

Fall 12-8-2015

## Honors College Participation Program

Cassandra Davis  
casdavi@bgsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/honorsprojects>



Part of the [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Commons](#)

---

### Repository Citation

Davis, Cassandra, "Honors College Participation Program" (2015). *Honors Projects*. 201.  
<https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/honorsprojects/201>

This work is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors College at ScholarWorks@BGSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Projects by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@BGSU.

Honors College Participation Program

Cassandra Davis

Honors Project

Submitted to the University Honors College  
at Bowling Green State University in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with

UNIVERSITY HONORS

December 8, 2015

Dr. Kacee Ferrell Snyder, Honors College, Advisor  
Donna Greenwald, College of Business Administration, Advisor

## Table of Contents:

Introduction	3
Summary of Fall 2015	5
Evaluation of Program for Fall 2015	6
Statistics of Program for Fall 2015	7
Survey for Fall 2015	8
Future of the Program	10
Recommendations for the Future	12
Timeline for Spring 2016	13
List of Contacts	14
List of Appendices	15

### Introduction:

For my Honors Project I developed a new program called the Honors College Participation Program within the BGSU Honors College. The purpose of the program was to connect students to honors faculty and staff, motivate students to attend events and serve in leadership positions, and encourage a sense of community within the Honors College. The program was launched this fall semester and included a Canvas course in which students can log on to see upcoming events, keep track of their points, and a way to submit additional documentation with activities if needed. The program also had prizes for students who obtained 250 and 450 points, which included a tumbler cup and a quarter-zip sweatshirt. Throughout the semester, I regularly met with Dr. Kacee Ferrell Snyder and Professor Donna Greenwald to add events to the program, keep track of attendance at events, and discuss improvements for the future of the program.

An initial proposal for this program was presented to Dr. Simon Morgan-Russell, Dean of Honors College, and Dr. Jodi Devine, Associate Dean of Honors College, in May 2015 for approval. The proposal included explaining how the program would create a sense of community, encourage participation, develop relationships, and help with recruiting students. The proposal also included the people who would be involved with the program (Dr. Kacee Ferrell Snyder), a way to track attendance, a schedule of events, prizes, and the budget for the program. Since the initial proposal, I have developed a Canvas page that keeps track of points, The Office of Marketing and Communications has made several designs, and the Honors College website includes information on the program.

I decided to make this my Honors project because I felt that there was not a strong connection between Honors College students and the Honors College. I am in the College of Business Administration and I have seen the success of the CBA Rewards Program and how passionate students are about attending events and wearing the apparel. I wanted to try to duplicate this program within the Honors College and add some features that would be exclusively for the Honors College. Throughout the process of creating this program I've learned a significant amount about the higher education structure and what it takes to get approval and help from other departments in order to successfully launch a new program. I have learned how much time and dedication it takes to manage a program on this scale. I have made connections with numerous faculty and staff in order to get the program up and running. I have had to overcome several obstacles with marketing and technical issues, but with the help of my advisors I have been able to run this program for the semester and am preparing to present it to continue for future semesters.

### Summary of Fall 2015:

Below is a summary of what I have done since starting the program in August

2015:

- Proposed, designed, and implemented the Honors College Participation Program in the Honors College to encourage students to attend events, connect with Honors faculty and staff, and build a stronger community within the Honors College.
- Spoke with students in one-on-one meetings to discuss the program, how to make improvements, see if the marketing materials were working, and to get a better understanding of how students feel about the program.
- Created and designed a Canvas page by working with Information Technology Services by importing all the Honors College students, creating assignments for the events, assigning due dates, and uploading files that explain the guidelines of the program.
- Maintained the Canvas page by continuing to add assignments throughout the semester, sending announcements about upcoming events, and uploading grades for students who acquire points.
- Discussed the progression of the program throughout the semester with Dr. Kacee Ferrell Snyder and Professor Donna Greenwald who were able to help overcome obstacles that arose with the development of the program.
- Drafted information about the description of the program and upcoming events and worked with Amy West in the Office of Marketing & Communications to create an official logo and pamphlet to be distributed to students.
- Collaborated with Honors faculty and staff to make sure there was a way to track student attendance at events, promote the program, and ask for advice to make improvements.
- Encouraged students to learn about the program and to get involved by networking with students, discussing it at Honors events, and putting it in the Scroll.
- Created an evaluation survey that was sent to the students through the Canvas page.

### Evaluation for Fall 2015:

Although developing the Honors College Participation Program was a difficult process, the students who were excited about the participating in the program made it worth it. Some of the obstacles to overcome when creating the program included: developing a tracking program for attendance, responding to questions in a timely manner, and making students aware of the events and rules of the program.

One concern for piloting the program is the amount of time it takes to collect and enter the names of students who attended events. The other programs that have been developed at BGSU (Ziggy Points and CBA Rewards Points) use a swiping device that reads a student identification number and then automatically uploads the information into a spreadsheet. Originally, the Honors College Participation Program was headed in that direction, until we were informed by staff in ITS that the software would take years to develop. After reconsidering, one option of developing a Canvas course for the program emerged and after several meetings, the page was up and running. The Canvas page is a way for students to see upcoming events and track their points on the same site a student would be checking updates for classes. The Canvas page was effective because it was one portal for students to access all the information, however some students complained of the number of notifications they received by the Honors College Participation Program Canvas page.

Other obstacles to overcome for creating this program included understanding that some people do not respond in a timely manner to emails. Some

ways to deal with this are to call, stop in the office, and send a follow-up email.

Using several means of communication also applies to marketing the program to students. It is important to understand that some students read emails, others do not, and when getting the word out about a new program it is important to contact students through flyers, emails, Canvas announcements, and any other means in order to get their attention.

Statistics for Fall 2015:

Website views for October	117
Website views for September	75
20 students viewed Canvas page	30+ times
Students viewed Canvas page in September	2875
Students viewed Canvas page in October	2229
Students who accepted the course invitation	764
Students who did not accept the course initiation	106
Student who received 0 points	346
Students who received points	415
Students who received more than 250 points	3
Students who received more than 150 points	2
Students who received more than 100 points	72
Students who received more than 50 points	260

Honors College Ambassador	16 Students Received Points
Honors Student Association	15 Students Received Points
Free Thinkers Society	10 Students Received Points
Honors Fellows	2 Students Received Points
Honors Opening Weekend Group Leaders	11 Students Received Points
Tuition Raffle	8 Students Received Points
Honors College Mentorship Program	55 Students Received Points
Holding a Leadership Role	14 Students Received Points
Honors Convocation	278 Students Received Points
Campus Fest	34 Students Received Points
Family Weekend	67 Students Received Points
Great Ideas Event	120 Students Received Points
Homecoming Tent	17 Students Received Points
Popcorn Wednesday	9 Students Received Points
Fact about Dean Morgan-Russell	7 Students Received Points



I-Plan Assignments	476 Students Received Points
Takeover Tuesday	9 Students Received Points
Advising Appointment	3 Students Received Points
Major Monday	5 Students Received Points
Who's Who	12 Students Received Points

Survey for Fall 2015:

At the end of the semester I put together a survey to send to Honors students to see if they participated in the program, if they would participate in the program for future semester, and if students had any feedback for the program. The results showed out of the 70 students who completed the survey, the first question concluded that 60% of the students answered the first question saying they did not participate in the program over the semester. Some of the responses as to why they did not participate included: they were seniors, they did not want to go to the events, they had prior commitments to other activities, they did not have time, and that they did not live on campus. The 40% of students who said they participated in the program explained it was good way to stay connected to the Honors College, they liked the idea of encouraging students to participate, they wanted to be more active in the Honors College, they wanted the prizes, and that it was fun.

The second question asked if the Honors College Participation Program motivated you to attend events and 21% of students said yes and 79% of students said no. The third question asked if you would participate in the program next semester and 40% of students said yes and 60% of students said no. Some of the responses to this question included: "I would like to attend more events to receive prizes", "I have other things that take priority, points aren't enough to motivate me to go to events that don't interest me", and "I think a lot of the events I attended

were really interesting, and I enjoyed going to them, however, without the incentive of a free t-shirt/hoodie I probably wouldn't have gone." The last question asked for feedback to improve the program and students responded by saying: "a larger variety in event times," "market more," and "more opportunities to earn points."

Overall the response from the survey of 71 students was shocking. The survey that was sent to students in the spring semester showed that 82% of students would be interested in a participation program and only 40% of students said that they would participate in the program for next semester. I was expecting a higher percentage of students to be interested in this program for future semesters. The freshman class that did not get the opportunity to take the spring semester survey may have had an impact on the percentage dropping drastically. I think some valuable feedback from the survey is offering more prizes, finding new ways to advertise besides for Canvas, and getting more information online to ensure that students understand how the program works. The survey did show that a lot of students said they were "too busy" to participate in this program; however, several students did seem to benefit from the program by being motivated to meet new people and receive the prizes.

I think that this program had a lot of success including the Canvas page, student excitement, and some of the marketing materials that have been created. I think the program failed in communication and allowing the students to have more of choice of whether they want to participate or not. I also learned that students who do not live in Founders are less likely to attend the events. I think that this program was a huge learning opportunity and I now understand that this program

is not meant for every Honors student, but for the students who need a little incentive to get involved and who are willing to put themselves out there to attend events and do things they would not normally do. Initially when I began the program, I felt a need for a variety of Honors students to get involved. I felt that a majority of leaders in the Honors organizations participated in several other of the organizations. The incoming classes might be changing this perception, but I still think that this program could be a possible solution for this gap.

#### Future of Program:

At this point, the Honors College Participation Program is going to be transitioning from my Honors Project, to a program that can be sustainable to future semesters. The next steps in the development process include discussing plans with the Associate Dean in Honors College to see if this program would fit in with the Honors Learning Community (HLC) and the Honors Fellows. Over the course of the semester a majority of the events that were included in the program were HLC-sponsored events. The Honors Fellows are a group of students that help to coordinate events and get students involved in the Honors College. The future of this program would make sense in the hands of the Honors Fellows who would be able to distribute the work of marketing and tracking attendance with its members and the program could be under the leadership of the HLC Coordinator. The program would fit well with the goals of the Honors Learning Community including getting students involved, retaining students for future years, creating a sense of community, and to continue to build and develop relationships with other students and staff members. My hope is that the program will be placed under the HLC

Coordinator and the Honors Fellows for the spring semester and to continue to reward the students who are reaching the prize levels throughout the semester.

In addition to the program possibly being integrated within the Honors Learning Community, the Provost's Office is encouraging the use of Merit. Merit is a program that celebrates student accomplishments such as making the dean's list, studying abroad, and receiving other academic and institution awards or honors. When a student receives an accomplishment, they receive a Merit badge and eventually when a student receives enough badges, they could potentially receive rewards such as a tumbler cup and quarter-zip sweater. This program will publish stories about student achievements on a web page that alumni and employees can access. Merit is beneficial because it could help students find internships, graduate schools, and jobs. The accomplishments can be used on a resume or a LinkedIn profile. Merit and the Honors College Participation Program could be combined to track student success in extracurricular activities and awards the student is receiving. Once a student receives a threshold of points for a certain area, they are awarded badges and eventually prizes. This would be a great way to continue to improve the program and to celebrate the success of the students in the Honors College. It will be a great way to connect students, alumni, faculty, and staff to encourage students to get involved and to be motivated to reach a certain number of points.

### Future Recommendations:

- Make the program a choice for students whether they would like to participate or not.
- Increase marketing and communication to students in additional ways besides for emailing and sending announcements on Canvas. This could include flyers, posters in the Den, or writing on the white boards in the Honors classes.
- Add guidelines and directions on the Canvas page so the directions are easy for students to understand.
- Coordinate with Jacob Haun, Founders Hall Director, to improve the communication between the resident advisors and the program.
- Lower the threshold so more students are able to receive prizes.
- Give the Honors Fellows the prizes to use as a marketing tool and students will be more willing to participate in the program once they see the prizes.
- Target the students who are not as involved on campus, which could happen during advising appointments or encouraging active students to talk to their friends about opportunities to get involved.
- Launch the program at the very beginning of a semester so students can get involved early.

### Tentative Timeline for the Spring Semester:

- January 11-15, 2016:
  - Update the website.
  - Have schedule of spring events finalized and uploaded onto Canvas.
  - Send an email welcoming students back and sharing that the program will continue through the spring semester; provide a link to more information.
  - Have flyers made that list the events for the spring semester.
  - Email the Honors faculty members asking if they would mention the programs in the Great Ideas classes.
  - Assign the Honors Fellows duties, which include marketing, tracking attendance, and coordinating with faculty and staff.
  
- February 1-5, 2016:
  - Plan a dinner with Dean Morgan-Russell for the top five students who accumulate the most points over the course of the year.
  - Regularly post in the Scroll of the top point earners.
  - Continue to talk with students about improvements for the future.
  - Look for events that could be added to the program.
  
- May 2-6, 2016:
  - Evaluate the program and consider revisions for the following year.
  - Consider prizes for following semester

List of Contacts:

Honors College:

Kacee Ferrell Snyder, Assistant Dean Honors College:

[kaceef@bgsu.edu](mailto:kaceef@bgsu.edu) 419-372-8604

Jodi Devine, Associate Dean Honors College:

[jdevine@bgsu.edu](mailto:jdevine@bgsu.edu) 419-372-8501

Simon Morgan-Russell, Dean Honors College:

[smorgan@bgsu.edu](mailto:smorgan@bgsu.edu) 419-372-8504

Martha Nyce, Coordinator Honors College:

[martham@bgsu.edu](mailto:martham@bgsu.edu) 419-372-8502

Marketing:

Amy West, Communications Manager:

[amywest@bgsu.edu](mailto:amywest@bgsu.edu) 419-372-2704

Information Technology Services/Canvas:

Patrick Lisk, Client Services Manager:

[plisk@bgsu.edu](mailto:plisk@bgsu.edu) 419-372-8180

College of Business Rewards Points:

Donna Greenwald, Lecturer:

[donna@g@bgsu.edu](mailto:donna@g@bgsu.edu) 419-372-9531

Founders Residence Hall Director:

Jacob Haun, Residence Hall Director:

[jhaun@bgsu.edu](mailto:jhaun@bgsu.edu) 419-372-2011

### List of Appendices:

- **Appendix A** is a series of screenshots taken from the Honors College Participation Program Canvas page. This is where information discussing the details of the program can be found, a schedule of events is posted, and where students can check the number of points.
- **Appendix B** is one of the first marketing flyers to promote the program. This was hung in the Honors spaces to make students aware of the program.
- **Appendix C** is a final draft of a letter to faculty members to explain the program in their honors classes. This letter was never distributed to the faculty members because of timing, but can be used in the future.
- **Appendix D** includes screenshots of what has been added on the Honors College website. This is information explaining the program, the prizes that students can earn, lists the guidelines of the program, and has examples of events of how students can earn points.
- **Appendix E** includes marketing materials that were created by Amy West in Marketing and Communications. These materials were printed and sent to Honors Students further explaining the program. The materials were also printed and placed in the Honors Learning Community members' mailboxes.
- **Appendix F** is a picture of the Honors Display Case. This is displayed outside the Honors office and is viewed by prospective students as well as current students who are walking past the office.
- **Appendix G** includes the survey I sent to all Honors College students Spring Semester of 2015 that helped to understand if a rewards program would fit



within the Honors College. The screenshots show how the students responded to the questions.

- **Appendix H** includes the survey I sent to all Honors College students who were enrolled in the Honors College Participation Program in November of 2015. The screenshots show how the students responded to the questions.