

“How Does Your Honors Program Measure Up?”

An Honors Thesis

by

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California, Pennsylvania

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California University of Pennsylvania

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Focus of Research

Serving as a representative for California University of Pennsylvania's Honors Program as a work study student during the school year as well as in the summer, I became curious as to the best marketing tools that our program has to offer. Attending conferences for the Honors Program such as NCHC, the National Collegiate Honors Council Conference, helped to provide resources and information about practices used at other University Honors Programs and I wondered specifically how our program measured up in terms of diversity, demographics, academics, and other relevant information. My sample population would be University Honors Program students that are comprised of 146 students including 46 Freshmen (completed 1-29 credits), 28 Sophomores (completed 30-59 credits), 35 Juniors (completed 60-89 credits), and 55 Seniors (completed 90 or more credits). After reading information from Roy Wilson, the President of Wayne State University, "Maybe it is best to think about honors not in terms of an end result but as an ongoing conversation about value added and all the ways that this institution and our students, faculty, and staff work to achieve excellence to benefit our whole community" (Wilson, 2015, p. 174), I decided that I wanted to survey all students within our program to compare each classes' views on the different aspects of the program , in order to provide useful information that may grow the program even further.

Background Information

“CalU offers the University Honors Program for exceptional students who are ready for a unique challenge. Your course offerings include independent research and experiential learning opportunities in a community of like-minded students who value academic excellence. As an honors student, you pursue intellectual and creative growth that compliments your major field of study – both inside and outside of the classroom,” as stated on the Honors Program For Outstanding Students pamphlet. This mission statement focuses on our three pillars: Community, Opportunity, and Research, “Your Opportunity to challenge yourself, to discover, and to excel.” Also, as stated by South Dakota State University President, David Chicoine, “Today’s young people are sophisticated consumers in the higher education marketplace. They are seeking ‘above and beyond’ academic experiences such as study abroad and undergraduate research. They are looking for a personalized academic experience, and they aspire to be in community with others who share a similar sense of purpose and drive toward success and personal fulfillment” (Chicoine, 2015, p. 125-126). Honors program students are comprised of 3.10% of California University of Pennsylvania’s campus population and must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least a 3.25. To become a member of the University Honors Program, students must have graduated in the top twenty-five percent of their class, earn a score of at least 1100 on the SAT or a 25 on the ACT, and submit an application essay. As Trucker stated in an article in the NCHC journal, “This policy opens the program to students who might have been mediocre high school students” (Trucker, 2014, p.70). In order to develop the content for the survey questionnaire, information from past honors research was studied from three different journals:

Chronicle of Higher Education, Honors in Practice, and the JNCHC (Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council), along with information provided from fact sheets and pamphlets from our Honors Program here at California University of Pennsylvania. First, some basic information would be asked regarding the respondent's major, minor/concentration, rank, and overall GPA. In order to look at the demographics of the students in our program, the survey would also ask for the city and state the respondent has listed as their permanent address, if they are a commuter or not, if they are an in state student or an out-of-state student, and if they live on campus. Since one of the advertised benefits of our program includes the Honors Residence Hall, questions would also be asked regarding if they have ever resided in the Honors Residence Hall and more specifically if they currently reside on the first floor of the Honors Residence Hall (designated for honors students only). Respondents would also be asked what semester and year they joined the program and if they began the program as a Freshman, realizing our program does allow for transfer students and late applicants, which are determined on a case by case basis. The benefits that our program advertises include: challenging coursework, community service, excursions and conferences, hands-on research experience, Honors Residence Hall, honors scholarships and awards, priority registration, professional communication, access to resources such as the honors computer lab and library, and travel opportunities. In a similar study, "One series of survey questions asked students to rate the relative strength of various factors influencing their initial decision to enroll in the honors college. We listed nine factors (and asked respondents to rate the influence of these factors, with '1' as 'not influential' and '5' as 'extremely influential... The highest-scoring responses were competitive advantage associated with honors

college enrollment (4.29) and smaller classes (4.26). Connecting with faculty (4.05), prestige associated with honors college enrollment (4.07), and opportunities for deeper learning (3.90) were also highly rated by other students. On the other hand, ‘supplemental opportunities’ had a score of 3.44, indicating that our students were less motivated by the desire to do research, travel, and assume leadership positions when they made their initial decision...influence of parents (3.24), teachers (2.95), and peers (3.04) was relatively neutral” (Nichols, 2013, p. 110-111). Combining our current program’s benefits and similar research students would be asked to rank benefits from one to ten, where one is considered the best. The benefits that would be listed on the survey include: challenging coursework, conferences/excursions, faculty, honors residence hall, meeting similar people committed to academics, opportunities for leadership, priority registration, resume builder, small classroom size, and to complete a capstone project for one’s major. It was found through another University Honors Program study , through analysis of their survey data about student involvement that, “Approximately seven percent of undergraduate students participate in honors courses, yet a disproportionately high percentage of these students lead student government, discipline-specific student organizations, academic competition teams, and university-wide community service program.” (Chicoine, 2015, p. 126). So students would be asked for the amount of clubs and organizations that they were currently involved in or have been involved with as well as any leadership roles that they currently hold or have held. One question of particular interest was finding out the reason why students joined the honors program, “Honors faculty and administrators hoping to succeed in their recruitment, retention, and graduation efforts need an accurate understanding of why students decide to enroll and

persist as well as their satisfaction with honors experiences” (Nichols, 2013, p. 105).

Students would be asked to write why they each decided to join the program as a short answer response question. As suggested by Lynne Goodstein from the University of Connecticut, “In recent years the option of enrolling in honors programs and colleges at major public universities has increasingly become an alternative to elite private and public institutions for some of the brightest and most academically talented high school graduates. In order to attract these high-achieving students, universities may offer applicants incentives such as merit scholarships, smaller classes, honors residential options, research experiences, and enrichment programs” (Goodstein, 2013, p. 85). In order to attract students, our honors program here at California University of Pennsylvania offers multiple scholarships to students all throughout their time in the program from Freshmen to Seniors; students would also be asked to fill out a question as to how many scholarships they have received from the program as well as what semester and year that they received the scholarship, if applicable. Then, students would be asked to rate on a scale from one to five, where one means strongly disagree, three is neutral, and five means strongly agree with how important it was to them when they decided to join the program. They would rate challenging coursework, conferences/excursions, faculty, the Honors Residence Hall, meeting similar people committed to academics, priority registration, helping to build your resume, and small classroom size. In addition, students who have stayed in the honors residence hall were asked why they stayed there and for how many semesters. Lastly, the students were asked if there are any additional benefits that they have experienced throughout their time in the program thus far.

Survey Template

Consent Form:

CalU University Honors Program Thesis Survey

My name is Leah Seader and I am a Senior University Honors Program Student completing my Thesis Project. Information from this survey will be kept confidential and used to find correlations within the data and to provide various statistics for the University Honors Program through using primarily SPSS software. Participation in this survey is 100% voluntary. All responses of the survey will be collected through SurveyMonkey in order to ensure that all responses recorded are anonymous. There is no compensation for completing this survey and your participation can be discontinued at any time throughout the survey without penalty or collection of any data that you may have entered. There is also no penalty in coursework or standing in the University Honors Program (UHP) for not completing this survey. All data collected through this survey will be inputted into the SPSS software after the information is downloaded off of Survey Monkey which is an online survey website, the information will be available to my Thesis Board and stored on my CalU account to ensure the safety of the data. My email is sea3001@calu.edu if you have any questions about any aspect of this survey, my faculty advisor for my Thesis is Dr. Leandro Junes and he can be contacted at junes@calu.edu.

By selecting next you agree to accept minimal risk by participating in this survey through answering various questions and by clicking submit at the end of the survey you indicate your consent to use the data that you provided.

"Approved by the California University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board. This approval is effective 3/23/17 and expires 3/22/18."

Next

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Survey

CalU University Honors Program Thesis Survey

*** 1. Please answer the following questions:**

Major

Minor/Concentration

Overall GPA
(Ex. 3.75)

What city is listed as your permanent address?

What state is listed as your permanent address?

What is your current class rank?
(Ex. Freshman)

*** 2. Please answer yes or no to the following questions:**

	Yes	No
Are you a commuter student?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are you an in-state student?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are you an out-of-state student?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you live on campus?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have you ever stayed in the Honors Residence Hall?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you currently reside in the Honors Residence Hall-Smith Hall?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you reside on the 1st floor of the Residence Hall?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you begin the UHP when you started as a Freshman?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 3. Please list the total number of clubs/organizations that you have been a member of or are currently a member. Next, please list the total number of leadership roles that you currently hold in addition to ones that you have held.

Example: 5

Total Number of Clubs/Organizations

Total Number of Leadership Roles

* 4. What semester and year did you enter the University Honors Program?

Example: Fall 2014

* 5. Why did you choose to join the University Honors Program?

6. If you have received a UHP scholarship how many scholarships have you received and what year did you receive them:

Example: Freshmen Year-2

7. If you have stayed in the Honors Residence Hall, why did you choose to stay there? And for how many semesters?

* 8. Which of the following do you consider the greatest benefit of being a part of the University Honors Program?

(Please rank the responses from 1-10 where 1 is the best)

☐	☐	Challenging Coursework
☐	☐	Conferences/Excursions
☐	☐	Faculty
☐	☐	Honors Residence Hall
☐	☐	Meeting Similar People Committed to Academics
☐	☐	Opportunities for Leadership
☐	☐	Priority Registration
☐	☐	Resume Builder
☐	☐	Small Classroom Size
☐	☐	To Complete a Capstone Project for my Major

* 9. On a scale from 1-5, where 5 means Strongly Agree, how important were the following to you when you decided to join the program:

	1-Strongly Disagree	2-Disagree	3-Neutral	4-Agree	5-Strongly Agree
Challenging Coursework	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conferences/Excursions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Honors Residence Hall	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meeting Similar People Who Are Committed to Academics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Priority Registration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helping to Build Your Resume	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Small Classroom Size	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 10. Are there any other benefits to you in regards to the University Honors Program that are not mentioned above? If so please list them below:



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Data Analysis

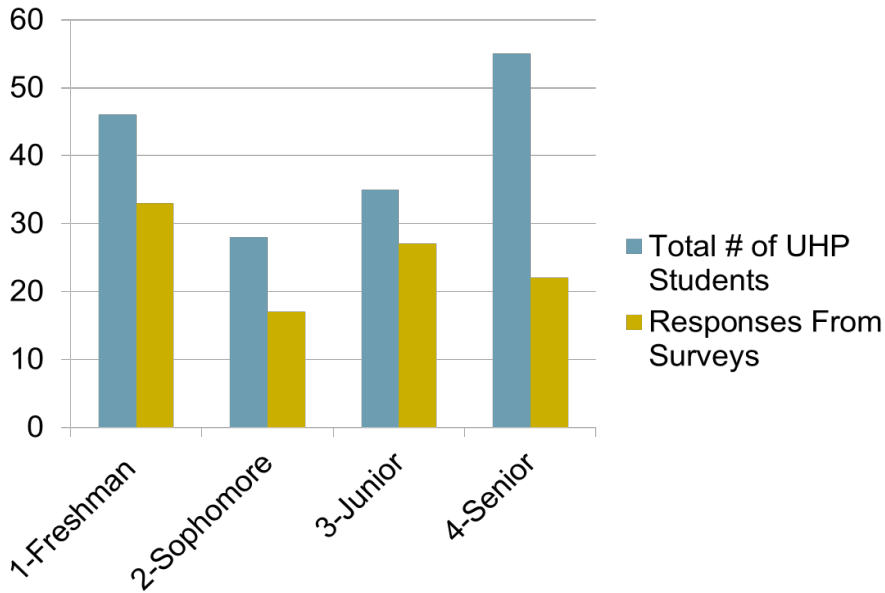
After distributing the survey link to students through SurveyMonkey, I was able to collect a total of 100 surveys from the honors program students, so my sample size is 100. All of the survey responses were then recorded into an excel document for each question using all 100 respondents. Once all of the data was inputted into an excel document, it was then uploaded in the SPSS software. SPSS stands for Statistical Package for the Social Sciences and is primarily used to perform data entry and analysis for a wide variety of disciplinarians. SPSS allows one to perform descriptive statistics, Anova tests, T-tests, find correlations in the data, and various other statistical procedures and analyses. First, descriptive statistics were run on the data which provide details used to describe the data in the study. The descriptive statistics showed that of the 100 respondents, 33 were Freshmen, 17 were Sophomores, 27 were Juniors, 22 were Seniors, and 1 respondent was unsure, so the total used to determine the response rate was 99 out of a possible 164 from the Honors Program at California University of Pennsylvania. As shown in Figure 1, the total response rate was 60.37% and having at least a 40% response rate for each rank.

Figure 1:

Rank

	Total # of Students in the Honors Program	% of Students in the Honors Program	Responses from Surveys	% of Total Responses from Surveys	Response Rate
1-Freshman (1-29 credits)	46	28.05%	33	33%	71.74%
2-Sophomore (30-59 credits)	28	17.07%	17	17%	60.71%
3-Junior (60-89 credits)	35	21.34%	27	27%	77.14%
4-Senior (90-above credits)	55	33.54%	22	22%	40%
Total	164		99		60.37%

This information can also be better visualized through a bar graph as shown in Figure 2:



In order to see how diversified the University Honors Program is by major, descriptive statistics were ran and the following information was outputted to determine the frequency or number of each major as shown in Figure 3:

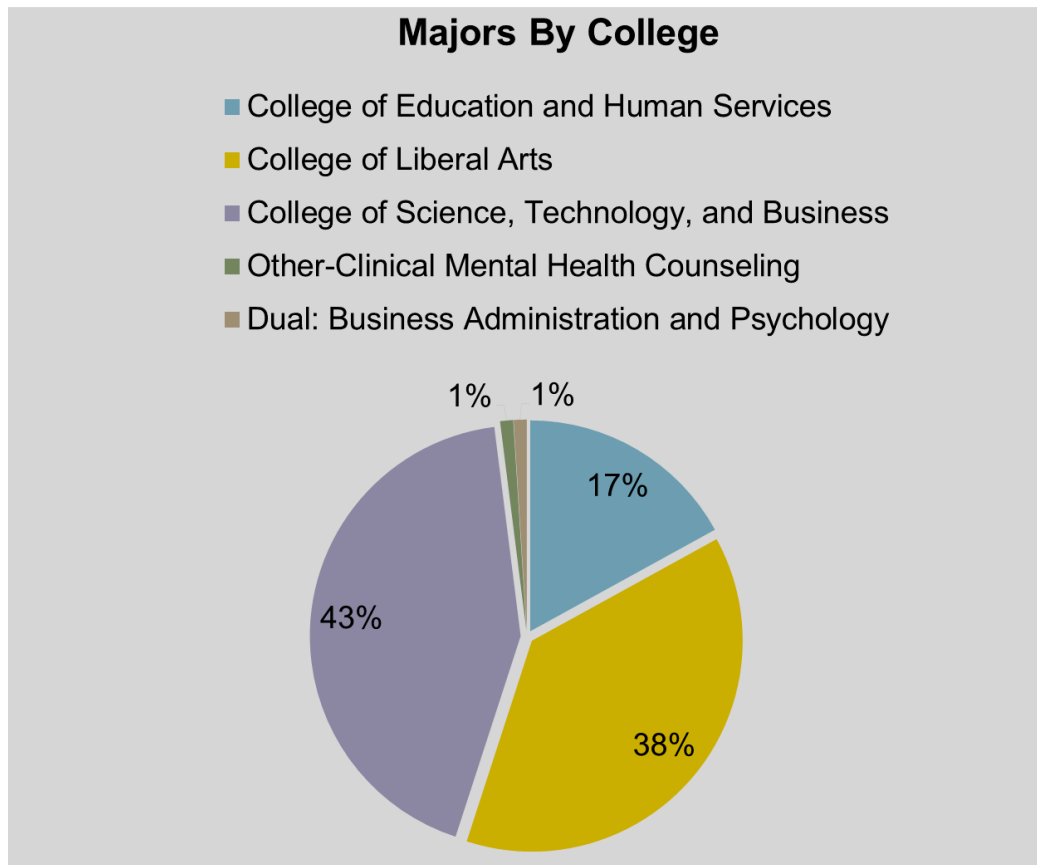
Figure 3:

	Frequency	Percent
Business Administration	14	14.0%
Biology	9	9.0%
Graphic Design, Graphics and Multimedia	6	6.0%
Psychology	6	6.0%
Secondary Education	6	6.0%
English	5	5.0%
Communication Disorders	4	4.0%
Environmental Studies	4	4.0%
Anthropology	3	3.0%
Chemistry	3	3.0%
Criminal Justice	3	3.0%
Sport Management	3	3.0%
Geology	2	2.0%
International Studies	2	2.0%
Mechatronics Engineering Technology	2	2.0%
Parks and Recreation Management	2	2.0%
Prek-4 & Special Education	2	2.0%
Sociology	2	2.0%
Athletic Training	1	1.0%
CIS: Computer Information Systems	1	1.0%
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	1	1.0%
Commercial Music Technology	1	1.0%
Communication Studies	1	1.0%

Creative Writing	1	1.0%
Dual: Business Administration and Psychology	1	1.0%
Dual: Business and CIS	1	1.0%
Dual: Communication and Political Science	1	1.0%
Dual: English and Criminal Justice	1	1.0%
Dual: Mathematics and Business Administration	1	1.0%
Dual: Political Science and Sociology	1	1.0%
Dual: Psychology and Sociology	1	1.0%
Dual: Spanish and International Studies	1	1.0%
Fine Arts	1	1.0%
Fisheries and Wildlife	1	1.0%
Geography	1	1.0%
Meteorology	1	1.0%
Political Science	1	1.0%
Technology Education	1	1.0%
Technology Management	1	1.0%
Theatre	1	1.0%

From the descriptive statistics of the 100 respondents it was determined that eight students have a dual major with a variety of thirty-two additional majors. This major information was taken and broken down by one of the three colleges: College of Education and Human Services, College of Liberal Arts, and College of Science, Technology, and Business as shown in Figure 4:

Figure 4:

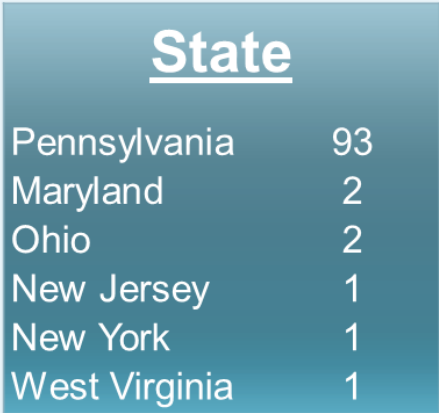


From Figure 4, not only was the information broken up into the three categories of Colleges but also there was an Other category for Clinical Mental Health Counseling since this is considered a graduate program and one of the respondents was entered into the graduate program early. There was also a category for Dual: Business Administration and Psychology since Business Administration falls under the College of Science, Technology, and Business and Psychology falls under the College of Liberal Arts. It is interesting to note that the majority of the students, (43%) fall under the College of Science, Technology, and Business. As California University of Pennsylvania begins to transition into a STEM university, this can only be considered a positive for the Honors

Program, as the number of students in the STEM majors increases, then the number of students in the Honors Program may also increase.

Another question of interest was where geographically the students in the program were from. From the descriptive statistics of each respondent's city and state, this information was first broken down by state as show in Figure 5:

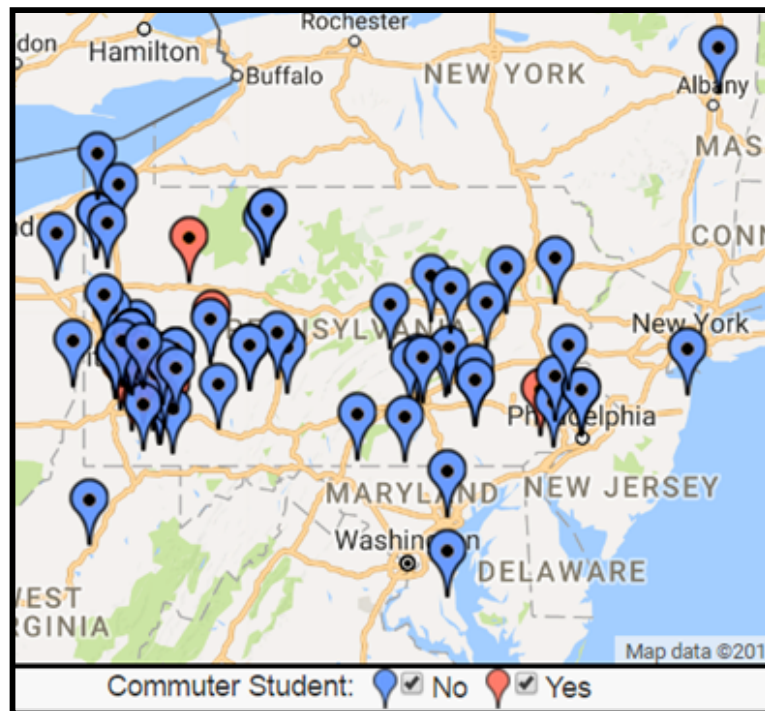
Figure 5:



<u>State</u>	
Pennsylvania	93
Maryland	2
Ohio	2
New Jersey	1
New York	1
West Virginia	1

The majority of students did come from Pennsylvania; however, from this analysis, the Honors Program students came from six different states including: 93 students from Pennsylvania, 2 from Ohio, 2 from Maryland, and 1 each from New Jersey, New York, and West Virginia. Since there was a wide array of cities from where students originated, all of the cities and states were inputted online at easymapmaker.com in order to see a distribution of the demographics of the students as shown in Figure 6. The data for each respondent's City and State was inputted along with whether or not they were a commuter student in order to see how far some students travel.

Figure 6:



From the descriptive statistics it was determined that from this study there were 28 commuter students and 72 non-commuter students. This statistic was surprising considering that California University of Pennsylvania is a majority commuter campus of approximately 70% commuters. In order to compare the data of commuter versus non-commuter students, a nonparametric test was used to determine a p-value. A nonparametric test is used in statistics when the data is not required to fit a normal distribution and a p-value is the level of significance representing the probability of an event; a p-value of 0.05 or lower is considered significant. The p-value in comparing commuter students to non-commuter students in this study showed a highly significant difference since the p-value was $p=0.001$. There were also 53 students who said that they stayed on campus with 39% of the students currently residing in the Honors Residence

Hall and 16% of those students currently residing on the 1st floor of Smith Hall. Just to note, the first floor of Smith Hall is only for University Honors Program students.

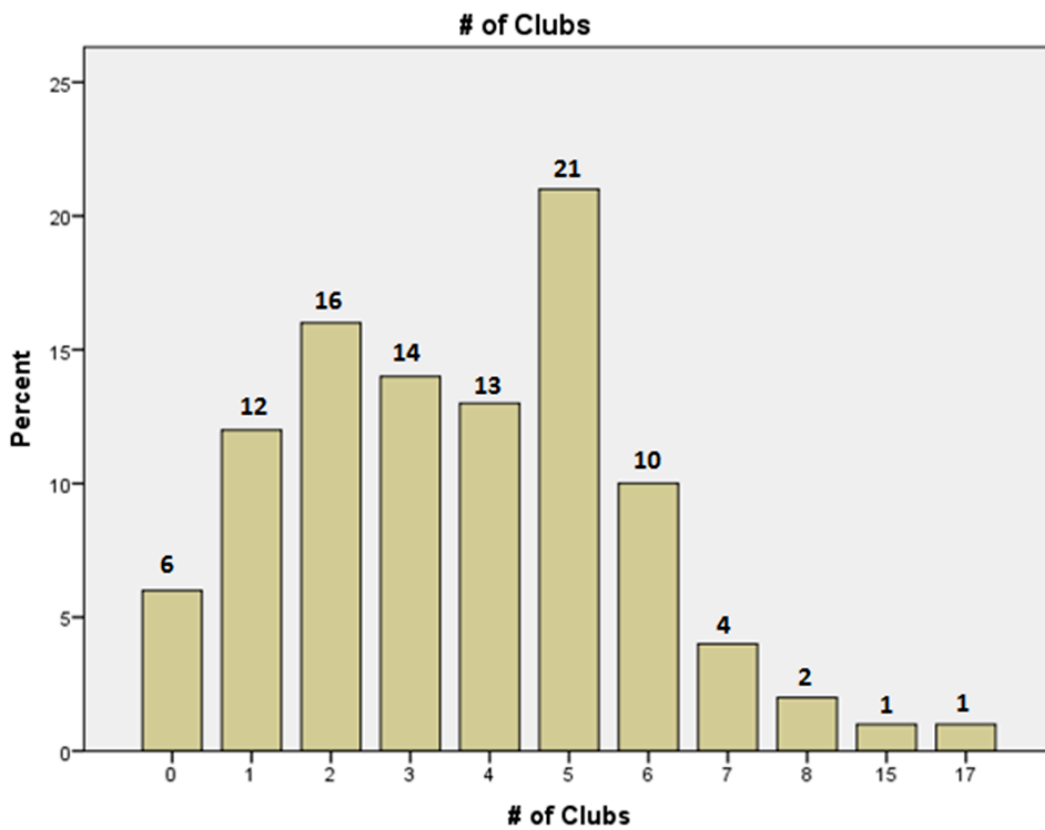
Although there were a total of 72 non-commuter students, there were only 53 students who said that they reside on campus; this difference of 19 students can be explained as off campus students. The average semester count that students stayed in the Honors Residence Hall was 3.39 which is approximately 3.5 semesters, and the answers ranged from 0-8. Overall, 64% of respondents said that they have, at least for one semester, stayed in the Honors Residence Hall. Students were also asked why they chose to stay in the honors residence hall, noting a variety of answers were recorded and common themes included: convenience, quiet, ease of access, sense of community, to be surrounded by other honors students, easy access to computer lab and classroom, and easier to get to know other honors students. In highlighting two of the responses, one student said, “I thought that I would be able to make friendships with people I knew, I would have classes with, and develop a sense of community. I chose to stay in the hall my second year because I enjoyed how quiet it was when I needed to study,” while another student commented, It's conveniently close to the honors classroom and the computer lab. Really, who doesn't like free printing? I'm planning on continuing to stay in the Honors Hall but this is only my first semester.”

The next area of focus on the survey was about the student's involvement in clubs and organizations on campus along with any leadership roles that they currently hold or have held throughout their time at Californian University of Pennsylvania. The responses received from the descriptive statistics were recorded and demonstrated in bar graphs as shown in Figures 7 and 8:

Figure 7:

Descriptive Statistics	Sample Size	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
# of Clubs*	100	17	0	17	3.79	2.653

Figure 8:



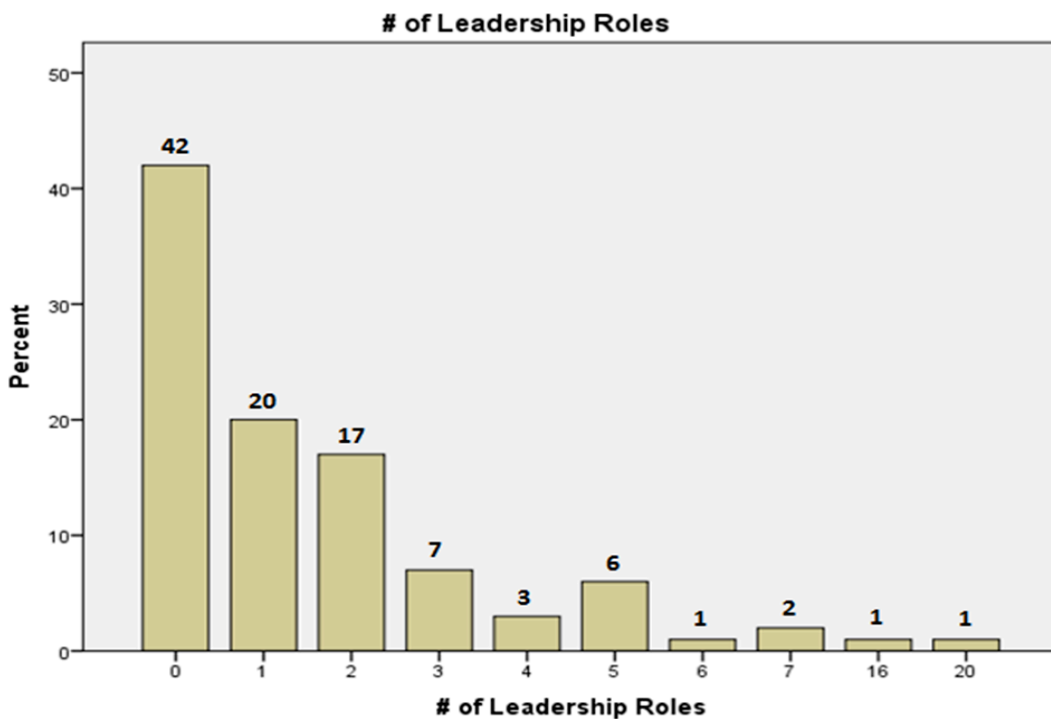
As shown in Figures 7 and 8, the range of the data was from 0-17 and the average number of clubs per student was 3.79 which is approximately 4. The standard deviation was found to be 2.653 which is approximately 3, ultimately meaning that the average number of clubs was about 4 give or take 3. Since 2 respondents answer 15 and 17 for the number of clubs, these two data points were considered outliers and were removed from

the calculation just to make sure that the data was not skewed. Upon removing the two responses of 15 and 17 the new range became 0-8, the mean was 3.54 which is approximately 4, and the standard deviation became 2.01 which is approximately 2. The statement now becomes, the average number of clubs per students was about 4 give or take 2. Since the only difference in removing the outliers was in the standard deviation from 3 to 2, the data is not considered to be skewed. The data for the number of leadership roles is shown in Figures 9 and 10:

Figure 9:

Descriptive Statistics	Sample Size	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
# of Leadership Roles*	100	20	0	20	1.73	2.912

Figure 10:



As shown in Figures 9 and 10, the range of the data was from 0-20 and the average number of clubs per student was 1.73 which is approximately 2. The standard deviation was found to be 2.912 which is approximately 3, ultimately meaning that the average number of leadership roles was about 2 give or take 3. Since 2 respondents answered 16 and 20 for the number of leadership roles, these two data points were considered outliers and were removed from the calculation just to make sure that the data was not skewed.

Upon removing the two responses of 16 and 20, the new range became 0-7, the mean was 1.40 which is approximately 1, and the standard deviation became 1.73 which is approximately 2. The statement now becomes, the average number of leadership roles per students was about 1 give or take 2. Since the only difference in removing the outliers was in the standard deviation and mean from 3 to 2 and 2 to 1, respectively, and the data is still considered to be skewed. Next, a test of correlation was used to see if there were any significant correlations between the variable of GPA, the number of clubs a student is involved in or has been involved in, and the number of leadership roles a student currently holds or has held. Correlation is the statistical measure that indicates the extent to which two variables fluctuate together. The results of the correlation test with the three variables are shown in Figure 11:

Figure 11:

Correlations				
		GPA	# of Clubs	# of Leadership Roles
GPA	Pearson Correlation (r)	1	.287**	.143
	Sig. (2-tailed) (P-value)		.004	.158
	Sample Size	99	99	99
# of Clubs	Pearson Correlation (r)	.287**	1	.786**
	Sig. (2-tailed) (P-value)	.004		.000
	Sample Size	99	100	100
# of Leadership Roles	Pearson Correlation (r)	.143	.786**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed) (P-Value)	.158	.000	
	Sample Size	99	100	100

From the results of the correlation test in Figure 11, it shows that GPA is highly correlated with the amount of clubs the student is involved in and also the reverse is demonstrated as the amount of clubs that the student is involved in, the higher their GPA was reported as the values were found to be 0.004. It was also shown that the number of clubs one is involved in, is highly correlated to the number of leadership roles one has which makes sense because as the amount of clubs increase, the higher probability one has of obtaining a leadership role. It was also determined through descriptive statistics that as the data progressed through Freshmen up to Seniors, the number of both clubs and

leadership roles increase as the rank increased. Through an Anova test, also known as an analysis of variances, which is used to analyze the differences or variances among groups and their means, it was determined that there was no significant difference of GPA across the ranks since a p-value of $p=0.448$ was found. The averages for the student's GPAs were found through descriptive statistics and are shown in Figure 12:

Figure 12:

	Average GPA
1-Freshman	3.68
2-Sophomore	3.69
3-Junior	3.68
4-Senior	3.80
Overall Average	3.71

From Figure 12 it is shown that the four ranks have very similar GPA averages. Noting that the Seniors had the highest average GPA and that all of the averages among the ranks and the overall average exceeds the minimum overall GPA requirement of the honors program which is only a 3.25 overall GPA.

The next set of data consists of the responses regarding the benefits of the honors program where students were asked to rank them 1-10, with 1 being considered the best benefit. The data is show below in Figure 13:

Figure 13:

	Challenging Coursework	Conferences/ Excursions	Faculty	Honors Residence Hall	Meeting Similar People	Opportunities for Leadership	Priority Registration	Resume Builder	Small Classroom Size	To Complete A Capstone Project
1	12	12	4	8	12	3	19	18	4	8
2	8	5	11	7	14	10	14	13	10	8
3	9	10	9	6	11	14	13	9	13	6
4	6	8	14	4	11	8	8	20	13	8
5	7	9	15	12	12	10	8	8	10	9
6	9	8	13	12	13	13	6	5	13	8
7	9	9	13	5	13	15	10	10	9	7
8	11	16	7	11	6	12	7	9	11	10
9	16	13	11	14	6	4	9	5	11	11
10	13	10	3	21	2	11	6	3	6	25

Due to the limitations on rank with the statistical software, frequencies were found for each benefit including the benefit that received the most “1” responses which was priority registration. The benefit of completing a capstone project for one’s major received the highest amount of “10” responses. Next, descriptive statistics were ran on the importance of eight different aspects of why one would have joined the program. The data is shown in Figure 14:

Figure 14:

	Challenging Coursework	Conferences/ Excursions	Faculty	Honors Residence Hall	Meeting Similar People	Priority Registration	Resume Builder	Small Classroom Size
1-Strongly Disagree	6	13	4	12	6	2	2	3
2-Disagree	12	10	6	12	5	2	3	4
3-Neutral	24	36	31	23	9	10	6	17
4-Agree	37	22	42	30	44	31	34	43
5-Strongly Agree	21	19	17	23	36	55	55	33
Mean	3.55	3.24	3.62	3.40	3.99	4.35	4.37	3.99
Standard Deviation	1.132	1.248	0.972	1.295	1.096	0.892	0.884	0.969
Highest Mean By Rank	Sophomores 3.55	Seniors 3.55	Sophomores 3.94	Seniors 3.77	Sophomores 4.53	Seniors 4.50	Juniors 4.52	Sophomore 4.18

Since the students got to choose their response on a scale from 1 to 5 for each of the eight columns, calculations included the mean, standard deviation, and the means by each class rank. As shown in figure 14, each highlighted response for each column shows where on the scale the highest frequency was recorded. Challenging coursework, faculty, the honors residence hall, meeting similar people committed to academics, and the small classroom size all received the greatest frequency count for Agree-4. Conferences/excursions received a Neutral-3 answer, whereas, both priority registration and resume builder received the highest frequency for the Strongly Agree-5 part of the scale. In looking at the means, they were all relatively high and all, but conferences/excursions and honors resident hall, received an approximate mean of 4 when rounded which means that the results showed the students agreed that all of the above eight factors were important in each of their own decisions to join the program. Interesting enough, Seniors had the highest mean for the categories of conferences/excursions, priority registration, and the honors residence hall. Juniors only

ranked the highest for resume building. Sophomores ranked the highest means for the categories of challenging coursework, faculty, meeting similar people committed to academics, and the small classroom size. The Freshmen did not rank the highest mean in any of the categories. T-tests are used to determine if there is a significant difference between two population means or groups. Two t-tests were performed in comparing the data from both Figures 13 & 14 for Freshmen to Seniors and also Sophomores to Seniors. I chose these two comparisons because I wanted to see how the views differentiated between students who had just recently joined the program compared to students who are going to be completing the program. The comparison between Sophomores and Seniors was completed in order to see the difference in views between these two groups since the Sophomore class is the first class to begin the track of preparation classes for the HON 499-Honors Thesis class as they take HON 200 the spring of their Sophomore year and HON 300 the spring of their Junior year. These classes were set up in order to better prepare the students for the Honors Thesis class and to gain more knowledge about research. The results of the two T-tests showed that in comparing Freshmen to Seniors: the Freshmen significantly viewed meeting similar people committed to academics as a greater benefit than the Seniors and the Freshmen significantly viewed the Honors Residence Hall as more important than the Seniors. Also, the Seniors significantly viewed completing a capstone project for their major as a greater benefit than the Freshmen, and Seniors also significantly viewed conferences/excursions as more important than the Freshmen. The second T-test compared Sophomores to Seniors and it was found that the Sophomores significantly viewed meeting similar people committed to academics as a greater benefit than the Seniors and the Seniors also significantly viewed

1. "At first, it was because I was used to being considered an honors student, but I stay in to challenge myself and experience things I wouldn't otherwise experience and to add something to my resume."
2. "Because of the opportunities it provided, both in terms of academics and extracurricular activities. Additionally, I appreciated other opportunities such as the summer study abroad program."
3. "I appreciated the academic challenge being in the Honors Program presented to me and I thought it would give me more opportunities to expand my knowledge and to network."
4. "I believed that it would provide me with the opportunity to meet other motivated students, taking interesting courses, and learn to carry out research."
5. "I chose to join the University Honors Program as a means to expand my knowledge and help me develop into the best student I can possibly be."
6. "I knew it would push me to continue working above the average requirements. I like to be challenged, especially when it comes to something related to my field, and I figured the Honors Program would do just that."
7. "I thought there were plenty of benefits to joining the program, and thought I'd give it a shot. The program has provided me with plenty more opportunities than I could've expected."

8. “I was never in the honors program in my high school and that made me feel like I was not good enough to be in one. When I got the opportunity to join UHP at Cal, I immediately felt like I was finally worthy of calling myself an honors student.”

9. “More one on one with both professors and students, Honors status merit on a job application, resume, etc.”

The next question, “Are there any other benefits to you in regards to the program?” was an optional question and a lot of great answers were received including some common themes: addendums, Honors Thesis, SHAB (Student Honors Advisory Board) events specifically social events, free printing, honors credit on transcript, opportunities for independent research. Twelve additional responses in their original format were as follows:

1. “I believe that the courses in the Honors Program require more effort than other general courses. Since they expect more out of you, you come to expect more out of yourself. Therefore, it may encourage students to have more confidence in their abilities with various obstacles.”

2. “Although the people you meet in classes are all similar in respects to their devotion to academics, it's important to note that we are all from various majors. I wouldn't have met most of my friends here if I was only in classes for my major.”

3. “Honors Computer Lab, SHAB events, and the welcoming atmosphere. Each time I have needed something both the Directors and Secretary have been very helpful and guided me in the right direction to help me succeed, I would not be where I am today without the University Honors Program!”

4. "I love being a part of the program. It's nice to be a part of something that puts such an emphasis in our growth in education. The professors take a keen interest in our individual needs and goals and I think that's really great."
5. "I loved having the opportunity to travel without any expense and meet people from Honors programs at other schools. The Honors Program also provided me with great peers and faculty mentors that have been supportive and have helped me grow."
6. "I would say that my presence in the program acts as a motivational tool. It's nice (and at times terrifying) to have to live up to expectations (primarily your own)."
7. "It has forced me to develop relationships with faculty and seek out opportunities in the community to complete my addendums."
8. "One-on-one discussion with professors and mentors. For example, the Honors Program introduced me to philosophy staff that helped me take courses to prepare for the LSAT. English staff discussed my future as a Peace Corps volunteer given his own experience. These benefits were invaluable. Also, the library is full of neat books, which I have checked out on occasion."
9. "The Honors Composition II class with Dr. Kearcher enabled me to further develop my writing and research skills. That class has proven useful in all four years of my college career, as well as various internships I have had."
10. "The honor's computer lab is very nice, and has saved my grade on multiple occasions. Thank you very much for giving students a quiet place to work."

11. “It allows you to gain self-confidence. It helps encourage you and allows you to realize that even if you're not the smartest one in your Honors grad class, you're still someone special and capable of creating a positive environment for those around you.”

12. “Using my mind in different and creative ways.”

Conclusions and Future Research

Overall, the data analysis provided a significant amount of feedback to be passed along to the Student Honors Advisory Board, the Honors Advisory Board, and the University Honors Program Directors to help provide useful information to both current and upcoming students. It would be interesting for future research to compare student responses of Honors Program students compared to non-honors students at California University of Pennsylvania with similar questions to see how the data compares. It would also be interesting to do an extension of the survey to compare additional conditions such as surveying students at the beginning and end of each year and tracking those responses as they complete the program to help gauge what areas to focus interest on for the students.

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