

**The Perceptions, Attitudes, and Behaviors of Students Toward Their Honors Program:  
A Study of the Temple University Honors Program**

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## **Abstract**

Through an online survey and in-person interviews, I studied the attitudes and perceptions of Honors students at Temple University in Philadelphia to better understand how they interact with their Honors Program. A quantitative analysis of 152 survey responses found that involvement, especially in certain organizations, is highly correlated with how much a student feels as though they belong in the Honors Program. For the qualitative analysis, several major themes arose, such as barriers from the Honors staff, the atmosphere of the students, the lack of representation, and barriers to involvement. I created a list of nudges and interventions that can be implemented to combat these themes. Overall, this project has shown that the people with the solutions are often the ones closest to the problems.

Keywords: Higher Education, Honors College, Honors Program, Temple University

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## **I. Introduction**

For many decades, the Temple University Honors Program (henceforth referred to as Honors or the Honors Program) has served as a community for undergraduate students with high academic achievements. Admittance is primarily based on high school GPA and SAT scores, though students can be admitted through the Temple Option program or by transferring in once they are a student at Temple. Students in Honors receive perks such as extended library privileges, access to a separate residence hall community [the Honors LLC], and priority registration, which is taking part in the first wave of class registration each semester. There are several organizations and opportunities available only for students in the program. The Honors Program also offers advising, community spaces through the Honors Lounge and Huddle, and smaller, more personalized classes. Overall, there are a plethora of academic and social benefits of being in the Honors Program.

Like any organization, the Honors Program is not perfect. It is nearly impossible to cater to every resource to each student when there are over 2,000 undergraduates in the program every year. However, through observations of my own experiences and those of the people around me, I have noticed that there seems to be recurring themes and disconnects between the Honors Program and its students.

Through the Honors Scholar Project, an elective interdisciplinary senior thesis for students in the Honors Program, I set out to more thoroughly research and better understand if these disconnects are pervasive and persistent. Under the support of my mentors, I used the ideas and research methods of behavioral economics and organizational management. After data collection and analysis, I created a list of nudges, which are types of policies that specifically are cheap, are easy to implement, and make decision-making less complicated (Thaler and Sunstein, 2008). In essence, nudges do not take away decisions but make certain choices more easily accessible (Clavien, 2018). The goal of this project is to understand more broadly how Honors students interact with and view the Honors Program in order to more efficiently address policies for the students.

The rest of the report is as follows: Section II explains the methodology used, Section III presents the quantitative results, Section IV details the major themes and suggested nudges for implementation, and Section V concludes with a summary and final discussion of the report. The paper is supported by an appendix of supplementary materials, beginning with a glossary of terms related to Temple and the Honors Program.

## **II. Methodology**

In order to understand how students view the Honors Program, I relied on two main strategies: an online survey and in-person interviews.

The online, anonymous survey attempted to obtain large-scale, meaningful quantitative and qualitative data about three primary topics. The first section observed the current and previous involvement of the students. The second section attempted to understand how students perceive the Honors Program. Three questions asked about representation and diversity in Honors. Referred to henceforward as the belongingness score, the primary variable of interest asked the students to rate how much they feel like they belong in Honors (on a scale of one to ten with ten being “completely belong”). An optional open-ended question gave the students the chance to elaborate. The final section of the survey measured the demographics of the students and concluded with asking the students to leave their emails if they would be willing to speak with me further. The survey was distributed to students through the Honors Bulletin, the daily email from the program, over six days total, evenly split between the week before and the week after Temple University's Fall Break. The full survey can be found in Appendix B.

To analyze the findings of these surveys, I estimated the following ordinary least squares regression:

$$(1) \quad Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + B_4X_4 + B_5X_5 + B_6X_6 + u$$

where  $Y$  is the belongingness score. In equation (1),  $x_1$  is the total number of Honors organizations and roles the student is currently involved in, and  $x_2$  is a binary variable of whether the student's primary college is the College of Science and Technology [CST], the most popular college for Honors students.  $x_3$  is the “well-represented” score given by the student to the question, “Do you feel well-represented within the Honors community?” (on a scale of one to five with five being “completely well-represented”).  $x_4$  is the number of semesters the student has been in the Honors Program which has been included because there is a common notion that students become less involved in Honors as they get older.  $x_5$  is a binary variable of whether the student self-identifies as a person of color (which is only 38 percent of the students in the program), and  $x_6$  is a binary variable of whether the student would agree to meet with me further, as maybe those with the most polarized views are the ones who took the survey.

Aside from the survey and regression analysis, I conducted one-on-one interviews with students using the responses from the survey question asking for follow-up participants. Appendix C includes the full set of interview questions, though I asked many participants questions that were specific follow-ups to answers they gave. Overall, the interviews attempted to obtain qualitative data to better understand three major areas. First, the interviews asked about feelings toward the Honors Program and its services. The interviews also asked about the alignment between the student, the community, and the program as a whole. Finally, there were questions attempting to understand what Honors is, believes, and promotes versus what the student believes it should.

### III. Quantitative Results

The initial survey received 153 responses of which 152 were current students. Responders to the survey were not fully representative of the demographics of Honors but were likely to have several distinct traits. The primary college for responders was the College of Liberal Arts [CLA] (37 percent) even though CLA students are only 19 percent of Honors. Although about 38 percent of students in the program identify as a person of color, only 20 percent of those surveyed identified this way. 57 percent of responders do not currently belong to any Honors organizations or serve in any official roles, and the most frequent first semester in Honors was cited to be Fall 2019 or Fall 2018 for 28 percent and 24 percent of responders entering the program in those years, respectively. Of the survey respondents, 20 met with me for interviews. Appendix D details the descriptive statistics and distributions for the survey and interviews.

The average response for the belongingness score was 6.21 out of 10. Excluding the factors with low sample sizes, certain descriptors had, on average, higher scores. Students on the Honors Admissions and Transitions Team [HATT], living in the first-year Honors LLC, and members of Temple Honors Appalachia [THA] tended to score themselves higher than their peers. Similarly, current first-year seminar instructors and students who visit the Lounge every day or multiple times a week also had higher average belongingness scores. Students who feel like they belong may be more drawn to these organizations but being a part of these organizations may cause a student to feel more as though they belong. The largest difference was seen between students who were involved in at least one Honors organization and those who were not, with the former scoring an average of 7.21 and the latter a 4.91. On the other side, the number of semesters a student has been in Honors, a student's primary college, and whether a first-year student is in a seminar had little to no variation in the belongingness score. With all these variations, we cannot assume the direction of influence.

To better understand what influences the belongingness score, I ran the regression from equation (1) in R. Of the independent variables, only the total number of current Honors organizations a student is involved in and the well-represented score were statistically significant at the .001 level. Both have relatively large, positive coefficients that suggest that the more involved a student is or the more well-represented a student feels, the more the student feels as though they belong. Being a part of the largest college in Honors [CST], the number of semesters a student has been in Honors, whether the student identifies as a person of color, and whether the student was willing to follow up with me were all not statistically significant in the belongingness score. What makes this interesting is that the common belief in the Honors Program is that being in CST, being a newer student, and not identifying as a person of color helps you identify more with the Honors label. The full results can be found in Appendix E.

#### **IV. Themes and Suggested Interventions**

The quantitative results from the data analysis as well as the qualitative results from the open-ended survey questions and the follow-up interviews can be broken down into several major themes. Each theme includes a description of the topics, supported by student quotes collected during this project, and the potential interventions that can be implemented to address any problems or strengthen existing systems. Most interventions listed are considered nudges, but some of the suggestions in the third subsection would not be as some would be expensive and complicated to implement; the subheader has been adjusted accordingly. A complete and more detailed list of suggested interventions can be found in Appendix F.

##### *External Barriers From the Honors Program and Its Staff*

The students who took part in this project expressed that they faced a series of external barriers from the structural Honors Program and its staff.

The most prominent barrier is what one student concisely defined as “Honors politics,” the idea that in order to be a visible student in Honors, you must exhibit specific behaviors or appease certain people. Related to favoritism or nepotism, one type of “Honors politics” occurs when a position of prominence, such as being the head of an organization, is given to someone who already holds a similar position or is well-known by the staff. For example, one student remarked about being passed over for a first-year seminar instructor position in favor of a student who is very friendly and close with the advisor. Another student was explicitly told that their prior relationship with an advisor helped them receive a leadership position in Honors despite a poor interview. In essence, “interviews are formalities,” as one student put it. Overall, students expressed frustration at losing out on positions they were very passionate about while the same select group of students continues to be promoted and exalted.

“Honors politics” is not limited to the interview or application process. Another example of the term occurs when students are given access to more benefits or kinder treatment because of pre-existing relationships. “There is a bit of a hierarchy among the students” with certain individuals getting preferential treatment or opportunities that are not made available to others. Students have expressed frustration at going through the long, formal process of obtaining meetings with advisors only to see some students go back into the advising suite to chat with an advisor whenever it is convenient for them. Another student remarked that often when an advisor goes into the Lounge, they acknowledge only a few of the students who are there. Experiences like these can make Honors students view the program as less accessible and biased to hand-selected students. Overall, the “advisors create how kids interact” which I believe contributes to the problems within the student population that are described in the next section.

Suggested Nudge Interventions:

- Conduct blind interviews and hiring for student positions

- Revamp marketing strategies, both formal and informal, to authentically use different types of students

### *The Atmosphere of the Students of the Honors Program*

The students who took part in this project also expressed a series of beliefs related to the students in the Honors Program.

Overall, most students in Honors described the program in one word: community. There is a view that Honors offers a sense of fellowship and connection above just sharing the label of “smart.” Many students expressed that Honors feels like home and is where they found many of their lifelong friends through classes, the Honors Lounge, student organizations, or the Honors LLC. For example, one student expressed that THA brings out the best type of people. “[Honors is] a welcoming, unrivaled sense of community,” as one student phrased it. There is a joy that comes from being immersed with other students who are helpful, passionate, and curious. Of all the themes that this project has brought forward, the positive community created by the Honors Program was the most prominent and frequent.

However, there were many students who expressed disappointment in aspects of the Honors community. One such frustration comes from the idea that there exists two types of students: “transcript people” and “the Honors cult.” Most Honors students seem to take part in Honors for the special courses and privileges, such as priority registration. Many of these students do not want to be actively involved in the non-academic parts of the program. The more prominent and well-known group of Honors students is “a select group of people you can anticipate will be involved in everything,” as one student put it. These students are actively involved and are well-recognized due to high publicity. Many students expressed that the existence of this group makes the Honors Lounge feel restricted.

The “clique” of Honors students seems to create a third group of Honors students who want to be involved but feel put off by these highly active students and the barriers from the Honors Program. Many students believe that there is a barrier to entry because they do not align with the most visible faces of Honors as seen in the marketing campaigns and the Honors Lounge. As one student said, “It feels like there's this ‘in-crowd’ that I just won't ever be a part of.” The existence of the three groups of Honors students could be suppressing involvement and positive feelings towards the Honors Program and community.

The Honors Program prides itself on supporting the best and brightest students at Temple. However, this attitude has led to a level of elitism within the Honors community. Many students remarked that Honors is a bubble because there is an attitude of “we are provided with endless opportunities and told to expect satisfaction just because we are Honors.” Many students, especially the highly visible ones discussed above, tend to be hyper-involved, overexert themselves, and pride their success on what can be put on a resume. This thinking is what got many students admitted into the Honors Program originally, but there is a difference



between elite and elitism, as a student discussed. A few students mentioned that this idea also stems from the program itself, feeling as though they are just a metric to be advertised to prospective students. “It seems like the focus of honors is the most successful people.” Many Honors students lamented that they struggle with finances, mental health, or staying in school, and thus do not feel like a part of Honors because their idea of success is different from what is promoted. In essence, “elitism is prized,” as one student put it.

The elitism of Honors has led to many instances of Imposter Syndrome in the community. Suffering from Imposter Syndrome, the idea of doubting accomplishments and fearing you do not belong, has caused many students to disassociate with the Honors brand. “Once I distanced myself from the whole ‘Honors’ label, it helped me gain the confidence to take on leadership positions,” as one student stated. Some students have doubted their place in Honors because they did not get an A or are not as accomplished as some of their peers. Other students remarked that they know they are intelligent but still “question if [they are] smart enough to belong in the Honors community.” There is a pervasive belief that to be successful in the eyes of Honors you must achieve great national or global success, especially with the Fellowships Advising staff so frequently advertising and appearing in Honors spaces. It is important to note that there is nothing wrong with wanting to be successful but there is also nothing wrong with not wanting those things; the Honors Program would benefit from talking about different ideas of success as well as “common struggles and how to deal with them, which can build solidarity in its own valuable way.”

The feelings of elitism and Imposter Syndrome seem to be perpetuated by HATT, an Honors student organization dedicated to recruiting prospective students primarily through campus visits and open houses. Many student respondents expressed that HATT, or at least the most visible members of HATT, are the epitome of the highly involved students that compose the “Honors cult” discussed at the beginning of this section. The people promoted by HATT are “super in your face about how great [they] are” and are believed to be representative of Honors, as one current member of HATT explained. The Honors community is perceived as “the people who do HATT,” which, as one student mentioned from personal experience, was misleading to prospective students because it is a distinct community. Many students also remarked that HATT and its community is exclusive and isolates those who are not involved. There seems to be a social power that comes from being involved in HATT. “The HATT Coordinators are ‘gatekeepers’” and “once you know [them] and Amanda [Neuber], you’re in,” as one current student in HATT expressed. HATT does many great things for the recruitment of students, but there does seem to be a disconnect between the Honors community and the HATT community.

#### Suggested Nudge Interventions:

- Adjust the framing of the language, both formal and informal, around what it means to be in Honors
- Change the HATT admission and promotion process to obtain students with more diverse interests but who are passionate about Temple University and the Honors Program

- Create a clearer separation with Fellowships Advising as it perpetuates the unhealthy idea that being in Honors requires obtaining fellowships
- Train and collaborate with student leaders in Honors on the topics above

### *The Limited Representation of Students*

The students who took part in this project also expressed disappointment in the representation of students regarding socio-economic status, race, other diversity measures, and primary college.

Wealth and socio-economic differences were some of the most cited representation issues. Overall, students seem to believe that Honors students are primarily from middle to upper-class families in the suburbs. Many students believe that this perspective makes it hard to pursue what they love and feel as though they belong in the Honors Program. “Honors sometimes feels like a bit of a bubble where you're told to pursue what you are passionate about with no regard to financial challenges or familial expectations, and that can sometimes be challenging,” according to one student. The wealth gap is especially prominent for first-generation students. Responders also expressed a social and financial disadvantage from not being able to afford the Honors LLC in 1300. Some students discussed support for financially disadvantaged students, such as through increased scholarships, use of Temple Option, funding for the Honors Student Grant Program, and support for students to transfer into the program.

Aside from wealth disparities, race differences were highly discussed in connection with representation. Though some students expressed positive attitudes toward the existing racial breakdown, many were neutral or disappointed. Many students find their classes and the Honors student organizations to be mostly white and discussions about diversity to be non-existent. Most students believe that there are very few non-white students in the Honors Program, even though those who identify as people of color comprise about 38 percent of the program. “[Honors] isn't very diverse - or at least it doesn't feel like it,” as one student explained. Some mentioned that they or their friends who identify as people of color feel do not feel welcome in Honors spaces or organizations. “I feel like I can't use my slang or be who I really am. The student of color always has to change the way they act to sound more ‘put-together.’” Though some of the racial disparities may be a result of systems outside of higher education, the Honors Program should still be making strides to address the issues it has power over.

Other diversity issues arose throughout this project. In general, responders believe there is an equal representation of gender in the Honors Program. The overall visibility of the LGBTQ+ community is generally positive as well, though students cite a lack of representation of transgender students. In addition, many students perceive the program as having few non-traditional students. Students who participated also agreed that they wished there was more of a space to discuss and acknowledge disabilities. As an Honors student with a disability myself, I

have felt a level of discomfort discussing my health and the accommodations I receive in the context of being smart and gifted as an Honors student.

It is important to acknowledge that many of the representation issues outlined above are not exclusive to the Honors Program, Temple University, or education overall. There are several factors at play. Many of the disparities result from problems in systems that students begin experiencing long before they reach college. However, that does not mean that there is nothing that can be done. Education on the issues and beliefs as well as small practices can be incredibly beneficial. A bandage over a bullet hole is not as good as surgery, but it is a better solution than saying that nothing that can be done. The Honors Program should keep this in mind.

Another form of representation that many students touched on was regarding the schools and colleges. The biggest area of concern was the underrepresentation of creatives, such as those in the Tyler School of Art and Architecture [Tyler], the Boyer College of Music and Dance [Boyer], the School of Theater, Film, and Media Arts [TFMA], and the Lew Klein College of Media and Communication [Klein]. Many students in these colleges expressed frustration at the limited number of Honors students as well as the struggle to meet the Honors requirements given the very structured course loads of their schools. Honors creatives have even felt socially disconnected from Honors. “There are times when I feel as though I don’t belong because my major is not one that is traditionally considered more rigorous, even though I still work really hard,” as a student expressed. Finding a way to prioritize these marginalized students can increase representation, belongingness, and perspective in the Honors Program.

Like the underrepresentation of creatives, students expressed a desire for the Honors Program to offer more opportunities for students who are not in CLA. For example, several students were disappointed in the rift between the Fox Honors Program and the University Honors Program (the program of study), and others mentioned the lack of social work students. As a student responded to the survey, “I find [Honors] to be most pertinent to only CLA students.” In fact, most upper-level Honors elective courses advertised in the Bulletin and course guide are based in CLA departments. Even many students whose primary college is CST, which is the most popular school and composes 27 percent of the program, expressed that Honors courses are more skewed toward CLA. Taking a less CLA-focused approach may help the remaining 81 percent of students to feel more like Honors is their program too.

#### Suggested Interventions:

- Allow students to take a leave of absence for a semester without revoking their scholarship for every future semester
- Amplify the use of the Honors Student Grant Program
- Collaborate with IDEAL and DRS to authentically change how diversity is viewed in Honors
- Expand the program’s use of Temple Option
- Improve the transfer student process by making the application less restrictive and providing more information about what Honors is

- Move the LLC to a less expensive residence hall with more communal amenities or a more communal atmosphere
- Offer more programming during the day to accommodate for commuters and non-traditional students
- Provide more Honors courses in departments outside of CLA
- Specify different requirements for certain colleges, especially Boyer, Klein, and Tyler

### *Involvement in Honors*

The external barriers from the staff, the atmosphere created by the students, and the lack of representation all contribute to another major theme: decreased involvement in Honors organizations, programs, and positions.

Many students expressed in this project that there are barriers to involvement in Honors. One such barrier is a lack of information regarding what Honors organizations and extracurricular experiences are available to them. Several students expressed that more information about Honors organizations may increase the likelihood that they become involved. "If I knew more about what I could do to be more active in Honors, I would feel like I belong even more," as one student put it. Though many Honors organizations are advertised through the Bulletin, there still seems to be a lack of effective communication. Word of mouth and peer-to-peer marketing may be a better way to reach students.

Aside from the perceived lack of information and communication, students who took part in this project, especially commuters, transfer students, and non-traditional students, expressed a disappointment with the availability of ways to be involved in Honors. Some students expressed that not living in the Honors LLC or being able to remain on campus during nights and weekends has affected their participation in events and organizations. One student expressed that their friends do not feel comfortable using the Lounge because their lack of involvement makes them feel like an outsider. Most students rely on their classes to meet other Honors students, but this can be both a benefit and a barrier as "people tend to remain friends with who they already know" through living together or being members of the same organization.

Many students who responded expressed that if they found a place in the Honors community, it was because they lived in the LLC or they got more involved as time went by and they became more comfortable. Therefore, reaching students when they first join Honors may be the most effective way to increase involvement. "Unless you get people when they're [first years], it is hard to fix the problem," as one student said. As we saw in the data analysis section, the number of Honors organizations a student is involved in is significant to a student's belongingness score. In essence, involvement matters.

Suggested Nudge Interventions:

- Create more playful Honors clubs and programs that are run by students

- Emphasize peer-to-peer communication and word of mouth whenever possible
- Establish a new or strengthen an existing mentorship program for all students in their first semester of Honors
- Incorporate Honors professors into the Honors Program more so that they can be informal yet informed spokespeople for the program
- Offer a yearly or bi-yearly Honors organization fair run by students
- Reimagine the student handbook with an emphasis on more than academics and distribute at the first-year class meeting as well as orientation

## V. Conclusion

The Temple University Honors Program is a community for high-achieving and curious college students to be passionate about exploring new things. As a student noted, the Honors Program utilizes a strategy of offering services that attract new students, support existing students, or both. While there is no way to definitively say whether this “recruitment versus retention strategy” is adequate and balanced as currently implemented, Honors must be honest and transparent with themselves about what offerings are being utilized for recruitment but are failing current students. The low drop-out rate of Honors students does not mean the retention and involvement strategies are entirely working, only that the perks outweigh the costs of leaving for students. “Widespread failure of compliance by targets of policy may signal that there is something wrong with the policy, rather than with the targets who are being uncooperative by failing to comply with it” (Rainey and Weaver, 2015). In essence, we must acknowledge that solutions are being attempted but there may be something wrong with the policy if perceptions are this pervasive and persistent.

It is important to acknowledge that not every student in the Honors Program wants to be involved in the program. What is troubling is that there are students who would be more involved given different resources, structures, and support. Many students feel as though they belong in the Honors Program, but there is also a plethora of students who feel marginalized or left behind by the program. There seems to be a disconnect between what Honors is and what students believe Honors should be. The external barriers from the staff, the atmosphere created by the students, the lack of representation, and involvement in Honors all contribute to whether students feel as though they belong in the program. These themes are not unique to the Honors Program, but that does not mean there are not things that can be done. More research should be conducted to better understand why and how these themes arise.

This report mentioned a series of interventions that can be implemented to address some of the problems brought forward by students (a full and more detailed list can be found in Appendix F). However, not all of these ideas may be feasible or the best strategy to employ, but that does not take away from the intent behind them. “One simple shift [to] reduce the problem is the shift from the advocacy of a specific reform to the advocacy of the seriousness of the problem, and hence to the advocacy of persistence in alternative reform efforts should the first

one fail” (Campbell, 1969). The perceptions and beliefs of students recorded in this project should be taken seriously by the Honors Program, even if the strategies to fix them fail, as the people with the solutions are often the ones closest to the problems.

## Appendix

### *Appendix A: Glossary*

Business Honors Student Association [BHSA]	The student professional organization for majors in the Fox School of Business who meet certain honors requirements
Boyer College of Music and Dance [Boyer]	The school of performing arts majors that composes 3.1 percent of the Honors Program
College of Liberal Arts [CLA]	The second most represented college in the Honors Program with 19.2 percent of students
College of Science and Technology [CST]	The most represented college in the Honors Program with 27.2 percent of students
Fox Honors Program [Fox Honors]	The honors program for majors in the Fox School of Business that offers a student lounge, advising, and resources for its students separate from the Honors Program
Honorables of Color [HOC]	The Honors student organization for students who identify as people of color
Honors Activities Board [HAB]	The Honors student organization dedicated to planning and executing social events, such as the Honors Formal, Murder Mystery Dinner, and First-Year Scavenger Hunt
Honors Admissions and Transitions Team [HATT]	The Honors student organization in charge of recruiting prospective students during campus visits and open houses (known as Experience Temple Days)
The Honors Advising Suite	

The backset of offices and conference spaces for Honors staff, advisors, and

student workers; also, where all Honors advising appointments occur

The Honors Bulletin [the Bulletin]

The daily email correspondence from the Honors Program that includes professional opportunities, social events, and Honors news

Honors Community Outreach [HCO]

A student-run service-learning organization dedicated to increasing the involvement of Honors students in North Philadelphia and the entire Philadelphia community

Honors First-Year Seminars [Seminar]

Optional one-credit discussion and development seminars for first-year students that are taught by Honors advisors and current Honors upperclassmen to ease the transition to college

The Honors Huddle [the Huddle]

A large, quiet space with couches and desks for Honors students to study

Honors Living Learning Community [Honors LLC]

Two portions of the 1300 residence hall that are designated for Honors students, one for first-year students and one for upperclassmen

The Honors Lounge [the Lounge]

A space with computers, couches, and other amenities for Honors students to study, collaborate, and relax, as well the location for the Honors advising suite

Honors Peer Mentors [HPM]

An organization that pairs an incoming first-year Honors student with an Honors upperclassmen as a bridge between the student community and the program staff



Honors Scholar Project	An elective, interdisciplinary project that students in the Honors Program can conduct throughout their senior year under the mentorship of two professors
The Honors Student Handbook	A written guide of the Honors GPA and class requirements that is distributed to all first-year students at orientation
Lew Klein College of Media and Communication [Klein]	The sixth most represented college in the Honors Program with 5.9 percent of students
School of Social Work [Social Work]	The smallest, most underrepresented college in the Honors Program with only 0.1 percent of students
School of Theater, Film, and Media Arts [TFMA]	A college who students compose 3.1 percent of the Honors Program
Student Worker	A paid position for Honors students to aid the Honors advisors and staff with administrative tasks
Temple Honors Appalachia [THA]	A service immersion and cultural exchange program for Honors students that culminates in a week-long trip to eastern Kentucky in May
Tyler School of Art and Architecture [Tyler]	The school of art and design majors that composes 3.2 percent of the Honors Program

*Appendix B: Survey Questions*

Page 1:

1. What Honors programs are you currently involved in? (Select All That Apply)

BHSA

Freshman Seminar

HAB

HATT

HCO

HOC

Honors LLC

Student Worker

THA

None

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What Honors programs were you previously involved in? (Select All That Apply)

BHSA

Freshman Seminar (Instructor)

Freshman Seminar (Student)

HAB

HATT

HCO

HOC

Honors LLC

Student Worker

THA

None

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. In general, how often do you visit the Lounge or Huddle? (Select One)

Every day

Multiple times a week

Once a week

A few times a month

A few times a semester

Never

Page 2:

4. How representative of the “real world” do you think Honors is? (Open Answer)

5. How diverse do you think Honors is? (Open Answer)

6. How much do you feel like you belong in the Honors community? (On a Scale of 1 [Not at all] to 10 [Completely])

7. Do you feel well-represented within the Honors community? (On a Scale of 1 [Not at all] to 5 [Completely])

8. If you would like to, please expand on your previous answers. (Open Answer)

Page 3:

9. What was your first semester in Honors? (Select One)

Fall 2019

Spring 2019

Fall 2018

Spring 2018

Fall 2017

Spring 2017

Fall 2016

Spring 2016

Fall 2015

Spring 2015

10. What is your primary school or college? (Select One)

Boyer College of Music and Dance

CLA

College of Education

College of Engineering

College of Public Health

CST

Fox School of Business

Klein

School of Social Work

School of Theater, Film, and Media Arts

STHM

Tyler School of Art and Architecture

University Studies

11. Do you self-identify as a person of color? (Select One)

Yes

No

Prefer not to answer

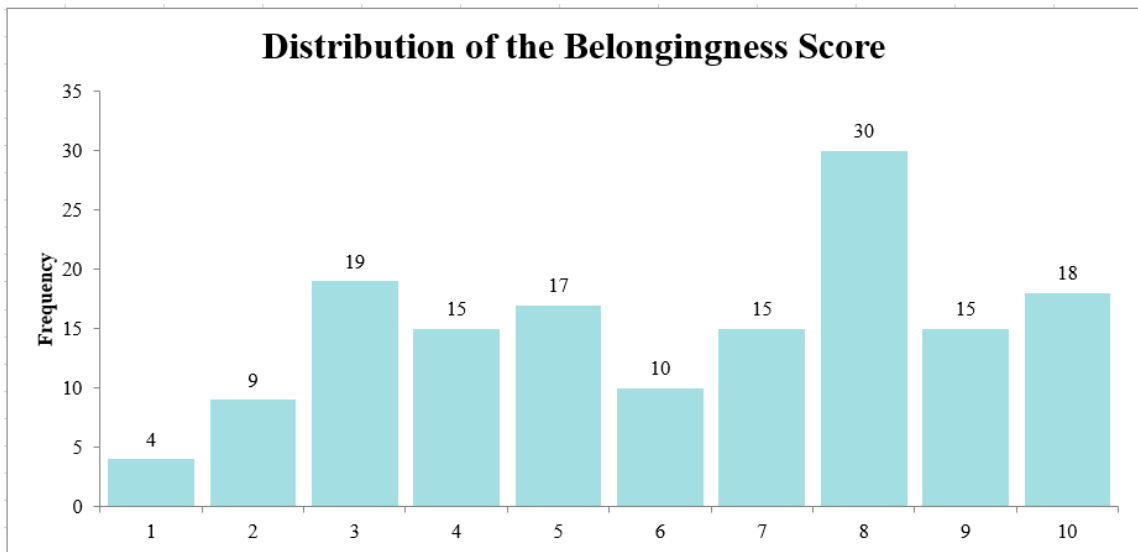
12. Would you be interested in talking with me one-on-one about your experiences? All names will be kept anonymous. If so, please leave your email and pronouns (and your name if you feel comfortable)! (Open Answer)

### *Appendix C: Interview Questions*

1. I have a list of questions for you, but before I go through them, do you have anything you want to say? Is there anything you feel like you need to share about Honors, my survey, etc.?
2. What made you want to speak with me?
3. What is Honors?
4. What should Honors be?
5. How do you feel when you walk into the Lounge?
6. How do you feel your goals, values, and priorities align with other Honors students?
7. What is your favorite part of the Honors community?
8. What is your least favorite part of the Honors community?
9. Do you feel like you belong in the Honors community? Has this changed over time? Why?
10. How do you define success?
11. How does Honors define success?
12. Imagine you are put in charge of Honors. What is your biggest priority? What would you change?
13. Is there anything that I did not ask that you would like to talk about? Final comments, questions, suggestions for me?

Appendix D: Descriptive Statistics (Tables and Graphs)

	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation	Interquartile Range
Belongingness Score (out of 10)	6.21	7	8	2.629	4 [8-4]
Well-Represented Score (out of 5)	3.7	4	4	1.121	2 [5-3]



Average and Median Scores for Survey Respondents by Metric

Metric	Count	Mean of Belongingness	Median of Belongingness
Current Involvement	Involved in $\geq 1 = 86$	7.21	8.00
	Involved in 0 = 66	4.91	5.00
First Semester in Honors (excluding Spring semesters due to sample size)	Fall 2019 = 43	7.21	8.00
	Fall 2018 = 37	6.16	6.00
	Fall 2017 = 28	5.57	5.00
	Fall 2016 = 31	5.90	5.00
First-Year Seminar - Instructor	Involved = 5	9.60	10.00
	Not Involved = 104	5.63	5.50
First-Year Seminar - Student	Involved = 22	7.14	8.00
	Not Involved = 18	7.27	8.00
Frequency of Visiting the Lounge or Huddle	Every Day = 10	8.10	9.00
	Multiple Times a Week = 26	8.12	8.00
	Once a Week = 24	6.83	8.00

Frequency of Visiting the Lounge or Huddle (cont'd)	A Few Times a Month = 26	6.19	6.50
	A Few Times a Semester = 44	4.89	5.00
	Never = 22	5.09	5.00
HATT	Involved = 30	7.90	8.00
	Not Involved = 122	6.00	8.00
Honors LLC - First-Year Students	Involved = 29	7.76	8.00
	Not Involved = 14	6.07	6.00
Primary School or College (excluding Social Work and the School of Sport, Tourism, and Hospitality Management as no students from these schools participated)	Boyer = 3	4.67	4.00
	CLA = 56	6.30	6.50
	College of Education = 3	6.67	8.00
	College of Engineering = 7	6.71	8.00
	College of Public Health = 7	5.00	5.00
	CST = 38	6.84	7.00
	Fox School of Business = 9	6.67	7.00
	Klein = 14	4.57	4.00



Primary School or College (cont'd)	TFMA = 3	4.33	3.00
	Tyler = 7	5.71	5.00
	University Studies = 5	7.60	9.00
Self-Identifies as a Person of Color	Yes = 30	5.87	6.5
	No = 122	6.30	7.00
THA	Involved = 24	7.83	8.00
	Not Involved = 128	5.91	6.00
Willing to Follow Up	Yes = 55	6.18	7.00
	No = 97	6.23	7.00

Note: This table excludes any metric that has a sample size of less than 20 affirmative respondents (i.e. less than 20 people who said they participated in that metric) with the one exception being current first-year seminar instructors of which there are only seven in the Honors Program

Appendix E: Regression Output for Equation (1)

Variable	B	SE	T-Value	P-Value
Intercept	1.266	0.661	1.915	0.058
Total Involvement (Current)	0.735	0.162	4.526	1.24E-05
CST	0.492	0.381	1.292	0.198
Well-Represented Score	1.182	0.151	7.840	8.91E-13
Semesters in Honors	-0.073	0.070	-1.050	0.296
Person of Color	0.033	0.432	0.075	0.940
Willing to Follow-Up	0.072	0.344	0.209	0.835
Residuals:				
Minimum	Q1	Median	Q3	Maximum
-5.664	-1.267	0.235	1.343	4.672
R-Squared:	0.471	Adjusted R-Squared:		0.449
Key:	Positive Coefficient		Significant at .001	
	Negative Coefficient		Significant at .1	

## *Appendix F: Suggested Interventions*

### External Barriers From the Honors Program and Its Staff

- Conduct blind interviews and hiring for student positions
- Revamp marketing strategies, both formal and informal, to authentically use different types of students

### The Atmosphere of the Students of the Honors Program

- Adjust the framing of the language, both formal and informal, around what it means to be in Honors
- Change the HATT admission and promotion process to obtain students with more diverse interests but who are passionate about Temple University and the Honors Program
- Create a clearer separation with Fellowships Advising as it perpetuates the unhealthy idea that being in Honors requires obtaining fellowships
- Train and collaborate with student leaders in Honors on the topics above
  - Potential options
    - Conduct training with student leaders about how to promote an authentically inclusive environment within their positions or organizations
    - Create a coalition of current student leaders to collaborate and share strategies across organizations

### The Limited Representation of Students

- Allow students to take a leave of absence for a semester without revoking their scholarship for every future semester
- Amplify the use of the Honors Student Grant Program
- Collaborate with IDEAL and DRS to authentically change how diversity is viewed in Honors
  - Honors is relatively diverse, but it is not perceived that way
    - Honors should collaborate with these organizations to change these perceptions through marketing and general dialogue without coming across as inauthentic or using “token” students
- Expand the program’s use of Temple Option
- Improve the transfer student process by making the application less restrictive and providing more information about what Honors is
- Move the LLC to a less expensive residence hall with more communal amenities or a more communal atmosphere
- Offer more programming during the day to accommodate for commuters and non-traditional students
- Provide more Honors courses in departments outside of CLA
- Specify different requirements for certain colleges, especially Boyer, Klein, and Tyler

- Potential options
  - Offer more than a maximum of two contracts
  - Require less Honors courses, especially upper level courses

### Involvement in Honors

- Create more playful Honors clubs and programs that are run by students
- Emphasize peer-to-peer communication and word of mouth whenever possible
- Establish a new or strengthen an existing mentorship program for all students in their first semester of Honors
  - Potential options
    - Expand Honors Peer Mentors or HATT
    - Create a new organization or system to pair incoming freshmen or transfer students with upperclassmen mentors
  - Utilize automatic enrollment that is opt-out rather than opt-in
    - “Automatic enrollment is effective because people exhibit inertia, which favors sticking to defaults” (Benzarti et al, 2017)
- Incorporate Honors professors into the Honors Program more so that they can be informal yet informed spokespeople for the program
  - Potential options
    - Add the emails of professors to the Bulletin email list
    - Create an abbreviated, once a week Bulletin just for professors
    - Distribute the student handbook to professors so they understand what Honors is and what Honors offers students
- Offer a yearly or bi-yearly Honors organization fair run by students
- Reimagine the student handbook with an emphasis on more than academics and distribute at the first-year class meeting as well as orientation
  - Currently, the handbook only offers information on how to be involved academically, such as the GPA requirement, the course requirements, and contact information for the Honors advisors
  - A reimagined handbook should offer one page about Honors student organizations, social events, social media, and where to look for more information

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