talk them - they were not very helpful. Both of them had been seniors and pretty much said, "OK, I'm out of here. Good luck." I mean that's another hurdle you know trying to build something that nobody left me a blueprint for.

**Interviewer:** How do you feel the blueprint you're building now will help the generations to come?

**Interviewee:** Well, in terms of let me add something in terms of helping further Presidents, I now collect a lot of information in a binder about like "here's who you should talk to. And here is where to find these resources. Here is a list of contact information." And we changed our Constitution to actually say that every year the President will come from the previous e-board so that it's always someone who's had experience leading ANCHOR.

**Interviewer:** And that was another change this year?

**Interviewee:** We rewrite the Constitution every year though, so there's room for change.

**Interviewer:** Outside of ANCHOR are there other groups that you collaborate with, like faculty?

**Interviewee:** Previously, I would say not a lot, but the Mentor Council has been trying to kind of come together this semester a lot more.

**Interviewer:** Are you familiar with any other Honors colleges from around the area?

**Interviewee:** No, we've never had contact.

**Interviewer:** Thank you so much. It's very helpful.

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

Was not asked as time was cut short.

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

Was not able to agree to reconnect as there was no time left.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- N/A

**Possible next-steps:**

- One possible next step is to contact more members of ANCHOR to see if their experience with ANCHOR has resulted in similar experiences as this stakeholder had
- We can do some research into how ANCHOR currently operates, as well as how other colleges operate their own student representative bodies



Dialogue Summary #6:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> Professor
<b>Estimated Age:</b> ___ 20-30 ___ 30-40 <u>X</u> 40-50 ___ 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b> The primary goal of this opportunity was to be able to gain empathy with an Honors professor by better understanding their stance on how an increase in communication between students and faculty might look like, and how it might impact them.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b> This research influences our team problem statement greatly, as this is one of the foremost stakeholders in this problem's solution. Without understanding this point of view, we will be missing a significant portion of the stakeholder map, resulting in inadvertent misrepresentation.
<b>Summary of Research:</b> This interview was insightful not only because of the stakeholder group that this interviewee represented, but also because of what kind of background this interviewee had – political science and sociology. With this background, this professor was able to shed some light on how people organize themselves and try to set themselves up for success later on. Furthermore, the professor also discussed current techniques used in their class that have yielded positive results, such as sending out reminders to students. They also provided an informative viewpoint on things that students do that frustrate them.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One insight is that, although research into how students organize would have a direct application to the problem statement, it may also be worth looking into how people organize themselves in preparation/fulfillment of a goal in any large-scale setting, such as labor unions, and how effective these are</li><li>• From this particular professor's point of view, there are already some measures implemented to try and gain empathy across the faculty/student communication gap, and these seem to be effective in this professor's classroom setting, at least</li></ul>

### **Dialogue Questions and Response:**

**Interviewer:** Describe from your perspective the current systems in place for communication between Honors faculty and staff in your role in this? By Honors faculty and staff, I mean professors and administration.

**Interviewee:** There is a weekly faculty meeting of all the Honors faculty that are either half time or full time. So, I'm someone who's half time and I guess it's about maybe 10 of us or something like that in that category. We're working on curriculum and anything else related to teaching in Honors on a regular basis. There's also Honors dedicated curriculum committee that looks at new course proposals and I think they meet pretty frequently. And then there is - I think that it's still operating, I was on it for several years. Sort of a broader faculty council that includes representatives from people who maybe just teach a class in the Honors College to kind of have them involved.

**Interviewer:** What would you describe as the biggest barriers to communication between students and faculty?

**Interviewee:** I think, that there is something like 60 faculty teaching classes in Honors from many different places in the university. And so, my general impression, you know, I was one of those people for a long time and this is my first year as a dedicated Honors faculty part time. So, I guess my general sense is that when I have had students in class, communication hasn't been an issue. It's probably the case that someone who has students in one of the freshman sequences probably has a longer-term connection with them, just because they sort of get them when they start their career here, and so the students continue, I think, to recognize that person as they spent a year with them. So that's someone they can go back to get help with advising and other kinds of things. I would imagine that once the freshman sequence is out of the way Honor students are more on their own and that's where perhaps there might be sort of a weaker connection between faculty and students. And I have not met with meetings of Honor students, so I don't have a good sense of the kinds of concerns and challenges that they're facing, beyond the immediate things in my classes.

**Interviewer:** What types of communication do you feel most comfortable with participating in (in person or email)?

**Interviewee:** Any of the above. Usually e-mail is good for something that is not super complex or sensitive. If it's the latter, you probably should face-to-face as this works better. But I'm, you know, I can communicate any way that works.

**Interviewer:** To what degree should technology be used in facilitating communication?

**Interviewee:** I mean, it can be useful, but you know we all have sort of e-mail overload and so it's easy for electronic communication to kind of go in one ear and out the other. And so, sometimes you can catch people. Sometimes emails get missed if there's too much of it. So, I think you sort of have to be strategic if you really want to get a message out. You have to be strategic about how much you're communicating with people because if it's a constant barrage of information and people are just going to, like, so, when I have time, I'll look at the Honors College newsletter, but I don't look at it every week. I have colleagues that do. So,

they said the other day to me, "Oh, it's in the Honors College newsletter," which I haven't looked at yet. So, I think that if there's a very important communication you want to happen, maybe personalizing it. Saying important in the subject line, or those kinds of things, but if people are getting a lot of communication all the time electronically, they may not post.

**Interviewer:** You mention not being able to have enough time to read the newsletter every now and then. And reading the newsletter is trivial in that sense. But if you think setting aside some time to quote, unquote, "read the newsletter," would be beneficial? In the sense of students talking to faculty.

**Interviewee:** Potentially. If we're all reading it then we're all sort of on the same page. Or if I read it regularly then you know I might be able to announce in class. I give people a heads up.

**Interviewer:** What frustrations have you experienced when communicating with students?

**Interviewee:** I haven't really had too many. I guess the only thing that I noticed occasionally is, and this isn't just in the Honors College, but you know, if I sent something out to individual students and I say, "You know, this is an opportunity for you to apply to a fellowship," or, "You know, this is something that you can take advantage of," and then I couldn't ever get a reply or I'll get a reply like the day before it's due, like, "Can you write this letter for me." But beyond that, it's not really an issue and you know if they're students in my class, I see them all the time when I'm doing enrollment advising and sometimes you know I'll send something out so I signed up advisees and, you know, one or two of them will show up. So, I mean those kinds of things where it's just sorts of hard to get people to surface. It can be challenging.

**Interviewer:** What successful communication strategies have you implemented within your own work or classes that you would recommend to your colleagues?

**Interviewee:** I think sending reminders is good. For example, when I organize on-campus speakers I get on the campus calendar. I get a poster done and then usually I'll do an email maybe two weeks ahead of time and an email just a couple of days before. And I find, too, that I have a lot going on but if I get reminded about it really helps. And usually if I have a deadline for something, I'll go over the assignment in class. I'll remind them right before its due in class and then I might even e-mail them online.

**Interviewer:** What benefits do you think an increase in communication between Honors College students and faculty would have on the Honors College, as a whole?

**Interviewee:** I think in general the more students and faculty know each other the better students feel about their experience, the more opportunities for exploring different possibilities come up so if you're talking to someone on a regular basis, you're more likely to mention something that, as a professor, a student could take advantage of. The better you know a student beyond just how they're performing in a class, the more likely you just think of things to suggest to them that could benefit them long term. The better you're able to write letters for them, the more you're able to consider doing independent research with them, brainstorming creative ideas. So, I think those kinds of things. You know not just meeting in a

task-oriented way in the classroom, but also meeting or having opportunities to meet more formally is a good thing. Like the Food with Faculty thing we're doing. I think those are good opportunities outside the classroom for students and faculty to talk in a low stress environment, just kind of relax and chitchat. And I think it's beneficial to the faculty/student relationship.

**Interviewer:** Is that the first time that that's happened?

**Interviewee:** No, it's happened a few times. The thing that we're doing now that I think wasn't done in the past is, we're going to have some music. I'm going to be playing music with professor Benjamin and his colleague, and I think some students will be playing as well.

**Interviewer:** Is student participation in that where you would like it to be like?

**Interviewee:** I didn't go to the ones last year, so I don't know so, we'll see how it goes. It's oftentimes hard to predict and it can be very, you know, sometimes it just happens to be a time when people have a lot of assignment deadlines or there are lots of other events going on on-campus or student groups. They could impact it and you just don't know about that when you're scheduling an event, so hopefully a lot of people show up.

**Interviewer:** What disadvantages do you think an increase in communication between these two groups would have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** None.

**Interviewer:** How might you personally be impacted by an increase in communication between faculty and students?

**Interviewee:** The better I know my students, I think, the more effective I can be as an instructor. So, it's a positive and it might require some more dedicated time on my part, but I don't necessarily see it as - if I can fit into my schedule, I don't see it as a disadvantage.

**Interviewer:** What are some issues that you think might be brought to this faculty by the students and why?

**Interviewee:** Their Honors requirements with their major requirements. And then there are the usual kinds of challenges that students face in terms of balancing work and school. For those that are employed. Some students face physical or mental health challenges that can affect their ability to do well in class and figure out a way to communicate with professors about assignments and that kind of thing. I don't know how students feel about how much say they have an Honors program, or if they want more say in terms of types of classes they're being offered, or where the requirements, or other aspects of the program. I really don't have that sense because I haven't ever gone to a student governance meeting in Honors and students haven't really come to me and said X, Y, and Z: our problem.

**Interviewer:** What limitations would you like to see place on the communication?

**Interviewee:** None. I don't foresee any issues. When do you want to meet with [REDACTED] or [REDACTED], and when do you want to meet with individual faculty? When do you want to meet with the leadership? When do you want to meet with a formally constituted faculty?

**Interviewer:** How often do you think this communication should occur and why?

**Interviewee:** It would be great if students just came and talked to us in our offices. I know some do. For whatever the reason, some students are a little bit shy. A lot of students are very busy. A lot of times it's, you know, "Help me with this assignment that's due," as opposed to kind of talking more broadly. I think having dedicated events that are attractive to students or faculty can come is a good opportunity. I've met a couple of students at some social events like the building dedication and I think the graduation ceremony in the summer. So that's kind of a good chance for some kind of chance connections between students. And I think having faculty, individually, having informal settings where faculty and students can interact. And then if there's, you know, kind of more formal sort of - students have got together and there's something that they want in the program then maybe a formal setting's a little more appropriate. And you guys have like a student organization that convenes at certain intervals. I would imagine with [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

**Interviewer:** Now that we've touched that topic. Do you think that that's an appropriate avenue? That the most good can happen through organizations like that?

**Interviewee:** If the organizations are able to communicate well with a critical mass of students and they have a good sense of what students want and don't want. If it's a group with a small group of students that are very highly involved, but don't necessarily have the fingers on the pulse of what's happening with other students. Then the benefits are going to be more limited.

**Interviewer:** Do you think that faculty should communicate with as much of the student body as possible or a select few and why?

**Interviewee:** I think you know it's logical that the Director and the unit communicate on a regular basis with a formally constituted group of students. Beyond that, I guess it would sort of depend on what our concerns are and trust students to identify which faculty - I wouldn't necessarily want or think would be a great idea for faculty. In general, these higher Honors faculty just to meet with students just because. But if there is like something that fits within the expertise of faculty, or particular things that students want and those faculty can help them with that.

**Interviewer:** The last two questions are finish up questions. But before we reach that, I would like to just delve into your background. And stop me if I'm wrong, but I did a little bit of research and it said that you are familiar with labor movements and organizations. Would you please comment on how they organized and the effectiveness which that occurred?

**Interviewee:** Yes, sure. So, well I mean my research on trade unions is in Chile, and I did a case study of a metalworkers' union. I've written some broad and synthetic stuff on labor, but it's pretty Latin America focused. So that's a little bit different from - the politics a little bit different in the US, the laws are a little bit different. So, unions in Chile were mainly started

by political party activists. There were a lot of home-grown organizing that went on prior to the labor laws being passed in the 1920s. But once those were implemented in the thirties, political parties became very important. That's not necessarily true of other places around the world. And there are specific legal rules which would be true in any country where you know if you have a certain percentage of employees in a workplace that vote for a union, then you become a union shop and then that opens the door for collective bargaining and strikes and so on. But getting to that point of bringing somebody you can vote on can be very challenging because if management gets wind that workers are organizing, oftentimes they'll fire the people who are sort of the lead organizers. And that's true, you know, lots of different places - not unique to Chile. How did they get people involved? So, I would say in the company that I studied, they developed an organizational structure that started in the work section. And then the work section would send the delegates to the higher level or broader level of organization. And people, they worked together every day and knew each other. They also had sports teams organized by work section. So, drawing on those long-term connections with people and more face-to-face, personal connections can help serve as building blocks for a larger scale organization.

**Interviewer:** Thank you. Are there any connections that you have that you think our team should contact?

**Interviewee:** It would be interesting for you to talk to [REDACTED] is good because [he/she] is not a half-time or full-time Honors faculty member, so [he/she] can give you the perspective of someone who's not there all the time. [REDACTED] is someone who is connected to a lot of students, [he's/she's] very active in the program. I think [he/she] would be a good person to talk to. [He's/She's] been a regular on his faculty member for a long time. I think it would be a good idea to talk to either [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] because they have contact with a lot of students, so they have kind of a broader perspective on students and some of the challenges that students are facing, and they're doing a lot of the advising. So, I'd start there.

**Interviewer:** Thank you. And what is one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?

**Interviewee:** I don't know. I mean, it was pretty thorough list.

**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 contact?**

This stakeholder agreed to be contacted again for further inquiry and would prefer to set a meeting up using email.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- Faculty members
- Administration members

- Current students by extension of faculty member

**Possible next-steps:**

- One next step is to reach out to the faculty and administration members given by the interviewee
- We could research into how labor organizations have structured themselves, and how they have found success in these structures

Dialogue Summary #7:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b>  Student
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b>  The primary goal of this opportunity is getting a glimpse into how a current Honors student, who is in the later years of their career, see the impact of communication between Honors students and faculty and how it's benefitted them thus far.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b>  This reflects on the problem statement by putting a new light on how technology could be used in implementing communication between students and faculty, when previous research has led to different results.
<b>Summary of Research:</b>  The student made a fact of implying that although the Honors College professors are much better at facilitating communication with their students than general education professors do, communication between the students and faculty would be better suited to technological tools, such as texting or email. In this way, the student could look back on what was said if they could not recall later on. Furthermore, technology offers a chance to communicate almost instantaneously, without even being in the same location.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The student highlighted that the Honors professors, in his opinion, were much better at facilitating communication with the students than general education professors were</li><li>• The student also highlighted the importance that texting and other technological communication tools could have between the two parties</li></ul>
<b>Dialogue Questions and Response:</b>  <b>Interviewer:</b> Describe from your perspective what your experience was as far as communication between Honors faculty and you, personally.  <b>Interviewee:</b> I felt like Honors faculty did a better job of communicating and relating to me than professors in traditional classes. Honors professors tend to go out of their way to foster clear communication and form friendships with the students in a more personal way than professors for traditional classes.  <b>Interviewer:</b> Describe from your perspective what your experience was as far as communication between Honors faculty and other students.



**Interviewee:** Honors faculty also communicated very well with the other students. They always made an effort to ensure that all students had a clear understanding of what was required and other aspects of class.

**Interviewer:** What would you describe as the biggest barrier to communication between students and the faculty?

**Interviewee:** The biggest barrier is that students can be late to see and respond to emails. Blackboard and email are not the best form of communication, but if students check their emails consistently then it works.

**Interviewer:** As a student, what types of communication do you feel most comfortable with participating in (i.e. in person, email, or phone), and why?

**Interviewee:** Texting and emails are definitely the most comfortable because they do not involve immediate contact and can be referenced again at a later date which makes the communication less stressful.

**Interviewer:** To what degree should technology be used in facilitating communication?

**Interviewee:** Technology should be heavily involved. Most students would find responding to texts very convenient. Students tend to be very adept at communicating using certain technologies.

**Interviewer:** What frustrations have you experienced when communicating with other students?

**Interviewee:** Some students will not respond to emails and texts if they are not very invested in the class. The most frustrating thing I have had is a student in a group that would not show up or respond to group meetings and contributed very little to the group.

**Interviewer:** How has your communication between faculty and other students changed throughout your time in the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** I have found that in-person communication has become easier with the Honors faculty and students. I have also gotten more comfortable with phone conversations.

**Interviewer:** What successful communication strategies have you implemented that you think would be appropriate for students and faculty?

**Interviewee:** Making sure to respond promptly to messages and emails has helped to make communication more efficient. Also, for group projects, using an app for group messaging such as GroupMe really helps to keep everyone updated.

**Interviewer:** What benefits do you think an increase in communication between Honors College students and faculty would have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** I think that if the Honors faculty and students increased their communication, it would help students feel more comfortable in the future with workplace communication and help students to stay more updated on what is going on in their classes.

**Interviewer:** What drawbacks do you think an increase in communication between these two groups would have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** I don't really see a drawback with increasing communication if it is based in messages and updates. If the communication is in the form of a discussion board post or something similar, students can see that as a monotonous task and become frustrated with it.

**Interviewer:** What are issues that you think might be brought to the faculty by the students, and why?

**Interviewee:** Students may feel more comfortable bringing confusion and questions about assignments to faculty. Also, questions regarding choice of major and career path could be brought up to faculty because students will feel closer and more comfortable with the Honors faculty. Overall, students will feel more comfortable asking the Honors faculty for advice and guidance.

**Interviewer:** What limitations would you like to see placed on the communication between faculty and students?

**Interviewee:** I think that phone calls should be avoided unless necessary because it takes more time and can be more intrusive than texting or emails.

**Interviewer:** How often do you think this, being the communication between the students and faculty, should occur, and why?

**Interviewee:** I think communication should occur on a twice a week basis with additional occurrences if necessary. This method will not overwhelm the students with unnecessary communication, but it will provide students with enough information before and after class time with open space for any unforeseen information to be added.

**Interviewer:** Do you think the faculty should communicate with as much of the student body as possible, or only a selected few and why?

**Interviewee:** I think that communication should be kept within classes and majors. If the communication goes outside of the students interests or responsibilities, the students may begin to tune out the communication and ignore information that may be helpful to them.

**Interviewer:** Who among the faculty do you think should be tasked with the student communication?

**Interviewee:** I think professors and the Director of the Honors College should be in charge of student communication. The Director should communicate overall information for the Honors College and class specific information should be communicated by the professors. Additionally, I think professors could inform students about important updates to make sure that the students receive the information they need.

**Interviewer:** Is there anyone you know who you think we should contact?

**Interviewee:** You could contact [REDACTED]!

**Interviewer:** Is there anything else that I didn't ask you that you think I should have?

**Interviewee:** There was nothing that came to mind.

**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 contact?**

The stakeholder agreed to be contacted further and said that text messaging was preferred.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- A current Honors College student familiar to both of us
- N/A
- N/A

**Possible next-steps:**

- One next step could be to reach out to the current Honors student and ask for an interview.
- Another step could be to research how texting could be implemented in communication between the faculty and students.

Dialogue Summary #8:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b>  Students
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b>  The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain an understanding of how the Frederik Meijer Honors College's students view the opportunity of having increased communication between themselves and the student body. This is also meant to get an understanding of how they would like this to operate, what topics the students would like to have a say in, and how devoted they are to the goal of increased communication.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b>  This interview is vital to our team's problem statement, as it will be a source of information into one of the biggest stakeholders. As one of the biggest stakeholders (students), the responses to these questions will naturally help shape the team's solution to the problem.
<b>Summary of Research:</b>  After doing this interview I have discovered that this student prefers meeting with faculty in person when they have the chance. I also found that trying to find time to meet with faculty in person can be hard for students to do. This student also shared with me that they are not willing to give their personal time to increase the communication between Honors faculty and Honors students. The student also shared that if increased communication were to happen between faculty and students, it would result in students viewing professors as mentors which could be beneficial to students. It was also shared that first-generation students should have the most communication with faculty. This is because transitioning to college for a first-generation student can be very hard and faculty can help support them.

**Important insights:**

- Increased student and faculty communication would result in students viewing professors as mentors.
- Lack of time is the main reason why students don't participate in student governance.
- Lack of time also hinders students who want to communicate with faculty in person.

**Dialogue Questions and Response:**

**Interviewer:** Describe, from your perspective, the current systems in place for communication between Honors faculty and staff, and your role in this.

**Interviewee:** I guess just the advisors. But only when I was in my freshman sequence and junior seminar.

**Interviewer:** What would you describe as the biggest barriers to communication between students and faculty?

**Interviewee:** Trying to find the time to actually meet in person. I know it's very difficult depending on the professors because I know a lot of them tend to set their office hours on their schedule rather than on their student schedules.

**Interviewer:** Do you ever feel like intimidated or like A little nervous to speak to Professors?

**Interviewee:** Not really. I mean I like it because I can just ask any questions I have.

**Interviewer:** What benefits do you think an increase in communication between Honors College students and faculty would have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** Maybe professors would have more of a mentor role.

**Interviewer:** What disadvantages do you think an increase in communication between these two groups would have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** Maybe it would limit their perspective in terms of reaching out to other professors. Like they might become too comfortable with the Honors College professors and not decide to talk to them.

**Interviewer:** How much time would you as a student be willing to devote to increasing the amount of communication between these two groups?

**Interviewee:** Zero. I'm too busy and I just don't care.

**Interviewer:** OK. Why don't you care?

**Interviewee:** Because I have too much other stuff I have to be bothered with.

**Interviewer:** Can you describe a circumstance in which you have been involved in where communication between different groups worked really well? Why do you think that it worked? Or why did it not work?

**Interviewee:** Yes, as an RA. There's a bunch of different times I have to communicate. Things tend to be really well or really bad. And it just depends on really what the group says, but if people are willing to listen and actually communicate versus just shouting.

**Interviewer:** Are there any limitations that should be placed on the students regarding topics to be discussed with Honors faculty and administration?

**Interviewee:** I wouldn't think so. If you were trying to be like a mentor, then no. Everyone should be trying to remain open.

**Interviewer:** Who among the student population do you think should communicate with the faculty the most?

**Interviewee:** I would say first gen students then if they have the opportunity. As a first Gen, I had one of the most difficult times in college because I didn't know what college was and I just didn't know anything I need to get it done. Whereas all my friends had like family members that could help them.

**Interviewer:** Describe what communication methods you currently use, when you use them, and how frequently?

**Interviewee:** I guess usually through email or in person. I prefer in person because I can ask quick questions.

**Interviewer:** To what degree should technology be used in facilitating communication?

**Interviewee:** This gave students that didn't have the opportunity to go to her actual office hours to interact with her. And so that was a really nice thing.

**Interviewer:** As a student, who do you think should be in charge of organizing the communication between the two groups?

**Interviewee:** I think it should be a mix of both students and faculty.

**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 contact?**

Yes, via email or phone call.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- Their roommate
- Their friend
- Honors professors

**Possible next-steps:**

- I could reach out to their roommate and their friend to schedule an interview.
- I could ask questions about if students view on the current student government with Honors.

Dialogue Summary #9:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> Honors Part Time Faculty
<b>Estimated Age:</b> ___ 20-30 <u>X</u> 30-40 ___ 40-50 ___ 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b> The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain a better understanding of what exactly this particular stakeholder wants to see happen in order for the Frederik Meijer Honor's College student body to have consistent and constructive communication lines with the Honor's College faculty. Also, to discuss the issues and problem that the Honors College is currently having and what the best ways would be to remedy these issues.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b> This work reflects constructively on the team's problem statement, as the interviewee's comments on certain issues will be taken into consideration when crafting a solution to the problem. Also, part-time and associate professors in the Honors College make up a majority of the faculty so they are a large part of the stakeholder map.
<b>Summary of Research:</b> This interview was interesting in the fact that it was more of a dialogue. I didn't have the chance to ask as many questions as I would have liked, but through the interviewee's interest to figure out the problem with communication and further understand it we discussed a variety of issues. We also focused a lot on the issue of communication between faculty and students. With faculty that are more intimidating it is often hard to get students to feel comfortable communicating with them, and they resort to the easy way of communicating over technology. However, professors can offer a large variety of insights on various topics besides the ones that they teach. Another big topic was the barrier of location between the Honors students and faculty. With a majority of the professors being "borrowed" from other areas, it leaves a lot of the Honors faculty spread out and farther away from the Honors students that take up a large part of their time.



**Important insights:**

- Location of Honors Part-Time staff is an issue
- Professors would like to maintain a sense of professionalism
- Technology is a major issue in communication

**Dialogue Questions and Response:**

**Interviewee:** So, is Grand Valley's ANCHOR Council for the whole Honors College? Or just for like a dorm or a resident's life center?

**Interviewer:** It's essentially for the whole Honors College, but I think the problem there is that it really is essentially only at Niemeyer because I don't think a lot of the people at Holton Hooker or those that don't even live in the Honors Dorms, don't normally travel over there to join the meetings and events for ANCHOR. If that makes sense.

**Interviewee:** Yeah that does make sense. Because not everybody in Holton Hooker is in the Honors College. And then a lot of people in Honors, they live in a dorm or resident's life center their freshman year and then their sophomore year they are living off campus. Do you live off campus?

**Interviewer:** Yes, I am off campus.

**Interviewee:** That is what happens. People live on campus their freshman year and then off campus and create a large disconnect. From once being connected their freshman year having their freshman sequence and living with other Honors College students and being able to interact with those people. And then after that first year they leave. I think that is probably a REALLY big issue. So, what is the end goal? Are you looking to propose a student governance structure? What are you looking to do?

**Interviewer:** We are not exactly sure yet, as that is what we are trying to figure out what would be the best solution. But we have been doing face-to-face interviews every week and also finding secondary research articles to gain insights to this problem. As of right now, we are seeing that the biggest issue is communication between students and faculty, and the unawareness of students about events going on.

**Interviewee:** So, it's a problem of communication. Tell me more about this problem of communication? Is it between the students, students and faculty, students and administration? What kind of problems are you seeing?

**Interviewer:** We have found that the problem is with all of those that you just mentioned. Mostly though between students and faculty just because we have found through research and interviews that students get anxious and are nervous meeting with their professors. Or they are afraid they will sound foolish or just don't know how to communicate with them properly.

**Interviewee:** Really? Did you even come to see me last year to talk about a paper?

**Interviewer:** I did not. I would say I am one of those students.

**Interviewee:** Why was that? Didn't I invite you guys in and even write it on your paper? Maybe...and?

**Interviewer:** I think that I have always been that way. Personally, I have always been a lot more closed off and on the shy side.

**Interviewee:** So, you are kind of closed off right? Maybe. So, what can I do then when a student is more reserved? I invited you in, didn't I go around and say hello, how are you?

**Interviewer:** Well it was nothing you ever did, it was totally on me personally. I think that it was my freshman year, it was a class I really struggled with, but as a professor you were definitely intimidating.

**Interviewee:** So, what is a professor to do when he invites his students to come in? And I see students, [REDACTED] comes by. I am helping him out with his resume. I had [REDACTED] in class and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are interns for the film festival. And so, [REDACTED] has come by and I have written recommendations for her. So, I mean I have seen people. So, what can a professor do? Because we do have this problem of communication.

**Interviewer:** I think in my situation, I was not really sure how to communicate with you in the right way. I am most comfortable talking about things that I like and that I am interested in and taking a freshman sequence that was all history was out of my comfort zone. Whereas all of the science classes that I take, I would definitely say I have a better connection with those professors just because I would say I am more intrigued and excited to talk about those topics. I don't know if that makes sense, I just feel more comfortable with myself in meeting with a professor if I know more about the topic, so I don't seem foolish and I am more at ease.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, but I mean, you know, professors always love to talk with their students, and you know invite students to come. I require students from all of my classes to come in for a 5-minute icebreaker. Not my Honors students, because I see them so much. And besides they come to see me when they are writing their papers. So, I don't need to really work on that, but then again not everybody does, right? So, I don't require it, but all of my other classes have to come see me for five-minute icebreakers. And we just talk because there is plenty to talk about. We can talk about your major, talk about your studies, what you did over the summer. What are your hobbies? Do you remember those five by three note cards that we had you write down interesting facts on? Those are all things we can talk about. So, I don't know, I mean I agree there's a problem with communication, but I think that the professors are putting themselves out there.

**Interviewer:** Okay. I think it depends on professors too because they are not all the same. Some have more closed off personalities as well, just like students. So, I think it definitely depends on the individual as well.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, but you know you should always just go in and meet and just say hi. You know you don't have to know anything about history to come in here and talk. Yeah, I love talking about history, but we haven't even talked about it once! Ok, so communication with students and professors is a problem, what are the other problems that you guys have identified?

**Interviewer:** Another issue we have identified is that there are differences in levels of communication between freshman students and upperclassmen.

**Interviewee:** So, between students?

**Interviewer:** Well yes, but also mostly with their communication techniques with their professors. So, there's that disconnect between freshman, since they all live together in the dorms, essentially. I mean there is the select few that don't, but mostly everybody does. Yet, that is a great feature of the Honors College where they all get to live in the dorms over there together. However, the issue with this Living Learning community, is that Honor's students' dorms tend to be more closed off and isolated as a community, especially since they are on separate end of campus as well. And having an isolated community is not always a bad thing, however from a social and communication aspect it definitely seems to be hindering their outreach. Just because those students have the option to go in their room and shut their door and do homework for the rest of the night. Whereas, on North Campus or in the freshman dorms, a lot of the RA's are much more involved and have open-door competitions with their residents. There is more of a community built where you see everyone interacting with each other.

**Interviewee:** Really?? And that is interesting to me because I remember from our freshman sequence a lot of you guys were spending lots of time together. So, I am really surprised by that. You know we have students that form study groups and they used to spend time over here and time over there and you know we have couples that come out of our class every year. So, I mean when you are telling me this, I am like wow really?

**Interviewer:** Well, a big part of it too is that classes put groups together and students are often almost forced to work with groups for projects and other presentations.

**Interviewee:** Well yeah, but a lot of you also chose to study together and hang out together. You know like [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] became really good friends right. And they were hanging out and you know [REDACTED] was like taking care of [REDACTED] by the end of the semester. Right, so I mean we saw a lot of these kind of relationships develop. I mean your class especially bonded a lot. I am just surprised. I know there are activities intended for just Honors students and I know a lot of them are probably over at Niemeyer. And so maybe that is what is excluding people over here at Holton Hooker and the freshman campus. I didn't realize there were these more open-door communities. I remember when I lived in a dorm for two years, and yeah you kept your doors open, you know you're blasting your music and people you know stopped by and there was a lot of socializing going on. But you know then there were people that you know kept their door closed or people that avoided that, so you could socialize as little as you want or as much as you want. So where did you live your freshman year?

**Interviewer:** I lived in freshman land, specifically Kistler.

**Interviewee:** So, did you feel disconnected from your classmates or did you have other classmates that lived in your dorm?

**Interviewer:** I actually didn't have other classmates, which was something that I disliked. But I liked the aspect of getting to socialize and meet different kinds of people. Because there is that stereotype of Honors that we are all studious and only worry about school work. And I really was focused on school, that is why I joined the Honors College, but I didn't want that to be my main focus. I definitely wanted to meet new people and form relationships outside of just the Honors College. So that was a major reason why I decided to live over there.

**Interviewee:** So that was a conscious decision you made to live over there? Do you regret it?

**Interviewer:** Yes, it was. I don't know, I sometimes do just because I think the relationships that you make in Honors are definitely some of my better friends versus my friends that I made in other classes. But I was able to spend more time with classmates in our sequence than I was in all of my other classes. However, I still am glad that I chose to live on freshman campus just because I did meet so many different people and I am still in touch with them. I just didn't form as a deep of a bond with them.

**Interviewee:** Okay. So, what is the problem here with like the freshman you know and like the upperclassmen talking to faculty? You said that was a problem.

**Interviewer:** We have found through a lot of research; our generations are becoming a lot more media and technology based. And it is showing that technology is really hindering the freshman from actually meeting with professors face-to-face and communicating with individuals one on one. So, it just shows that they prefer to use email and those easier ways of communication that gives them the quick responses they need but not necessarily the thoughtful responses they could get in person. Whereas if you have been here longer and are an upperclassman, they kind of know the norms and realize that it is better to meet face-to-face and they utilize those advantages.

**Interviewee:** I agree that's a problem. Because I don't have a cell phone, so it's not like you can just text me or email me. I have to be in front of a computer to do that. But I know that there are other professors that give students their cell phone number or they are texting students. You know students and professors texting each other, oh my gosh no I don't like that one bit! I would never give a student my phone number, if you want to call me you can call me on my office phone. Never would I give them that, and I am not going to text with a student ever. Right. I mean you know I can send you an email but that's fine, but it always is very professional. I interact with a lot of students and you know students are going on to graduate school for example, and I work with them I try to help them out, so I have my group of students that come by to see me for advice and so forth. But I don't text. Yeah and you know you're right, I think that the freshmen are a little reluctant because the only time you go and talk to professors is if you have a problem. A lot of students feel that you can only go visit a professor when they have got a problem, of course admitting that you have a question though too, but you don't like to ask questions. So, I mean yes, it is a problem. I think maybe when the students are here longer maybe they get to know their professors and maybe they are a little more likely to go talk to them. But yeah, I do see a difference, I think.

**Interviewer:** What would you say is the biggest barrier to communication?

**Interviewee:** It's that thing right there [pointing to a phone]. Students would text each other in class, you're sitting 10 feet away from a person why don't you just go over there and talk to

them. People think professors aren't paying attention, but we are just like really? What is the first thing that happens with the break between class? What do you do when you step out of class? Everyone walks down the hallways with their thing [phone]. And for somebody who doesn't have one of those, yeah it is really striking. So, I do think that maybe the upper classmen are maybe a little more likely to communicate because maybe they've had it drilled into their head that they need to get to know their professors. But the freshmen are a little more reluctant, maybe they're intimidated. You know we put our pants on the same way, that's why I require people to come in for the five-minute icebreakers. That's why I go around the room and I say hello to every single person. So, I don't know, we've lost the art of communication. You're absolutely right, I don't know how we can get over it either, because it is only going to get worse.

**Interviewer:** What successful communication strategies have you implemented within your own classroom that you would recommend to your colleagues?

**Interviewee:** Five-minute icebreaker hands down. I have other colleagues that recommended this. I know I am intimidating. I know I can come across as being condescending and arrogant or whatever. But I also know that if I can get you anywhere where you're sitting two feet away from me instead of me standing up and pacing around the room, you'll see that I am just a normal person, and that its just how I am. It's a five-minute interview and we will just chat because it breaks down barriers right. I know that students find professors intimidating, so you come in and we just talk. That way you're more likely, if you have a problem or a question to come in later on because we have already broken the ice. The best thing is that it requires students to come in because we all know that learning doesn't just take place in the classroom. Learning occurs outside of the classroom. Students are more likely to ask questions too. If they've got a problem to seek out help if they already know the professor. I have had students that come in sometimes and I let them borrow books. I have had students that you know were really sharp students and you know they're are interested in this or that, so I give them a book to read and then come back and talk about it. And then you know I write them a recommendation when they are going on to law school, so that's how I get to know students. That's why I write lots of recommendations. If you're going to grad school, I help students out, it's just the five-minute ice breakers.

**Interviewer:** What benefits do you think an increase in communication between the students and faculty would have on the Honors College as a whole?

**Interviewee:** I think it would help with retention of students. A lot of students drop out because they don't feel connected, and if you can make a connection you are more likely to stay at Grand Valley and finish your degree. I mean a lot of stuff that goes on doesn't just happen in the classroom. I can tell you about funding opportunities. I'm interested in doing a study abroad, but I don't know how I am going to pay for it, I'm interested in undergraduate research! Huh, well I can tell you more about that! Talking just opens so many doors and just getting people to come into my office. Best thing that can happen to you is to just go in and chat with somebody. Yeah but again I think it really would help with retention. I can't tell you how many times I have had students tell me that no professor ever knew my name. I have had people who were seniors tell me that because they were quiet like you, no professor even took the time to know my name or show any interest in me.

The problem with the Honors College is they have very few faculties. Most of the faculty are borrowed. So, I teach history, yeah, but I also reach in Honors. But I am in history. I never go over to Niemeyer, except for when we have an activity. So, unless, I interact with you in class, I don't see you, you don't see me. So, I don't really have a connection with the Honors students but now that I have been doing Honors for 5 years and I taught the Honors junior seminar last semester, then I know students right, but still. That's the problem with the Honors College because almost all of the faculty are borrowed so we are being pulled. You know [RED] wants us to go there and do activities with Honors, but I have to do activities over here in history. I don't want to go over there, I don't want to go over to Niemeyer. This is where my office is. I make a point of not teaching over there, so thank goodness they opened up Holton Hooker. It is 15 minutes literally to walk over to Niemeyer. And on a day like today when it's raining or if it's snowing, do I want to be doing that? And then where am I going to meet with students when my office is over here? So, we are being pulled in two different directions.

**Interviewer:** How difficult does that make it to divide your time between the two?

**Interviewee:** It makes it difficult for you guys because your dorms are over in Niemeyer and you have to hike over here to see me. But if my office was over in Niemeyer then you could just come down and see me in your sweats and sandals. So really there is that problem.

**Interviewer:** We haven't heard that issue brought to us yet.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, they just borrow so many faculties. Making it hard to devote our time to only Honors. However, Honors students take up 90% of my time. Because Honors students are so worried about their grades that they come to see me about their drafts. I had appointments. Even then, students last semester complained because they could never get in to see me. And that's my fault? The university says that I should have three office hours and I have seven. I even meet with students during my lunch hours. So yeah, this idea about being torn in two different directions is big. I am over here, and Honors is over there. Yeah, I am supposed to go to activities here since this is the College of Liberal Arts and Science but then I should go to activities over there. I have meeting over there, I have meetings here, I have them everywhere. But really that just means that's less time I have to spend with students. What else?

**Interviewer:** I would like to talk more about this pulling of directions? Because we have not seen this idea brought up so far in our research.

**Interviewee:** I am in between. I do service in three areas. I do history, I teach in History, and then I teach LAS which is an area in Global Studies. And I am not the only Honors Faculty being pulled in different directions.

**Interviewer:** And a majority of the faculty for Honors is part time as well?

**Interviewee:** That creates problem here too. We are not over there in Niemeyer or over there in Holton Hooker. We taught everywhere but we weren't in Honors. Which creates a real disconnect. But I absolutely refuse to go to Niemeyer and walk 15/20 minutes across campus in this crappy weather when my office is over here.

**Interviewer:** Is there a question I didn't ask you that I should have?

**Interviewee:** No, I don't think so. I mean I talked a lot. You know me.

**Interviewer:** Do you have any other people that you think we should contact?

**Interviewee:** No, I think you are on the right track.

**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 be contacted?**

They agreed to further inquiry and requested that we contact them through email.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- N/A

**Possible next-steps:**

- It would be a good idea to look at the idea of location and offices of part-time professors in the Honors College. Is this an issue that both students and faculty have? Or is it mainly an issue with professors?
- It would be beneficial to the team problem statement to research the varying communication methods that are effective at varying colleges. The idea was brought up that what makes Grand Valley unique is that it has smaller class sizes. In what ways do colleges of larger capacities communicate with their students?

Dialogue Summary #10:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b>  Honors Alumni
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Female
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b>  The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain a better understanding of what exactly this particular stakeholder saw happen in the way of communication between the Honors College student and administration bodies, and amongst themselves. This interview is also meant to give the team a viewpoint that is no longer attached to the Honors College.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b>  This work reflects constructively on the team's problem statement, as the interviewee's comments on certain issues will be taken into consideration when crafting a solution to the problem. This particular stakeholder group is not often addressed, and by analyzing their experiences, we may have a clearer picture of how to proceed in the future.
<b>Summary of Research:</b>  This interview was very short and does not hold many insights that we have not already gathered, except for the insights on how the Honors administration collaborated with the interviewee's senior project advisor, "who was not part of the Honors faculty." Beyond this unique insight, we received similar answers to the previous alumni interview, where there minimal or perhaps even no concerns over the communication between the student body and the administration of the Honors College. This interviewee also highlighted how the student-to-student relationship is not always where some students would like it to be.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This interview brought to light the fact that this alum did not find many issues with current system in place for communicating between the Honors administration and student bodies.</li><li>• This interview was one of the few that actually have had prominent frustrations about</li></ul>



communication between them and other students, primarily due to the fact that the interviewee was active doing their homework, while other students were not.

### **Dialogue Questions and Response:**

**Interviewer:** Describe, from your perspective, what your experience was as far as communication between Honors administration and you, personally?

**Interviewee:** I felt like communication with the administration was easy and timely. I always felt like I always had access to ask the faculty questions. I felt like they responded quickly to my emails and were very thorough in explaining their expectations of my class.

**Interviewer:** Describe, from your perspective, what your experience was as far as communication between Honors administration and others?

**Interviewee:** I felt like the Honors administration did a great job communicating with my Senior Project advisor who was not a part of the Honors faculty. Everyone was on the same page and knew what was expected of us in the project. I also felt like the other students in the Honors program appreciated the communication between them and the faculty. I never heard anyone complain about lack of communication or understanding.

**Interviewer:** What would you describe as the biggest barriers to communication between students and administration/faculty?

**Interviewee:** Knowing who to contact.

**Interviewer:** As a student, what types of communication did you feel most comfortable participating in (i.e. in-person, e-mail, phone, etc.)?

**Interviewee:** In-person or email, depending on the questions/concerns.

**Interviewer:** To what degree should technology be used in facilitating communication?

**Interviewee:** I feel like technology is a great resource to enhance communication and should be used as often as possible, when appropriate.

**Interviewer:** What frustrations have you experienced when communicating with other students?

**Interviewee:** I was not a procrastinator. I often struggled with communicating with other students when I had questions or concerns regarding a project that others had not started or were not as far along in. I also struggled with this during group projects.

**Interviewer:** What successful communication strategies have you implemented within your own work that you think would be appropriate for students and administration/faculty?

**Interviewee:** As a nurse, we perform our shift to shift report at the bedside so that everyone involved in the patient's care is on the same page, including the patient. This has proven to

reduce misunderstandings and increase patient satisfaction with their care. I feel that the faculty and students in the Honors program should all sit down together to communicate questions and concerns so that everyone is on the same page.

**Interviewer:** What benefits do you think an increase in communication between Honors College students and administration would have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** Increased student satisfaction with the program and high grades as a result of a better understanding of expectations.

**Interviewer:** What drawbacks do you think an increase in communication between these two groups would have on the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** This may result in the students being less responsible for their own work and grades as they think the faculty will help them with every question, they have instead of making them think critically.

**Interviewer:** What are issues that you think might be brought to the faculty by the students, and why?

**Interviewee:** Curriculum or scheduling concerns in regard to those with time consuming majors (engineering/nursing). It can be hard to combine the Honors schedule with some of these majors. This should be addressed because often these students deserve to be a part of the program but are stressed with how to fit it into their schedule.

**Interviewer:** What limitations would you like to see placed on the communication between administration and students?

**Interviewee:** I don't think there should be any limitations on communication.

**Interviewer:** How often do you think this should occur, and why?

**Interviewee:** Communication should be allowed at any time or in any way that is appropriate.

**Interviewer:** Do you think the administration should communicate with as much of the student body as possible, or only a select few, and why?

**Interviewee:** As much of the student body as possible, because everyone should receive the same information. No one should have to rely on another student or classmate to receive information. Every student in this program deserves to be respected and properly communicated with.

**Interviewer:** Who among the administration do you think should be tasked with student communication?

**Interviewee:** The individual professors.

**Interviewer:** Do you have any contacts that you think we should contact about this?

**Interviewee:** I don't know, I wouldn't feel comfortable with offering someone up like that.

**Interviewer:** Is there something I didn't ask you that you feel I should have?

**Interviewee:** Nope, I think you did a great job.

**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 be contacted?**

They agreed to further inquiry and requested that we contact them through email.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- N/A

**Possible next-steps:**

- Because this interview did not yield many new insights, the best course of action to take after this is to start narrowing down the team's ideas about not only this interview but all of the others as well as our secondary research and start to come up with as many possible solutions as we can.

Dialogue Summary #11:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> Honors Administration
<b>Estimated Age:</b> ___ 20-30 ___ 30-40 ___ 40-50 <u>X</u> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b> The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain a better understanding of what an increase in communication within the Honors College means to this stakeholder, as well as how it may impact them. Moreover, by interviewing this stakeholder, the group can better shape a solution to the problem as a whole.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b> This interview reflects on our team problem statement by offering us a clear viewpoint into what a solution might look like, how it might operate, and how we can judge whether or not it has lived up to expectations.
<b>Summary of Research:</b> This interview was beneficial for many reasons, such as highlighting how the administration currently goes about finding out what the students are thinking, and how this was done in the past, as well as what the administration would like to see as far as student representation in the Honors College policy-making – how it might be structured and how often it might meet. This was found to be some sort of representative-based organization similar to Student Senate, and the Honors administration would like for this communication to occur at least monthly.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This interview shed some light on how the current administration communicates with the students and the faculty, as well as how it was done in the past.</li><li>• It clearly defines what the administration would like to see from a system that fosters communication and how it will be judged as a success in the administration’s eyes.</li><li>• Gives some examples of how the administration might like the system to be structured,</li></ul>

and some concerns about how this will be done.

### **Dialogue Questions and Response:**

**Interviewer:** Thank you [REDACTED] for taking time out of your day to meet with me. Our team is investigating ways in which we can solve for improved communication between Honors faculty and Honors staff, students in order to improve governance of the Honors College. Describe from your perspective the current systems in place for communication between Honors faculty and staff and students, and your role within this?

**Interviewee:** Well, I guess the whole thing is that I don't know if there is a structure for that. There's plenty of structure for communication between faculty and staff, and me, the faculty, and staff, and we do have the Mentor Council that we work with on summer orientations and the welcome days but that's a very narrow, kind of conscripted job that we have with them. And then we have [REDACTED], the two advisors, do work with the ANCHOR folks to talk about their activities and kind of help that organization along. And then I serve on ex officio capacity on this Honors curriculum and Development Committee chaired by [REDACTED]. That's sort of like our education committee for the Honors College where we have representatives more on campus and they help us with the guidance of the curriculum and the assessment of the courses and that kind of thing. And we have chosen students to serve on that committee, but they were kind of handpicked. We picked one person from the Mentor Council, one person from ANCHOR, and one person from the University Innovation Fellows program. But I'd like a more formal way to interact with students on a regular basis about those concerns, you know, the governance concerns.

**Interviewer:** If you could explain just a little bit about the communication between the administration and the faculty in the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** By the administration, you mean me?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, okay. So, we meet every week in what we call the Honors Faculty Council, which is the full-time faculty here and people who have offices in this suite; [REDACTED] and others and the two full time advisors, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. That's the main communication that we have as a group to talk about the direction of the Honors College; deal with personnel issues, and we work on the curriculum. Like this coming week for example, we're going to be talking about the degree to which we require participation in classes and whether we attach a grade to that or not and what's a good practice for that. So, it's that kind of stuff we've talked about. And then I'm here, so I see people come in and out - I talk to people. It's the fact that, you know, some students come in here, and I talk to the student workers, but I have a hard time seeing students on a regular basis. I see them out in the hall, and I'm still fairly new to this job, so I'm getting to know some students. But I don't know you, for example, so if I see you on campus, I don't necessarily say anything to you. So, I guess that that's the missing part to me is there is that kind of communication.

**Interviewer:** What would you describe as the biggest barriers to communication between students and faculty currently?

**Interviewee:** Well, probably the biggest barrier is that everybody's busy. The students are busy with their work and outside work and homework and working on a student organization and all the other things that students do. And then the faculty are busy teaching their classes and they're willing to talk to me, I guess, because we have a fairly close proximity and relationship. And on some level, I'm their supervisor so that works well. But I think we have to figure out a way for those students who are interested in helping to facilitate communication to make themselves known instead of, you know, I don't want to pull people aside if they're busy. You know, it's a, "hey, can you help us out?" But so far in my time here I've had really good luck calling upon people - even asking, like, sending out blanket requests for help and I've gotten a good response. I think there are people that are willing to put that time in.

**Interviewer:** What types of communication do you feel most comfortable participating in? E-mail? Phone?

**Interviewee:** Right. So, I'm an e-mail person, you know. I came of age before e-mail, but I've gotten used to it. We're working in the Honors College, we have this newsletter that goes out every Tuesday. I'm not confident that that's really the best way to communicate. We just established an Instagram account. We have Facebook. We have LinkedIn. We have Twitter. But there's nothing like face to face. There's nothing like actually talking with people and so I guess I would have to say that's my favorite. And yeah, I could sit here and e-mail people. I have a list of all the students and their email so I could sit here and e-mail people, but I would really rather have a regular time to touch base with a representative group of people and talk face to face. But I guess to answer your question: email and face to face.

**Interviewer:** To what degree should technology be used in facilitating communication?

**Interviewee:** Well because of the busyness of everybody and the fact that it's asynchronous, you know, some people are busy on Tuesday mornings and other people are busy on Tuesday night. I think technology is going to be really helpful to us.

**Interviewer:** What frustrations have you experienced when communicating with students?

**Interviewee:** I guess part of it is that I often have no prior relationship with the person. I mean, I might have met them at welcome days or something. That's what's nice to me about a committee or a group you get to know them over time. There are definitely some students that I know pretty well, and I like communicating with them because I feel like we have a personal contact, but I guess my main frustration is that we send out a newsletter to two thousand people and sometimes it feels like it's sent off to the void. You know, nobody likes that, nobody wants to think that what they're doing is not landing. And I should say that that's one way. We don't want one-way communication.

**Interviewer:** What successful communication strategies have you implemented that you would recommend to your colleagues?

**Interviewee:** I think that we built this Honors curriculum and Development Committee kind of from scratch. There was an advisory committee before that, but that was more informing people around campus what was happening in the Honors College. This new version of the Honors Curriculum Development Committee is a working Committee that I think is intended to go both ways. So, these are people who are advising the Honors College and consulting with us on our

ideas. So, we say, “hey, we're thinking about this course, what do you think?” And so that has been a successful model to convince people that this is not just one way, that we actually do want to have interaction and we want input, and we don't want to just announce things to you, we want you to be part of that decision making. And my experience with that group has been that people have become, I think, more invested in the Honors College because they feel like they are part of it, and they have a voice in it. And I think that'll be true of students too.

**Interviewer:** If I could go off the script once more. I had never previously known that food with faculty was an event, but I hear it's happening Thursday.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, it's Thursday.

**Interviewer:** Can you speak a little bit about how that's impacted the student-faculty communication in previous years?

**Interviewee:** That event in particular?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Interviewee:** So, I think they had Pasta with The Profs before I came, and it was an attempt just to have informal gatherings with faculty. That's what the students want. I think it's to get to know faculty on a personal level and not just through classes. When I came in here in summer of 2017 I was just really drawn to the kitchen and I just thought, “I can't believe this place has this kitchen that we can use.” People can make food! We have that window that opens up to the MPR. I think that's fantastic. So, I really wanted to do more of those, and so we did. We did a couple of Pasta with The Profs last year and now we're going to have some music involved and it doesn't have to be pasta of course, we came up with some other names. Food with Faculty, I guess is what we're settled on because we can have any kind of food. I made some Indian food back in September, snacks and stuff, and I opened up the window and just waited for people to come by. If we had an Instagram or Twitter feed or something where we could say, “hey, we've got Pakora downstairs if anybody wants to come by and get some.” I think that would be really ideal. But the Food with Faculty is a way to say that. As [REDACTED] said, that the MPR is the living room of this building. And so, it's a way to say, “yeah, we like to hang out, and we would like to hang out with students as well as faculty.”

**Interviewer:** Has student participation been where you want it to be?

**Interviewee:** No, it's been pretty light and a lot of it has to do with the teachers, who teach at that time, kind of saying, “hey, you should go down and check it out.” So, that's one of the things we need to figure out is when's the best time for this kind of thing? For faculty, four and five o'clock is perfect because then we leave at 6:00 or whenever. But for students it might be 8:30 p.m. is when that kind of thing should happen. And so, we need to learn that kind of stuff. But we've been happy to have 10 or 15 students. Again, we have seventeen hundred, so 10 or 15 is pretty paltry. And yet it's better than nothing, so it's been fine. I'm hoping this week, you know, [REDACTED] is sort of the Pied Piper so he tends to draw people. So, we're hoping that we have a bigger crowd this week.

**Interviewer:** What benefits do you think increasing communication between Honors College students and faculty would have on the Honors College as a whole?

**Interviewee:** Well, I think it can help steer the Honors College in the direction that students and faculty want to see it go in, and as I said before, I think it'll increase the investment that people have in the College. One of the things that [REDACTED]'s class address last year was the sense among students that we've heard where the first year is really heavily invested and involved. And then there's this dwindling participation rate as people move out of Niemeyer or Hooker or they get involved in their major. And so, they barely had a sense that they're Honors College students. In some cases, in the junior seminars, like this one, touchstone and then they do their senior project which they can do pretty much without coming in this building. So hopefully that sense that, "I'm an Honors College student because I am participating in the direction of the Honors College and I plan to be part of the Honors College even after graduation," somehow will foster that sort of investment. And just a healthier kind of environment. I think it's a good environment now. I don't mean to say it's not healthy - but a better one.

**Interviewer:** What disadvantages do you think an increase in communication could have?

**Interviewee:** Well, not all faculty are keen on the idea that students say, "hey, we like classes that deal with contemporary topics. We're through with that history stuff." And that wasn't my view. So that's just an example of something that faculty may not want to hear. And of course, if you were to hear that, that doesn't mean, "oh, that's what we'll do," it means, "well, let's have a conversation about that." I think that's a good thing. So, I would like to talk. If there were a group of 30 students who came to me and said we think all of the topics should be contemporary and we shouldn't have any historical topics, I would like to have that conversation. You know I think that would be a good thing and I would like to think that I could be open enough to say, "well, convince me about why that would be the case and let me try to convince you why I think we should have those historical courses." So, I think that the disadvantage might be that it's like a democracy. What's the disadvantage of democracy is that sometimes it goes in ways you didn't anticipate? And I like democracy and I think that's one of the things we live with. We live with the fact that sometimes things go away we didn't anticipate.

**Interviewer:** Sticking with this point, what limitation would you like to see placed on the communication between students and faculty?

**Interviewee:** So, by that you mean what kind of limits would we want to place on the power of the student voice?

**Interviewer:** So, to say.

**Interviewee:** Okay, I'm not sure about that. I am a believer in democracy and a believer in open communication and I believe that human beings, intelligent human beings, tend to make the right decision in public settings and group settings. So, I think in conversation we would come to the decision that history has a place because we collectively as humans have decided that you know? So, it's hard to argue against it in a way. But it's worth having that conversation. I think that we should realize there's no way around the fact that ultimately, we have a faculty governance, a shared governance system between faculty and administration. So whatever input students have it's always going to be advisory. You know it's never going to be a vote. I don't think there's ever going to be a time when we cede decision making to students. So, I guess that's the limitation. I would say that there is the possibility that students might get frustrated because



they might think their voice may be overruled. But I would like to think that would be an extremely rare thing, that usually it's going to influence the way decisions are made.

**Interviewer:** How might you personally be impacted by an increase in communication?

**Interviewee:** Even with faculty and staff here, sometimes I feel like I'm winging it when I talk to people about the Honors College. You know, "here's what you can expect if you come to the Honors College." So, what I would gain, in all my communication, what I gain is a sense of confidence that I am speaking for the Honors College and that I represent the Honors College. So, the more students tell me, or tell us, what they like and what they don't like and what they want and what they don't want, the more confident I would feel on a daily basis that we are doing the right thing. You know that's really important to me. Because you don't want to go through your day thinking, "I hope this is right."

**Interviewer:** What are some issues that you think might be brought to the faculty by the students and why?

**Interviewee:** Well, in today's Lanthorn, there's an article about the Honors College establishing of a diversity task force. The Honors College is lagging behind the university as a whole in terms of diversity. It has always been less diverse than the university as a whole. So, this is a good example of if you, if I, and four other people on the staff or faculty dream up ways to encourage more diversity in the Honors College we're only going to hit a very small, very few good strategies. Whereas if students are giving us that kind of feedback we have the potential to really learn what's going on now, is there a culture here we don't know about, is there other ways, can we reach out to communities that we haven't reached out to, are people interested in more diversity in the student body and in the faculty, and are there any bad feelings about that or that? So, it would just be a way to really learn a lot more about that kind of an issue. This is one that we are very much aware of because people around campus mentioned to us. You know, I mean, it's well known around campus that the Honors College is not as diverse as it should be. But there may be other issues, other things that students think and talk about that we don't know about. I think we're responding now with the curriculum. You know one of the things we heard loud and clear last year was that there is a sense that the sequences are not always equal to each other or equivalent in terms of rigor or difficulty or fun or whatever. So, we're trying to respond to that. But that's kind of hard to anticipate what those issues will be. I'm pretty confident they're out there.

**Interviewer:** How often do you think that the communication should occur and why?

**Interviewee:** It's a good one. The faculty used to meet once every month or once every two weeks. And when I met [REDACTED] and together we made it once a week. So, we wanted more. So, I tend to want more. But I think again with the busyness of the students and everything I would think that at least meeting monthly would be really helpful. And of course, what that really means is meeting about six times a year: January, February, March, April and then, you know the Fall. So maybe it's seven times. But so even that I think you could do more. But I would like at least once month, I'd say.

**Interviewer:** Do you think the faculty should communicate with as much of the student body as possible or a select few and why?

**Interviewee:** Well, I think it's both. I think the whole idea of representation. Again, it goes back to democracy. You know representative democracy is more efficient than total democracy. You know in ancient Athens they could handle it because they had a very small group of citizens that they could actually meet in the Assembly and you know actually talk things through. But pretty soon they had to have representatives. And so, I would imagine having a small representative group of students to communicate with and then share it with the entire student population is the way to go. And then to have town halls. I would really like the MPR - we should fill up the MPR to discuss issues. We should be able to get 70 or 80 or 100 people in there and talk through an issue of importance to people, like this. You know we should be meeting on that. And people should be saying, "well, heck, I know a lot of people on campus that would love to be in the Honors College, but they don't know they can apply or something." You know, let's do it.

**Interviewer:** I'm going to go down that rabbit hole. How do you think... I don't want to place any assumptions on what this communication might look like, but how do you think an organization as ANCHOR would change with the growth of the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** So, it's like a student organization or...?

**Interviewer:** Yeah, and maybe that's not the solution that we end up with. But you mentioned ancient Athens and how their population, it was a viable solution for them.

**Interviewee:** I think you set up a structure, when you're building an organization, when you're institutionalizing you set up a structure that's going to work for growth, anticipated growth. I just talked to the new president when she was on campus and she asked me, "so how big is the Honors College?" "Seventeen hundred." "That's pretty good. Are you anticipating continuing to grow or what?" And I said, "well, if the Honors College is about offering to students, ambitious students, who are interested in engaging fully in their education and taking advantage of all that campus life has to offer. If that's the goal of the Honors College then we should be bigger because we had more than seventeen hundred students on campus that fit that," and she said, "I agree." So, she was kind of saying, "yeah, it should be bigger." And so, on the other hand if you say no it's only for people fourteen hundred SAT, four-point two GPA in high school. Then you say, "no, we should be small." You know there's two ways to look at it. So, I think probably a structure that we should have; you know percentages as a way to figure out a representation; that the group can grow and serve a large a growing population. I don't see any time soon it's getting more than two thousand or twenty-five hundred or something in the Honors College. So, we're not talking five thousand because I don't think Grand Valley is going to grow much, like twenty thousand undergraduates is about where it would be. But could it be 15 percent? Yeah, I think it could be fifteen percent. That would be three thousand people. I think it could be that.

**Interviewer:** Who among the faculty do you think should be tasked with student communication?

**Interviewee:** Well, I think, I'm technically not a faculty member here. I'm the Director. I'm outside the faculty system at the moment. But probably I should be the main one because I'm given the time for it. The faculty have full time teaching jobs, whereas I don't. So, I think I'm primarily the one and then I think we have, just as we have, we have the full-time faculty, we have two representatives as well as the chair, [REDACTED], on that Honors Curriculum Development Committee. And I think we would likewise want to have representatives that

would be liaisons with students. Say me and two other faculty would be the liaisons. So, I guess a couple and I don't know exactly who those would be, but I'd want people who are interested.

**Interviewer:** Are there any connections that you have that you think I should contact for future interviews?

**Interviewee:** Well, I do like the idea of learning what other people around the state and around the country do in their Honors programs. But I can't really say you know exactly. You know [REDACTED] is going to be around. I think [he'd/she'd] be good to talk to about it. [He's/She's] leads Hicks Honors College down at the University of North Florida. So, I'd be looking forward to asking [him/her], "so, what do you guys do for this?" I think [he/she] had an advisory group that [he/she] had put together but I think it was kind of ad hoc. So, I would like to ask [him/her], "did you ever think about this," or, "what were the barriers you faced?" I like the idea of talking to the Student Senate here at Grand Valley and ask them about what they've learned about being student representatives and how they might feel about. I don't even know if there are other student government organizations like does Seidman have one, or what's your major?

**Interviewer:** Electrical Engineering.

**Interviewee:** Yeah. So, I doubt very much... But I can imagine one in Seidman and now they might have some kind of group. I don't want to compete with Student Senate, but it would be nice to have a kind of open communication with students and through their representatives that we have in the Student Senate. But anyway, the Student Senate probably has some insight about some of these very questions that you're asking.

**Interviewer:** What is one thing that I didn't ask you, that you think I should have?

**Interviewee:** You know, probably the main thing is what kind of resources would be available for such a group. And student organizations through the university get a budget. The answer to that question would be that we have what they call "working money." So, for some special projects and right now I think this is worth supporting with some financial resources. So, if people wanted to travel or talk to people or to hold events and have food or you know these kinds of things, we can support that. So, I think it could be something that we put some resources into to make it work over the next couple of years.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Well thank you for sharing your insight with us. You've been very helpful. And we look forward to sharing our results with you.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I look forward to them, it'll be fun.

**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 be contacted?**

They were fine with being contacted again and would like it to be through email.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- Honors administration member
- Former Honors College Director
- Honors College Advisors

**Possible next-steps:**

- The next step is to start crafting possible solutions that either fulfill the structure that the Honors administration already have in mind, or to craft possible solutions that fulfill the overall desired outcome of increased communication.
- It was clearly stated by the stakeholder that they would like to see some research into what other Honors Colleges do for ensuring their students' voices are heard, and how they structure this – so we need to expand our research geographically!

Dialogue Summary #12:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> Honors and Gen-Ed Faculty
<b>Estimated Age:</b> ___ 20-30 ___ 30-40 ___ 40-50 <u> X </u> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b> The primary goal of this opportunity is to better understand how increased communication between the students and administration of the Honors College might influence those who have limited access to the administration or are not affiliated with the administration as much as other stakeholders are.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b> This work reflects on our team problem statement by ensuring that even some of the least affected stakeholders are accounted for and are asked how an increase in communication may influence their roles within the Honors College.
<b>Summary of Research:</b> This interview reaffirmed the idea that the location where Honors College students live and spend their time is a significant contributing factor to how much an individual feels a part of a larger body. That is to say, the sense of being in the Honors College is much higher and causes students to be far more active in their freshman year because they are more often than not on campus and interacting with other Honors students. Once these students leave this location, the participation in the Honors College tends to dwindle.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I found it interesting that the Honors administration do not try to communicate with both of the faculty who lead a freshman sequence but designate one faculty member to head the class and be responsible for its direction.</li><li>• An important insight is that, in all honesty, this stakeholder group, while informative, will not be directly impacted a significant amount by an increase in communication</li></ul>

between the Honors College student and administrative bodies.

**Dialogue Questions and Response:**

**Interviewer:** Describe for me your perspective of the current systems in place for communication between Honors faculty and administration, and your role within this.

**Interviewee:** Well I guess we just get e-mail notifications from the secretary in Honors. I don't know exactly what the title of [his/her] role is, but she would send notes, notices, or notifications to us. And I think it was different with [REDACTED] because in our course, [he/she] was the faculty who was in charge. So [he/she] had more dealings with [REDACTED] concerning things like assessment of the course. And it might be worth talking to [REDACTED] about this because most of my dealings with the administrators came through [REDACTED]. [He/She] was the course administrator so anything that we had to do with the administration would go through [him/her] except for my participating in the Honors College in the first place.

**[In describing the course, he formerly taught]**

We were always running two semesters two courses each semester. Now that way, there were four profs teaching in the course. We had a History Prof, English Prof, Art Prof, and Philosophy Prof. Each of the four semesters we all participated in each of the four semesters, but each semester was heavy on one over the other. So, fall first semester was heavy history and then heavy philosophy and then heavy art and then it ended with heavy literature. So, the semester that it was heavy philosophy, I would get a release from my home unit. I would only be teaching two classes in the philosophy department and my third class would be this class in the Honors program. But that was only in winter semester because this was the heavy philosophy semester. Now for the other three sections, I would receive some type of compensation as a part time participant team teaching in these other classes. I would either get monetary compensation for teaching in these little bits more this semester [pointing to a paper] and then less this semester [pointing to a paper] because I got released from the home unit to teach the philosophy course in the Honors sequence. Then when they revamped the personnel policy, they had introduced something called significant focus.

Every faculty member had to have significant focus, which was something in addition to research beyond the teaching. So, I would always put these three courses down for my significant focus and then get released from the home unit. In the winter semester, only teaching two courses in home unit and philosophy and the one in Honors. In the fall semester I'd be teaching three courses in the philosophy department, and then sit in on these two classes in Honors and do some lectures and paper grading and exam grading.

But this was an administrative nightmare. In regard to how I got compensated: when I got released from the home unit, the College of Interdisciplinary Studies, which houses the Honors program, would pay for me teaching this course in the Honors Program. And the reason they do this is there are some professors who teach in Honors full time in the Honors College, and then there's a cohort of teachers who teach in their home units and then they have one course in Honors. They do this so that the philosophy department doesn't pay for the Honors program, but the program has its own budget. There's a lot of this sort of stuff that has to go on and I always took care of this myself through the College of Interdisciplinary Studies. I would

deal with the administrative secretary. For the last ten years, I'd have to explain this about every two years. I'd have to go over there and explain it to them. So as far as that's concerned, faculty and administration I had to do a lot of that. But that really doesn't affect the students so much. It doesn't have to do with what's going on in the classroom. It's purely a bureaucratic administrative issue.

And that has always been a bit of a problem for the Honors program because they want profs to teach in the Honors school, but then it's sort of sucking people out of home units. And if the home units have heavy loads, then we can't spare anybody from the Honors program. There wasn't so much a problem with the philosophy department, but it was a problem over the years with the history department. There's sort of pressure on the history prof to come back to the home unit because they just had courses that needed to be covered, and they couldn't afford to have somebody taken away by the Honors program. So that was always a bit of an issue. Now how that gets resolved is you can talk to [REDACTED] about that or you might want to talk to the head of the history department. But that's more of university administration matter.

Current systems in place for communication - so through the faculty member responsible for the course, and I believe that's how the Honors program works. If there's a team teaching the course, one faculty member is responsible for it being in charge of it, and that person will deal directly with the administration of the Honors College. And then the other faculty members who are team teaching it will deal with the person who's in charge of that course.

**Interviewer:** What would you describe as the biggest barriers to communication between students and administration of the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** Well I'm not really sure. I know that students live in the Honors dorm and the Honors College administration is housed in the dormitory where everybody lives. So, I don't know if there are barriers to communication between students and the administrators of the Honors College. My impression was that there was quite a bit of communication between students and administrators at the college. I didn't know that there was. I didn't know there were barriers.

**Interviewer:** What limitations, or in this sense, barriers, would you like to see placed on the communication between administration and students?

**Interviewee:** Just as far as communication is concerned? Well, there are privacy matters that have to be respected. Some of those are a matter of law. Some of them are a matter of university wide policy. But then there are privacy issues that aren't even covered that have to be respected. If there is a problem student, well, whose business is that? It's probably just that student and the administration, and therefore there's got to be some sort of presumption that people aren't going to pry into what's going on with the student and why isn't the student here anymore. So, there are those sorts of limitations. And I think a lot of that's already in place in the university and the administrative code in the faculty handbook and the student code. Everybody has a private life and that's got to be respected. Some of that is just strictly legal matter. We used to, at the end of the semester, have exams left over and we'd put it in the hall and people can come by and get your exam. And now, you can't do it. They put the kibosh on that. Absolutely not. Sometimes, people get a little loose. Sometimes, after class, we leave the exams, make sure you

pick it up on the way out. Not supposed to do that. You're not supposed to be seeing other people exams.

[For my course], as the semester progressed, more people felt more comfortable with each other and maybe we got a little bit looser about stuff like that. But I don't know, maybe if there's no limitations or areas you know if there are students who need help, I don't know if there are mechanisms set up for them getting help or if they feel comfortable looking for help. It could be academic help, "I need help in this course." I don't know if you guys have a tutoring system setup. Is there an Honors tutoring center? That might be something worth doing. There may be some-- One of the things about your first semester sequence was that you start out, freshman year, first week, and by the time you leave two years later there's a lot of changes.

We had a couple of sections one year, we started out one it was thirty-six or thirty people in the class and second semester it was cut in half and half the people left. Now some of them left the Honors College altogether. Some people leave the Honors College of their own volition. Some people don't make it through. I don't know if there are mechanisms set up to catch that or help prevent that from happening. What's the problem? A lot of people get to school the first semester at GVSU; we have a lot of students who this is the first time anyone in their family went to college. So, we get some students who simply follow the high school guidance counselors. I don't want to blame the high school or put it off on them, but a lot of people - especially if their parents have never been to college - they hit the ground here and there. What I mean is, they don't get involved in university culture at all. And I think some of them flounder just because of that. It's so unfamiliar to them. You probably don't get that as much in the Honors program, but we do in the university in general. It seems like there has got to be more of a freshman seminar or advising. So, in some sense, it's got to be a little more heavy-handed. A senior in High School can have a blow off year, or especially that last few months. Then they have the summer off, and they hit the first week of classes and you get the Honors sequence cycle and there's 150 pages of material to read and they get shocked.

**Interviewer:** What types of communication do you feel most comfortable participating in between faculty?

**Interviewee:** Email is pretty convenient and it's more convenient than phone, in a way. Because the phone rings, and I may be right in the middle of something. I've got to stop what I'm doing. Whereas the e-mail or text messaging is more convenient for communicating. But as far as between faculty is concerned, the in-person stuff works pretty well. And we would always meet before class, after class, or before the semester begins. [REDACTED] would have people over to the house. And we would just kind of brainstorm about the class. What do we want to do to change the class? Let's go over the syllabus and see how we can improve things. So that was always in person, and that was that worked pretty well between the faculty. As far as students are concerned, I think we would do a lot of before class and after class stuff. Email, office hours, if I'm not available at office hours, swing by some other time.

I think that with this faculty where people are teaching in the Honors program, their offices are right there in the Honors Dorm. Now, I don't know what percentage of the Honors students live in the Honors Dorm. That might be worth investigating.



You've got cohorts of people and students in the Honors program: those who live in the Honors dorm and those that don't. And their Honors experience I think is going to be quite different. And even with respect to something like this - communicating with the faculty. The person just walks down the hall and the faculty office is right there as opposed to my office is here on the other side of campus. I would think that for the faculty who are there, students are constantly poking their head in the door. That's my impression from what I saw over there. If faculty, make the students feel comfortable doing that that would be a very effective way of communicating with people. But then it's going to be different for other students that don't live in that dorm.

**Interviewer:** To what degree should technology be used in facilitating communication?

**Interviewee:** Well I think people sometimes pooch the e-mailing or texting, but it really does make it easy to communicate with people - especially on the weekends. People have a big assignment, if you get balled up, just throw me an email over the weekend, I'll get to it when I can. And I tell people that it doesn't happen that often, but sometimes the person just needs two minutes and then then they can take off. So, you know, I don't want people Skyping me at home, but e-mail or texting is good. And I don't do that texting on the phone, but I know a lot of people like it. A lot of people like it better than e-mailing. So, if it's easy for somebody to do, well it just increases the amount of communicating that goes on. Then some people will complain. Well then, that's a substitute for the in-person, face to face communicating. And how can you tell when the technological interaction is a substitute for face to face interaction? It's hard to say. It shouldn't interfere with the face to face. But it can be used to supplement real face to face communication. I think maybe students might have an easier time just sending the professor an email rather than going to the professor's office, as you have to make arrangements to get there. And then just maybe some freshmen feel uncomfortable going to see a Professor. But just shoot me an e-mail. And that might be easier for the student to do.

**Interviewer:** What frustrations have you experienced when communicating with students?

**Interviewee:** I really can't think of any. I can't really think of any.

**Interviewer:** What successful communication strategies have you implemented within your own work that you would recommend to your colleagues?

**Interviewee:** I guess maybe it's a communications strategy. I have always tried to memorize everybody's names in the classes I teach. It's a little bit harder the older I get, but it takes about three or four weeks and I can get everybody's names memorized. I've got seventy-five people this semester and I'm pretty much there right now. And that changes the atmosphere in the classroom when I can call up on people by name. It's a different environment.

And I think one of the things that's helping me now is the photo roster of the class that's available on blackboard. I would recommend people memorize the names and then help them if you use the photo roster to do that. Then before I go to class, I'll take a quick look at the roster and then I draw a line showing the student is also sitting over there. So is just a way of reinforcing the association. It's a way of communicating with people. If you know people's names, it creates a good atmosphere in the classroom.

**Interviewer:** What benefits do you think an increasing communication between Honors College students and faculty would have on the Honors College as a whole?

**Interviewee:** It might create more esprit de corps. A sense of being part of a body, a civic body of sorts. Maybe there are more than they've had in the past-- faculty meetings before the year begins of everyone in the faculty teaching the Honors College. And that's good because it brings people together. And you know who's who. It makes it easier to interact with people over the year. But you also don't want there to be too many events. I say at the beginning of the year or throughout the year because then people just get too burnt out. I think it would create a stronger sense of being part of the Honors College if there was more communication between everyone involved here.

**Interviewer:** I think you touched on this a little bit, but what disadvantages do you think that this would have?

**Interviewee:** You have to honor Privacy always. But I haven't heard of problems in that regard.

**Interviewer:** How might you personally be impacted by an increase in communication between the administration and students in the Honors College?

**Interviewee:** I don't know, maybe the expectations of the Honors College and what's expected of students might be made clearer. I don't think that's really a problem in the Honors College because the people know more is expected of them. And think everybody in the Honors College knows it. The bar is set higher and that's impressed upon people and they know that coming in. It's an Honors College. And these are more difficult courses, more work is going to be required, and a higher level of performance is expected. So as long as that's conveyed to people. It's a good thing. So that when we get in there and we lay the work on them they'll be like, "Oh okay, this is what they told us was going to happen." It's not going to come as a shock to people. Like I said, when people come in, they don't know what to expect. And I mean it's reached the point now where you have to tell people, "Make sure you go and buy the texts that are required for the course," And we have people in the fifth week, and they haven't got the text.

So, that's a case where somebody has got to communicate to them that they have to do this, and it can't be the case that we'll have the professors tell them. Because then it's too late by that point. You can't have the professors impressing upon the students. It's like telling them you've got to go to class. Well, the professors can't tell them to go to class. Somebody has to tell them before they go to class that you've got to go to class. That's another issue that's come up is we're starting to get more absenteeism from class. You know, if you miss a certain number of classes you automatically get a whole grade lower. It doesn't matter. And I think I see something that I think comes from some of the poorer quality high schools where it really doesn't matter if you're there or not. We'll have students where they've missed over half the classes so far this semester. I have one student in class who's missed a week's worth of class in addition to the university is shutting down for a week. [He's/She's] had some real health problems and other students in the past say, "look, you got to go talk to the Dean of Students and see about getting a refund and dropping all your courses." They will do that once in a while. If somebody has a massive health problem six weeks into the semester and they have to drop everything, you get a refund even if it's after the deadline. But see that's where we count on the administration to handle that sort of thing. Now to what extent that goes on in the Honors College, I'm not sure,

but I'm sure it does to a certain extent. You know there's problems and issues. The administration is there to take care of that.

**Interviewer:** How often do you think this should occur and why?

**Interviewee:** Maybe the people who run the Honors College could set something up. Something we're going to have a once a semester. I don't think you want to do it too often. But every week it's going to be too much and you're going to end up getting a few core people that attend. And then it's going to be those core students who speak for the whole student body. In a way, you don't want that. But maybe if once a semester there was assembly of Honors, all Honors students are invited to an assembly with refreshments and voice your concerns. Any concerns! You can either send us a note beforehand of a concern you want brought up at the meeting, or at the meeting have an opportunity for people to write your concern on a piece of paper. Take them in the order in which they occurred to bring it up and have a brainstorming session where people can just get it off their chest. Then maybe it doesn't go anywhere. Or maybe, there seems to be enough of an issue here.

We're going to have to go somewhere with this and we'll have another meeting in a couple of weeks which we address this specific issue. I guess I would recommend, every semester maybe an assembly of all Honors students and faculty or administrators. Again, I got to watch out for there being too many meetings because faculty and administrators are already going into too many meetings. Is there a board or an online board for people to send in concerns or gripes? The city of Grand Rapids has this. I've used it a couple times and you get a notice right back saying we'll get back to you in so many business days. Then you get back to it again, we're going to get on it, we're going to send a crew out to investigate it, and we'll take care of it. Maybe the Honors College can have something like that. A concerns board where you just send in concern and then administrators and faculty will get back to you.

**Interviewer:** Just out of my own curiosity, is there any precedent that you know of that an assembly occurs like you were talking about in the general education?

**Interviewee:** I don't think so. No, I don't think there's anything like that. On the University Curriculum Committee, we're supposed to have a representative from Student Senate. But that's sort of off and on. Sometimes in the past they've managed to appoint somebody to attend. And so, there's a student on the University Curriculum Committee and there isn't now.

But I think again that is one of the things that people are just too busy. The University curriculum Committee meets two hours every week. So, it's kind of a heavy time commitment. And it's Wednesday afternoon from 2:00 to 4:00. So, you would have to be somebody who is free at that time.

So, I think that's the case with some other university committees there. There are faculty governance committees. There is a student representative on the committee that's coming from Student Senate. So, I guess if you want to take that as a precedent for communication from the student body to the administrative body there are student representatives on the University academic senate and that meets every week, every Friday. And there's always a couple of students there.

**Interviewer:** Do you think the administration should communicate with as much of the student body as possible or only a select few, and why?

**Interviewee:** Well, I mean that's the way it works with the university at large is that we have academic senate which is 50 some-odd professors from all across the university and the Senate meets every other week. And there's an executive committee of the Senate that people also get voted onto that meets every week. Perhaps you want something like that in the Honors College? Perhaps you want to have an Honors Senate because there's just a Student Senate. Then maybe you'd have a Senate or an executive committee of the Senate which would be a smaller group of Honors students. You can't get five hundred people to gather. Nothing would ever get done. So, if you have a group of a dozen or so who would be elected in the Honors College student government, they could meet on a weekly basis. Ask a faculty member to sit in on that. And then maybe that elect group that met on a weekly basis could meet with the administrator of the Honors program every three weeks or as needed.

**Interviewer:** Who among the administration do you think should be tasked with that?

**Interviewee:** Gosh, I don't know how the administration is set up. There's a Director of the Honors program, and I don't know if there's an assistant director. It seems like it should be somebody in the administration of the program to Frederick Meijer Honors College. Let's see, your part of the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies. Maybe one of the Honors academic advisors should do that. But I don't know what the flow of chain of command is over there. They have some kind of division of labor there but then you've got this faculty who are permanently assigned to the Honors program and then you have a whole range of associates who are teaching in the Honors program. There's a lot of people. It depends on how the administration is set up over there. And I don't know what would be best for you guys because you got you've got the administrators, the students, and the faculty. So, there's kind of three groups there. And how do you envisage their relationship to each other?

As far as communication is concerned, is it a communication with the administrator? Is it communication with the faculty? Is it both of those things that you're concerned with? But that's something that you guys can hash out.

**Interviewer:** Are there three in mind that you think we should contact concerning this project?

**Interviewee:** Yes, I guess I would talk to [REDACTED]. And then I guess I would talk to [REDACTED]. Then [REDACTED] may recommend you talk to [REDACTED]. I don't know what their role over there is. And then there's a person who's going to be in charge of the physical plant. I don't know if you guys have much to do with them.

**Interviewer:** Is there anything that I didn't ask you that you think I should have?

**Interviewee:** I think it would help if things had gotten a little clearer on exactly what the problem is that you're trying to solve. What's the problem you're trying to solve? What's the question that you're looking for the answer to? Why is it a problem in the first place? And proceed from there. I think it's this business about Honors students who live in the Honors dorms and those that don't. There is a critical element here that you might want to investigate. It's always a question of what is the Honors program supposed to accomplish? Why do we have an Honors program in the first place? You know you've got a gen-end program that's designed

for you guys and they're revamping the whole Honors program now. And what is the general education program since there's a bigger issue here. What's general education supposed to do? Why do we have a general education program? And now we've got the Honors College has its own general education program. Well, what is it supposed to accomplish? What is it? Why do you do that? What does the Honors general education program do that the regular general education program doesn't do? What can it do that this other program can't do? I think that you've got your own college. You've got your own Honors building, your own classrooms, your own dorm. I mean, it's kind of a school within a school, in a sense. And do you want to cultivate that? Do you want to increase people's sense of that?

**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 be contacted?**

They were fine with being contacted again and would like it to be through email.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- Former sequence co-professor
- Honors College Director
- Honors Faculty Chair

**Possible next-steps:**

- One next step would be to research how location of residence impacts the participation of students – is it simply because of ease of access, or something larger?
- To tackle this, it might be a good idea to interview an RA who works in Niemeyer’s Living Center.

Dialogue Summary #13:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> Honors Advisor
<b>Estimated Age:</b> ___ 20-30 <u>X</u> 30-40 ___ 40-50 ___ 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Female
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b>  The main goal of this opportunity was to gain the ideas and understanding of communication from an advisor's perspective. They often communicate with a large majority of students and have a different perspective than other faculty and staff on campus.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b>  This work reflects on our team problem statement because it has changed drastically since the beginning of our work. We have decided to focus on barrier-free communication and advisors at the Honors College are some of the best barrier-free pathways to communication already. So, it is interesting to see what they think and how it is working so far.
<b>Summary of Research:</b>  This interview was very interesting. It was nice to learn about how advising and administration communicating with students is a lot different than with professors. Advisors and administration often communicate with large student bodies through technology-based avenues. However, an important idea that seemed to ring throughout this interview was the idea of building community. Communication is not a one-way street and is often overlooked by the students as not a priority. If students knew they were cared for and that their teachers and staff were interested in them outside of class, it would increase participation all around. It was also interesting to think about the idea that all of our research and ideas will have ramifications.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build a community. Relationships will form stronger and last longer through community building. It takes time and energy to build relationships but eventually it will create a stronger and more dynamic community within Honors.</li><li>• Technology seems to be coming up on us. The Honors College already utilizes some of these avenues and could be looking at using more in the future. However, in today's society we have to learn what is going to be most effective.</li><li>• Direct communication is a style that seems to work. It is easier to have one conversation rather than 5 or 10. It also allows for students to understand better and to trust their professors/faculty. Students want to know that their professors take interest in them and with using direct communication and emails to check in it would be easy to get this across.</li></ul>

### **Dialogue Questions and Response:**

**Interviewer:** Describe from your perspective the current system in place for communication between Honors faculty and students and your role in this?

**Interviewee:** Okay...and we are just talking faculty like not staff in that like we will say professionals and students?

**Interviewer:** Yes...we can discuss that after.

**Interviewee:** So, I would say that communication between faculty and students is per faculty member right. And what each faculty member chooses to convey to their individual classes. So mostly it is course content, related things, maybe occasionally there is like enrichment things out in the world. But faculty for the most part confine themselves to classroom things more or less.

**Interviewer:** Describe this now from the role of administration and students.

**Interviewee:** Yeah. And I guess I would be administration, it is like a weird zone. We are kind of the ones that run the Honors College right. While faculty do and have a hand in that, we are the ones that get stuff done. And so, we are the folks that send out and compile the newsletter, or let folks know registration is coming up and you should do XYZ. We are also the folks that come in to classes to talk about some of that admin stuff and maybe hosting some of the extracurricular things that are happening in the Honors College or maybe collaborating with departments outside.

**Interviewer:** What would describe as the biggest barriers to communication between students and faculty/staff?

**Interviewee:** Uhm. Yeah, we often work so collaboratively with faculty that it is hard to make that distinction. But in terms of barriers we are always struggling with what is the most effective way to communicate with students. Because we receive varying feedback from students. As you can imagine there are 1700 Honors students and we as advisors see a ton of those students throughout the year and the feedback, we get is completely different from each individual. So, we try to think about an event and publicize in these ways using multiple ways and avenues but at the end of the day we rely heavily on electronic communication whether that be email. We just started an Instagram account to see if that helps, there is a Facebook account, the newsletter. Sometimes we send out individual emails to blanket students and so we are always trying to figure out how to best target our particular audience depending on the event. But also, how are students going to read this? We have also tried paper methods as well, such as posters hanging up around the building, but they get torn down... So, the answer to your question about the barriers is trying to figure out where most people are going to get that information. And even if they are looking at it on their phone, are they even going to tune in? So, we are talking about other methods, but we are still unsure what is effective and whether or not it is a fad?

**Interviewer:** As an advisor --- describe the differences in levels of communication between freshmen students versus upperclassmen.

**Interviewee:** It is a little bit different as time goes on. SO, the ebb and flow of our year, at the beginning of the year, we will just say the first two weeks of school, we meet with predominately

freshman who are in some stage of freak out zone. Mostly about their sequence, the work load, something is not adjusting well. And then there is a lot of miscellaneous students and schedule stuff. Also, at that time we are chatting with students that are beginning academic probation, what that is what that means, so there is a whole line of communication for that. As we move on in the year, we are starting to get ready for other events and engagement activities. And by second semester it is full court press for registration season and getting into the classrooms having discussions before it happens and making sure students are seeking out their advisors. So, at that point we are seeing a whole lot of students that are all across the gambit. What is interesting currently about the Honors College and how our communication matches with the grade levels is that there are kind of like two spikes of engagement with students just in general. One is freshman year related to the sequence and the other is in the junior/senior year related to their senior project. That is when students for the most part are seeing advisors more frequently than they would their sophomore/junior years. So, with the new curriculum, it will be very interesting to see what that mean for advising. I think my life is going to change a lot.

**Interviewer:** What types of communication do you personally feel most comfortable participating in?

**Interviewee:** Well, so that is interesting because my life outside of the university, I am on Facebook and Instagram so I do electronic communication well for somebody my age I would say. Because quite frankly I rely on students also to tell me what's new. So, we rely on student feedback, particularly those that work in the office to tell me we are behind the times. For me though, the easiest way to communicate with students is via email and I end up sending out lots of emails throughout the day; getting/receiving. And I also return all emails back to people, so that is a personal policy of mine. I have often worked through other avenues through text messaging with students, particularly student leaders that I have more trust in, a different relationship with, or we might text "Hey see you at the meeting today". That I have a deeper relationship with, and I am okay with them having my cell phone number. In this capacity, having 1700 students have my cell phone number and knowing students on that kind of level that I would even send them a text, there is a level of creepy. My boundaries are such that I am not going into that zone. If there was technology set up that allowed me to text students about appointments and things coming up, that had nothing to do with my own individual cell phone or number I would be really open to using that.

**Interviewer:** I believe there is already an app that does this, Remind 101.

**Interviewee:** I have heard of Remind Me and I have used it. I don't really like the interface too well, but I am open to it. Particularly if they fix some glitches. Some of them that I have found, is that I am an old admin on Remind Me with a previous job I had, so I keep on receiving messages about events that are happening there and there is no way for me to get off of it. I am blocking numbers every day. So, it is things like that, where it is a great idea, but the burden of the glitches is not worth it.

**Interviewer:** Yes. I have never really had glitches with apps like that, but in my high school we used Remind101 and it was extremely easy to exit a class. A teacher would set it up for the semester you had class and send out reminders about homework or projects and at the end of the semester they could either remove you from the class or you would just send "STOP" to the



number and it automatically removed you. So that was a resource that a lot of students at my high school used and was particularly useful to help keep track of things.

**Interviewee:** Yeah. I think it would be great if we started to figure out what app we could use for something like that, so we aren't in a creepy zone but also communicating with students in a way that is helpful. You know, frankly I think we should be moving into a text zone sometime soon. Whether or not we will be a totally separate conversation. But I find it interesting because even my mechanic uses text messaging services to just say like "Hey your car is doing well it should be right on time, we will see you this afternoon". Or recently we got in a car accident, so our car was there a much longer time and he still sent automated text messages throughout the process to check in.

**Interviewer:** I know you said the texting route should be looked at but what degree do you think technology should be used in facilitating communication?

**Interviewee:** I mean let's face it, like the way that we communicate now is very technologically focused. And given the way that our society is moving and benchmarks in general with contact time with students and things like that, technology is helpful. What I have a problem with in general is using technology as a way to communicate solely with other people so that direct personal communication isn't used anymore. And so, I will send out an email and say here is some important information, but it can never replace an in-person conversation. Just like you could send me these questions that you are asking me, and I could answer them. But they would never be as thorough as they are in the moment. And we know that what students read, they see what they want to see and don't read into things and so relying solely on a text or a series of text messages or a newspaper, or an email, is not the total story. But what really bothers me and makes me nervous for our society as a whole is how students really don't want to do office hours and would rather just send an email because that really misses the nuisances of personal communication and I think that is the stuff that we really need to start trying to assert more as educators. We are finding more and more, like I am reading these articles about how students are deficient in communication skills yet have spiked levels of anxiety that is related to technology. That is problematic to me when using technology and that makes me think enough that maybe I want to focus more on the in-person because it is the harder part but its where the good stuff comes from.

**Interviewer:** What frustrations, if any, have you experienced when communicating with students?

**Interviewee:** I guess one frustration is like, one we hear frequently, is "I didn't get a message about that" when clearly you did, and we can show you exactly where. That is just one that I would call a pet peeve, where it happens and we know it, but you can't let it get to you. Another one I would say is me sending a message to a student telling them it is very important, and they miss the deadlines. Or they don't send me emails back saying they wanted to do something. So, the lack of follow through on their behalf. But like everyone makes their own decisions and that is part of working with college students and letting students make their own decision and screw up and then be okay to start over again. It isn't stuff like that that gets me down but rather I am like all right let's just move on. Because in reality, the best way to communicate with someone is in person, and I am much more willing to be patient and understanding to a student that is

honest about being nervous about communicating with people, but I am still able to. Whereas the students that aren't going to do any of it and just give up or throw in the towel.

**Interviewer:** What successful communication strategies have you implemented within your own work that you would recommend to your colleagues?

**Interviewee:** Uhm. So, I am from New England and I am a direct communicator which is not typical I would say in the Midwest. The conversation style I have is I pretty much just tell people how it is, I might sugar coat things here and there, but I am pretty much direct. And for me it works, it's helpful, I don't think it has impeded my professional life at the university even though a majority of the people I work with are from the Midwest, so I have figured out a balance. But when it comes to particularly working with students, you know, I am certainly compassionate, particularly when stuff is rough, but I will tell them what the deal is, and I am not going to sugar coat it. I don't work with colleagues here in Honors that sugar coat things, but there are people around that sugar coat, and I am like "Ahh, if you would just be honest with them you would only have one conversation and not have to have 5 more later on". So, I think about that direct communication stuff all the time and what that means. I am also more on the line of intrusive advising. I work with a handful of students that have a lot of extra stuff going on in their lives, they are not typical students and have a lot of extra stressors. They need more help along the way like me, to be on their butt all the time asking them how they are doing. Now, I am not a micromanager, that's not my job but I do engage in maybe more than some of my other colleagues is that I am sending "how you doing" emails all the time to certain students to like just keep letting them know that I am there, I care, let me know if you need anything. Knowing they will take that as they are able to take that as they are in the moment, and I know they may not ever text me back or respond but at least they know that somebody is looking out for them. So that also means that yeah, I have students that I meet with that are a little bit more difficult to communicate and engage with because they struggle themselves to communicate. And there might be some colleagues of mine that say you don't have to do that, or that's too much, or they have to learn at some point. These kinds of excuses that we give ourselves of why we should or shouldn't communicate in this way. But I am the kind of person that says our job is to get them through school and be a good person out in the world, and if these extra emails help to engage them or these extra moments of conversation engage them, then I am going to do it because it is not a killer to my schedule.

**Interviewer:** What benefits do you think an increase in communication between Honors College students and faculty/staff would have on the Honors College as a whole?

**Interviewee:** It is interesting, I come from a school of thought that says relationships are the things that change people. Yeah certainly, classes change people, and our experiences but to me the relationships that you have with your faculty your staff the other folks around you are the things that really make movement in your life. So, if you have a really good relationship with your faculty you are more apt to pay attention in class, to visit their office hours, to study and do well on a test because you don't want to disappoint them. Uhm, and you know that they are holding you accountable so that relationship matters. And I think that is true we will just say for advising, but for me creating community and helping students and faculty/staff build relationships with one another is the thing that really does build community And for me there are some nuts and bolts that need to get done on a daily basis to run this place; classes, events, stuff that we are doing like probation and scheduling crap. Those are tasks things that can get

done and could certainly be a conduit for building a relationship with people. But what we need to learn to capitalize on are all of those moments and how they are all super important. Even this conversation between you and me. You have a different view of me in the 20-30 minutes that we would spend than a typical student I would advise. But isn't this a richer conversation than simply talking about classes? Which is often what many students want to talk about, but they don't know that we could just shoot the shit for 20 more minutes. Or that shooting the shit with your professor is a really good thing to do. Or coming to pasta with the profs and listening to them talk or listen to music, like those are the good moments that move people into different directions in their life, to help them be more thoughtful and engaged with all of their stuff. I want to do more of that.

**Interviewer:** What are the disadvantages to an increase in communication?

**Interviewee:** More time! There goes my social life, my life with my family, it requires extra effort and support and energy. And we are, culturally speaking, so attuned to how much we can do in one day, so we are limiting our interactions to less and less time. We have trained ourselves to have minimal time with people. And so many of my colleagues are not good at "shooting the shit" or small talk, it is not their favorite thing. And yet it is the thing that helps build the foundation. So, we have to be better at some of that. The disadvantage is really that we need to spend more time and energy doing that and we don't necessarily have the time or energy. And I am not necessarily advocating for us to do all of these times and evenings with students while that might be their time and hour of their prime awareness. That is not always great for the rest of us so there has to be a balance. But also, a balance of students taking their own initiative. It takes lots of dramatic shifts for those kinds of things to happen. Those relationship building events and things to happen. It is a shift in focus too and that takes a different kind of energy.

**Interviewer:** How often do you think communication should occur between students and their faculty/staff and why?

**Interviewee:** Well, I am not a professor. Although I teach a Live. Learn. Lead. in the fall, so I have that perspective. But what I think about when a student goes into class is my hope is that they are having good interactions and positive meaningful interactions with their professors on a daily basis. Everything from the professors knows my name, knows when I am there or not, checks up on me to see if I am okay. Those things are important. But I might be in the minority in thinking that. I am the kind of person that when a student doesn't show up to class that morning, I come back to my office that morning and email them "Hey we missed you in class", because yes attendance is important but more so is everything okay? And I can do that because I have a class of 15 and I have this whole other life that I live that is not class related so I have the time to do that. I think it is hard though for other faculty to do that, it is hard for them to have that kind of intense level of engagement with all of their students if they teach 3-4 classes a day and have multiple students. It is really hard to compartmentalize classes and be engaged in all of your classes equally. It might be harder to set up structures through each of your classes for checkups and feedback. Those checks and balances that faculty could set up along the way take time and extra effort. And some of them would have to get over themselves too, it may not be socially easy for them.

**Interviewer:** How should faculty communicate with the student body? As a whole or a select few?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I mean there is no faculty member that is communicating with everyone in the Honors College. And really that goes back to the idea that they are all in charge of their own classes and there is that idea of autonomy whatever we think autonomy really is. But those are the people they are communicating with and they are going to do it however damn well they please. We can tell them things and they can go to teaching and learning workshops, but it still comes back to their individual choice. We in turn as administration are going to do things our way, which means that newsletter is probably going to go out until we find out something new. We are always going to send out probation emails to individuals. We are always going to send out campus wide emails about registration or going to classes. We are always going to try other modes of communication because that is how we roll. Unless new people come in and change things up, we are rolling this way until we learn something new. In some ways that is how it is. If someone were to say we really should be communicating more, and this is the way; then we have to take that into account. Same if they are actually like communicating in this way and not that way, we have to think about that. But again, it goes back to we have 1700 students here and who's telling us we have to communicate in certain ways, one person. Or even just one part of a class or a whole class of students are telling us this way. There begins to hold a lot more weight once more people are involved. There are things we know in place, but we don't always know the whole story of what individuals are going to do, because we are all going to behave a little differently when communicating with others. And that is what we haven't figured out, where to meet most people because it is hard.

**Interviewer:** Alright this is just to finish up here but are there any questions that I should have asked you that I didn't?

**Interviewee:** So, you all are focusing on communication and have you kind of surveyed each other and yourselves and chatted about what the honesty level is?

**Interviewer:** In the beginning we did a lot more of that because we had a lot more time to sit down and talk to each other as we were brainstorming ideas and what we ourselves thought the problems of communication more. And personally, I know a lot of us in our group specifically didn't read the newsletter but now that it was brought to our attention a lot of us started reading it! This made us realize we aren't taking all of the steps that we could when we are given so many resources. And it was really eye-opening for us to realize that some of us weren't trying hard enough to communicate with professors and faculty either. However, now that we have been interviewing and doing other research, we talk more about our insights of what we have found rather than where we are at now with the communication idea.

**Interviewee:** The other thing I just kind of wonder about if students realize that what they say when we come to meetings in the class actually does have ramifications for what we do later on? If that is even a thought in your mind?

**Interviewer:** I mean we know that at the end of the semester we are publishing a portfolio and that what we are researching and looking into and trying to create could have an impact not just here at GVSU.

**Interviewee:** And it could go multiple ways with that! I was just in a meeting the other day and we were talking about the newsletter and a calendar and what is the best way to get info to students and I think [REDACTED] said that a lot of students don't actually read the email even though some students actually do. Then we all started talking and brainstorming and eventually one of my colleagues said well maybe we just shouldn't have a newsletter anymore. And I thought "oh shit" that was not the intention to get rid of the newsletter because that's good information and there are some students that actually use it and look forward to it. But it is interesting because one thing that [REDACTED] heard in your class and brought it up in the meeting, we all talked about it and got to the murkiness of what does this mean, and one person says what if we don't have it anymore. There could have been this moment of another person agreeing and then another and suddenly we don't have a newsletter anymore. Then we no longer are communicating with students anymore because students don't read the newsletter but really, they do sometimes. And then I thought I wonder if that class knows the meta of this all the way through of just one thread of your information. Whatever decisions you make can't go lightly.

**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 be contacted?**

Yes. This stakeholder agreed to reconnect if necessary and to email her or schedule an appointment through the office.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- N/A

**Possible next-steps:**

- Although we are focusing on better ways to provide barrier-free communication we should also focus on how to build community while doing so.
- All of these ideas are going to take time. We need to recognize that all of the ideas and innovations we implement are going to have an impact even if it is small. With this in mind, it is important to remember just how much we can change the Honors College with our ideas.

Dialogue Summary #14:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> Honors Student
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Female
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b> <p>The primary goal of this opportunity was to receive some feedback on our top five innovations, what the student thinks are good things about the ideas, what [he/she] thinks are bad things, and what they would change about the ideas should they have to implement it. The ultimate goal of these three questions is to understand what this stakeholder thinks about each innovation from all across the spectrum, as far as supporting the ideas.</p>
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b> <p>This reflects positively on our team problem statement regardless of how negative or positive the feedback was. It reflects this way because our goal is to better build meaningful relationships between the Honors College students and the Honors College administration/faculty, and any feedback received from a direct participant in this helps us develop a better solution to the problem.</p>
<b>Summary of Research:</b> <p>This interview was constructive in every sense, as we received positive, negative, and constructive adjustments for every single one of our five innovations. In order to cover all five of them, though, an in-depth analysis of the innovations had to be sacrificed in order to accommodate the interviewee's schedule. There were some common threads between the interviewee's responses to the questions. The most common piece of negative feedback that was received was the it will still be difficult to entice Honors students to participate in events, as a significant amount of them are more introverted. The team did, however, receive feedback that reinforced the approach that we are taking, as if there was a good way to entice students to participate, innovations as these, or similar to these, are likely the best way to do it.</p>
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regardless of how interactive or how un-interactive the innovation is, there will always be the struggle of getting people to participate in it.</li><li>• From this student's perspective, it seems like the administration/faculty of the Honors College enjoy communicating with students and are willing to make some accommodations to see this take hold in more prominent ways that it already is, but there will come a point when they can't give any more and have to tend to other commitments.</li></ul>
<b>Dialogue Questions and Response:</b>

**Interviewer:** What do you find advantageous about the Co-Creation Lab?

**Interviewee:** I think it's kind of hard to say. I think that if I understand this right, it would be like an "idea space"? Like individuals could spend their time here working on projects and homework and stuff? I think it would be cool to have a space like this, but I worry about the level of involvement students would have with it. I would be interested to see the kind of involvement students would have here both individually and like working with other people in the space. It could be a good project space, but people would have to know to use it and be encouraged to use it.

**Interviewer:** What do you find detrimental about the first innovation?

**Interviewee:** I think there needs to be some sort of method of getting students to make use of it, or it might go forever unused. Which would cause your design to not work out in the end.

**Interviewer:** If you were to implement this innovation, what would you change about it?

**Interviewee:** I think it would be cool if some sort of project supplies could be provided in this area or have like different hours for different faculty members to be the room host. Like if there is a professor with a lot of woodworking passion, he could be the room host for 3 hours on Tuesdays while a professor that is really interested in cooking could host the room for 3 hours on a different day. I think this could be really cool to have ridiculous availability to this room. Like a 20-hour availability window or something. I just wonder if it would help encourage students to use the space and having a guide there could help students to try new things?

**Interviewer:** What do you find advantageous about redesigning Honors spaces to make them more comfortable and collaborative?

**Interviewee:** This is an interesting idea! I think that the best part of this idea is that it could make things a lot less formal. Maybe students wouldn't be so intimidated to talk with other students, or maybe even a professor. And it could just make the building a cooler place to be in.

**Interviewer:** What do you find detrimental about the second innovation?

**Interviewee:** Honestly, while I think that there could be some cool improvements to the building, I honestly think it is a really nice building already. I mean, you'll see some of the students who live here walking around barefoot down the halls or staying up super late in some of the classrooms. I even had a couple roommates freshman year that would use the big lecture hall for Nerf wars in the middle of the night.

**Interviewer:** If you were to implement this innovation, what would you change about it?

**Interviewee:** I guess I don't really know what to change. It kind of sounds like you want to make the Honors College look like Google. I think that could be cool, so maybe comfier seats. Or in that one movie, they had nap chairs at Google, those would be pretty sweet too.

**Interviewer:** What do you find advantageous about the yearlong challenges?

**Interviewee:** I really like the competition side of things of the idea. We don't have a whole lot of competition in the Honors College. Maybe through grades and in-class activities, but honestly, not much more than that. But I don't know, I guess that's just kind of Niemeyer. I feel like you

have a couple different kind of people who go to the Honors College. You have the people like me, who is pretty social. But most people like me are living in Holton-Hooker, not in Niemeyer. Then, you have the people who go to the Honors College for their Freshman year, then drop out because they just don't care about it. And then, you have the super nerdy people. The ones that aren't social and are kind of reclusive in their rooms. I think that's why a lot of people don't stay in the Honors College. You could walk through Niemeyer during the day and not see anyone in the living halls. It's like the people who live there just aren't interested in anyone else. It's just quiet and isolated. So yeah, I guess back to your question, some competition would be good.

**Interviewer:** What do you find detrimental about the third innovation?

**Interviewee:** I would go back to what I said about Niemeyer being so nerdy. I just don't know if people would be interested in that. And, what about the professors? A lot of them are just trying to do their whole 9 to 5 routine. Like, they have families, and there's no way they will want to stay late hours of the night working on a competition with the students. With your first idea, I think it would be better because the professors are staying there because they have interests in the activities that are going on in the idea space. But unless they are super interested in the competition, I don't think it will work.

**Interviewer:** If you were to implement this innovation, what would you change about it?

**Interviewee:** I think I would have some sort of more substantial reward. Like, maybe if the professors win, they get some sort of bonus, but if the students win, they get that bonus. I think that could be pretty cool and might really encourage students to be involved. Especially against their professors. Or especially against the professors that they don't like!

**Interviewer:** What do you find advantageous about the faculty landing page?

**Interviewee:** I think it could be a good thing to have some sort of super available thing. Sometimes an email just doesn't always work the best, so if you could come up with a way that would be like a step up from email and a step down from skyping the professor, I think that could be a good thing.

**Interviewer:** What do you find detrimental about the fourth innovation?

**Interviewee:** I actually think some people still have a hard time communicating with professors even if it is through like email. Because you always wonder if the professor is going to be annoyed with your question or if they are going to think you're dumb. Like, most times I would rather just ask a friend in the class rather than the professor.

**Interviewer:** If you were to implement this innovation, what would you change about it?

**Interviewee:** I would make it an app instead of like some website. I think with smartphones these days, it could be cool to just have that power at your fingertips. Or you said you guys could actually be like making this happen. I would talk to the CS faculty and get it to be some sort of senior project for the CS majors to help make this app. That way it's free.

**Interviewer:** What do you find advantageous about out of office-office hours?



**Interviewee:** I think it would be good to have some unconventional office hours for the students to attend. Especially for like students who typically have night classes. Or those non-conventional students who have like families and stuff. I bet they could totally make use of that.

**Interviewer:** What do you find detrimental about the fifth innovation?

**Interviewee:** Just like one of the ideas we talked about earlier, I think you would have a really hard time convincing faculty members to spend time outside of their regular work week meeting students. The structure of school has been set up for so long that professors are like the bosses of the work environment, and the students are the employees. If your boss tells you to meet him or do something, you are expected to do that. I think it would be a hard battle to get the professors to give up that kind of control they have.

**Interviewer:** If you were to implement this innovation, what would you change about it?

**Interviewee:** I would maybe give the professors a stipend for coffee house expenses. So that way they would be encouraged to work in a place somewhere other than their office. That could be good for them and for the students.

**Interviewer:** Would you be open to further contact in case we should want a follow-up interview?

**Interviewee:** Sure, that's no big deal.

**Interviewer:** Who else do you think we should contact?

**Interviewee:** You could talk to [REDACTED]. I forget his last name, but he's involved in the Mentor thing - oh wait! It might be ANCHOR that [he's/she's] involved in. I don't know, either way [he/she] could be good. And you could ask any of the professors you've had. That's what I would do.

**Interviewer:** What's one thing I didn't ask you that you think I should have?

**Interviewee:** I'm not too sure. I think you covered everything.

**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 contact?**

Yes, and after the interview was completed the interviewee stated that texting would be their preferred method.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- ANCHOR Representative
- Past professors

**Possible next-steps:**

- The next steps are to integrate the feedback received in this interview and determine how many of the adjustments that were suggested to us should happen. It is important to also stay true to our goal.
- Another next step is to integrate this interview with the other interviews from this week and see how they start to piece together and create a larger picture of what each of these innovations might look like when implemented.
- It's getting to be time that we seriously start to think about keeping two innovations and scratching three. It may be worth trying to see how we can intertwine innovations to stay true to the original problem statement, but only if how the implementation of it can be carried out and if it can be traced back through our research and need statements.

Dialogue Summary #15:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> ANCHOR President
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Female
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b> My primary goal was to gain insights into our team's top 5 innovations and hear what improvements we can make as long as what another student who already is involved in Honors College governance believes can work if implemented properly.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b> Our top 5 innovations come from needs developed from our team research and insights, so responses to any of those innovations are focused on our problem statement. It also addresses the general goal of this project of what our innovations can do in terms of increasing student governance for the Honors College.
<b>Summary of Research:</b> This piece of research is beneficial towards our team's goal because it provided insight into what a student leader has found has worked in the past and what she believes would not work. This stakeholder is very important because she is the President of an Honors student organization who is currently working on increasing involvement in the Honors College through that organization. Her insights were able to direct our goals more specifically and understand what could help alleviate stress during faculty-student interactions and what does not work.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is important for students to feel like they are important to their professors or faculty and are not annoying them or taking time out of their days.</li><li>• Collaborative spaces are necessary in order to bolster communication between students as well as between the students and professor.</li><li>• Students with a limited amount of time need to know specific time frames they can access the information they need.</li></ul>
<b>Dialogue Questions and Response:</b> <b>Interviewer:</b> I am going to do this simply by just telling you each innovation we have come up with, describing what we mean by each innovation we came up with, and then let you ask me any questions and let me know from your experience in leadership what you think of each of these innovations. Is that an okay method for you? <b>Interviewee:</b> Yeah, I think that works.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so I'll start with our first one. First, we said we can create a "do something" environment. This basically means that we create a space or utilize existing spaces for a place to create whatever you want and have the space open to both faculty and students so that they can communicate in a creative space. What are your thoughts on an innovation like that?

**Interviewee:** Interesting. Would this be specifically Honors spaces or just at Grand Valley?

**Interviewer:** So, it would most likely be in Honors spaces like Holton Hooker or Niemeyer because that's where, like, Honors students live, and Honors classes are.

**Interviewee:** Okay, makes sense. I think this is really interesting but I kind of see it as another event that students may or may not come to. As President of ANCHOR, I know how difficult it is to get Honors students to come out to events and spend their free time doing something with the Honors College, so I don't know if this really helps reduce the stress of communication or just provides another option that people may not utilize. Those are just my immediate reactions, I guess.

**Interviewer:** That does make sense and we see a lot that students may be apathetic towards events. I guess the idea was more like having a space for faculty and students to be goofy and play almost like in elementary school and get out of their normal environments to just create something.

**Interviewee:** That's why I think it's a really interesting idea and could work really well, but I think you'll still run into the issue of trying to get people to be there and utilize the space.

**Interviewer:** I appreciate the insight on that, especially because you know through ANCHOR that students can be hard to convince to come out of their spaces. But I'll move onto the next innovation. We proposed that we can redesign Honors spaces so that they are more comfortable and collaborative. So, this could be redesigning Honors classes, living spaces, or even Honors faculty offices in order to reduce anxiety when it comes to being in class or even being around the Honors College. In what ways could this benefit our mission?

**Interviewee:** I think that the way a room is designed is actually really important to make people more comfortable and actually let students and professors talk to each other. We do something similar in ANCHOR meetings, so our desks are set up so we can talk to each other openly and face each other and have good personal interactions. It's interesting how even easier access to communicating with other people can make people more comfortable with talking in general. So, you said you would just redesign the spaces as they are, like not try to replace how the rooms are set up?

**Interviewer:** Basically, it would be something as simple as rearranging the furniture or adding some more color into rooms or anything like that to make students and professors alike feel more comfortable with communication.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I think that's really interesting. I think it can definitely work because even in my Honors classes, it was a lot easier to be collaborative if the professor arranged the desks so that we could see each other and talk to each other. So that has a lot of benefits.

**Interviewer:** Excellent, well I'm glad to hear your input. Next, we proposed that Honors students and faculty could possibly have year-long challenges like between student organizations or departments or even Honors freshman sequences. The subject of competitions could differ depending on semester or year or something like that and students or faculty within each team can get to know each other well while working together in order to compete against other groups. Do you think that could possibly be beneficial?

**Interviewee:** That's really interesting because I never really thought of competitions increasing communication and working for people who are already anxious. So, I would be a little concerned about Honors students who are already anxious in social situations or are hesitant about situations like that. But I can also see how team building could be beneficial for them, like even though they're competing they also have their own groups that they can get to know better through the competition. So, I think it's possible, it could help communication. I'm just worried about the Honors students who I know are already socially awkward or get anxious about social situations. That one I'm a little bit iffy on but I think it's possible.

**Interviewer:** Right, thank you for your honesty. I think those are good insights, so I'll move onto the next innovation. We also thought that faculty could create professional schedules that are easily accessible 24 hours a day in order for other faculty or students to be able to see when they are open and when they are busy. Basically, the schedule would consist of what classes the professor has, what their office hours are, any other events that they have to participate in, and campus events that they would recommend for other students. Do you think this could help faculty and students, especially in finding communication at any time of day?

**Interviewee:** I think that absolutely could help because I've even experienced, like, I'm trying to get in contact with my professor whose office hours do not work with my schedule and I can't figure out what time they're available besides talking to them directly and then they have to take time out of their day to let me know when they can meet outside of class or office hours. And if you put in events that they recommend, that could really help get students out to more events that are focused on their major or subjects they are interested in. So, would they just post the schedule on their office doors or classrooms or something like that?

**Interviewer:** We were actually thinking that they could post their schedules online somehow. We've seen that some organizations and some colleges are able to post schedules online or even through Blackboard so that you can see the schedule at any time of day.

**Interviewee:** Okay, that makes sense. I would say that could really help students be able to figure out when they can get the help they need even if their office hours don't work. Like we know that Honors students have busy schedules. There's no way that all students can make the office hours a professor has. So, this is really interesting.

**Interviewer:** Awesome, I'm glad to hear all about that. Alright this brings us to the last innovation that our team proposed. We thought that faculty could create some sort of out-of-office office hours so the environment is less stressful, and the students feel more comfortable coming to their professors or other faculty they need to see and can actually address their issues. What do you think about that?

**Interviewee:** Okay yeah, what kind of places would the faculty go to then?

**Interviewer:** We were thinking somewhere like a cafe or lounge or even different locations on the Pew or Allendale campuses so that students could have access to them at least relatively close to where they already will be. So, like if a student is always on the Allendale campus and lives on the Allendale campus, they shouldn't have to go downtown to meet the professor just to talk about certain issues they have in class. But the areas would have to be places that are comfortable to be in and allow them to be collaborative because we still want to alleviate anxiety. Does that make sense?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I get that. I think that really helps with the access problem because students need to be able to see their professors at more than one place and at more than one time per week. Plus, I've even gone out to lunch with a professor and grabbed coffee with a professor and that environment is way different. I think even they feel more comfortable and will just talk to you like a normal person. So, for your goal, I think that could really work.

**Interviewer:** That's great, I'm so glad to hear your insight about all of our innovations. So, like I said that was the last innovation that we have come up with and we are working on right now. Is there any particular one that you think could work the best? Or is there anything that you don't think would work at all?

**Interviewee:** I actually really liked the idea of arranging furniture or whatever you said it actually was in order to increase communication and make students able to collaborate more effectively. That is just something that I have personally seen working for people who might be anxious around talking to random people or it can work for people who struggle with collaborating with other people. Plus, that's something so easy to do in classrooms or offices and doesn't really cost anything, so I think that's the easiest and most effective one to do. And I guess there were some concerns that I had with a couple of your ideas, but I don't think that really dismisses them as possibly working. I think it's still possible but like I worry about getting students to come out and get involved without changing something on that front first. But I don't necessarily think it won't work.

**Interviewer:** Well, good to hear. Is there anything that I didn't mention here or any questions that you think I should have asked during this interview?

**Interviewee:** Nope, I really can't think of anything. I'm excited about hearing about where this goes.

**Interviewer:** Alright, well if there are no other questions, I will wrap this up. Before we leave, would you be open to further communication with me about this project?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, that sounds good with me.

**Interviewer:** Perfect. Is there a method you would prefer for communication?

**Interviewee:** I don't really have a preference, I just check my phone and my email the most so that's the easiest way to contact me.

**Interviewer:** That sounds like a plan. Well I appreciate everything you have told me, and I thank you for taking your time to meet with me.

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

The interviewee did not have a response to this question.

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

She mentioned that I can contact her in the future. She can be contacted either through calling, texting, or email communication.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- Competition between students may be perceived negatively by those who have social anxiety
- Students who have busy schedules need to be able to meet others in locations not too far away and at times that work around their schedules
- Opening a space for creativity does not mean people will show up unless they have an additional incentive to show up

**Possible next-steps:**

- Sit in on an ANCHOR meeting to see how the board and members discuss relevant issues within the Honors College
- Talk to an Honors professor about the 5 innovations
- Address issues with the possibility of implementation of our innovations

Dialogue Summary #16:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> Honors Faculty
<b>Estimated Age:</b> ___ 20-30 ___ 30-40 ___ 40-50 <u> X </u> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Female
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b>  The primary goal of this opportunity is to gain insight into a faculty perspective on the current strengths and weaknesses of the Honors College's communication system, with particular emphasis on opportunities for improvement within the current faculty-student dynamic in the Honors College.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b>  This work ties directly into our problem statement by examining the ways in which the Honors College is currently positioned to facilitate faculty-student engagement.
<b>Summary of Research:</b>  Some major themes emerged, namely that there needs to be more authentic, less performative, engagement of students in the Honors College as well as an increase in student initiative and responsibility. Students should recognize the investment they're making and make sure they're really getting what they need out of their educational experience. There was also a major theme of utilizing existing feedback channels, namely the LIFT survey, more intentionally and making that knowledge public.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Even in situations where students are involved, they are usually asked for feedback as a "box-checking" action rather than as an act of co-creation</li><li>• Honors faculty have unrealistic mentoring expectations (up to 250 students a year), this model should be revised</li><li>• LIFT evaluations are required for all professors, but what actually happens with them? These should be made public and should be used to steer decision-making</li></ul>



**Dialogue Questions and Responses:**

**Interviewer:** So, you have a little bit more background information than most people we've talked to about this, but I was really interested in your perspective, in particular because of your position within this project. We are really interested in looking for differing people's perspectives of the current communication system within the Honors College.

**Interviewee:** I have a different position within the Honors College. So as endowed chair I am not really faculty and I'm not really administration. And then I have my left foot in other places in the universities, so I see a lot of what's going on. Within the Honors College itself I absolutely believe the faculty are intention on making sure that students have an educational experience that is more than just what a typical liberal arts education would be. I'm very dedicated toward interdisciplinarity, toward driving critical thinking and creative thinking. But I also believe that there is a challenge between actually implementing that outside of curriculum and what expectations we might have for faculty and then for students. So, when we talk about creating a culture where there is a different exchange of information or there is a co-creating of an Honors College experience, I don't see where there are those channels either informal or formal. Now in a formal sense, there's some committees that students get asked to join, and the students get asked to join those are purely the ones that happen to show up. So, if you are in this particular role, let's say you were elected by your fellow students to be president of ANCHOR. Because you're a recognized name that's how you get this role- not because of interests, not because of expertise, not because of a different perspective, it's just because you're known. I don't want to say it's unfair, but it tends to have a certain perspective consistently provided, and it's somebody who was more involved, somebody who wants to be at the table. But on the other hand, when I say at the table, just being at the table doesn't matter to me. It's more like what are you saying here, how are you engaging, what is your agenda, and most importantly how are you representing a larger voice than just your own? I don't think we teach people how to do that. Especially if you are in a leadership role, do you really truly understand the sense of responsibility you have toward representing more than just your own opinion? I'm not sure we enable students to understand what role they could have in crafting their own educational experience at Honors. I'm not sure we have faculty who truly want to go outside the wheelhouse of curriculum and say, "well no wait a minute, I have a role here too in crafting this experience", but it's built around that of what students need and want as this "check the box" thing. I don't know. I think most people just look at it that way. It's like "I want this designation on my diploma" vs. "No. Tell me how this makes my college experience more meaningful, and how it helps me achieve my lifelong goals."

**Interviewer:** That's a much richer perspective.

**Interviewee:** Right. Formally we don't have any committee, to me, that addresses that. We have a curriculum committee where a lot of faculty, not just Honors faculty but faculty that teach in Honors from around the university, have a high interest in the promise of Honors curriculum. They represent each college and we sit around and talk about proposals of curriculum- we certainly just finished a big curriculum redesign- but as for students, there's three students there. And I think I'm the only person that stops the conversation and goes "no, what do you think." Students don't come forward with just their own opinion.

**Interviewer:** Even those three students that are there?

**Interviewee:** No. I don't believe that the structure... it's a very formal committee structure. Now I don't know about you but when I was 22 the last thing, I was about ready to do was to interrupt a bunch of faculties to say "well that's not going to work. I'll give you the six reasons that's not going to work". So, at the end of the day when you asked them, "Does that sound interesting to you?" it's a yes or no question. It's not building on any of the conversation and it's just basically to me almost a perfunctory "Let's check the box, we asked a student." And I'd love to see the whole equation flipped which is "Students, guess what? This is your curriculum. What do you need from it?" Especially Junior Seminars. We need 12 junior seminars from Honors students. You guys tell us what you want to learn. What are you interested in? And we as faculty will help put it together. We'll meet the learning objectives, we'll design curriculum because we're pros at that, to make it a high impact learning experience for you. That's what we'll do. That's our expertise. But if you want to learn about the 10 things you wish you didn't know, because it's all about creepy germs and climate change or whatever else, I mean we'll do that, right? We'll do that. And then I get challenged when I say stuff like this against "well students don't know what they want", and I was like "I think you need to talk to them".

**Interviewer:** I really appreciate hearing that.

**Interviewee:** I think that there's a lot they have to say about this. But again, how do you take some of that informal and anecdotal information that I think I have by talking to so many students through a course that is designed to get student voice. The whole Design Thinking class is designed to help students push forward an agenda.

**Interviewer:** You can't say that about too many other classes.

**Interviewee:** Right. So, after all these semesters I think I have a pretty good idea of what students are interested in and how they value their educational experience. So, let's let students try to do some things but there is not a formal mechanism for that.

**Interviewer:** So, it sounds like there is responsibility on both sides just not an understanding of where that responsibility needs to be enacted.

**Interviewee:** Right. And I think there's, and I don't want to say it's true with everybody, but I do believe that in general the educational system does a lot of patting on the heads of students and says, "aren't you great" and "don't you worry your little self with that". And maybe it's just because I was raised in the 70s. I mean students college students at Berkeley, they changed the world, and they pretty much decided how it was going to go for them.

**Interviewer:** Absolutely. And look at students out in Parkland now students are still changing the world.

**Interviewee:** Absolutely. And then I'm also just very pragmatic. I'm a business person and if I paid X for Y, I really would like to make sure I got Y, right to my level of satisfaction. And too often I see students that just want to get through a course and I'm going "you're paying for that". If it's a bad course, if it's a bad instructor, if it's not giving you the results that you would like to see, then something in the equation has to change. Because it's not equitable. With

students having agency about this, and maybe it's a bigger problem statement than what we're thinking about in this class. Maybe the problem statement is "how do students have agency about their educational experience?" And it's perfectly fine to ask that question, because is there a different issue here? It's an issue where there's a whole generation of students that don't believe they have that sort of level of responsibility and accountability toward their own educational experience.

**Interviewer:** This is a huge question, but what factors do you think contributed to that shift of students no longer feeling like they have agency in education? This could be widespread or let's just maybe think about Grand Valley, what factors do you think are there that

**Interviewee:** I don't know, there is probably so much research that shows sort of this transition from Baby Boomers through Generation Z, and how those mentalities shift. I'm sure in your work you see this too and you guys probably have discussions about kids of 20 years ago versus kids today, and helicopter parents and everything. So, I do think that's real. And so, with that probably comes this change in how people are thinking about a higher education and what it means toward accomplishing a career goal let alone a life goal. Because careers are just supposed to support our life goals. So, I'm not saying Honors doesn't do some of this stuff. I'm sure that there's faculty that would tell me I'm full of malarkey, or maybe not, or maybe they haven't really thought about it.

**Interviewer:** I wonder, how much of a status quo actually gets questioned?

**Interviewee:** I think it's wrought to question the status quo. Everybody is going at a breakneck speed, so change is harder than it ever was. If you have the system down and you have things going so you know what to expect every day it gets very difficult to suddenly start talking about "No, we're not going to do things that way anymore." And as a matter of fact, you don't know what you'll be teaching in two years even. You'll be in Honors but you're probably going to have to redesign a class every two to three years.

**Interviewer:** I feel like that's a pressure that a lot of students don't think about.

**Interviewee:** Probably not. Having true empathy for faculty and what it means- I didn't really gain that even after all of my years of working and career until I was actually teaching. I always love it when I have students come back and they join me for a class or they teach part of a class and afterwards they just shake their heads and go like "I had no idea how hard that was" and I'm like "Yeah it looks like it would be super easy", and then add into that grading, follow up, and office hours. I'm not complaining at all, it's really joyous work but it's a lot more than people think.

**Interviewer:** Absolutely. This is a theme that's come up in our research and I'm sure other teams' research as well are these kind of empathy gaps between these two experiences of what being a student in the year 2019 looks and feels like and what being a teacher or an administrator in 2019 looks and feels like, and I feel like we both have outdated assumptions. I wonder if you could talk a little bit on that and what those assumptions are and how that influences communication.

**Interviewee:** I don't know all of those assumptions and I wish I did. I lived this a little bit through my own children. I have one who's a freshman in college and one who's made her college choice and will be leaving for college. It's exciting, it's wonderful, it certainly wasn't what my experience was. I paid my own way. It wasn't about an experience, my education was an education, it was a means to an end. It was "get out as fast as you can have it be as cheap as you can make it and get a few lucky breaks along the way". It's very different now. I don't know all those assumptions but I do know that if we had a way where there was conversation to gain that empathy and then to start problem solving around it- whether it's these anxiety issues which seem to be so prevalent, anxiety and depression issues which I truly believe are greatly technology driven because physiologically we're showing brains behaving differently- or it's the fact that I can't afford this and I'm working two to three jobs. There's been a lot of great work done with first generation students trying to understand the sort of extra constraints that those students have to maintain a full schedule, send money back home, and work. But do we really have empathy? After the freshman year in particular we just have a disconnect in our culture. The new curriculum will help with that a little bit, but overall, I'm shocked when I find out that people don't realize that faculty you have in your sequence is your faculty advisor for Honors. People don't know that. They kind of miss the memo. You're supposed to be able to link with them for 4 years. But then back into that and realize what that means for every faculty member, if it's 60 students in year one and it's four years it's up to 250 students a year that they should be touching base with. So that's one a day or two a day. Is that even realistic?

**Interviewer:** Or if that is realistic, what quality of connection and conversation is happening there?

**Interviewee:** Right, or what missteps? Even worse, what could be detrimental in that process? And there are some students that just don't care. They're just in a different space and they have more independence and just sort of figure stuff out on their own. So, let's say it's even 200 students. That's on top of maybe teaching three classes, other obligations they have for service and scholarship at the University, it might not be realistic. So, then what do you create in order to have this exchange of information so that we're building better classes, were cognizant of the challenges, and not just having these assumptions, especially the assumptions about work? I just am stunned all the time about faculty that don't get it. I mean the fact that you work full time and you have the flexibility you have to be even taking classes now is purely by the virtue of a great employer.

**Interviewer:** I'm intensely grateful that. I couldn't do it otherwise, it's what kept me from doing it for 10 years.

**Interviewee:** Now you would be at the point where one class a semester does not finish a degree. And not a wonder you get worn out. So, I don't think that they understand that, the extra constraints. And certainly, then you get into a team environment with fellow students that don't have those sorts of things that they just they don't get it either. I don't get like "you're just going to be here and you're going to do this and you're going to get it done you're going to get out because you actually have another 300 things on the to-do list". So, I'm not saying that they don't, but they don't have the professional lens yet.

**Interviewer:** They are busier than I expected them to be, that's been really interesting to see, so many driven students, it's awesome.

**Interviewee:** Well that is the beauty of Honors. I'm absolutely blessed to teach in Honors because I'm spoiled rotten. They get you highly motivated students that really are trying to have an impact in the world. But with that also comes a cohort of students that typically, because they're more driven and certainly have higher expectations, also of higher stress and certain challenges that other students don't face- one of them being indecision because they're good at everything. And it's like "okay what do I do next when I'm good at everything and I enjoy everything and I'm curious about everything? It's like divine discontent. I always look at the Honors College as a college within a college. And as student who's coming back to the university, choosing the Honors College for the promise- I mean this was totally a decision you made based on the promise of Honors that's well beyond designation. I can't believe that you would take the extra time and energy to do this unless it was more than the designation.

**Interviewer:** Right. It was my favorite thing about school the first time around, those are the classes I still remember from a decade ago.

**Interviewee:** So that's the Honors promise. So how do we build on that in a way that the curriculum is engaging to this very curious, more intellectual, group so that we keep them? Of all the students that are out there, I would guess this is a group that will want to have a say about the design of their educational experience. When you're in Life Sciences, or you're in Health Sciences, and you're in a professional degree program, there is not a lot of wiggle room. Those programs are accredited, you have to do A, B, C, D, and E if you expect to have a degree. Outside of those, gen eds is the only thing that they get to play with. And I'll tell you most of the time it's "let's just check the box and get those done as fast as I can". It's very different. So, I don't think this is for everybody. I don't think the question of designing your educational experiences for everybody. But I think the people that can answer that question in the liberal arts and in Honors are really truly the leaders of tomorrow.

**Interviewer:** So, building off of that, if they are the leaders of tomorrow do you see any opportunity or any expectation for involvement post-graduation?

**Interviewee:** I think if there is a formal mechanism for exchange of ideas and co-creating, which to me is agency. I mean we're going to co-create we're not just going to sit down and talk about stuff and wonder what's going to happen next, we're going to co-create. We're going to help implement together. I think alumni should definitely be engaged in the formal mechanism because when we get a hold of alumni from Honors, they do talk about their Honors experience very fondly as a game changer. Either networking that happened through it or because of Honors they felt more confident to go and become leader of Student Senate, so anything that built their resume. They'll talk about that. We don't leverage that network very well. I think we're learning how to do that. About two or three years ago there were about three of us that wanted to do ask "What is our outreach plan to our alumni? How are we engaging our alumni?" So, a student did a senior project with me and drew up a blueprint for alumni engagement and went and interviewed 30-40 different alumni on how they want to be involved. All of them said they wanted to be, but they didn't know how to.

**Interviewer:** Interesting, that's a phrase we're hearing a lot.

**Interviewee:** Well we don't have it. I think this is why the design challenge is what it is for the class. You have a new Director in the College who is like "I don't have a way to talk to students." So, he keeps coming back to this class. I'll tell him "give me another design challenge, it's fine." I mean what we're hearing and what we're learning is directly changing what's happening in the Honors College. That's great but it needs to be outside of that, because it's only students that are taking the class and then and that's 30 students a year or 40 students a year, this little tiny subset out of seventeen hundred students.

**Interviewer:** This leads into my next question of scale. I have been really interested in hearing different perspectives about what you view as the scale of projects like this. Is it only going to touch Honors, is it going to touch past that? What do you think the potential could be?

**Interviewee:** I'm so bullish about working within Honors because Honors is a program within the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies so there's enormous degrees of freedom to implement change. We don't have to go through 18 Faculty Councils and senates, and we don't have to do Student Senate and we don't have to go through the Provost, so there's tons we can try. To the previous Director too I was always talking to him about how this is the perfect prototyping spot. We can try anything here. Every junior seminar goes through the Honors College curriculum committee to make sure it aligns with learning objectives et cetera, but it doesn't need to go to curriculum committee. So, you can change a junior seminar every single semester.

**Interviewer:** That's wonderful. And you've got people that are so creative and so willing.

**Interviewee:** You have faculty that really want to do that, and then you have another faculty that don't. I always ask students what happens with your LIFT evaluations, do you know? They don't know. They fill them out, so don't you think those should all be public? And they just look at me. Why should they be public, you filled them out? You select courses based on time of day, whether you need it or not, and Rate My professor, and this is your three criteria. And behind all of this you have a whole LIFT evaluation from the semester before, why isn't it public? And oh my gosh I said this one time in front of faculty, and I thought I was going to be thrown out of the room.

**Interviewer:** What does happen with those then? Is it just internally reviewed?

**Interviewee:** I get my mine, I use them to adjust our curriculum. I'm assuming the Director gets them and he can look them up. But I don't know how they're used for tenure evaluation, I don't know any of that. I don't know how my colleagues use those evaluations in order to improve on their work. I assume they do. But if you get a bad review what happens then? So, I don't know, but what I do know is that evaluation, we ask people to do them. We as faculty get messages to make sure you have at least 80 to 90 percent participation. So, take course time to do it, which I refuse to do, I just ask you repeatedly to do it to try to get to that percentage. But it should be voluntary, and I would hope it's because people truly believe that that is a conduit for there to be change around something that's ineffective. And that's what I hope happens.

**Interviewer:** That's really interesting to think about, I hadn't thought about LIFT evaluations at all through this process.

**Interviewee:** They're required as part of university accreditation, so what black hole are they going into? Who's looking at them, how are they being used, how did faculty use them, why aren't they available to students especially when you're picking classes?

**Interviewer:** And how much could we be learning from those? How many answers are in there that we just haven't even checked out?

**Interviewee:** And that's a long evaluation. I learn the most from comments. I don't mind the number scores, and there's always an outlier to everything of course, but the comments are so instructive. But I have a very different view of feedback than a lot of other people. It's critical. I mean I shouldn't be up there running a class if I can't deliver content that is valuable.

**Interviewer:** Oh absolutely. Plus, how else are you going to know if people don't tell you?

**Interviewee:** But I do wish it was used versus the Rate My Professor thing which I think is just silly. I had students in my second or third semester that were very upset because I wasn't out there. And they said "we're going to create your account. We're going to do the first couple posts. It's too important. You have to be out there with positive evaluations because then people will sign up for the class." They wrote the class description, they did a marketing thing for me, they were like "what you need to do is offer this downtown, you need to offer this in Allendale, you need to have more than one section of this" and on and on and on and that was all great, but it's not quite so easy.

**Interviewer:** I think about the difference between those two tools [LIFT and Rate my Teacher], like a Yelp review, are you always going to take the time if you had a really good experience or are you only going to go when you're incensed about something?

**Interviewee:** I only find that I moved enough when I'm incensed. Not necessarily though, sometimes I'd write, and or I will just leave a huge tip.

**Interviewer:** Well I don't want to take up too much more of your time I know we're past 20 minutes, but this has been so good I've barely even looked at our checklist over here.

**Interviewee:** Make sure you have the ones that will help you draw lines of sight from insights to needs.

**Interviewer:** Honestly you very organically got to the things that I was hoping to get to. So, thank you for that. Something I'm always interested in, what do you think we haven't thought of yet?

**Interviewee:** Well I was surprised initially, after the first few classes and then the first interviews reading with students, at just the failure to recognize the personal sense of responsibility and accountability toward an education. It was kind of like "I'm coming here, and this is all happening to me."

**Interviewer:** Oh interesting, “to me” not “for me”.

**Interviewee:** Yes, and that was an eye opener for me, and quite an insight to realize. There were several interviews that came back where students were saying “well everything's fine. We don't need to talk to administration at the Honors College.” There's a lot to peel back out of that. Well do you not feel associated with this outside of a designation on your diploma? And maybe that's fine. Should you feel more? You're putting a lot of money into this. I'd look at this and go “you can buy four cars, or you can get a college education”. So, what's the return on that investment and what does that mean long-term if you learn certain skills now? And it doesn't necessarily have to come from curriculum, those skills. So, I'm a little surprised at how there doesn't appear to be a need here, so is it just an administration need? So, I think as you guys craft your needs statements and start innovating, gut check on those innovations and gut check on those needs' statements, on how those innovations address the needs, will be really important to make sure that we're still designing for the for the right problem.

**Interviewer:** That's really good feedback. All right then, last thing I will ask today is: Who should we speak to next?

**Interviewee:** I sent an announcement out because I saw this thing, it might have even been in the Honors newsletter because I read it, about a Provost Student Advisory position. I was like “What is this, and where does it go, and who does it work with?” I would love to know what that is, and how does somebody get picked for that who is somehow going to represent the diversity of the university, and what is the mechanisms for input, etcetera. So that was really an eye opener. We have an existing organization called ANCHOR, and we have the Mentor Council and these all serve purposes but again defining roles and responsibilities. If one's going to be built on as a solution, great, but what does that mean to the charter and all sorts of stuff. But you know I think the Director craves sitting in that room last week. He could have sat there for eight hours and listened to what you guys have to say about that experience, and he's going to do something with that information, so we better figure out how that information is going to be of highest value and representative of the highest priority issues. I don't think that it is coming through weird channels with the same one or two people is the best.



**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 be contacted?**

Yes, e-mail or in person.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- Investigate Provost Student Advisory position
- Investigate LIFT evaluations
- Follow up with alumni

**Possible next-steps:**

- Talk to someone about Provost Student Advisory position
- Ask the Director about LIFT evaluations, and how they’re used in Honors
- Connect with Honors faculty about mentoring expectations and realities

Dialogue Summary #17:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> Honors Student
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Female
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b> The primary goal of this opportunity was to gain insight from an Honors student about our team's top two prototype concepts. This was especially interesting as this student has been a part of the design thinking process and had a unique perspective!
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b> This work reflects our team problem statement because this interview really got at the heart and soul of our innovations. Since we are down to the top two it is vital to understand what best fits people's needs and schedules to utilize these ideas when deciding further about our innovation.
<b>Summary of Research:</b> This research gave way into our team's top two prototype concepts. We discussed both the positives and negatives of each concept and the takeaway from them. The second prototype concept was received better because it was something that created an ease of access to information that students look for on a daily basis, while also being a way to create relationships with professors as well. The concepts themselves seem to both have some tweaks that could be made to improve them as well. But for the most part this interview gave a lot of insight into what the foundations of these prototype concepts should represent.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ease of access seems to be an important factor when thinking about the innovations; for both students and faculty</li><li>• Time is always going to be an issue so making things that are available at various times throughout the week is important</li><li>• Location was something that we talked about and having pop-up locations rather than one set in stone seems to allow for more diversity and students and faculty to join something like our first concept. This also doesn't limit us into only certain groups of students and faculty on campus but opens it up more to everyone in Honors.</li></ul>
<b>Dialogue Questions and Response:</b> <b>Interviewer:</b> Considering you are an Honors student that is also a part of the design thinking process this semester I am excited because I feel as if you will offer a unique perspective! Since you already know most of the ideas behind how this process works and what innovations are, I am just going to describe for you our top 2 prototype concepts and then ask you a few questions!

Our first prototype concept concerns creating a Co-Creation Lab that encompasses a “do something” environment. This will help to bring faculty and students together for informal, creative, and playful problem-solving activities aimed at fostering greater communication and rapport-building. This environment could either be a pop-up experience at rotating locations or at a permanent drop-in experience at a designated location depending on interest and availability of the space. This space would also form an Honors Nexus where faculty and administration could meet to discuss both academic and personal issues in a more relaxed environment.

Our second prototype concept that our team came up with is a “Faculty Landing Page”. This would encompass most of what the Honors College website already has to offer but with a few tweaks. Google Calendar or another calendar like widget, could be utilized to better allow students access to a faculty member/administrator’s professional schedule throughout the day. This would allow for easier access to people and their availability would be updated in real time. This solution caters to the fact that students tend toward asynchronous communication with authority figures, as our research shows, and also helps to eliminate the sense of wondering that some students have about whether or not the faculty member/administrator will be in their office. This landing page would also encompass some of the faculty’s interests and other events or presentations on campus that they are passionate about to generate conversation starters if needed, while also building a more personal and authentic relationship.

**Interviewer:** What do you find advantageous about the first prototype concept?

**Interviewee:** I think it is a good idea as far as providing another space that is outside the typical office that you go to for office hours. But I think a lot of research has shown that students are really nervous about meeting with faculty, so I think that would take away that power structure that makes students nervous. And then also, I think that might help mitigate the timing issues with students, just to have another place that faculty and students could potentially meet outside of office hours.

**Interviewer:** What do you find detrimental about the first prototype concept?

**Interviewee:** The only thing that I thought of was maybe a lack of structure in that space without a common goal, topic, or question for faculty and students when they meet. It might be hard for them to start a conversation. Like even faculty has said that it is hard to just be put in a social situation with students, and they are kind of at a loss for what to discuss. So, I think if there was a common topic or like a question of the day or something that students and faculty could come in and focus their discussion about. It may help encourage them to do it and to also go use that space and to help facilitate relationships, rather than leaving it open-ended.

**Interviewer:** If you were to implement/participate in this prototype concept, what would you change about it?

**Interviewee:** That is kind of just what I said about directing discussion a little bit more and then maybe like, this is another problem I just thought of. But I remember when I was freshmen and I didn’t live in Niemeyer but because of the room of the innovation space being in Niemeyer it might be more difficult for students who aren’t on campus or are even further away for them to participate.

**Interviewer:** Do you think if it was like a pop-up location throughout the week or month between different locations in the Honors College, in what ways would that be more appealing to students and faculty?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, actually I didn't think about that. I think that would be awesome just because then maybe students who don't live in Niemeyer can go and even for faculty it might be closer to their offices. It might help to diversify groups, because I think students are lazy and don't always want to walk to Niemeyer so if it is like one minute away, they might actually consider going.

**Interviewer:** That is funny because I talked to an Honors professor as well about the location between the different colleges, and since a lot of our part time faculty aren't housed in Niemeyer, they say that they hate walking all the way to Niemeyer and would rather have their classes somewhere in the middle. So, I think location plays a big role in both faculty and student participation.

**Interviewer:** What do you find advantageous about the second prototype concept?

**Interviewee:** I think having a calendar stood out to me, to kind of have a centralized place where all of the scheduling is. There has been a lot of research saying that timing is a big issue, and I think that a calendar would really just be an easy way to access what is going on in the Honors College, what time the professors are willing to meet, it really just filters it all into one location and allows students to fit it around their own schedules.

**Interviewer:** And the flip side, what do you find problematic about the second prototype concept?

**Interviewee:** I couldn't think of any specific problems. But maybe a concern, is maybe as long as students know about it and if it is really easy to access so you don't have to go searching for it. So, a calendar that is easy to see and find, and also get the message that it is there. I know that a lot of times things that are online with the websites or the newsletters, students don't really know about it so they can't utilize it.

**Interviewer:** One of the things we thought about too adding onto the faculty landing page, even inside the calendar because a lot of departments already do this. But if there was a possibility to also sign up for an appointment through the calendar, in what ways would it make it more beneficial or difficult to students and faculty to use?

**Interviewee:** I think that is a good idea, because I was actually just going through this problem with registering for classes because there are so many different advisors and faculty members online so it is accessible, but you have to find what specific advisor you need to talk to and where they are located and just visit a bunch of different pages. So, I think also visually being able to see what times are available with various advisors and staff would be super nice.

**Interviewer:** If you were to participate in this prototype concept, what would you change about it?

**Interviewee:** No, I like that one a lot. I don't think I would change anything.

**Interviewer:** Okay, your kind of are getting into my next question. But what is your preferred prototype concept and why?

**Interviewee:** I think the second one just because for myself I would see myself using that one a lot more. Maybe occasionally if they had the first prototype concept location I would do it occasionally, but I wouldn't see myself doing it on a regular basis just because of timing and stuff. But the calendar for sure, I definitely would be using that a lot to try and stay involved in the Honors College and the ease of access of it would be really nice. And having a centralized location for events that are going on in Honors would be awesome because then I could plan things based on my own schedule.

**Interviewer:** What is one thing that I didn't ask you that I should have?

**Interviewee:** I think your questions were tailored nicely for your prototype concepts and that you asked them great! I don't really have anything else to add.

**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 be contacted?**

Yes, they prefer to be contacted via text message or phone.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- N/A

**Possible next-steps:**

- One important idea to remember is that the best prototype concept isn't always the most favorable of the team. It is important to remember that we are solving for a group of people and the best way to find the best prototype concept is to ask them!
- Figure out how if it is possible to add a Calendar widget to the Honors College faculty page...and how much time that would take to create
- Start brainstorming a list of locations that would be good for the Co-Creation Lab both on and off campus

Dialogue Summary #18:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b>  Honors Alumni
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity</b>  The primary goal of this opportunity is to receive some feedback on our team's top two prototype concepts, so that they can be further revised and developed to better suit both the students and the faculty/administration of the Honors College, from the perspective of someone who no longer has many ties to either of the two principle parties.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b>  This work reflects positively on our team problem statement, as it seeks to further develop the two prototype concepts that we already have, as well as searches for a solution that we have not yet considered – all in the name of increasing the communication between the students and administration/faculty of the Honors College.
<b>Summary of Research:</b>  This interview was insightful in that it offered a perspective from someone who is no longer associated directly with the Honors College but is still familiar with its workings and who any changes may impact. The biggest insight that was received was which party benefitted the most from each prototype concept, meaning, who was the instigator of any potential communication, and who was the recipient of that communication? Example: the online calendar solution favored the professors as the students would have to take the initiative to seek out the calendar first, and then make another effort to talk to the professor or administrator.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The online calendar prototype concept places the initiative on the students to start a conversation</li><li>• The space redesign prototype concept places the initiative on the faculty and administration to start the conversation</li><li>• Placing TV's in existing common areas and office spaces might be a clean way to try and meet in the middle</li></ul>

## **Dialogue Questions and Response:**

**Interviewer:** We've had two prototype concepts that we've come up with so far. The first prototype concept is to have a Google calendar on the Honors College website, especially for the faculty and the administration. Students could go to the website to look up the professional calendars of whoever they want to talk to, so they know if they're available. What benefits do you think that would have?

**Interviewee:** I think it would help students who already know that they want to talk with their professor, find a suitable time to talk to that professor or any other faculty member. It can be hard to know someone's schedule as is, so that could be a helpful solution to figuring out when someone's available.

**Interviewer:** What disadvantages do you think that prototype concept can bring?

**Interviewee:** It would really be up to the individual student to take the initiative, and for the individual student to have the knowledge, and I think that's probably where you'll run into some issues is that students won't know that that information is available or wouldn't be able to find that information, even if they had wanted to use it. You could solve that by just trying to have a little awareness campaign or whatever, but awareness of that site would probably be the biggest issue in my mind.

**Interviewer:** What are some of the tools you utilize at work?

**Interviewee:** At work, all employees' calendars are generally public. You can't necessarily see what a particular blocked off event is that someone might be doing, but you'll be able to see when they are busy throughout the day. And we need that for scheduling all sorts of things, really.

**Interviewer:** How does it help with the accessibility of your co-workers?

**Interviewee:** It definitely increases the accessibility, especially if it's going to be more than a five-minute conversation. If it's five minutes I can usually run up to them and quick ask them if they're at their desk, but if it's going to be longer than that it's really nice to be able to schedule out a time, sit down, have something planned out. Especially if it's going to be an important thing to talk about for a while. Then it's helpful to have the right setting, the right room, the right mindset for the people going into it, and if we see each other's schedules we can know that.

**Interviewer:** What would be some of the changes you would like to make either to the Honors College prototype concept or to your work?

**Interviewee:** It's tricky, because I see what you're trying to do with making calendars available, but I've never felt like the Honors College or the general GVSU website was really meant for current students. It's always felt like a place where you go to learn about information if you want to attend. I can't even recall if I've ever visited the Honors College website when I was a student – it just was not important. I already knew everything I had to, so I wouldn't go out of my way to look there. Probably ever. But I don't know if there's a better website to put it on – it seems like an appropriate spot, just probably not how it's actually used.

**Interviewer:** Our second prototype concept is bigger in scale, financially and spatially. We propose that the Honors College redesigns common areas to be a little more welcoming, and what we would do with this space is have faculty members, both administrators and professors, do “out-of-office office hours” and students could go to the redesigned common area and to their prof in a more inviting environment. That same space could be used for student events or student/faculty events.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I think that seems reasonable. I did like that in the engineering department, a lot of the workspaces are surrounded immediately by their offices. Their doors aren’t necessarily open, but when you’re working on your stuff your professors are right there behind you. If you have a question you can go up and knock on their door and chat, and it’s pretty accessible.

**Interviewer:** What are the disadvantages you could see with this?

**Interviewee:** I can see faculty and staff opposing it. Once you get settled in your office, you’re in your own little bubble and it’s hard to get out of your bubble. I’m not sure they would be terribly excited to leave their office to come out, and the other challenge is – it might be more with the professor side than Honors College staff side – a lot of the professors don’t have a full-time office in the Honors building, to my knowledge. They have their own office elsewhere. For professors, it seems like a lot to have them moving around everywhere, but for faculty I could see it being reasonable.

**Interviewer:** How would you implement something like this at your work?

**Interviewee:** It really is how we pretty much have our offices laid out right now. We have for the most part our core engineering group located centrally and then all the project managers are along the outside. That way we can see when they’re in the offices and go talk to them anytime. I think that’s been very helpful, we’re not secluded away from them, they’re not hidden away from us. That way we can really foster communication between the teams and our company as a whole.

**Interviewer:** In what ways could the two concepts be blended together?

**Interviewee:** I think if you were to redesign a room, you might as well do the calendar idea as well. That’s a pretty small change, something super simple. In the engineering building, as I recall, most of the professors would have their schedule printed on their door. Which was a start, but you had to be there to see it. But since you were in that workspace surrounded by their doors, you could generally see it. But it would still be more helpful if their schedules were more widely publicized. You could do, perhaps, on a smaller scale, I think you should at least do the website thing that seems very reasonable and easy, but instead of relocating offices you could put out a couple of monitors, outside the office buildings, that could show what professors are in and if they’re available to talk. That way you don’t actually have to change anything, just put up a couple of TVs’. You could almost just do it with a live feed of what the calendar site says. That way students walking by know who’s going to be in there when.



**Interviewer:** You mentioned that the online prototype concept makes it so that the students have to take the initiative, and the other one makes it so that the faculty have to take the initiative. How could you see the initiatives mitigated for both to meet in the middle?

**Interviewee:** I think probably the TV route where instead of students having to take the initiative to go look for something it's pretty clear in front of them as they're walking by through the building. And then the professors don't have to take the initiative to go out and meet the students or to go out to some common area that they don't want to move to, they can still stay in their office, but their schedule is highly public. And it only takes a split second for a student to say, "Oh hey, yeah, I can stop in fast and chat." It's hard, because someone's going to have to take some initiative sometime, but trying to minimize it, I'd say that's a pretty decent idea off the top of my head.

**Interviewer:** How does the space where communication occurs have an impact on the conversation?

**Interviewee:** If your professors are sitting at open tables in the multipurpose room, then anything said can be easily overheard. And that's going to change the conversation by simply that nature. If you are secluded in a professor's office that he's been in for 20+ years that's completely filled with everything he has, it can be pretty overwhelming for a student who is uncomfortable going in to that professor's space, when it's so clearly their space where they are in control of. I think that can alter the conversation as well. So hopefully trying to come to a comfortable balance would occur, but that's tricky.

**Interviewer:** Are there any other questions you can think of?

**Interviewee:** No, I think you covered the standard bases for the two prototype concepts. Nothing springs to mind.

**Interviewer:** Do you have anyone in mind that you think I should contact next?

**Interviewee:** You should contact those people who I directed you to in a previous interview.

**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 contact?**

The interviewee agreed to reconnect for further inquiry. This could be done either through an additional interview or email.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- Spouse
- Other Honors alumni (these two were the only ones recorded)
- Old professors (not recorded)

**Possible next-steps:**

- See how we can integrate the space redesign idea with the online calendar idea
- Investigate the possibility of installing televisions into the current office spaces and common areas

Dialogue Summary #19:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> Honors Student
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity:</b> The primary goal of this opportunity was to get feedback on our top two prototype concepts which are Creating a Do Something environment and creating an accessible professional calendar with faculty information.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b> Conducting this work reflects on the team problem statement by providing feedback and suggestions on how we can improve the top 2 prototype concepts. The information that we get from the interview can be used to help tailor the team prototype concepts to make sure that they are helpful to the targeted audience.
<b>Summary of Research:</b> During this interview, the interviewee made it very clear that most of our prototype concepts should be targeted at freshmen. This is because as students advance on in their education, they are less likely to participate in the activities going on in the Honors College. The interviewer also really liked the prototype concept of the Do Something Environment but was a little apprehensive about it because they did not know how much participation this prototype concept would get from faculty. They wondered if faculty would be willing to be in that much of an informal environment with students. The accessible google calendar with faculty availability in it, received positive feedback. This is because it will allow an easy place for students to see when professors have free time. On the other hand, the interviewee was unsure about if faculty would stay committed to updating their availability on the google calendar.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our innovations should target freshmen.</li><li>• Faculty might not be comfortable being with students in an informal environment.</li><li>• Professors might not stay committed to updating their availability.</li></ul>
<b>Dialogue Questions and Response:</b> <b>Interviewer:</b> Some background before we begin. Our team has developed five different innovations that we would like your input on. The first innovation concerns creating a “Do Something” environment that brings faculty and students together for informal, creative, and playful problem-solving activities aimed at fostering greater communication and rapport-building. This environment could either be a pop-up experience at rotating locations or a permanent drop-in experience at a designated location depending on interest and availability of space.

The first innovation sought to unify both the students' and the administration's desires for meaningful communication between the two parties by having informal conversations in the short-term, and objective conversations in the long-term. This would be done by having year-long challenges where the students would compete against the administration and faculty, incentivized by making the loser of the competition do something such as receive a pie in the face, or something similarly playful. The goal of this innovation is simply to create an occasion for the students and administration to come together in a fun scenario and get to know each other better, through which the Honors administration can better understand what the students are thinking about the direction of the Honors College and how they can fit into it.

**Interviewer:** What do you find advantageous about the first innovation?

**Interviewee:** It would be good if aimed at freshmen. Freshmen are usually really scared when they come in and it would reduce anxiety and make professors seem more human.

**Interviewer:** What do you find detrimental about the first innovation?

**Interviewee:** I'm not sure how much participation you would get faculty and older students. Like not core Honors faculty who teach sequences or some of the other courses.

**Interviewer:** If you were to implement this innovation, what would you change about it?

**Interviewee:** I would change the reward to be more of an incentive rather than a professor getting pied in the face. So maybe an ice cream dinner. However, I think that faculty will have fun only because they want students to have a good time.

**Interviewer:** Next, our team decided that the electronic calendars, such as Google Calendar, could be utilized to better allow students access to a faculty member/administrator's professional schedule throughout the day. This would allow for easier access to people and their availability would be updated in real time. This solution caters to the fact that students tend toward asynchronous communication with authority figures, as our research shows, and also helps to eliminate the sense of wondering that some students have about whether or not the faculty member/administrator will be in their office.

**Interviewer:** What do you find advantageous about the second innovation?

**Interviewee:** I think that is a good idea because I have experienced being left in the hallway because a professor didn't show up. Students could also feel like professors are more accessible especially if they don't want to reach out and ask for an appointment outside of office hours.

**Interviewer:** What do you find detrimental about the second innovation?

**Interviewee:** Holding the professors to it because some professors would never keep it updated. If you could get faculty to comply, it can make students believe in it.

**Interviewer:** If you were to implement this innovation, what would you change about it?

**Interviewee:** Maybe have the students share their ability too. For example, have students send out a excel sheet of availability so that they can clearly see what time works the best for them to visit 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 be contacted?**

Yes, via phone call.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- Honors faculty
- Their roommate
- More Honors students

**Possible next-steps:**

- Go back and revise our innovation target audience.
- Research if professors would be comfortable meeting with students in informal environments.
- Research if google calendar can effectively work to display information to students easily.

Dialogue Summary #20:

<b>Stakeholder Group/Location:</b> General Education Student
<b>Estimated Age:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Primary Goal of this Opportunity</b> The primary goal of this opportunity was to gain the input of a student who has no ties to the Honors College and therefore has no bias with their input. We received prominent examples from the spaces of the non-Honors buildings and how some of their designs help to foster a working environment between students and professors/administrators.
<b>How does conducting this work reflect on your team problem statement?</b> This work reflects our team's problem statement by bringing us closer to a solution that benefits both the students and the faculty/administration by being able to reference ideas that are already in place and have proven results.
<b>Summary of Research:</b> This interview leads to some insights that hint at student disinterest in extracurricular activities that have no real benefit academically but still maintain some sort of academic feel to it, such as a yearlong challenge between the students and the professors/administration of the Honors College. We also received more positive feedback for the online calendar solution. The engineering building's workspaces were mentioned again, and how their design encourages communication between the students and the professors, and this in turn has led to better relationships between the two. One thing that was mentioned as something to look out for in the first solution was if the professors were going to abide by their online schedules or disregard them, as something like this would simply make this solution void.
<b>Important insights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We received even more feedback into how the engineering building is laid out and how that encourages communication between students and professors/administrators and how offices in close proximity to the workspaces lead to this.</li><li>• Not everyone will be enticed by a year-long challenge.</li><li>• A redesigned space would benefit group work with a professor or administrator more than individual work with a professor or administrator.</li></ul>

## **Dialogue Questions and Response:**

**Interviewer:** We are looking to be able to involve students more in the governance of the Honors College by increasing the communication between the students and the administration. Our first prototype concept to this is a web-based solution that would have something similar to Google calendar where the Honors College students could go to the Honors College website and just look up the schedules of their professors or administrators, just so they know when those people are free to talk. What benefits do you see in this plan?

**Interviewee:** I would say with dealing or talking with professors, from my own personal experience, it might not work out very well. For instance, when you're trying to talk to a professor after their office hours, it could get complicated because they have a very standard calendar posted outside their door. But obviously not everyone's going to totally abide by that 100 percent, and there's going to be quick changes. So I guess dealing with it electronically and having more events that they have to go to, would help just to give you a quick reminder than actually going to the building where their office is, where you could just pull it up on your phone, and you could just see where they're at, when you want to talk to them, or when you need more information from them. So, I guess that would obviously be the best benefit from it. Other than that, I'd say that's pretty much it.

**Interviewer:** What disadvantages do you see with this plan?

**Interviewee:** No real disadvantages from the student's point of view, but for faculty and professors, I'd say on a personal note, they might not want to share everything they have or how in-depth they're willing to go with it. Or how well they're actually going to abide by it. If everybody's going to use it, or if it's just, you know, the professor might do it at the beginning but then after a while they just stop sticking to it, and then you're just back to the old way it was. But that would be the only disadvantage, I would say.

**Interviewer:** If you had to implement this plan, what things would you change, if any?

**Interviewee:** I feel like it's a pretty good solution to a problem where students aren't able to reach professors. Have you had any past, good points that I could go off of?

**Interviewer:** Not really as to how they would change it, but one disadvantage that was mentioned by an interviewee was that it puts the initiative to make that conversation on the students.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, well I mean, it always is on the student. I guess I'm basing it off when you want to go reach a professor to go talk in their office. I don't know how much more in-depth it is, like if you're trying to require more information from the student. I was going from personal experience. But, yeah, I feel like it's on the student, if they really need to contact the professor it's not that big of a deal. I think it would be a really good solution. Was the plan for a student to only be able to view the professors from their courses, or would they be able to view any professor's thing on a website?

**Interviewer:** The second one.

**Interviewee:** Okay, and that would be limited to GV students? Through Blackboard or something?

**Interviewer:** Yeah, and more specifically Honors Students, but yeah, GVSU students.

**Interviewee:** It's a really good idea, I think all students would agree that it's a really good idea. I guess the only thing is how involved professors would be to actually use it would be the only obstacle the plan would face.

**Interviewer:** Our second prototype concept is a little grander in scale. What we propose is to have a redesign of the Honors College spaces such as their common areas. We would have to professors and faculty do "out-of-office office hours" in the space, just so that if students do want to drop by, they are a little easier to access. And the redesigned space would hopefully help to facilitate communication between them. What benefits to this plan do you see?

**Interviewee:** The main benefit I see would be for group work, you know, it'd probably be a lot easier doing that than a bunch of students going and piling into a professor's office, everybody has to go in one by one and it gets too crowded. If they're dealing with a situation that might take some time, an open area like a group environment would work out a lot better. I feel like if it's just a one on one scenario, I think the office hours are still a nice benefit. Some students may not be as inclined. Speaking for myself, I have no problem going to see a professor in their office. But being a little more open-minded about it, some students may just, you know, may just be a little more introverted and they might need a super strong push to go see a professor in their office, but an open office environment might encourage them to go out and speak to them a bit more. But those would be the main two advantages for me.

**Interviewer:** If this space was to be redesign, what are some other ways that you see students and administrators taking advantage of it?

**Interviewee:** I guess it would take the formal aspect out of it. Other than that, I think my other answer, for group assignments and if they were going to see the professor for more than just a quick question, maybe it's an elaborate, drawn out problem that they needed – just things of that nature. It would also make it a bit quicker and informal and would benefit the students more and it might benefit the professors more too. Maybe you see them make more of an effort to get to know each other on a more personal level in a less formal environment.

**Interviewer:** How might a year-long challenge between students and faculty encourage communication?

**Interviewee:** What kind of challenge?

**Interviewer:** I don't know, something like Minute to Win It games every other month, and you rack up points and see who wins in the end.

**Interviewee:** Personally, I don't have too big of an interest in it. I haven't worked with any professors that much in-depth. I haven't reached out to any professors on a personal level that much. I know of some people who have, and maybe that's something cool that they would want to try. Wouldn't hurt to try it. I guess it could be kind of cool, but personally, I wouldn't have too much interest in it. I feel like I have a good relationship with my professors, where I go to class, have a relationship with them within the class, but I don't have enough personal experience for



me to take time out of my schedule to. I guess it just wouldn't interest me as much as it might another student.

**Interviewer:** Is there anything that you think I should have asked you that I didn't?

**Interviewee:** I feel like you covered both sides of each solution just from a student/faculty perspective. The only other side of it I feel would be like, to ask a question like, "Do you actually think professors would abide by the entire thing?"

**Interviewer:** Do you have any contact that you think I should talk to for any further information?

**Interviewee:** Maybe a [REDACTED], my fellow coworker. Honestly, you could maybe talk to [REDACTED], just if there's anything from a graduate perspective and just see the relationships that they've had and see if anything changed over time.

**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 contact?**

The interviewee agreed to reconnect for further inquiry. They preferred this to be done through texting.

**Three more connections this stakeholder provided:**

- Two coworkers within [his/her] department

**Possible next-steps:**

- One possible next step is to send out a survey to get a quick poll of who might be interested in something similar to a yearlong challenge, as there was not explicit positive feedback from this interviewee.
- More positive feedback was received for the web-based solution. Perhaps it might be time to start pulling designs together for this.
- Narrow all of this down into one, nuanced prototype concept.

## Research Bibliographies

### Research Bibliography #1:

**Citation:**

Miles, Jennifer M., Miller, Michael T., Nadler, Daniel P. (2008). Student Governance: Toward Effectiveness and the Ideal. College Student Journal. Volume 42, Issue 4: pg. 1061.

Retrieved from:

<http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=a21bef66-cccb-4227-8cc0-86a9be28c71c%40pdv-essmgr01&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#AN=34876573&db=s3h>

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

This article was very interesting regarding the research study it did to explore the ideal characteristics of student governance bodies. It is important to take into account these specific characteristics and ideals that push towards effectiveness, when thinking about the road to follow for the Frederik Meijer Honors College.

**Main argument:**

The main argument in this article is that students should be able to have input in institutional governance and the positive impacts that come from that. The purpose the study they conducted was ultimately to identify the “barriers and opportunities” that students could have on meaningful governance.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ Student involvement in institutional governance has become fragmented
- ❖ Higher education has taken away many of the powers that were initially delegated to students
- ❖ Students learn through the involvement of decision making
- ❖ Student involvement has been seen as a non-serious component of holistic institutional governance

**Evidence:**

“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.”

“Student involvement in institutional governance has been predicated on a number of arguments. These include student's entitlement of citizenship and the right of franchise for citizens in a democracy, the correlation between student learning and involvement, the learning produced by engagement in decision-making, the acculturation into democratic life, and that students are often on campus as long as administrators”

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

- ❖ “Baldrige (1982) was quick to note that there never truly was a period of time in American higher education where all authority and power were delegated equally among differing governing bodies, but, the increasingly commercial behavior of higher education institutions has marginalized governing bodies due to their inefficiencies and focus on fiscal positioning (Miles, Miller & Nadler, 2008).”
- ❖ “For college administrators across campus, and those in student affairs in particular, there is a need for the examination of what ideal student governance bodies look like, what measures are used to identify their effectiveness, and who is best qualified to provide leadership for them. Literature in these areas is limited and often reliant on anecdotal reporting of activities, problems, and solutions (Miller & Nadler, 2006), and there has been little coordinated effort to examine student governance.”
- ❖ “The competing interests of higher education, those being the desire for corporate like success (and financial control) coupled with the inherently inefficient purpose of student maturation create a tension within higher education that does not support shared governance generally, and with students specifically”
- ❖ *Loco parentis*: being in place of a parent
- ❖ “Although some institutions place students on boards of trustees and even allow them to vote, higher education as a whole has increasingly segregated governance bodies and stripped them of many of the powers that were initially delegated to them.”

<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Talks a little about the history of student governance.</li> <li>❖ Gives insight and reasons as to why students should be included in student governance.</li> <li>❖ Has data from surveys to support their information</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ This article only talks about the pros and not the cons of having students being involved in governance</li> </ul>
<p><b>Connections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ This article talks about how student involvement in institutional decision making has declined which effects their participation in the participation of student governance.</li> <li>❖ The article draws conclusions from exploratory surveys that they conducted. The data was collected from small liberal arts colleges and asked students varying questions about the governance at their university. This data could be very beneficial in helping us conduct similar surveys and even take away valuable information and interpret it.</li> <li>❖ This article brings up very good points in the conclusion that we are at a unique time in history. With that in mind, it gives us time to explore the design thinking process in unique ways as well. It is important to note still however that whatever student governance method is created that it is aimed at representing a broader population.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Questions/Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ What is the significance and importance of the research that they conducted? How do their findings relate to today?</li> <li>❖ What are the ways that we can help students to stop playing placating roles in student governance and effective ways to get them involved?</li> <li>❖ Is there a way to make sure that student governance is broad enough to reach the ideals of most students on campus?</li> </ul>	

## Research Bibliography #2:

**Citation:**

Kelly, L., Keaten, J. A., & Finch, C. (2004). Reticent and Non-Reticent College Students' Preferred Communication Channels for Interacting with Faculty. *Communication Research Reports*, 21(2), 197-209. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08824090409359981>

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

As we are interested in solving for improved student-faculty communication, this article seemed like a good source of peer-reviewed information on the subject. The emphasis on reticence is also intriguing as it allows a more in-depth look at the complexities of communication and barriers we had not previously considered to this depth.

**Main argument:**

- ❖ Teacher-student communication can be greatly influenced by a student's level of reticence. Teachers should keep this in mind when designing which modes of communication, they will make available to their students.
- ❖ Students with high levels of communication apprehension prefer modes of communication that are asynchronous, so that they may have time to carefully compose their thoughts and ruminate over a reply. The pressure to reply quickly and perfectly can prevent them from seeking out formal face-to-face communication.
- ❖ Both main student groups (reticent and non-reticent) prefer talking to a professor before or after class over scheduling an office visit, suggesting that the formality of communication can influence student comfort.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ Outside the classroom communication has various benefits for both students and faculty
- ❖ Students are more likely to communicate with faculty through email versus seeing them in person or calling them
- ❖ Communications between students and faculty are not "one size fits all" because of varying levels of comfort and apprehension
- ❖ There are benefits to offering options for both synchronous and asynchronous modes of communication
- ❖ The degree of formality of communication (scheduled appointment vs. impromptu chat after class) can influence faculty-student communications

**Evidence:**

“Reticent participants reported a usage preference for asynchronous, computer channels of communication, whereas non-reticent respondents preferred synchronous channels. For example, compared to non-reticent, reticent students reported preferring to use e-mail to talk to their teachers, and are less likely to visit an instructor at his or her office as Kelly et al. (2001) found. In contrast, non-reticent participants reported a preference for visiting teachers at their offices.” (pg. 206)

“Problems with knowledge (i.e., knowing what to say) appeared to have the greatest impact on comfort level about visiting faculty at their offices, and delivery problems seemed to present the biggest challenge for speaking to them after class. Timing problems affected comfort level, especially when using the telephone and visiting teachers at their offices. In terms of usage preferences, problems of timing, knowledge and memory (i.e., remembering what one wants to say) had the largest effect on visiting faculty during office hours. Problems with anxiety, knowledge, timing, delivery, organization and memory all were related to the preference for using e-mail to communicate with faculty.” (pg. 207)

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

- ❖ Reticence was determined and defined through six dimensions:
  - feelings of anxiety
  - knowledge of conversational topics
  - timing skills
  - organization of thoughts
  - delivery skills; and
  - memory
- ❖ Professor-student communication modes examined:
  - Talk Before or After Class
  - Visit During Office Hours
  - Call Teacher at Office
  - Send an E-mail Message
  - Write Teacher a Note
  - There was also consideration of whether a communication mode was synchronous (in-person or over the phone) or asynchronous (e-mail or written note)
- ❖ “Research has found that when communication is required, regardless of context,
- ❖ reticent individuals tend to avoid situations that may result in negative evaluation
- ❖ (Keaten, Kelly, & Finch, 1999) or, in O'Sullivan's terms, that threaten self-presentation.
- ❖ Because of a heightened fear of negative evaluation, reticent individuals might develop a general preference for mediated channels.” (pg. 199)
- ❖ “Keaten and Kelly (2000) define reticence as: "When people avoid communication because they believe it is better to remain silent than to risk appearing foolish, we refer to this behavior as reticence" (p. 168).” (198)
- ❖ “Differences between synchronous and asynchronous channels of communication may have important implications for the reticent individual. Reticent individuals tend to view themselves as having deficient communication skills and adopt the unrealistic belief that effective communicators speak spontaneously and without planning (Keaten & Kelly, 2000). Additionally, prior research shows consistently that reticent individuals report communication problems associated with anxiety, knowledge, timing, organization, delivery, and memory (Keaten & Kelly, 2000). Asynchronous channels may minimize many of the problems with reticence, such as timing, delivery and memory because the time expectations associated with face-to-face communication (i.e., virtually spontaneous response) are not present. In short, the anxiety produced by the demands of spontaneity during real time interaction is replaced by the opportunity to plan a message carefully and, therefore, reduce the likelihood of negative evaluation or self-presentation costs.” (pg. 200)

<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Explores communication methods that are successful even when there is a hesitance to communicate.</li> <li>❖ Discusses the importance of the students' belief in their own abilities in a particular communication tool (i.e. face-to-face interaction, email, etc.).</li> <li>❖ Introduces a method to gauge how reticent an individual is in six different aspects.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ This research is from 2004. Since this time there has been a technology explosion and there are now many more modes of digital communication available to faculty and students that are not included in this study.</li> <li>❖ The sample group was imbalanced by gender (68% female and 32% male) and by standing year (4% freshmen, 15% sophomores, 30% juniors, and 51% seniors), there may be confounding variables hidden in this imbalance</li> </ul>
<p><b>Connections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ This resource evaluates the preferred methods of how students communicate with faculty, which relates to the team problem statement of how students can contribute to the governance of the Honors College via better student faculty communication.</li> <li>❖ It provides multiple (see section Notable Quotes, Terms, and Concepts) ways that students and faculty could interact with varying degrees of success, depending upon how reticent the individuals involved were.</li> <li>❖ This resource does make it clear that no matter what the communication method is, students will avoid conversation that may result in negative evaluation.</li> <li>❖ This shows that offering a variety of communication modes helps cast a wider net and accommodate different comfort levels.</li> <li>❖ While we are solving for improved communication, we should also keep in mind that there are internal barriers to communication we need to consider, including individual's sense of security vs. insecurity.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Questions/Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ How can we integrate the Reticence Scale to bring about a better solution to the problem of communication between the student and faculty of the Honors College?</li> <li>❖ The article spoke about how there was a negative relationship between an individual's reticence and their comfort level 93% of the time. How can we avoid making either the faculty or the students feel uncomfortable and insecure while building a communication channel between them?</li> <li>❖ What new technologies that were not available at the time of this study are now available to us that could assist in providing the proven correct conditions (informal, asynchronous) for optimal communication with reticent students?</li> </ul>	



Research Bibliography #3:

**Citation:**

May, Walter P. (2010). The History of Student Governance in Higher Education. College Student Affairs Journal. Edition 28, Issue 2: pg. 207-220. Retrieved from: <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/docview/737539301?pq-origsite=summon>

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

This source was included because it is important to understand the history and background of what college governance is. As this directly relates to the problem question provided to us by Roger Gilles. The article also explains the significance of how governance has evolved over time and adjusted to better fit the environment of its time. This idea of evolution of ideas and solutions to college governance will be helpful in finding the best solution for here and now at Grand Valley.

**Main argument:**

Student governance has existed since the creation of colleges in early America. With that being said, it is important to recognize that the different practices of student-governance are in ways interconnected. However, it is also important to remember that separately these institutions had large impacts themselves.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ Origin of student self-governance arises from multiple areas that could use improvement
- ❖ Many new ideas came from looking at previous ones
- ❖ Students are unhappy with the lack of significance they have
- ❖ Society develops along with the ideas brought forth from student governance
- ❖ Student governance is a way to express oneself and to voice their own opinions
- ❖ May not always be available to all students

**Evidence:**

“Generally, the responsibilities of student associations include serving as the voice of the student body to the institution’s administrations, overseeing student fees, etc. These bodies also currently participate in the decision-making processes in student affairs and academic and administrative affairs” (May, 2010).

“Often, the honor systems and councils emerged from the actions of the early literary societies. Over time, students were successful in their efforts to create codes of behavior and to hold themselves accountable to those standards” (May, 2010).

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

- ❖ “Freidson and Schuman’s definition of student self-governance is “a type of organization which by virtue of its composition and constitution is entitled to represent the student community as a whole” (May, 2010).
- ❖ Colleges in the colonial period and 18th century were much more different than colleges today: Small populations, often upper class, Male, often had little to none student engagement
- ❖ “The culture of higher education at the time of the 1800s supported the belief that college students were a subservient class that did not possess the same rights and power as the instructors or even other citizens” (May 2010).
- ❖ “As with students of any era, these young people sought to express themselves, to find something to fill their time, and to empower themselves to become engaged in their campus environments” (May, 2010).
- ❖ Literary Societies: allowed students to channel their frustrations with the institution
- ❖ Over time, colleges grew in size and capacity revealing new ways to group and organize students together
- ❖ Student Associations had branches like those of the national government: executive, judicial, legislative
- ❖ Underrepresented groups: Women, Minorities
- ❖ “As higher education in the United States matured, so did student self-governance, sustaining the argument that it will carry on as a fundamental element on college and university campuses” (May, 2010).

**Strengths:**

- ❖ Defines the ideas of self-governance
- ❖ Provides a history and background of how student-governance emerged
- ❖ Demonstrates the benefits of governance and student involvement

**Weaknesses:**

- ❖ Many of these governance ideas are from a long time ago
- ❖ Some ideas have been disproved
- ❖ Does not give much insight on today’s ideas

**Connections:**

- ❖ Informs us of how to maintain a student organization during periods of growth
- ❖ Informs us of different ways to organize a student-led government
- ❖ Informs us of different ways to channel student frustrations

**Questions/Concerns:**

- ❖ How applicable are these ideas in modern universities?
- ❖ Is the appropriate solution to have appointed representatives to provide communication between the student and faculty bodies

Research Bibliography #4:

**Citation:**

Cohen, Mel. (2012). *Let's Talk: Enhancing Teaching and Learning through Student-Faculty Dialogues*. Teaching English in the Two-Year College; Urbana. Vol. 39, Isss, 4, pp 355-363. Retrieved from: <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/docview/1022639391/fulltextPDF/E622FBEA5618435CPQ/1?accountid=39473>

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

This source emphasizes the use of communication and dialogue outside of the classroom. This source enhances the ideas that we are essentially researching for and trying to solve. It will provide a good connection between dialogue and the importance of it between faculty and students.

**Main argument:**

The main argument of this article is the importance of cross-communication and dialogue between faculty and students. What at first seemed so simple and innocent, ended up providing deep insights to the connection of student learning. Hearing from students heartfelt and serious ideas left faculty impressed by these memorable ideas that may have never before come to their attention.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ A way to gain insights is to communicate with students
- ❖ Students learned that faculty/professors were much more accessible
- ❖ Enhancement of student learning and dialogues
- ❖ Student expectations of faculty and vice versa
- ❖ In order to see people in a different light, we need to first seem them as people

**Evidence:**

“Not only are student perceptions interesting, but they also are integral to teaching and learning and therefore critical to educational outcomes.”

“First and foremost, the dialogues developed a clear emphasis on student learning. Obvious as it now seems, this was not a focus at the beginning. However, the more we talked and listened to one another, the clearer it became that our conversations had deep connections to student learning.”

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

- ❖ Course evaluations may be helpful but are limited by the questions that are being asked
- ❖ “Working from a teacher centered approach, you fail to appreciate the potential impact student perceptions of teaching and learning have on us as teachers”
- ❖ Faculty participants came from various disciplines and reflected diversity across the board
- ❖ “Their observations indicate the difficulty in recruiting participants for campus focus groups”
- ❖ “The enhancement of student learning, based on student feedback, became an explicit focus of the student-faculty dialogues”
- ❖ “These dialogues had a transforming effect on me -- I began to see students in a completely different light (i.e., that they really do care about learning). It made me approach my teaching completely differently -- instead of me versus them, I started thinking of teaching and learning as ‘us’.”
- ❖ Students can often offer different perspective that most people have not thought of
- ❖ “Given the potential for miscommunication and misunderstanding, our task becomes less one of defining what faculty see as caring. Instead we need to examine the students’ perspective, what they might see as caring and as faculty actions that enhance their learning.”
- ❖ Little things do not go unnoticed and may impact student perceptions

**Strengths:**

- ❖ Offers many insights on why students should be involved in communication techniques
- ❖ Deducts that faculty are more than what they are often described as
- ❖ Implemented an idea/prototype that faculty and students tested together
- ❖ Enhancement is seen for both students and faculty members

**Weaknesses:**

- ❖ Only conducted at one school
- ❖ Used small groups of faculty and students
- ❖ Only addresses the benefits of involving students and faculty with dialogue
- ❖ Large emphasis on only the benefits to student learning and faculty teaching

**Connections:**

- ❖ This process of implementing a dialogue session seems to utilize some of the ideas of design thinking. The initial faculty member used a small idea to generate even larger ones and even went far enough as to prototype his innovation.
- ❖ This article draws conclusions from prototyping an innovation. The data that was collected strongly emphasizes the benefits of dialogue between faculty and students. These benefits will help us further interpret ideas and information related to our findings.
- ❖ This article emphasizes the importance of student involvement in communication. This relates directly to our problem statement and will ensure that we find ideas that help to improve the current communication issue at GV. It also described how faculty is often perceived versus how they truly are and the importance of getting to know them.

**Questions/Concerns:**

- ❖ Would this prototype of dialogue sessions be successful outside of this college addressed in the article?
- ❖ What was the formality like of these dialogue sessions?
- ❖ Would it be harder to implement these ideas with a larger group of students and faculty?

## Research Bibliography #5:

### **Citation:**

Li, L., Finley, J., Pitts, J., and Guo, R. (2011). *Which is a Better Choice for Student-Faculty Interaction: Synchronous or Asynchronous Communication?* Journal of Technology Research. Retrieved from:  
<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.467.7214&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

### **Reason for including this source in your work:**

This source was beneficial to our research because it discusses the new technologies that are arising. Along with new technologies it discusses how universities should use them to their advantage to extend traditional curriculums. Often times, we look at the face-to-face interactions between students and faculty. This source will provide in-depth research about how technology can play a positive role in communication.

### **Main argument:**

This article discusses the importance of changing the methods of communication with the evolution of technology over time. Most current students are highly satisfied with the use of email communication and other asynchronous forms of communication. These techniques could also improve the effectiveness of course delivery and management.

### **Important ideas:**

- ❖ Beyond the formal classroom, there are few opportunities for students and faculty to interact and communicate
- ❖ Informal contact between students and faculty is often associated with positive outcomes involving students' college experiences
- ❖ Contact between students and faculty is often limited to formal situations; such as in the classroom but this method is also the most commonly infrequent
- ❖ Due to changes in technology, there may be a demise in face-to-face communication
- ❖ Little is known about the processes that facilitate out-of-classroom and informal interactions between students and faculty

**Evidence:**

“One main challenge for institutions of higher education is to discover how to better engage the students in the communication processes that stimulate more substantial and frequent interaction with faculty”

“Studies have revealed that student engagement in college activities outside of the classroom and interactions with other students and faculty tends to have a substantial impact.”

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

- ❖ “The traditional approach of face-to-face office hours has been shown in previous studies to be infrequently used by students.”
- ❖ CMC: computer mediated communication
- ❖ Reticent students tend toward the use of computer mediated communication
- ❖ “In spite of the perceivable value of holding office hours in facilitating the student-faculty relationship, studies have shown that, in practice, students rarely take advantage of the opportunity and, when they do, the duration of the visits tend to be brief and concise in nature.”
- ❖ Synchronous vs. Asynchronous forms of communication
  - Synchronous:
    - Chat
    - IM
  - Asynchronous
    - Email
    - Discussion Boards
- ❖ “In a study of the impact of offering virtual office hours within a traditional course, Meyers found that students who had participated in virtual class discussions had higher levels of comfort and confidence during traditional classroom discussions.”
- ❖ Technology matters; but mostly how it is utilized

**Strengths:**

- ❖ Conducted various studies to back up their research
- ❖ Technology will continue to evolve and grow
- ❖ Found areas where students were most satisfied
- ❖ Solved for issues such as time management and availability for both students and faculty

**Weaknesses:**

- ❖ Technology can often be unreliable
- ❖ Did not discuss students that do not prefer computer mediated communication
- ❖ Not everyone has access to technology (at home)

**Connections:**

- ❖ In a time that is becoming increasingly advanced with technology, it is important to utilize it in effective ways. As we are solving for improved communication between students and faculty, it is important to recognize what is most satisfying for students and also the most effective.
- ❖ This article also emphasizes how universities and colleges can utilize technology with classes that they already offer; such as online, hybrid, etc. Being able to recognize that there is a problem and working around it is a large part of the design thinking process. This article helped us to realize what some of the problems could be with computer mediated communication.
- ❖ The article discusses how student involvement and engagement outside of the classroom revealed positive impacts on personal, social, and intellectual outcomes. With this in mind, it is important for our team to recognize that not all communication should be directly involved with classwork and formal sanctioned ways. These allows us to dig even deeper to find ways to improve the communication gap.

**Questions/Concerns:**

- ❖ What about the students that prefer face-to-face interactions?
- ❖ How do you effectively satisfy students that prefer ideas that are on opposite sides of the spectrum?



**Citation:**

Kim, Young K., and Linda J. Sax. "Student-Faculty Interaction in Research Universities: Differences by Student Gender, Race, Social Class, and First-Generation Status." *Research in Higher Education*, vol. 50, no. 5, 2009, pp. 437–459. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/29782935](http://www.jstor.org/stable/29782935).

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

This research delves deeply into differences between population groups, rather than looking at faculty communication with the student body as a whole. This gives us context for ways in which colleges in general serve or under-serve certain students, allowing us to keep this in mind as we design communication strategies.

**Main argument:**

Though student-faculty interaction is overall beneficial to students, the degree to which students are benefitted is directly influenced by differences in race, gender, social class, and first-generation status. Different population groups do not communicate in identical ways, and the patterns that emerge in this study show clear ways in which faculty is missing opportunities for connection with certain population groups.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ Differences in race, gender, social class, and first-generation status impact a college student's experience both in interactions with faculty and in overall success.
- ❖ Contact with faculty leads to higher success, but there are disparities between population groups that show not all students are communicated with or communicate in equal ways.
- ❖ Faculty members tend to provide the most encouragement and resources to White and Male students than to their non-white and female students. This speaks to implicit biases in faculty that warrants deeper consideration.

**Evidence:**

"In general, the research reveals that more contact between students and faculty, both inside and outside the classroom, enhances college students' development and learning outcomes."

"Faculty members, administrators, and student affairs professionals should pay particular attention to underrepresented student groups in terms of benefits of student-faculty interaction. It is clear from the demonstration of conditional effects that certain student subgroups benefit more or less as a result of student-faculty interaction. For example, while both genders and all racial groups benefit from course- and research-related faculty contact, respectively, with regard

to degree aspiration, male and White students tend to receive greater benefits than female and non-White students. This finding indicates that during interaction with students, faculty members may be inclined to provide greater motivation and encouragement to go to graduate schools for male and White students than they do for females and non-White students.”

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

❖ Terms and Concepts:

- I-E-O (Inputs-Environments-Outcomes) Framework: “accounts for characteristics that vary both within institutions (e.g., student background characteristics and college experiences) and between institutions (e.g., college environments).”
- Categories of student outcomes: “college GPA (grade point average), degree aspiration, integration, two self-reported gains in skills (critical thinking and social awareness), and satisfaction with overall college experience.”

❖ Quotes:

- “Gender differences were statistically significant on five of six different forms of student-faculty interaction. For research-related faculty contact, male students were more likely than female students to assist faculty with research as a volunteer or for pay, whereas females were more likely than males to assist faculty with research for course credit. For course-related faculty contact, female students reported more frequent communication with faculty by email or in person than males, while males demonstrated more frequent interaction with faculty during lecture class sessions than females.”
- “Asian American students were more likely than African American, Latino, and White students to assist faculty with research as a volunteer or for course credit, but they were less likely than other racial groups to have talked, communicated, or interacted with faculty regarding course-related matters. Conversely, African American students reported the greatest frequency of talking, communicating, or interacting with faculty, whereas they demonstrated the lowest frequency of assisting faculty with research as a volunteer or for course credit.”
- “Students from upper-class families were more likely than students from lower- or middle-class families to assist faculty with research for course credit, communicate with faculty by email or in person, and interacted with faculty during lecture class sessions. In contrast, students from lower-class families were more likely than their counterparts to assisted faculty with research for pay.”
- “Students whose parents attended college were more likely than students whose parents have not attended college to assist faculty with research for course credit, communicate with faculty by email or in person, and interact with faculty during lecture class sessions.”
- “Female and non-first-generation students were more satisfied with both

advising by faculty on academic matters and access to faculty outside of class than male and first-generation students. White students reported the highest satisfaction with faculty contact, followed by Latinos, African Americans, and Asian Americans. The results also show that as social class rises, so does students' satisfaction with faculty interaction."

- "Undergraduate research experience was significantly and positively associated with students' college GPA for all racial groups, but the association was stronger among African American students than for Latino and Asian American students."
- "Research-related faculty contact was positively related to perception of belonging at campus for White students only, and gains in critical thinking and communication for Latinos, Asian Americans, and Whites only. Interestingly, research-based faculty interaction tended to decrease Latino students' gains in cultural appreciation and social awareness. Perhaps in this case the research experience serves in place of other aspects of campus involvement that may more enhance cultural awareness, such as student clubs and groups."
- "For all social class groups, students who assisted faculty with research were more likely to obtain higher college GPAs and aspire to higher degree attainments. However, the research experience had a significantly positive effect on student gains in critical thinking and communication for middle- and upper-class students only, and it had a slightly negative effect on middle-class students' gains in cultural appreciation and social awareness."
- "Turning now to differences across racial groups, the effect of course-related student faculty interaction on college GPA and overall college satisfaction was significant and positive for all groups except African Americans. Comparatively, this type of faculty interaction had a positive impact on student degree aspiration and integration for Asian American and White students only. The results also indicate that course-related faculty contact served to positively predict gains in critical thinking as well as social awareness for Latino and Asian American students, but it did not for African American and White students."
- "For example, in order to mitigate gender gaps in the frequency of student-faculty interaction, faculty could encourage female students to engage more in discussion and activity during class sessions. With regard to racial gaps, faculty should invite more African American students to work on their research projects, so that the student population can achieve a proper balance between course- and research-related interactions."
- "Finally, the findings from the present study reveal that compared to middle- or upper-class or non-first-generation students, lower-class and first-generation students generally are more often excluded from faculty interaction whether it is research-related or course-related."

**Strengths:**

- ❖ Very large sample size studied (58,281 students)
- ❖ In-depth analysis across several cross-cutting factors, revealing hidden information

**Weaknesses:**

- ❖ "Perhaps the greatest limitation in the present study is its lack of reliance on longitudinal data. Since the survey used in this study has simultaneously measured student college experiences

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Very strong correlations in certain groups, solid suggestions for practice and improvements</li> </ul>	<p>and educational outcomes, it does not inform researchers of any time sequencing between the variables”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Racial groups were not balanced. In particular the African American proportion of the sample group was very small</li> <li>❖ There is no discussion or disclosure of the race, gender, etc., of the faculty in this study</li> </ul>
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**Connections:**

- ❖ As we aim to solve for improved faculty-student communication, this resource highlights some student groups who may be highest priority.
- ❖ Communication cannot be unlinked from individual experience, we should keep this in mind while trying to find a solution that works best for the whole.
- ❖ Research proves that communication and faculty-student interactions are beneficial, therefore equalizing access to communication should be considered a key part of our strategy.

**Questions/Concerns:**

- ❖ How do the findings in this research compare to the faculty-student interactions at GVSU? Are there similar disparities?
- ❖ To what degree does implicit bias within faculty affect students’ college experiences and long-term success?
- ❖ How can we solve for communication solutions that mitigate the negative consequences of implicit bias-driven interaction?

Research Bibliography #7:

**Citation:**

Roblyer, M. D., McDaniel, M., Webb, M., Herman, J., & Witty, J. V. (2010). Findings on Facebook in higher education: A comparison of college faculty and student uses and perceptions of social networking sites. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 13(3), 134-140.  
doi:10.1016/j.iheduc.2010.03.002

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

This article examines how likely students and faculty are to use Facebook to communicate with each other for school purposes and how effective that communication is.

**Main argument:**

The main argument in this article is that students are more likely to use Facebook to communicate with their professors more so than professors are to use Facebook. Professors more so prefer to use email to communicate with their students.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ The education community has struggled to incorporate social networking innovations into their means of communication with students.
- ❖ Faculty prefer to use email as the primary means of communication with students.
- ❖ Faculty who see teaching as an opportunity to build relationships are more likely to use social networking sites to communicate with students.

**Evidence:**

“Mazer et al. (2007) say that “Students may perceive a teacher's use of Facebook as an attempt to foster positive relationships with his or her students, which may have positive effects on important student outcomes ... (However), teachers may violate student expectations of proper behaviors and run the risk of harming their credibility if they utilize Facebook. (p. 136).”

“Facebook seems to be perceived as “... an excellent mechanism for communicating with our students because it allows us to go where they already are; it is an environment that students are already comfortable with” (Mack, Behler) (p. 137)”

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

- ❖ “Results of a Mann–Whitney U test found that students and faculty differed significantly ( $z=-4.548$ ,  $pb.01$ ) on how likely they were to have a Facebook account. Some 95% of students had an account, while about 73% of faculty had one. (p 137)”
- ❖ “Mann–Whitney U test also indicated that students and faculty did not differ significantly in how often they checked their Facebook accounts. The most frequent indication for both groups was checking Facebook 1–5 times per day, though about a quarter of each group also checked their accounts less than once a day and another quarter checked it 5–10 times a day. (p 138).”
- ❖ “College students tended to check both email and Facebook with equal frequency. While faculty were significantly more likely to check email than Facebook (p 138).”

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ “Faculty and students do not use Facebook a great deal for instructional purposes; in fact, this was reported as the least-common use of this technology. (p138)”</li> <li>❖ “Students seem much more open to the idea of using Facebook instructionally than do faculty. However, as the rapid evolution in societal perceptions and uses of the Internet has shown in the last decade, attitudes toward technologies tend to change over time. (p 138)”</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ This article did a good job at examining Facebook as a potential way for students to communicate with faculty.</li> <li>❖ This article came up with good hypothesis as to why they received the results that they did.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Only Facebook was examined and not any other social media site.</li> <li>❖ They never looked into how students and faculty feel about communicating through video chat.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Connections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ This source examines how students and faculty could communicate via social media and our design thinking challenge is about trying to improve communication between students and faculty.</li> <li>❖ Faculty still prefer to use email as their main way of communicating with students.</li> <li>❖ Students do not mind using social media to communicate with faculty because they say it’s convenient.</li> <li>❖ If faculty used social media to communicate with students, it could interfere with privacy.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Questions/Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ I wonder if Grand Valley faculty feel the same way about using social media to communicate with students.</li> <li>❖ I also wonder how Grand Valley faculty feel about video chatting with students as a way to communicate with them.</li> </ul>	

Research Bibliography #8:

**Citation:**

Miles, Jennifer M., et al. "Student Governance: Toward Effectiveness and the Ideal." *College Student Journal*, vol. 42, no. 4, Dec. 2008, pp. 1061–1069. EBSCOhost, ezproxy.gvsu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=34876573&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

As we explore the role of communication in governance, we should be looking at more examples of successful student governance. This article highlights the ideal characteristics of student governance, with information specific to liberal arts colleges.

**Main argument:**

An examination of research universities and liberal arts colleges shows that students still want to engage in student governance. However, many barriers have been put in place to hinder that from happening.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ Student's governance has not adopted well to the changing nature of the commercial higher education institution.
- ❖ Challenges students face staking their claim to involvement in governance activities include issues about age and maturity, self-interest in immediate outcomes as compared to long-term thinking, a contended naiveté about politics and institutional structures, and the argument that higher education is not egalitarian and should be governed by the best and most capable.
- ❖ The study found the student governance is still much needed in higher learning institutions. Higher institutions are not interested in sharing student governance with students.

**Evidence:**

- ❖ Student involvement in institutional governance has been predicated on a number of arguments. These include student's entitlement of citizenship and the right of franchise for citizens in a democracy, the correlation between student learning and involvement, the learning produced by engagement in decision-making, the acculturation into democratic life, and that students are often on campus as long as administrators (Miller & Nadler, 2006; Sibley, 1998).
- ❖ "Although there are indeed advantages to sharing authority and delegating work, contemporary higher education seems to be generally disinterested in increasing shared governance opportunities (Miller, 2003). The result is a gradual dismissive nature by institutional leaders to respect, call on, or rely on student governance bodies for input into the decision-making process."

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

- ❖ "College students have been engaged in various aspects of campus governance since nearly the beginning of the academy. This governance was formalized greatly by the academic freedom movement of 40 years ago, and the current system of shared governance has not adapted well to the changing nature of the commercial higher education institution."

- ❖ “Baldrige (1982) was quick to note that there never truly was a period of time in American higher education where all authority and power were delegated equally among differing governing bodies, but, the increasingly commercial behavior of higher education institutions has marginalized governing bodies due to their inefficiencies and focus on fiscal positioning (Giroux, 2001 provides an excellent broad discussion of this trend; Engell & Dangerfield, 2004 similarly provide a good description of the cultural change fueled by money).”
- ❖ “Additional challenges students face staking their claim to involvement in governance activities, however, also include issues about age and maturity, self-interest in immediate outcomes as compared to long-term thinking, a contended naiveté about politics and institutional structures, and the argument that higher education is not egalitarian and should be governed by the best and most capable.”
- ❖ “Institutional leaders and students are left with the perspective that shared governance is not something valued throughout contemporary institutions, despite the calls from accrediting bodies heralding the need for inclusiveness. The result is a compilation of governance structures among institutions that involve students unevenly with a disparate set of responsibilities that are difficult to generalize among institutions. And although some administrators may embrace shared governance, others see little value in the exercise, particularly as the influence of money has encouraged higher education to be more efficient and business like in decision making and operations.”
- ❖ “As shown in Table 3, students from the liberal arts colleges agreed most strongly with the characteristics of representing all student interests, having significant experience on campus, and being willing to communicate with diverse students, all with a mean rating of 4.80. Research university student leaders agreed most strongly with representing all student interests (mean 4.56), advocating for students with administrators (mean 4.56), being willing to build coalitions among student groups (mean 4.43) and being willing to communicate with diverse students (mean 4.43).”
- ❖ “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 student 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.”
- ❖ “Findings indicated that that content-based dialogue should supplant debates about parliamentary procedure and that political machines should be replaced by representing a variety of viewpoints. Results also indicated that there is a need to define officer roles, and this could have any number of interpretations including the need to better develop student leaders to see the broad picture of higher education and student needs and build agendas and coalitions that represent diverse student interests and needs.”

**Strengths:**

- ❖ This research is specific to liberal arts universities.
- ❖ There are demonstrated statistically significant.

**Weaknesses:**

- ❖ This research gives us the mean, response rate, and alpha, but not the sample size of students surveyed.

**Connections:**

- ❖ This source talks about the need for student governance in college institutions.
- ❖ Multiple barriers implemented through colleges keep students from being able to fully participate in student governance.
- ❖ Higher institutions of learning have a hard time incorporating student governance into their policy making.



**Questions/Concerns:**

- ❖ This source makes me question if whether or not student governance is well accepted at Grand Valley State University?
- ❖ How can the negative stigma of having students participate in policy making at colleges get erased?

Research Bibliography #9:

**Citation:**

Mayes, Eve. "Reconceptualizing the Presence of Students on School Governance Councils: The a/Effects of Spatial Positioning." *Policy Futures in Education*, 2017, pp. 1-17., doi:10.1177/1478210317739468.

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

I included this article in our work because it highlights external influences on communication between students and higher-ups that we did not previously consider, such as the room that the communication is taking place in, and the features in that room, such as the furniture of positioning of the individuals involved.

**Main argument:**

This article argues that the spatial positioning of the individuals involved in dialogue contributes to the underlying structure of power in the conversation.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ The positioning of the individuals involved in the dialogue contributes to the subtle structure of power within the conversation. Especially if that is between a recognized authority and someone lower in status.

**Evidence:**

"Spaces, bodies, objects and subject positions, also extend analyses of structures of power."

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

- ❖ Terms and Concepts:
  - Space: "bodies, objects and spaces are intra-actively generated."
  - Subject Position: "a produced, contingent, and contested category that changes through time"
  - Structure of Power: "apparatuses that contribute to the production of phenomena"
- ❖ Quotes:
  - "According to liberal humanistic conceptions of participatory governance, school councils are to make decisions in the best interests of students at the school through democratic deliberation. The meeting situation is conceptualized as social and rational (86) – individual intellects, wills, intentions and interests come together to work towards 'achieving, sustaining and reviewing

consensus' through 'the intersubjective recognition of criticizable validity claims' (Habermas, 1984: 17)."

- "Committing to consensus through dialogue may 'incline Mayes 3 some or all to advocate removing difficult issues from discussion for the sake of agreement' (Young, 2000: 44)."
- "To be present in a meeting does not necessarily equate with power; to speak in a meeting does not equate with being heard (Cook-Sather, 2006). As Wilkins (2016) puts it, '[w]hile attractive in theory, the representative function of school governance has in practice failed to properly materialize' (16)."
- "Spaces, bodies, objects and subject positions, also extend analyses of structures of power."
- "We were put separately from the rest of the school council. We weren't sitting in the same position on the table. We were at the back, slightly off in the corner. We just kind of watched what happened. We went into a room like a restaurant. I often sat on the side a bit, from nerves."
- "The subject position for example, of student, teacher, principal, parent, community member, chairperson, materialize through iterative intra-actions among human bodies, past and present experiences, policies, discourses about children, as well as among meeting agendas, budget spreadsheets, furniture, affects."

**Strengths:**

- ❖ Good sample size for online survey - 218 students participated.
- ❖ Discusses the impact that the room itself and the features within it have on the students' ability to properly represent themselves and others.

**Weaknesses:**

- ❖ Small sample size in regional research workshops - only 21 students participated.
- ❖ Highlights a contributing factor to limited communication between parties that we may not be able to influence.

**Connections:**

- ❖ The layout of the room that the dialogue is happening in, along with the room itself, contributes to the quality of the discussion itself.
- ❖ It provides personal accounts of how students are influenced by their positioning in the room, along with the positioning of the authority figures.
- ❖ Shows that the gap in communication between students and faculty is no fault of any person but is influenced by subtle factors that often escape our observations.

**Questions/Concerns:**

- ❖ Since one of our constraints concerned space and the availability of it, how will this research impact the feasibility and effectiveness of our solution?
- ❖ Can we modify the room and the features to be more inviting to students, reducing the underlying structure of power that it creates?

Research Bibliography #10:

**Citation:**

Collaco, Christine M. (2017). *Increasing Student Engagement in Higher Education*. Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice. Volume 17, Issue 4: pp 40-47. Retrieved from: <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/docview/1949477484/fulltextPDF/3C162658D5844EAPQ/1?accountid=39473>

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

The reason for including this in our work is because it discusses the idea of increasing student engagement in higher education. This has been a major insight that students either don't have time or just don't have the motivation to participate in extracurricular activities. Although this article is more involved with students' engagement in the classroom, that can directly impact their roles and efforts outside of it as well.

**Main argument:**

The main argument of this article was to find ways in which faculty can help aid in the increase of student engagement. There are effective teaching methods that would generally increase the participation of students and their interactions with both faculty and the course material. It is through these ways that students and faculty can better their relationships as well.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ The main role of the professors is to aid student's interaction in class, and have them create their own knowledge of the topics
- ❖ Researchers have described student engagement as a multidimensional phenomenon
- ❖ Students will have a greater experience in college based on the time and effort that they devote to their academics and activities
- ❖ The disposition of teacher influences the disposition of a student

**Evidence:**

"Researchers have described student engagement as a multidimensional phenomenon"

"Wittrock's generative theory of learning states that students learn better when they are engaged during the learning experience"

## Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- ❖ Student engagement has been defined as “involving students in meaningful academic activities”
  - “Being actively involved by asking questions, or working collaboratively with other students”
- ❖ Interactions with teachers and other students are an important part of a student’s experience
- ❖ Asking questions is a good way for students to engage and gauge their knowledge
- ❖ Suggests that teachers should consider using a questioning procedure throughout class
- ❖ “They [Webber et al.] indicated that students may benefit with increased academic knowledge as well as personal and social skills in a collaborative learning environment that is both challenging and supportive”
- ❖ Triangle Model as a theoretical foundation
  - Student Engagement has three factors
    - Prescription Clarity
    - Personal Control
    - Personal Obligation
  - “They found that setting clear goals, teaching learning strategies, and encouraging students to believe in themselves, along with stressing the importance of personal obligation contributed to predicting academic engagement. Engagement, in turn, predicted academic success”
- ❖ “Jang found that students’ engagement, motivation, and overall learning experience was increased by providing a rationale in a supportive way”
- ❖ ‘Mantle of the Expert’
  - Stresses the importance of allowing students to have an active part in making decisions in order for them to be invested in their own learning experience
- ❖ Locomotion Mode
  - Goal oriented
- ❖ Assessment Mode
  - Alternatives in order to maximize progress
- ❖ ARC
  - Application, Response, Collaboration
- ❖ Students are more engaged when the instruction...
  - 1. Increases student teacher interaction
  - 2. Involves cooperation with students
  - 3. Active learning
  - 4. Timely feedback
  - 5. Invest time in assignments
  - 6. High expectations
  - 7. Diverse talents and ways of learning
- ❖ Blended Learning environments
- ❖ “Schrand encouraged educators to use technologies for active forms of student learning, and not as ‘shovels’ of passive learning in presenting course content”
- ❖ Eye contact is an indicator of engagement
- ❖ Engaging students in higher education does not need to be challenging
- ❖ “Teaching is an art, and requires an inventive mind”

<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Used a lot of literature review within the article</li> <li>❖ Generated research questions</li> <li>❖ Defined student engagement in a variety of ways</li> <li>❖ Written more recently</li> <li>❖ Used focus groups</li> <li>❖ Acknowledged the fact that the focus groups may pose constraints</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Not all students engage in the same ways</li> <li>❖ Same student can vary on the continuum</li> <li>❖ Focuses mostly on the role faculty has on increasing student motivation and less on the student's role</li> <li>❖ Too many ideas/methods were brought up that it became overwhelming</li> </ul>
<p><b>Connections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ There was the idea of a “Mantle of Expert” in which students can form and create their own experiences. I think it is important to realize that students can make their own decisions and create their own experiences in college and Honors regardless of what anyone else says. It would also invest them into their own college experience and role that they have here directly at GVSU.</li> <li>❖ This article also discusses the idea of blended learning as a combination of face-to-face and online learning environments. I think this idea is interesting as most of this is already implemented, especially since today's generations are much more technological anyways. However, I think this is beneficial to know because not all classrooms and professors utilize these ideas and it could benefit a student's experience.</li> <li>❖ Learning does not just happen in the classroom. Although all of these methods and ideas to increase student engagement are beneficial, it is still important to remember that they will reach far beyond the classroom. If professors and faculty are able to promote student-teacher interaction and incorporate various teaching methods to increase engagement than it will reach far beyond just that. Many students will feel more comfortable to engage with professors and communicate when their class is engaging as well.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Questions/Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Are there methods already implemented in certain courses that students feel are more engaging than other courses?</li> <li>❖ Are professors willing to change their teaching methods and ideas? Especially ones that have been here longer than others?</li> <li>❖ If students did decide to “own” their experience here at GVSU, what would that look like? What would it consist of?</li> </ul>	

**Citation:**

Heirdsfield, A., Walker, S., Tambyah, M., & Beutel, D. (2011). Blackboard as An Online Learning Environment: What Do Teacher Education Students and Staff Think? *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 36(7).  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2011v36n7.4>

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

As we attempt to figure out the reasons there is a disconnect between teachers and students in communication, and since Grand Valley uses Blackboard for a majority of communication between teachers and students, it is important to see how others view the communication abilities of this platform.

**Main argument:**

Learning management systems have been put in place so that students who are living in distant areas from universities, such as adults, can access and interact with curriculum. However, using these systems with students who are available for face-to-face interaction is isolating and can deteriorate communication between students and professors.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ A key limitation of learning management systems is that teachers have to devote time and resources into learning how to properly conduct class through these systems, and often do not do so.
- ❖ Students can benefit from increased availability in timing, such as after typical office hours are over, quick feedback from professors, and building skills in time management.
- ❖ Potential to isolate and alienate individuals who have difficulty using technology.
- ❖ Primary use of learning management systems is to improve communications for learners who are distant rather than students who normally attend classes and have the ability to learn in person.

**Evidence:**

- ❖ Distance students claim that the use of Blackboard interactive features including discussion boards help them gain contact with the professor and other students, helping to foster a learning community among the group.
- ❖ Staff can commonly be unaware or uncertain about specific interactive tools that come as functions on Blackboard, and therefore students would not be able to benefit from the tools that could be at their disposal.
- ❖ It is valuable to have curriculum resources and learning tools in a central location that they could access 24 hours a day, which makes them capable of completing assignments and studying coursework outside of the normal 9-5-time chunk.

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

- ❖ “However, staff noted the need to learn how to use these features and identified the difficulty in following the discussion because of the confusion in adding new threads, collecting and reading posts and the inability to see the name of previous post when responding: ‘Yeah, they’re horrible that means someone has to post then you have to read, and then you’ve got to...it’s all disjointed.’ These difficulties led some staff to the view that discussion forums were not user-friendly, hard to follow and clunky to use and 30% of staff used discussion forms seldom or not at all.”
- ❖ “Students liked being able to access unit materials, access library databases and other materials such as homework and workshop tasks posted by the lecturer at any time of the day or night. Access to contacts with the teaching team, other students in the unit and other university staff created opportunities for collaboration through Blackboard. The value of having unit information such as what readings were needed every week, assessment tasks and due dates in the one place was seen as a major benefit by 70% of students.”
- ❖ “Thirty percent of students indicated that wikis were especially valued as learning was shared during group tasks. The ability to see what peers were doing in their wikis was useful for students engaged in similar tasks and contributed to their bank of learning resources that could be used in the future for teaching. And so being able to see how other people develop their work and you know, whether you are a drafter or whether you just like to have all your ideas, just put it out there and I’ve been able to learn from the way other people work to enhance the way I work. Students appreciated explicit instructions on how to proceed with a wiki and suggested it be used as part of the design of a unit as it can enhance teaching and learning.”
- ❖ “However, others noted isolation from peers and teaching staff. Some questioned the use of discussions forums and boards as they were perceived as unwieldy, time-consuming and poorly subscribed, while wikis were criticized by one student as a “dreadful” tool for group assessment.”

**Strengths:**

- ❖ This piece of research focuses specifically on a learning management system that we use at Grand Valley, Blackboard
- ❖ This research combines general findings with a specific study to increase reliability

**Weaknesses:**

- ❖ This research tells about the existence of hybrid learning classes but does not evaluate those students when conducting studies about their preference between the two settings.

**Connections:**

- ❖ Students can benefit from interactive features of Blackboard in order to better communicate with the rest of the class and the professor.
- ❖ Blackboard allows to access course content at any time of the day, therefore moving around scheduling difficulties.
- ❖ Professors need to fully learn the tools and uses of Blackboard before conducting a class or providing content on the platform.



**Questions/Concerns:**

- ❖ What are the requirements and learning processes that professors at Grand Valley go through before being able to create Blackboard classes?
- ❖ How often do professors at Grand Valley utilize discussion board and interactive features on Blackboard rather than only providing physical content?

Research Bibliography #12:

**Citation:**

Cotten, Shelia R., and Bonnie Wilson. "Student-Faculty Interactions: Dynamics and Determinants." *Higher Education*, vol. 51, no. 4, 2006, pp. 487-519. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/29734993](http://www.jstor.org/stable/29734993).

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

The reason for including the source in our work is because it studied student-faculty interactions and the frequency and nature of them. From there it determines why these interactions occur and how they occur as well. This is important as it indicates ways in which we can see faculty and students already interacting with one another and other key factors that result from these important meetings.

**Main argument:**

This article emphasizes what dictates the how and why of student interactions with faculty. They utilize a number of focus groups of students and their experiences along with research to illustrate their findings. Their main findings were that student-faculty interactions will have positive outcomes on students experiences at college, however, students often do not seek interactions with their professors, as it is a time-consuming commitment and/or they see no real need for it.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ Often students do not take full advantage of the resources that they are provided
- ❖ Student-faculty interactions come in various forms
  - Formal versus informal
  - Social versus academic
- ❖ The role of faculty outside of the classroom is not clearly defined
- ❖ Students are unaware of the potential benefits of substantive interaction with faculty

**Evidence:**

"However, while the classroom may be a primary point of contact between faculty and students, the ability of faculty to contribute to the college experience of their students does not end when class is dismissed"

"Students generally perceive interactions as beneficial. The particular benefits cited by students most often were course-specific or career-related; students typically reported that a relationship with a faculty member may lead to an internship or job opportunity, or to a higher grade. In other words, students recognize a networking value to interactions."

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

- ❖ "Early research that examined correlates of student-faculty interactions indicated that students often did not take full advantage of faculty resources."

- ❖ “The nature of interactions is also limited, with interactions lasting only briefly, and centering primarily on specific course-related issues.”
- ❖ “Students associated out-of-class interactions with faculty with greater self-confidence, learning, and academic skill development.”
- ❖ “The teaching practices of faculty provide cues to students about faculty members’ accessibility outside the classroom and may therefore explain student-faculty interactions.”
- ❖ An understanding of why and how of contact is important.
- ❖ “In general, students revealed that they approach faculty seeking help with a specific problem, with a specific course, with a specific need.”
- ❖ “At the institution where students were interviewed, the Office of Residential Life has established a ‘faculty mentor’ program. A faculty mentor is assigned to each residential community and is charged with participating in community activities for approximately 10 hours each month.”
- ❖ About a questionnaire given to students concerning communication with faculty: “... students reported some interaction with faculty. However, they also indicated that interactions were infrequent, and not a routine part of their academic experience. Several students reported that they had never interacted with a faculty member outside the classroom. Some noted that their primary contact with instructors was with teaching assistants.”
- ❖ A quote from a student who was interviewed: ““There’s not really a point in seeing teachers for the generally required classes that you have to take. You’re probably not going to see the same teacher again so it’s not in your best interest to take time to produce a relationship - unless it’s going to help your grade or something.””
- ❖ “A number of students reported that contact with a professor outside of class facilitates in-class interactions by raising their comfort level.
- ❖ Time is a major constraint that hindered interactions with faculty.
- ❖ A link of student effort between student-faculty interactions and performance.
- ❖ A quote from a student regarding faculty behavior towards students: “No matter how you talk to some faculty and no matter how you try to get their help, they make you feel like an idiot. And it’s their demeanor, it’s the way that they speak to you, it’s the tone of voice that they use, and it’s the hurriedness of their body language. Like, you’re wasting my time, you’re in my space, get out. Or, you know, they just make you feel like you’re another number and you’re completely unimportant.”
- ❖ “Students indicated that they were motivated to increase the effort they applied to their work in order to please, or avoid disappointing, a faculty member.”
- ❖ Maturity is often associated with recognizing the benefits of faculty interactions.
- ❖ “Students perceive that use of part-time faculty contributes to lack of faculty availability and presence on campus.”
- ❖ “Students noted that when they feel comfortable with faculty inside the classroom, they are more likely to feel comfortable approaching them outside the classroom.”
- ❖ “Given that faculty are one of the primary resources that universities provide to students, the limited frequency and nature of interactions reported by students is striking.”
- ❖ Campus culture plays an important role in the environment of a campus.
- ❖ Social vs Academic Interactions

- ❖ “Given that students and faculty must be present in the same location for substantive engagement to occur, institutions need to keep this obvious fact in mind as they design physical spaces and programs in order to create spaces that are attractive to both students and faculty.”

**Strengths:**

- ❖ Looked at the effects on transfer students
- ❖ Interviewed both faculty and students on their views of expectations of relationships
- ❖ Qualitative research
- ❖ Have direct quotes from students that were interviewed

**Weaknesses:**

- ❖ Focus groups could have limited some of the student’s participation in discussion
- ❖ Obviously, these are only selected portions of student interviews; so, they could be misleading
- ❖ Research was only conducted at one college

**Connections:**

- ❖ The article mentions that contact with professors outside of class helps to raise comfort levels of students. This is an insight that has been major throughout our research since, a lot of students get anxious and nervous when meeting with professors. This casual low-risk environment outside of the classroom helps to break down those barriers of anxiety for both students and faculty.
- ❖ One issue that came up in the article was that faculty are not readily available on campus. After recently interviewing a part-time associate faculty member in Honors, there is a direct correlation. Part-time faculty are not located directly in the Honors College and this location disconnect could impact the relationships that Honors students have with faculty. The distance between both the students and faculty as they are often located on opposite sides of campus may deter students and faculty from meeting often.
- ❖ This article also highlights just how much work speaking to professors and getting to know them on a deeper level is. To some, this is worth it, but to most, this is just wasted time as they will likely never see their professor again.

**Questions/Concerns:**

- ❖ How can we increase students’ awareness of the various benefits of communicating with faculty?
- ❖ Are there ways to bridge this disconnect of Niemeyer and Holton Hooker Honors students? And the part-time faculty that are not located in Niemeyer?
- ❖ Would these findings be the same or different at other colleges?

Research Bibliography #13:

**Citation:**

Cox, Bradley E., et al. "Pedagogical Signals of Faculty Approachability: Factors Shaping Faculty-Student Interaction Outside the Classroom." *Research in Higher Education*, vol. 51, no. 8, 2010, pp. 767-788., doi:10.1007/s11162-010-9178-z.

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

As we're honing in on our top 5 innovations, student-faculty trust-building and establishment of beneficial outside-of-classroom interaction is at the center of our work. This research shares information on how this can be achieved successfully.

**Main argument:**

Out-of-classroom interaction between faculty and students are valuable to both parties, but even so these interactions are rarer than they should be. This research shows that successful out-of-classroom interactions can be influenced by students' perception of faculty "psychosocial approachability", as developed by in-class behavior and other signals.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ Faculty who have a significant presence on campus (full-time as compared to part-time faculty) have more success in engaging students in out-of-classroom interactions
- ❖ Office hours, and how they are communicated to students, play a large role in a student's perception of a faculty member's approachability
- ❖ Student's concepts of gender-role and their gendered assumptions seem to lead to uneven outcomes in professor interaction- students expect approachability from female professors and so are unimpressed by it, leading to less out-of-classroom engagement, whereas students are surprised by male professor's approachability and are more likely to attend office hours because of it.

**Evidence:**

This research builds on a framework established by Pascarella in the 80's, many of those findings were re-tested and proven to hold true in 2010, showing that out-of-classroom student-faculty interactions are paradoxically highly beneficial but quite rare.

"Decades of research demonstrate that college students benefit from positive interaction with faculty members, although that same evidence suggests that those interactions are far from common, particularly outside the classroom."

"Positive student outcomes linked with faculty-student interaction includes grade-point average (Anaya and Cole 2001), persistence (Pascarella and Terenzini 1977), self-reports of learning (Lundberg and Schreiner 2004), plans for graduate study (Hathaway et al. 2002), social integration/adjustment (Schwitzer et al. 1999), and a variety of other educationally valuable activities (Kuh and Hu 2001)."

### Notable quotes, terms, and concepts:

- ❖ “Interactions with a substantive focus appear to have a greater impact on knowledge acquisition and skill development, for example, than do more casual, less-focused contacts (see, for example, Kuh and Hu 2001).”
- ❖ “Studies of students’ development of higher-order cognitive skills also suggest that the purpose and quality of faculty–student interactions may be more important than their frequency.”
- ❖ “Vianden found that many students do not know how—or even why—to interact with faculty members outside the classroom. Data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (2008) suggest that, during their years at college, students may develop an understanding of the purpose and process of contacting faculty members outside of class. First-year students, as well as those who are generally unfamiliar with college norms (e.g., first-generation students) or with lower levels of self-confidence or self-efficacy may be especially uncomfortable talking with faculty members.”
- ❖ “This limited body of evidence suggests that faculty members who have a student-centered philosophy of education and believe that teaching is a critical part of their role as professors consistently display higher levels of out-of-class interaction with students (Cotten and Wilson 2006; Einarson and Clarkberg 2004; Golde and Pribbenow 2000). So, too, do faculty members with friendly personalities and strong interpersonal skills (Einarson and Clarkberg 2004; Wilson et al. 1974).”
- ❖ “For example, faculty members’ signals of their “psychosocial accessibility” to students (Wilson et al. 1974, 1975) can take multiple forms, some obvious (e.g., occasionally, but repeatedly, inviting students to ask questions during or after class), others more subtle (e.g., facial expressions, keeping office hours, responding to questions in ways that reflect a genuine interest in helping students learn). These behaviors, in turn, may encourage students to seek such out-of-class contact with instructors (Cotten and Wilson 2006; Snow 1973).”
- ❖ “The conceptual framework (see Fig. 1) for this study hypothesizes that out-of-class interaction is the direct result of professors’ in-class pedagogical behaviors and other professional statuses/activities. These practices are themselves shaped by both instructors’ personal characteristics and institutional



environments.

- ❖ “Using the median and modal frequencies as points of reference, our results imply that, among those who have recently taught courses serving primarily first-year students, the majority of faculty members scarcely have any substantive interaction with first-year students outside of class.”
- ❖ “The descriptive statistics and structural models from this study indicate that part-time faculty members interact with students less frequently than do their full-time peers.”

- ❖ “Our descriptive statistics suggest that non-tenure-track professors have as much or more frequent interaction with students outside of class—particularly that which is substantive in nature—than do their tenure-line colleagues.”
- ❖ “Together, these findings suggest that female instructors do not receive equal out-of-class returns from their in-class efforts to engage with students. We suspect that these gender-specific outcomes may be the result of students’ gender-specific expectations for instructors.”
- ❖ “Tone of voice, facial expressions, and other nonverbal—often unintentional—signals may be more important than the presentations or assignments given by the professor. So, too, might a professor’s level of preparation for class or the manner in which office hours are listed on the syllabus affect students’ perceptions of faculty openness.”
- ❖ “Yet another interpretation of our findings is that faculty behaviors are not the biggest predictors of their likelihood to engage students outside of class. Rather, it may be that the student side of the faculty–student interaction equation is actually the driving force and that the variability attributable to the faculty members themselves is relatively minor.”

**Strengths:**

- ❖ Very large sample size for research: 2,845 faculty members from 45 campuses
- ❖ Addresses the “why” behind limited out-of-classroom interaction
- ❖ Digs into factors that are implicit as well as explicit (i.e. faculty in-class behavior vs. faculty gender and employment status)

**Weaknesses:**

- ❖ Leaves a bit unanswered, calling for deeper research into the student end of interaction
- ❖ Brings up many interesting points but doesn’t spend enough time unpacking them

**Connections:**

- ❖ Echoing the insight, we’ve seen several times now: office hours matter! Office hours should be more accessible to students and efforts should be made to improve how these are communicated to students.
- ❖ When designing out-of-classroom experiences we should make extra effort to ensure there is equal gender representation of faculty.
- ❖ There is also opportunity to engage part-time and tenure-track professors, who have a harder time accessing out-of-office interactions.

**Questions/Concerns:**

- ❖ How can we use these findings to deepen our understanding of student’s responsibility in faculty-student interactions?
- ❖ Given that this research shows that faculty who are on campus less have a harder time with out-of-classroom interactions, how can we include them in our innovations?
- ❖ Some of the factors discussed in this research are out of faculty’s control, namely students’ perceptions and expectations of gender, how can we address this in our solutions?

Research Bibliography #14:

**Citation:**

Collier, Ann Futterman, and Heidi A. Wayment. "Psychological Benefits of the 'Maker' or Do-It-Yourself Movement in Young Adults: A Pathway Towards Subjective Well-Being." *Journal of Happiness Studies*, vol. 19, no. 4, 2017, pp. 1217–1239., doi:10.1007/s10902-017-9866-x.

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

One of our top 5 innovations is to "Create a DO SOMETHING" environment, which leads to a need to research the benefits of engaging in informal making/tinkering experiences. This research outlines the potential benefits of just such an environment for college-aged students.

**Main argument:**

Maker activities are overall beneficial to college students, facilitating overall subjective well-being, self-esteem, and focus. These benefits can positively impact the personal and academic lives of college students.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ Engagement in maker activities can be stress-reductive and can foster a sense of community. Office hours, and how they are communicated to students, play a large role in a student's perception of a faculty member's approachability
- ❖ The frustrations and challenges that can present in making experiences are overall beneficial, leading to greater satisfaction and can spark generative creativity
- ❖ Constraints like income and time limit the activities students engage in, this should be kept in mind when designing makerspace activities

**Evidence:**

"Given the potential for Maker behaviors to facilitate personal growth and well-being, Maker identity might be a potential pathway towards subjective well-being (SWB)."

"Flow is associated with positive feelings because of immersion in the activity; it is more likely to occur when an individual is fully focused and engaged. Schueller and Seligman (2010) believe that flow experiences promote positive resources by nurturing talent, encouraging interest, and developing skills. They suggest that ultimately, flow experiences lead to greater productivity and success, which further enhances SWB."

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

- ❖ "By having a Maker identity, college students would be able to find structured opportunities for purposeful commitment and exploration, both in the depth and breadth of their activities."
- ❖ "Interestingly, our sample reported that present focus, mood-repair, and social involvement were the most important reasons for involvement in specific Maker activities. After these reasons, our participants indicated that individuality, recycling, and engagement in life were important. These six reasons actually accounted for the



majority of the reasons behind why students participated in Maker activities; mood-repair was present focus were the most important reasons given.”

- ❖ “Maker behavior appears to be associated with many positive psychological benefits and should be encouraged as a potential pathway to eudemonic well-being. Overall, college students engaged in a somewhat limited range of Maker activities, emphasizing primarily domestic activities (e.g., cooking, baking, gardening, scrapbooking), and then electronics, photography/films/movies and drawing/painting. The students we evaluated were less likely to have tried arts and craft and most DIY activities.”
- ❖ “When students did engage in Maker activities, they spent approximately 3 h a week doing so. Their limited range of Maker activities probably reflects their youth; our sample was on average 20 years old. These students also probably had little disposable time on their hands; Wolf and McQuitty (2011) have suggested that DIYers must have discretionary time in order to engage in DIY activities. In previous studies, we also found that Makers usually had more disposable income available, such as with textile handcrafts (Collier and von Ka’rolyi 2014). Marketing research should keep these factors in mind, i.e., disposable income and free time, when trying to attract younger demographics to both arts and craft and DIY activities.”
- ❖ “Instead, our college students were motivated to create mostly because it made them feel better emotionally, it provided avenues for social interactions, and they enjoyed the opportunity to live in the moment. Interestingly, DIY activities were done most often for individuality and present focus, not mood repair. And, sewing and quilting were the only activities where participants identified recycling as the primary motive for involvement.”
- ❖ “Many DIY and Maker tasks can be frustrating, annoying, and even irritating. These activities involve time and a process, as well as problem-solving and contemplation. Most of us that make things have had experiences where we set out to do a seemingly simple project and it turned out to be a major ordeal, even at times a disaster. This could lead to negative affect that is high in arousal, which we did not measure. Interestingly, high arousal negative mood is associated with convergent thinking, or generative creativity (Tidikis 2012). Thus, the experience of frustration while Making may not be so bad; it may contribute significantly towards the creative endeavor. Yet, by remaining engaged in the Maker activity, despite frustration, people often feel pleased with their accomplishment(s), further enhancing SWB.”

**Strengths:**

- ❖ This research introduced interesting scaled qualities including Maker identity, Quiet Ego, Trait rumination, and Subjective well-being
- ❖ This is some of the most recently-conducted research we’ve found, suggesting these findings are applicable to the technological and social landscape of the current college experience
- ❖ These findings show many benefits exist in maker experiences of a wide

**Weaknesses:**

- ❖ There was no discussion of faculty engagement in makerspaces, there seems to be a lack of research that addresses both student and faculty experience
- ❖ The sample size consisted of only first-year college students, it would be helpful to know how these benefits change or grow as students move deeper into their college careers

<p>variety of topic, scale, and time-commitment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ There is a gender imbalance in the sample size: 465 (73% female, 27% male) first-year college students</li> </ul>
<p><b>Connections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ This research gives insight into the specific types of maker activities that have been shown to be most beneficial to the subjective well-being of college students, this could guide our innovation process</li> <li>❖ Even if we do not pursue this specific innovation, this research shows how informal exploration experiences can benefit college students, which could be applied to a number of other innovations</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Questions/Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Would faculty have results similar to those shown here?</li> <li>❖ There is a lack of research on faculty-student collaboration in makerspaces, can we responsibly extrapolate these findings and apply them to a solution that encompasses both students and faculty needs?</li> <li>❖ How can these findings be applied beyond first-year college students?</li> </ul>	

**Citation:**

Freeman, T. M., Anderman, L. H., & Jensen, J. M. (2007). Sense of belonging in college freshmen at the classroom and campus levels. *Journal of Experimental Education, 75*(3), 203-220. doi:<http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/10.3200/JEXE.75.3.203-220>

**Reason for including this source in your work:**

I am including this source because it tackles the connection between a sense of belonging and many different factors such as self-efficacy, professor openness and warmth, and social acceptance within the university. These are important because the issue with a sense of belonging also effects involvement in student governance.

**Main argument:**

The main argument of this article is that a student's sense of belonging can strongly influence their motivation to participate in the college experience, their perception of the interpersonal nature of professor communication, and their social acceptance by others who belong to the university. They argue that sense of belonging established early in a student's college career can increase motivation in both academic and social settings during college.

**Important ideas:**

- ❖ A student's sense of belonging at any level of schooling can be positively influenced by a supportive interaction or relationship with a non-parental adult, such as a teacher or professor.
- ❖ Characteristics of how the instructor teaches classes can have an impact on sense of belonging, such as a student's perception that their classes are in line with their academic values and will develop mastery in the subject.
- ❖ College students coming into an entirely new environment face difficulties being separated from their high school and established relationships and creating new perceptions of how those things look, which can limit a sense of belonging because the students are unsure about their future interactions in a new environment.

**Evidence:**

"As expected, students' social acceptance was a significant positive predictor of their sense of university belonging ( $\beta=.46$   $p<.001$ )."

"Students' sense of class belonging was positively associated with their academic self-efficacy ( $R^2=.34$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $\beta=.58$ ,  $p<.001$ ), intrinsic motivation ( $R^2=.16$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $\beta=.38$ ,  $p<.001$ ), and perceptions of the value of academic tasks in that class ( $R^2=.21$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $\beta=.46$ ,  $p<.001$ )."

"When considered alone, students' sense of class belonging ( $\beta=.36$ ,  $p<.001$ ) was significantly associated with their university belonging and accounted for 13% of the variance in the sense of belonging to the university."

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

- ❖ “Those findings suggested that when students felt a sense of belonging in a particular class, they also reported positive motivational beliefs in relation to that class. They feel more confident of accomplishing their academic goals in that class, their reasons for participating in class discussions and activities are more likely to reflect their personal interest in learning and mastering the material presented, and they perceive the class material as important and useful.”
- ❖ “In particular, students’ sense of efficacy for succeeding in class and their perception of the value of tasks required in class were quite strongly associated with their sense of belonging.”
- ❖ “The results suggested that all three characteristics included were associated with the sense of belonging, with the encouragement of student participation and interaction being the most important. That practice, along with instructor warmth and organization, represented characteristics of generally effective teaching (e.g. see Davis, 2003) and were linked with students’ motivation and achievement. Our findings suggested that students’ sense of belonging is also enhanced when instruction is well designed and implemented.”

**Strengths:**

- ❖ Tells about proper professor instruction in order to help build a sense of belonging
- ❖ Highlights importance of exposure early on in a student’s college career
- ❖ Describes reasons why students may feel they don’t belong during the college experience

**Weaknesses:**

- ❖ Focus specifically on academic performance in relation to sense of belonging
- ❖ Does not mention suggestions for what to implement in order to increase students’ sense of belonging.

**Connections:**

- ❖ This research gives insight into the specific types of maker activities that have been shown to be most beneficial to the subjective well-being of college students, this could guide our innovation process
- ❖ Even if we do not pursue this specific innovation, this research shows how informal exploration experiences can benefit college students, which could be applied to a number of other innovations

**Questions/Concerns:**

- ❖ Would faculty have results similar to those shown here?
- ❖ There is a lack of research on faculty-student collaboration in makerspaces, can we responsibly extrapolate these findings and apply them to a solution that encompasses both students and faculty needs?
- ❖ How can these findings be applied beyond first-year college students?