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"As a Person, There is Nothing Else I Would Rather Have Studied": A Phenomenological Exploration of the Impact of the Humanities on Whole-Person Development

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"As a Person, There Is Nothing Else I Would Rather Have Studied":

A Phenomenological Exploration of the Impact of the Humanities

on Whole-Person Development

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Presented to

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Taylor University

Upland, Indiana

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Higher Education and Student Development

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by

Jennifer M. Cline

May 2020

Higher Education and Student Development
Higher Education and Student Development **Taylor University** **Upland, Indiana**

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL
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MASTER'S THESIS
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This is to certify that the Thesis of

Jennifer Cline

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"As a Person, There is Nothing Else I Would Rather Have Studied": A Phenomenological
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has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the

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Abstract

The content covered within humanities courses is intrinsically personal, and the pursuit of a degree from this school of study requires deep contemplation, as well as the ability to convey those thoughts in meaningful text. This study explored the impact that pursuing a degree within the humanities (English, history, philosophy, etc.) has on an undergraduate student's whole-person development. The areas of development identified include intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development. This study implemented a phenomenological design with an interview-based data collection process. The ten participants in this research were Senior undergraduate students studying English and history; the questions posed in their individual interviews remained open-ended as to provide them the opportunity to respond as authentically as possible. The qualitative data collected from this study revealed several themes that emerged as shared experiences among the participants, as well as shared perceptions of their personal growth and development by way of their majors; these themes point to the existence of whole-person development as those of both intellectual/analytical and social/emotional natures emerged. The results of this study further reveal the importance of humanities degrees for producing thoughtful, reflective, and competent graduates from an undergraduate institution.

Acknowledgements

"The discipline of gratitude is the explicit effort to acknowledge that all I am and have is given to me as a gift of love, a gift to be celebrated with joy" – Henri Nouwen

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Finally, thank you to my heavenly father, to whom I owe my life and being. Throughout my life I have seen overwhelming evidence that, as Brennan Manning writes, God is thinking of me. What a humbling idea. Thank you to my God for thinking of me and for loving me, and for the grace that I receive with every breath.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

"The humanities protect and give life to our most enduring values. The very DNA of civilization is encoded in the poet's song, the painter's brushstroke, and the vibrant dialogue about ideas" (Franke, 2009, p. 13). As an academic discipline, the humanities encompass many departments within a university but according to many are declining in terms of participation and perceived importance (Andrews, 2015). It seems within a culture that is basing the worth of an education upon financial benefits and discernable opportunity cost, the role the humanities play is reduced to an unwise investment for both the student and the university to make.

A defense for the humanities needs to be made, as the numbers for enrollment and job prospects notably descend. According to Hayot (2018) in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, "At many institutions, the decline in humanities majors since 2010 is over 50 percent" (para. 12). But, as Spierling (2019) stated in a later *Chronicle* article, the fact that the humanities now have to fight harder for their relevance does not diminish or tarnish their inherent importance to society. Spierling (2019) insisted that the reason this area of study is on a decline is that the humanities are largely misunderstood, as most assume that 'self-reflection' is the sum of what the humanities contribute to the world or to an individual's path in life. Spierling (2019) explained:

A world based on the constant global exchange of information, goods, services, and money depends upon an increasing need to rapidly access another person's or organization's point of view, cultural assumptions, and social norms. . . . Functioning effectively in a globalized society . . . requires the skill of rigorous, critical, empathetic thinking. (para. 7).

Along with the importance of this type of global participation, the act of studying and understanding humanity is imperative for the development of the whole student, instead of merely an intellectual development. A major role of the humanities is to assist with this type of development. Both higher education professionals and students should be made aware of the potential whole-person development benefits from studying within the humanities. A continued decline of this scholarship would be detrimental for students wanting and needing to grow in this way throughout their years as undergraduate students.

Humanities Construct

For the purpose of this study, a humanities major is defined as an undergraduate student studying in the departments of English, history, and/or philosophy. A general understanding of the humanities, though, ranges much more broadly. This is natural when it comes to a term that attempts to encompass the study of humanity itself. Therefore, as a study, the humanities have many working definitions and are defined throughout time and literature in several capacities. Generally, the humanities are understood as "a body of knowledge and insight, as modes of expression, a program for education, as an underlying attitude toward life" (Schwartz, 1970, p. 395).

The humanities are more specifically defined through the way they exist within an academic setting on a college campus. Kronman (2007) wrote college used to be assumed as "above all, a place for the training of character, for the nurturing of those intellectual and moral habits that together form the basis for living the best life one can" (p. 49). Kronman then argued the realization of this goal requires an immersion in the great texts of literature, philosophy, and history, even to the extent of memorizing them (Fish, 2008). "To acquire a text by memory is to fix in one's mind the image and example of the author and his subject" (Kronman, 2007, p. 50). Essentially, the humanities major acquires an ability to memorize and understand various perspectives and worldviews. This ability is essential in further defining what it means to be wholly developed, and this type of development is a distinctive—and a major mission—of modern American institutions of higher education.

Whole-Person Development Construct

Within the contexts of an institution of learning, development is understood beyond that of just intellectual growth. Development is seen as the growth of other aspects that contribute to an emotionally, mentally, and spiritually healthy human (e.g., empathy, analytical skills, critical thinking). The New Media Literacy dictionary defines the term *whole-person development* as "the holistic development of a person's actions and behavior in situations as compared to just acquisition of specific content knowledge" (Tan Wee Hin & Subramaniam, 2009, p. 396). In this sense, a collaboration is formed between academic intellectualism and skills necessary for involvement in a community that are not assessed in the classroom. A relationship exists between the development that happens within a college student and the humanities as their chosen area of study.

"The ability to function effectively in a dynamic, culturally diverse environment requires both critical thinking and clinical reasoning skills" (Brodhead, 2016, p. ii).

Summary

Intrinsically, the American college experience is defined heavily by the cumulative development a student experiences or acquires by the time he or she graduates. Thus, it is significantly important to continue identifying exactly what contributes to the development of the whole student. By nature, the humanities focus on subjects and texts that have the potential to promote this type of development.

In response, the purpose of this study was to explore the question of the humanities' impact on whole-person development within college students. If a relationship exists between the content studied within humanities courses and whole-person development, exactly how and why does this occur? Student perception of their own development is vital to answering a question that could enhance appreciation for a group of disciplines declining in both value and demand.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Definition of Humanities

The history of the humanities within the context of higher education dates back to the inception of the university. Since the sixteenth century, the humanities have been— and are still—considered a branch of "learning literature concerned with human culture" ("Humanities," n.d.); this definition has since expanded with the growth of higher education through the subsequent centuries. "From a twenty-first-century perspective, though, human culture . . . would seem—to many—to be the common purview of historians, anthropologists, quantitative (as well as qualitative) social scientists, and, increasingly and preeminently, practitioners and theorists within the life sciences" (Garber, 2012, p. 180).

The humanities continue to exist within higher education as an area of study in which students can involve themselves and that encompasses their majors and minors in their pursuits of an undergraduate degree, as well as post-graduate degrees. It is important to explicitly define the humanities in this context considering the vastness of the topic in its general state. In essence, the humanities produce a focus on the human experience and encompass a vast gamut of perspectives to collectively contribute to the continued pursuit of the understanding of this experience. Or, according to Classen (2016),

[The humanities] deal with literature, visual and audio expressions, and examine

human life from a holistic perspective. Moreover, the humanities are engaged

with the cultural expressions of human life and try to understand them as

meaningful and relevant representations of the human existence. (p. 1)

Within academia, the humanities as studied by undergraduate students are defined

within the realm of a literary scholarship discipline. Classen (2016) again argued,

Literary scholarship is not a pure science. Literary scholarship carries out a

reflective, methodologically sound analysis and engagement with the cultural text

tradition of one's own or a foreign community of speakers respectively. This

engagement includes a communication of the traditional values and expands the

historical knowledge to a medium of reflection for the respective present time of

the interpreter. (p. 2)

The majors and courses encompassing this focus are categorized into humanities

schools within the academic affairs departments of most public and liberal arts

universities; these typically include English literature, modern languages, history, and

philosophy.

The ways in which the humanities work within an academic setting to contribute

toward a student's development are categorized in two ways: the humanities as cultural

accessory and the humanities center as symptom (Garber, 2012). The humanities are

increasingly moving toward the category of accessory with "basic humanities courses in

art, music, Shakespeare, modern architecture, the classics are still in demand as electives,

and as social glue" (Garber, 2012, p. 181). The symptoms of the humanities are,

understandably, related to the results from the time spent within their study. The role of

humanities courses is to supply the substrate of basic works, themes, and ideas thought to constitute the basic foundations of modern (and ancient) humanistic knowledge: works, themes, and ideas with which the contemporary undergraduate is increasingly unfamiliar (Garber, 2012).

The value in this area of studies resides in the ability of the courses and materials within them to shape the mind of the student holistically. For instance, an important aspect of studying literature is literature in itself, as it is an elusive work, lacking an essence, and therefore is fundamentally hard to define concretely and definitively (Bennett & Royle, 2015). For example, with effort and imagination, any text has the ability to be read as poetic, anything at all that happens (in the world or in one's head) has the ability to be imagined as drama, and fiction has an innate way of becoming engrained within the reader's own world or reality (Bennett & Royle, 2015). Essentially, teaching and studying literature trains the student to be able to make meaning from a text that is easily transferrable to making meaning from other aspects of life.

These definitions fight against several current social stigmas that attempt to negate the value of these studies all together. As Garber (2012) contended,

> At the same time that their boundaries are being breached and expanded by adjacent disciplines, the humanities have been under persistent critique from some quarters for two mutually paradoxical reasons: first, that they are not relevant to present-day concerns and, second, that their interest in relevancy devalues traditional works and approaches. (p. 180)

Garber's statement is echoed throughout literature focusing on the humanities as an area of study. According to Classen (2016),

Economic and political pressure, as well as the competition from the natural

sciences, make it increasingly difficult to uphold the values and ideals of the

humanities as expressed, for instance, by literary texts. The tiresome and

pointless criticism is always directed at academic subject matters that do not

immediately lead to a professional career after graduation. The humanities badly

but unjustifiably suffer from this acrimonious challenge. (p. 1)

The number of undergraduate students enrolling as humanities majors is

declining. There was a 17% decline in humanities majors between the years of 2012 and

2015 (American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2019). Although this trend is consistent,

this does not negate the importance nor the positive impact of the humanities for those

who involve themselves in its study.

Definition of Whole-Person Development

"The classical ideal of the 'world citizen' is understood in [several] ways, and

'cultivation of humanity' along with it" (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 9). Nussbaum's reference

to a "world citizen" is understood as the increasingly common term *whole-person*

development. Within the realm of higher education, the development of the whole

student is among the top priorities; thus, an understanding of the term is necessary.

Whole-person development is comprised of various and diverse aspects of development

(intellectual, moral, etc.), as well as a measurable outcome of a higher education

experience.

The development of the whole person forms the core function of the communities

of scholarship and practice of the profession of faculty who find themselves working at

an institution of higher education (Braxton, 2009). When discussing the development of

the student that occurs during his or her years participating in higher education, defining

the term *whole-person development* is essential. Certain aspects of higher education

affect this type of development (i.e., the humanities), so one must know exactly what is

being developed within a student's personhood. There exists a specific contrast between

the concept of the *person* comprised within the idea of education as promoting their

personhood (of facilitating learning experiences that have the ability to contribute

towards human flourishing, as well as an initiation into intrinsically worthwhile

activities) and the notion of the student or pupil that is restricted and highly selective.

This is the notion most often in people's minds when they think of their experience at

school or college (Best, 2008). Best (2008) contended,

> The former conceives the person as a whole which is more than the sum of its
>
> parts, but whose parts are manifold including the intellectual, social, emotional,
>
> moral, political, bodily and sexual selves, and the self as a learner while the latter
>
> sees the individual as merely a learner, and one whose learning is pretty much
>
> restricted to the cognitive domain. (p. 344)

Essentially, whole-person development within the realm of higher education is a focus

beyond solely a transmission of knowledge (Best, 2008). Several facets and avenues

exist in which whole-person development is observed and, in some cases, even measured.

Specific aims for following this type of development in a student are the ability to

assist in the students' development of traits like integrity and autonomy and the ability of

the student to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships based on respect

for themselves and for others. Also, among this list are personal qualities including

valuing themselves, their families, and other relationships; the virtues of truth, justice,

honesty, trust, and a sense of duty; being able to manage risk and cope with change and adversity; self-esteem; and emotional well-being (Best, 2008).

To gain the ability to identify whole-person development within students, though, one must first define the term *development*. According to King (2009),

It is important to differentiate development from change (a difference in an attribute over time) and growth (an increase in an attribute). From within the constructive developmental tradition, development is defined as the evolution of skills (defined broadly to include abilities, capacities, ways of understanding) over time, where early level skills are reorganized into higher-level skills that allow individuals to manage more complex units of information, perspectives, and tasks. (p. 598)

In essence, this type of development in students is identified when students execute an ability to consolidate a new way of understanding in the process of applying and practicing new skills of which they have obtained to the various and diverse problems and contexts they encounter (King, 2009).

Among the aspects of character included within the construct of whole-person development is empathy—more specifically, empathy development as a part of moral development, which is included in the development of the whole-student. Empathy is defined as "the ability to imagine oneself into the inner life of another," is usually assumed to be good, and can be included in the realm of emotional development (Lindhé, 2016, p. 19). "Recent research links empathy with ethical consequences such as altruism and prosocial behavior, moral development, interpersonal bonding, and improved intergroup relations" (Lindhé, 2016, p. 19).

This aspect of the whole-person development (i.e., an effect of higher education) has often been associated with the academic affairs realm of higher education, specifically literature courses. Along these lines, Lindhé (2016) contended,

> The notion that the act of reading literature expands our empathy is a popular one . . . reading develops our ability to shift perspectives, and it enhances our understanding of unknown others. Martha Nussbaum believes that the empathy induced by reading literature can have an influence on a person's moral development and even prompt altruistic behavior in the real world, a contention she shares with many other philosophers and with (developmental) psychologists. (p. 19)

The fusion of literature and ethics is a prime example of how whole-person development relates directly to academics when used in reference to higher education. This approach is how one can observe the development of the whole student as a result of education.

Delving deeper into the idea of student development, and more specifically whole-person development as a result an impact of a college education, it is imperative to identify and understand which types of development are included within the whole-person realm. Torres, Jones, and Renn (2009) argued identity development is a crucial construct when considering the development of the whole person. The specifics of identity development are defined as the ways students discover their abilities, aptitude, and objectives. Understanding this definition may enable university faculty to assist students to achieve their maximum effectiveness (Torres et al., 2009). According to Torres and colleagues (2009),

The tasks involved in discovering abilities, goals, and effectiveness are part of

creating a sense of identity that allows the student to enter adult life. Identity is

shaped by how one organizes experiences within the environment (context) that

revolves around oneself. (p. 577)

Interestingly, one of the components of identity development that arises quickly

on most campuses is the process of students learning how to balance their needs with

those of others (Torres et al., 2009). Various perspectives are needed, for comparison's

sake, to form and understand one's own identity, one of the most foundational aspects of

developing as a whole person.

The term *whole-person* implies a broad scope of what exactly is developed within

the student, thus making room for a holistic perspective of what promotes learning and

the development of the whole student (Baxter Magolda, 2009). This holistic, as well as

theoretical, perspective inherently includes higher education in general, meaning both

academic and student affairs. Crucial in this holistic perspective is the process of making

meaning and the student's development of this specific ability. For example, Baxter

Magolda (2009) noted,

In the years from seventeen to thirty a distinctive mode of meaning making can

emerge . . . [that] includes (1) becoming critically aware of one's own composing

of reality, (2) self-consciously participating in an ongoing dialogue toward truth,

and (3) cultivating a capacity to respond—to act—in ways that are satisfying and

just. (p. 625)

The specifics of meaning making further contribute to what is considered whole-person development, as well as what is necessary for a student to be considered further wholly developed.

Student engagement stands as a critical element in the development of the whole person (Braxton, 2009). "The greatest impact on learning and personal development during college seems to be a function of institutional policies and practices that induce higher levels of engagement across various kinds of in-class…educationally purposeful activities" (Kuh, 2009, p. 688). Gains in areas of character that comprise whole-person development are reported at a higher rate within students who are more often engaged (in classrooms, in campus extra-curricular activities, etc.). Greater gains in practical competence and personal and social development, as well as in general education, were reported in students with a higher level of engagement (Kuh, 2009).

One would assume a noticeable development in students considered more wholly developed by their college experiences. A specific aspect of development within this developed student is that of persistence—there are many external factors acting upon a student during their collegiate experience (individual assignments, group work, assessments, expectation from parents/professors, etc.). This may result in increased aptitude for persisting through adversity or stressful situations (Reason, 2009). Persistence is an integral aspect of whole-person development, especially in relation to the effect of college, as it accounts for the effects of a student's own personal experiences in areas of both their academic and nonacademic lives (Reason, 2009). A project lead by Pascarella, Seifert, and Whitt (2008) reported these experiences as principle influences on student outcomes, including educational attainment. These experiences are divided into

three areas: curricular experiences, classroom experiences, and co-curricular experiences (Reason, 2009). When focusing on classroom experiences, tendencies natural to classes of social sciences produce positive results. "Pedagogical approaches that encourage active, collaborative, and cooperative learning provide advantages, in relation to academic and cognitive gains, over more passive instructional approaches" (Reason, 2009, p. 673). These classroom tendencies, coupled with extra-curricular activities, have proven to produce persistence and thus contribute to the development of the whole person.

Existing literature does not answer explicitly the specific question that the researcher is posing. Does an extended amount of time spent in studying the humanities lead to a greater development of the whole person? There is a lack of recorded responses from students who have studied the humanities on a deeply personal level, and as these students are among those who can attest to the existence of this correlation, their own perceptions of their perceived development are important to record as we find ourselves in a time of a general decline in the humanities.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this research was to further explain and understand the relationship between students who are involved in the humanities by their choice of major and their respective growth and development as a whole person because of their involvement in this area of study. The employed research design was qualitative and phenomenological, as the researcher conducted interviews with senior students within their final year of completing their humanities degree. This design helped these students express their perceived development in specified constructs within the concept of whole-person development as a result of the time they spent engaging with the humanities.

Phenomenological Design

According to Creswell (2012), the purpose of this design is "to develop a detailed understanding that might provide useful information, and that might help people learn about the phenomenon" (p. 206). As the goal of this research was to identify perceived development, the conducted interviews constituted this research as a phenomenological study. Creswell (2007) stated, "[A] phenomenological study describes the meaning for several individuals of the lived experiences of a concept of a phenomenon" (p. 57). This type of qualitative design is necessary for this topic of research because of its requirement that focus remains on the perspectives and shared thoughts of the participant. A phenomenological approach to research "is focused less on the interpretations of the

researcher and more on a description of the experiences of participants" (Creswell, 2007, p. 59). This research is primarily focused upon the shared experiences of humanities majors, so through a phenomenological approach, the researcher focused on the participants' own perceptions of the whole-person development they experienced as a result of their majors.

The phenomenological data was collected through individual interviews with senior students who were in the last year of completing their humanities degrees. Data collection by means of interview was chosen because of the personal nature of information collected, as well as the study's purpose to find if participant responses formed a pattern or a shared phenomenon. "[Interviews] transform the subject behind the respondent from a repository of information and opinions or a wellspring of emotions into a productive source of knowledge" (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001, p. 15). The purpose of these interviews was to identify perceived development among individual participants; the use of this medium of data collection to obtain this information aided in moving the themes of participants' answers along the quantitative design continuum so their responses and the patterns formed within them produced some amount of certainty when considering the original research question. The open-ended nature of interview research was employed to ensure that the focus of the research remained on the participants' experiences; therefore, the interview questions were written with this in mind. "The qualitative interview uses three kinds of questions: main questions that begin and guide the conversation, probes to clarify answers or request further examples, and follow-up questions that pursue the implications of answers to main questions" (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001, p. 15). The nature of the information being collected also required that

the qualitative interviewer remained flexible and attentive to the variety of meanings that

emerged as the interview progressed (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001).

Context and Participants

This research was conducted at a small, faith-based, liberal arts institution with an

enrollment of approximately 1,900 students located in the Midwestern United States.

The participants were limited to students with senior status, or within their last year of

obtaining an undergraduate degree categorized as part of the humanities. The specific

majors included in this study were English (both literature and creative writing), history,

and philosophy. The point at which the students were interviewed by nature requires that

they had met the vast majority of their foundational core requirements, as well as had

been considerably close to fulfilling all of their major's requirements for graduating with

their respective degrees.

As part of a qualitative research design, the participants were identified on

purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2012). Their participation was based intentionally and

specifically on their involvement in the humanities as their declared majors. By nature of

these specified majors, the participating students were in a time of reflection of their

degrees as well, because of the cumulative essence of the senior projects required by each

of the named majors. So, coincidentally, these students were within the most collective

season of the four years of their humanities degrees. The researcher interviewed only

senior students, as they had completed the majority of their degrees by the time of their

interviews and had the most amount of time spent in their studies to reflect back upon to

relay to the researcher. As recommended by Creswell (2007), the researcher aimed to

interview 8 to 12 individuals who had all experienced the same phenomenon, in this case,

the completion of a degree in the humanities. The pool of potential participants included 16 seniors with an English major, 6 seniors with a history major, and 8 seniors with a philosophy major, totaling 30 potential participants.

Procedure

Upon obtaining IRB approval, the researcher contacted students individually through their university email accounts based on their graduation year status and their major. Using a roster list, the researcher contacted the students listed as in their senior year of a degree in English, history, and philosophy. Respondents who were willing to participate were invited to an interview session in which the researcher explained to them the definition of the working term *whole-person development* as used for this study. These interviews were conducted in a university library study room. These students were asked several questions about their personal perceptions of their own whole-person development in relation to their majors. The interview followed an outline of general questions that remained unchanged throughout each interview, but the researcher asked more specific follow-up questions based on personal responses from the participating students.

Data Analysis

As this research classified into a phenomenological research design, the interviews found their structure from a streamlined form of data collection that used single interviews with participants (Creswell, 2007).

Each individual interview was recorded and transcribed by the researcher. From these interviews, the researcher made note of and coded any themes that appeared to arise as a shared experience or phenomenon that was a result of majoring within the

humanities. Creswell (2007) described the subsequent data analysis of the interviews themselves:

> Building on the data from the research questions, data analysts go through the data (e.g. interview transcriptions) and highlight "significant statements," sentences, or quotes that provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon. . . . Next, the researcher develops clusters of meaning from these significant statements into themes. (p. 61)

The identifiable themes were placed into larger, more encompassing categories so the researcher could potentially interpret a connection between an increase in whole-person development and a humanities major.

Benefits

The specific question this research asked has yet to be touched upon in current literature and thus is beneficial by way of necessity. Any correlation found between the humanities and positive whole-person development should be present for the public, and specifically institutions of higher education, to read. The current trends in declining humanities disregard the potential whole-person benefits of majoring within the humanities. This research will benefit humanities programs looking to grow their enrollment, as well as students who are considering majoring within the humanities despite the current trends of decline. With a better understanding of how majors within the humanities can aid in the whole-person development of undergraduate students, both students and professionals alike are able to see the development of skills such as critical thinking, analysis, and empathy more clearly through this research.

Chapter 4

Results

The study results show a connection between majoring within the humanities and a positive growth in areas previously specified as whole-person development. The shared experiences that emerged from the 10 individual interviews can all be classified into at least one of the realms identified as parts of whole-person development, including emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and social potential, as well as mindfulness.

Through the participants' willingness to engage in questions and conversation about their perceived personal development by account of their majors, five main themes emerged: (a) relationships; (b) communication; (c) understanding of self; (d) critical thinking; and (e) empathy. Among these themes, several subthemes emerged as well, including listening, growth in a multicultural understanding, remaining open-minded, and learning to ask questions, among others. These themes are recognized by the number of participants who spoke on them, as well as the frequency in which they were mentioned by participants. The themes are discussed in order of the frequency in which they emerged, from greatest to least.

Theme One: Relationships

All 10 participants mentioned relationships and their treatment of others as an area of their lives and persons that was impacted by their humanities majors. The ways in which the participants view others was shaped by studying history and literature, as

well as an adapted and aware sense of the attribution they assign to why people around them act and react in the ways that they do. For example, Participant C contended,

> [Reading literature] just makes me curious and makes me aware that people are really complex. Reading different characters and analyzing the ways they think helps me not make judgements as quickly on my friends or, I think, other people that I meet. I think what you are taught in a literature classroom is to look at evidence and to reserve judgement until you actually understand what's going on. And I think that applies to people—looking at all of the possible factors that could be contributing to an action.

This ability to extend grace because of an increased understanding of other people was shared by multiple participants. Participant F, for example, said, "[History] definitely changed the amount of grace that I have for people, because I think that I looked at people in a very kind of good or bad understandings and classifications, but when you study history well, you have to acknowledge that people are never one or the other."

Broadening the lens through which they relate to others and analyze others' actions was a skill adopted through an application of what participants learned through their major-specific content. In this same vein, understanding others led some participants to realize the way they interact with others will better themselves as individuals. Several of the participants used the phrase *better person* to describe themselves while explaining how their major changed them. Participant E stated she found she could simultaneously become a better writer and a "better person to care for others" because of the stories she heard in her creative writing classes.

Participant G then cited this type of care as an overarching reason for studying English: "This academic work that we're doing is actually in service of living life better as people actually interacting in the world." Participant C viewed this holistically as well: "I don't really know what this (major) looks like on a practical level. So, on that level, I'm not really sure. But as a person, I think, there is nothing else I would rather have studied."

Sub-theme: Listening. Several participants cited the frequency of practicing listening in their courses as what shaped them into better listeners in their lives beyond their academic work. Participant J, commenting on how his history major contributed to a greater understanding of human nature, stated, "Listening better and understanding . . . seeking to understand the source of where someone's coming from, and why they would say things the way they do. I've learned a lot about that, and it's been a valuable skill I think." This same participant continued to comment that his practice in listening to oral history has affected his ability to listen, and in general, be a good friend, and thus a better helper to individuals about whom he cares. Similarly, Participant C then said:

> I think I've gotten better at listening, just the way an English classroom is structured, there is a lot of . . . you listen to other people and then you bounce off their ideas. . . . I learn a ton when I'm reading on my own, but I learn so much more when I'm in the classroom listening to other people's ideas.

She also contended that she had gotten better at incorporating others' perspectives into her own; thus, being a better listener translated into being a better learner.

Theme Two: Communication

Nine of the ten participants mentioned a development in their communication skills because of their area of study. Frequent remarks included the altering of ways in which they have personal conversations, being able to articulate their thoughts more successfully, and analyzing a situation and communicating effectively based on their analyzation. Participant F, for example, said,

> [History] influenced the way that I go about having conversations and working to make social change, and even now being in a community that has had a lot of tension, looking at what conversations feel helpful and socially productive versus what just feels unrealistic or unreasonable.

Expression was an idea frequently conveyed by the participants while commenting on their development in communication skills. Multiple participants mentioned growing in their ability to influence others because of their expanded ability to express.

Participant E stated, "[English] helped me more seriously consider how I'm going to express my ideas and how I'm going to express my beliefs and thoughts in an influential way." Participant A attributed his growth in communicating through expression to the creativity required throughout his courses. In particular, he offered,

> Creative writing's all about being able to communicate through a different medium from a lot of the world, and to express things in ways people might . . . that they're not presented with in normal settings. So, I think learning how to present important things in different ways in the biggest things I've gotten out of creative writing.

Communication is notably important when considering the aspects of a competent member of society, and this notion was reflected by many participants when recounting their experiences studying within the humanities.

Sub-theme: Stories/Narrative. Within comments on conversation, many participants specifically cited their work with stories or narratives, either in their own writing or reading others' work, as something that aided them in becoming better communicators. Participant C, for example, explained, "I love words and stories, and how powerful they are just to change individual people's minds and to broaden perspectives."

This sub-theme was generated mostly from English majors and, within this, primarily those who concentrated on creative writing. Every participant with a creative writing concentration mentioned their understanding of stories relating to how they now relate to the world or communicate with others. Participant E directly connected her experience of writing stories with her ability to communicate with those around her:

> No matter what I end up doing, or no matter where my path leads, story-telling is something that I want to be able to bring with me, and I think that's essential in everything we do, whether that's in my real job, in my family, with my roommates . . . story-telling is how we are able to relate to each other, and how we tell stories, how we communicate, is essential in developing relationships.

The importance of this theme emerged clearly as the participants continued to contend to the way that it will affect their lives for the years after graduation, as it had instilled in them the new ability to influence and understand others.

Theme Three: Understanding of Self

Though several specific aspects of the history or English major were cited as reasons why or how they each aided the participants in understanding themselves better, nine participants mentioned a new or deeper understanding of their own self as an area of development they experienced upon engaging in these scholarships. Participant F, for example, shared how she understands herself better from studying the stories of others through her history major:

> I also think studying history has helped me figure out what I am passionate about, because looking at the stories and the realities of how people have interacted with their own passions in the past has kind of been a glimpse into me of like, "Oh, what are the things that I would put that much work into," or "What are the things that matter that I care that much about"?

Similarly, Participant G mentioned how she was able to learn more about herself through the high amount of exposure to other people she gained through her English major. In particular, she noted,

> I think that having become more well-read and having interactions with as many texts that I've had to [interact] with, and being in classes where people disagree with me and professors who know more than me has really put perspective on what my own voice is.

Other participants mentioned reading texts with an analytical mindset as an aspect of their major that aided them in learning more about themselves. Participant C said,

> I remember looking at *Crime and Punishment* and being like, "Oh my gosh, actually I can see a lot of those things in myself, there are times where I try to be

more than what I'm capable of being, and that's this really arrogant statement." I

realized, "oh, I'm human and I'm limited, and that's not a bad thing." I think

that's who I am.

Comparably, Participant E cited reading through novels and analyzing characters as a

way she grew in understanding herself:

I'd say I'm a better person because of the English department, but through weird

things like just reading through stories and seeing peoples' lives impacted, or like,

when you read and you see a character and how they impact others and say, "oh, I

want to be that person, I want to reflect this, or reflect what we're ultimately

wanting to strive for as humans and as Christians."

As the participants specified, a growth in understanding of themselves as humans and as

members of a culture and society is imperative when considering the reality of what it

means to be holistically developed.

    Subtheme: Open-mindedness. Several participants continued their thoughts on

their development in skills related to introspection with commenting on coming to

understand that their ideas might sometimes be wrong. They cited development in their

new willingness to accept their wrongness. Participant G, for example, equated her

growth in open-mindedness with feeling content with a lack of assurance and being

willing to change her mind. In particular, she mentioned, "Because of my time in the

English department I've become more assured, in a way of . . . more assured where it

counts and also less assured where I was perhaps falsely assured before."

    Participant A contended that the discussion aspect of studying literature was

important for him to develop the skill of "knowing that you might be wrong about

something." Participant E commented on her experience with this as well, by means of listening to her peers' critical analysis in class:

> Reading stories and seeing all these different points of views . . . you're right there with the characters' inner thoughts, inner desires, feelings, motivations. And so, evaluating that and then finding somebody who said, "oh, no I value this in a completely different way" like, growing in that, like, "okay, this is not the only way that they would be thinking, or I could be thinking," which is what it leads to.

Similar to admitting being wrong, participants grew in the ability to recognize when they do not fully know or understand a concept. Participant F described this ability as "a coexistence of 'I don't know the answer, so I'm going to look at whatever possible answer there could be.'" As a result of their participation in the practice of scholarship, these participants grew both in the ability to identify what they do not yet know as well as the curiosity, motivation, and skill to correctly research an answer.

Subtheme: Understanding God. Three participants spoke at considerable length about their shift in understanding of God, along with the effects this deeper understanding had on their faith. The weight with which the participants spoke on this experience, and the importance they assigned to it, qualifies this aspect as a separate subtheme. Participant F, for example, specifically credited her history courses with the deepened understanding of God she experienced from her undergraduate institution:

> My faith has really been shifted by my major. . . . it wasn't through my theology classes that it was really shifted, but it was through learning how marginalized people thought of God, and studied God, and portrayed God that I was able to

kind of open my mindset to who I believed God to be, and what I believed the

role of God to be in the world.

Similarly, Participant B attributed his understanding of who he thinks God to be to the

content that he encountered in his History major. He stated, "If you listen to the people

around you, you learn new things about what the world is and who God is in that."

Notably, each participant who spoke of their understanding of God attributed this

new knowledge to their majors' focus on people. Participant E, for example, contended,

My faith was affected because I could see the many different ways God is

working in those peoples' lives and how they're able to tell their stories in such a

unique way, because of the experiences and the tools and the talents that God has

given them.

Theme Four: Critical Thinking

The concept of critical thinking, and related sub-themes that emerged from this

aspect of development, were reported by 9 of the 10 participants. These participants

mentioned how their ways of thinking changed because of the tasks they were required to

complete for their majors, and much of this was attributed to the need to deeply analyze

texts and maneuver their way through an argument.

For example, problem solving was cited often. Participant B explained, "One of

the best things that [the institution] does, especially the humanities, is encourage critical

thinking . . . that you can problem solve, you can look at both sides of an argument, you

don't just take what's given to you at face value." Similarly, Participant A cited his

growth in ability to formulate an argument and think deeply about it: "Coming to ideas

and then being able to argue ideas. I think that everybody can form an argument, but not everybody can learn how to accept if their argument is right or wrong."

Critical thinking was also cited by participants who mentioned being able to work through problems more efficiently than they were previously able. Participant H said, "Even if I do something ten years from now that is not what I studied at all, what I actually learned is how to deal with people and how to solve problems." Participant G directly linked her English major to a better ability to think critically and analytically, and she subsequently related this to whole-person development:

> These themes, these questions, are not things that lend themselves to being kept in a box when you put down the book or finish the paper. That's one of the unique qualities of English I think that makes it so affecting of character is because these are questions and ideas that we wrestle with in our day-to-day lives, and we learn better how to think about them by doing the work that we do as English majors.

So, I would definitely say that you will grow as a person if you are in this major. Critical thinking aligns directly with the intellectual development that is an integral aspect of a working definition of whole-person development; the ways in which the participants described their development in this skill reflect this specific aspect of cognitive development.

Subtheme: Asking questions. Multiple participants focused on the development in their ability to generate questions that led to valuable dialogue or discovery as a more specific example of their ability to think critically. Participant C, for example, described this development: "I would say that I've grown in asking questions that are insightful, and brought out questions that draw out good discussion from other people." Participant

D cited this aspect of her development as something that came with her department's encouragement to think more deeply. She then concluded, "It's good to pursue difficult things and ask good questions, and I think literature helps that too."

Some participants used question-asking as an example to describe how their process of thinking critically changed or grew. Participant F, for example, said, ". . . just the sense of like, 'I know that this event happened, but why did it happen?'. . . 'why is this there?' . . . 'how did where it happened influence how it went on?' . . . learning how and when to ask questions like that." Recognizing the value in general curiosity as an aspect of learning, Participant J described the way in which his manner of acquiring knowledge has changed because he now knows how to ask questions:

> In History, I learned that the journey of learning has to include asking questions. It's like, 'Why do we celebrate certain people or certain events? Why do we look down on certain people or certain events or things that have happened?' or like, 'We know this is wrong, but how do we come to those decisions, why are they celebrated or why are they wrong?' So, I think History and asking questions is a really valuable combination.

Several participants also cited the roles their professors played in their development of learning to ask questions of value. Participant H, for example, contended,

> I'd say something my professors have stressed is to ask questions, and I wasn't very good at that. I don't like to ask questions because I usually just want to handle problems on my own, but I realize that I need to ask clarifying questions not only in my course work, but in my life outside as well.

This skill was critical to the overarching goal of development and learning through altering the way these participants think.

Theme Five: Empathy

Seven out the ten participants mentioned a development in their ability to empathize with those around them and empathize with different people groups. The ideas of empathy were varied in the examples participants provided. However, the change in thought and action toward other people from these participants were all specifically identified as empathy. When Participant B mentioned a general development in his character, he specifically attributed this growth to a further development of caring about other people, which was eventually linked with a further development of empathy. He elaborated, in particular, by explaining, "Once you realize that there's context behind everything, you have to view people as people rather than just others."

This type of empathetic care was also cited by Participant E:

I've just grown a lot in understanding and knowledge, but also empathy towards others because of the English department, whether that is because I'm trying to grow in becoming a better writer by also becoming a better person to care for others because of the stories I hear, and the relationships I build.

Participant C equated her development in empathy with a further understanding of humanity in general:

If we are human and if we live with other humans it makes sense that we would pay attention to all of the different ways that can manifest itself. I think it helps you grow in empathy, especially classes that are careful about having a broad range of perspectives.

Participant J also cited understanding perspective as how he is able to better care

for others:

As I read something I automatically consider someone's perspective or their story

of what things go into that, that are not in the text or in the story. If I know

anything about who's writing it, those things are pretty important to know as well.

Participant G's attribution to her growth in empathy was from her major's emphasis on

valuing diverse perspectives: "I don't think I would be able to be as informed, or as

sensitive of people if those stories were taken away, or if people didn't find value in

recording them."

Subtheme: Broadened multi-cultural context. Many of the participants who

spoke of growing in empathy as a result of their major connected this idea to developing

more care for people outside of their own race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and

culture, and/or individuals who live in a different country. Essentially, these participants

grew in their ability and desire to empathize with those who have different perspectives

from their own. Participant C, for example, attributed studying literature to her

development of a multi-cultural lens that she used to understand people different from

herself. In particular, she offered that literature "gives you access to a lot of different

stories that you wouldn't know otherwise, and I think that makes you curious and want to

find out more, it makes you more open to things that aren't normal for you."

Participant B, when commenting on how his major affected him personally, said

studying history made him care more about different places and people because of his

deeper understanding. He offered,

> [History] has made me care a lot about certain things. So, when somebody's
> talking about some country across the world, a lot of people are just like, "Oh,
> that's not my business, like, I don't even know anything about them." Now, I'm
> like, "Well, these people are . . . these are people too, they have their own culture
> and everything like that."

This same participant continued by expressing that his grown interest in different cultures also made him more sympathetic towards them.

Several participants directly connected their time spent studying in the humanities to understanding humans and culture on a deeper level, which, in turn, aided in their ability to make meaning while considering others' perspectives. Participant G, for example, said,

> We can so often narrow down into our tiny little personal spheres, and in different
> styles of recording what humanity is, not only do we see its idiosyncrasies really
> clearly . . . like, cultural idiosyncrasies . . . which are so important to record in
> such a way as, like, to place them in a meaningful context from which they were
> born.

Similarly, Participant F spoke of the phenomenon of viewing and understanding humans more holistically by means of adopting different perspectives into her worldview. She continued: "I am so grateful to graduate as a history major and to have the mindset that I have towards the world now, I genuinely don't think I would have without this major."

Participant J explored this idea further by specifying that he can empathize with other views because his professors were intentional in offering perspectives outside of solely an American mindset. In particular, he noted,

> [History] helped me consider viewpoints. . . . it's just helped my worldview
> because my professors have been really good about looking at more than just the
> American view of things in the world as we study them. So, that's helped me to
> listen better I think, and to think more broadly than my own perspective.

The desire formed within the participants to consider other cultures' perspectives alongside their own when making observations or decisions is distinctly an aspect of whole-person development, as this disposition aids in developing the student into one who can properly engage with others in a global context.

Conclusion

In essence, the data retrieved in this study points clearly to a connection between the humanities and a development of the whole person. The themes that were generated by vernacular uniformity by the interviewed humanities majors emulate common and shared experiences between the students. These phenomena are important as they fit well into the description—and even helps to further define—whole-person development, a priority of most universities in regard to the way in which their students are impacted upon graduation. This data showcases the reasons for which the humanities are important to whole-person development. What is also essential to consider, though, are the overarching reasons as to why whole-person development matters to the American college student. These considerations are discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

Discussion

This study focused on the possible correlation between majoring within the humanities and the potential development of whole-person development. Considering the results of this research, certain shared experiences or phenomena are outcomes of completing a humanities degree that point toward growth in whole-person development. Whole-person development, described as a merging of intellectual and moral development, represents well the students' formation as a result of their humanities degrees.

As reported by the participants, their humanities degrees helped them experience what Best (2008) described as whole-person development: a focus beyond solely a transmission of knowledge. Without being given a definition, the participants described the developmental traits considered to be within the whole-person realm. The prominent themes that arose from the participants' responses fit well into the virtues described as necessary qualities of a holistic development within a college student.

As mentioned previously in Chapter 2, Best (2008) chose personal qualities such as valuing one's self and valuing others; maintaining virtues of truth, justice, honesty, and a sense of duty; and the ability to cope with change and adversity (among others) to define whole-person development in students. The phenomena that resulted from this study include themes attributed to virtues encompassing this type of development.

The literature that focuses on both whole-person development within a context of higher education and on the purpose of the humanities points to a shared virtue of a socially, intellectually, and emotionally competent student. Interactions with texts led participants in the current study to an increased ability to make meaning, which sets the humanities major apart from other areas of inquiry.

Many participants equated their growth in ability to read a text and attribute a deeper meaning to it to the changes they noticed within themselves as finer members of and contributors to society. Students who studied English reported a better ability to adjust their interactions with others based on their depth of understanding of humanity as a whole, as well as on the microscopic level of individuals. As a result, they can use the examples of characters they have assessed and analyzed in literature as models for their own lives. History students' growth in knowledge of important events and, further, the reality of the reasons they happened serves as a foundation for how they choose to impact social change. The desire to impact this type of change was attributed to studying history as well.

These examples fit well into what Cronon (1998) described as an ultimate goal of a liberal education: "Liberal education is built on these values: it aspires to nurture the growth of human talent in the service of human freedom" (p. 74). This expression describes well the nature of a humanities major and exactly why it is valuable. The skills developed by studying the humanities reflect a changing world in that the practices that define those disciplines are not static and do not depend on the rote memorization of one specific area of expertise. An ability that is developed over several years to read a text and apply it correctly to one's own role in society further builds upon itself, resulting in a

person who can act and react to important issues in a more holistically informed matter. The blending of introspection and awareness of culture required for the completion of a humanities degree is what produces students prepared to interact with society and, most importantly, who continue to do so even as society changes throughout their lives.

Implications for Practice

The exploratory nature of this study revealed several phenomena that aid in a general better understanding of the humanities in terms of their effect on students. Since there is an existing impact, there are several potential implementations for better practice to manipulate this impact so that it is most beneficial to students.

First, certain factors of their majors were repeatedly identified by participants as aspects that contributed to the development they recognized within themselves. Aspects of both the English and history major mentioned frequently by the participants were that of the social interaction required by the discussion aspects of each major, as well as the individual analyzation of text. The interaction with both peers and professors contributed highly to the growth in intellection as well as in social and emotional areas of their personhoods. With this knowledge, both schools of humanities as well as sciences have the option to implement these factors into their courses and curricula. These factors that have contributed to positive development within students in English and history courses have the potential to develop students studying outside of the humanities as well. These specific factors are worthwhile within the humanities as an area of study, as well as for a student on a science track to develop the previously mentioned areas of development—they are imperative to acquire the skills and understanding necessary for any vocation a student might find themselves post-graduation.

This has been seen within science-track students when the aspects identified by this study's participants were applied to their medical school curricula. This idea connects closely to Brodhead's (2016) assertion that science students need to be wholly developed as well to thrive in their STEM field. The ability to correctly engage in a dynamic and diverse healthcare environment requires not only detached reasoning skills but critical thinking skills and emotional intelligence as well. Analyzing literature, for example, might help any student better understand the people and the world by which they are consistently surrounded.

Second, an additional implication for future practice is an alteration of the way in which professionals generally equate a humanities major solely to job prospects upon a student's graduation. Currently, a declining number of students are choosing to major within the humanities in the United States. Several variables have contributed to this decline, but much of this issue can be attributed to a general distain with the gap in pay that exists between a student graduating with a STEM degree having a larger salary than a student graduating with a humanities degree (Hunt, 1997). Considering the results of this study, it is clear the skills acquired by students studying within the humanities by way of their major are significant and transferable. Cronon (1998) contended, ". . . being an educated person means being able to see connections that allow one to make sense of the world and act within it in creative ways" (p. 78).

Third, a shift in language is necessary. It is unhelpful for higher education as a whole to equate a college degree as merely a financial transaction or that of an opportunity cost decision. The current language often surrounding humanities degrees (i.e., "What are you going to do with that?") misrepresents the holistic purpose of

education. Starting with professionals in career centers across American universities, a change in what is focused on when considering a humanities degree should be made. Instead of moving straight to the conclusion that a humanities degree will make a student unemployable, the themes of development that emerged from this study need to be included in the conversation.

Implications for Future Research

As is common with research on development, a longitudinal study would serve this research well in determining with greater certainty the reality of the effects of a humanities major on the development of an undergraduate student. Within the nature of a longitudinal study, researching a group of humanities majors by tracking their development from their freshmen to senior years could potentially bring more clarity to the significance or amount of development occurring within the students. A longitudinal study would lessen bias that is inevitable from solely asking students to reflect in hindsight, as well as aid in identifying the specific courses that contribute most to the development a student might experience.

Second, following the 10 individuals who participated in this study throughout their lives post-graduation would enrich the data. Recording the ways in which the emerged themes aided them in their professional careers would serve as a testament to the importance of whole-person development within the corporate or professional world. Essentially, this data would be further enriched by the notions of if or how these specific themes of development service the students who claimed them in their vocations and lives after they leave their undergraduate institution.

Third, a comparison test would add greater comprehensiveness to the data and results provided by this study. A comparison test leads to a potential for future research in comparing a group of STEM major students to the responses given by humanities major students. This type of research has the potential to measure the assurance with which one can attribute whole-person development to specifically the humanities.

Finally, this study was conducted at a small, faith-based, liberal arts institution, so future research would benefit from data collected from other types of institutions. Comparison between a broader range of institutional types could potentially bring more clarity to the aspects of students' personhood affected by a humanities major. Because of the size of the institution studied, a limited number of majors are offered to students. Including different majors within the study may also prove beneficial.

Limitations

This study shows positive results in the ability to attribute development to the humanities, but several limitations to this research should be considered.

First, researcher bias was present as the nature of the study was somewhat personal. Bias is challenging to avoid in phenomenological research, and personal bias was a large limitation when considering this specific study. The researcher was an English Literature undergraduate student and thus had significant personal experience within the humanities before conducting this study. Care was taken to avoid implementing a specific agenda before conducting interviews, but the personal nature of the study posed a challenge in evading the provision of positive or negative feedback to the participants' responses.

Second, the represented majors caused a limitation with the unintentional omission of a previously identified major. The researcher invited senior students studying English, history, and philosophy to participate in the research and received no response from students obtaining a philosophy degree. An addition of the experience of the philosophy majors could have contributed to a variance in response, and the comparison between only two majors was a hindrance to the clarity the data could have produced provided that philosophy students were interviewed as well.

Third, the number of participants served as a limitation as well. While the number of English and history majors was considerably evenly divided, the study would have benefited from having more than 10 participants. The themes that emerged from this study could be strengthened or shifted with the addition of more participants.

Finally, the institutional type presented as a limitation, as it decreased the potential for variance in responses. This study was done at a faith-based institution that highly values the liberal arts. The participants frequently mentioned their faiths when answering questions about their perceived development, so this research would benefit from interviewing students at public institutions to determine if the same themes would arise given that this specific value would not be considered. The themes that emerged from the participants' answers align with the value placed on a liberal education that the university often contends to be very important; replicating this study at a school that is not described as liberal arts would be beneficial for the certainty of the findings.

Conclusion

How students spend their hours affects them. This study demonstrated that hours spent reading, analyzing, and discussing texts lead to a more wholly developed and

emotionally and intellectually competent person. In conclusion, based on this finding, it is important to maintain and even increase contending to the importance of the humanities as a degree to obtain for an undergraduate student. The assignments required for completing a humanities degree contribute to this development, but the nature of what is being studied has an incredible impact on personhood as well. The topics covered in a humanities course do not lend themselves to be contained to the hours spent reading the material; inherently, they demand the attention of the student as the words read and the stories told make their way into the personal decisions and conversations of the individuals who study them.

This subset of knowledge brings power that comes with a deep understanding of other humans because of the desire for change that it can instill. This type of change also proves imperative to the continuation of a healthy society. In his sermon "Learning in Wartime," C.S. Lewis (1939) wrote,

> Most of all, perhaps we need intimate knowledge of the past. Not that the past has any magic about it, but because we cannot study the future and yet need something to set against the present, to remind us that periods and that much which seems certain to the uneducated is merely temporary fashion. A man who has lived in many place is not likely to be deceived by the local errors of his native village: the scholar has lived in many times and is therefore in some degree immune from the great cataract of nonsense that pours from the press and the microphone of his own age. (para. 8)

Studying history and literature moves vastly past just reading texts. Both areas of study provide students with a diversity of thought and perspective by means of the virtue of the

authors and the orators with whom they interact during their years as undergraduate students. These practices aid students in making meaning out of the texts themselves but also out of their own lives. They then work into people who are better prepared to interact with the changing, shifting, and diverse worlds and cultures surrounding them.

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

I.   Introduction
    A. Welcome
    B. Informed Consent
    C. Explanation of the operational definition of "Whole-Person Development"

II.   Semi-Structured Interview
    A. Warm up questions
        1. What is your major?
        2. Do you have a minor? If so, what is it?
    B. Questions about their majors (the humanities)
        1. Why did you choose to major within the humanities?
        2. If you feel it has, how has your major prepared you for your life after graduation?
        3. What do you perceive as your overall takeaways from the years you spent as a [humanities] major?
        4. Can you cite a skill that you acquired because of your study that you did not have prior to this point in finishing your degree?
    C. Transition to perceived growth (Whole-Person Development)
        1. If applicable, in what ways have you been personally affected by your major?
        2. Which areas, if any, of your character have been developed by your major?
        3. If applicable, describe the growth that you experienced as a result of your major.
        4. Would you recommend your major to a student looking to grow in their character? Why or why not?
    D. Space for lasting thoughts
        1. Are there any lasting thoughts you have that you would like to share that I did not ask you about/ anything else you would like to add to what we have spoken about?

Appendix B

Informed Consent

Consent to be Part of a Research Study

Title of the Project: **The Impact of the Humanities on Whole-Person Development**
Principal Investigator: **Jen Cline, MAHE, Taylor University**
Co-investigator: N/A
Faculty Advisor: **Todd Ream, MAHE, Taylor University**
Study Sponsor: N/A

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be 18 years of age, and currently enrolled in university. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Important Information about the Research Study

Things you should know:
- The purpose of the study is to explore a potential connection between studying the Humanities and an emergence of whole-person development. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to consent to an in-person, individual interview. This will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour.
- Risks or discomforts from this research include general discomfort from somewhat personal reflection.
- The study will aid in a defense for the importance of the humanities on a American college campus
- Taking part in this research project is voluntary. You don't have to participate and you can stop at any time.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

What is the study about and why are we doing it?

The purpose of the study is to explore a potential connection between studying the Humanities and an emergence of whole-person development.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to choose a time to meet with the researcher and consent to an interview in which you will be asked about your growth by means of your major. We expect this to take approximately one hour, meeting only once.

How could you benefit from this study?

Although you will not directly benefit from being in this study, others might benefit because the potential growth of students participating in your major will be displayed in a positive manor.

What risks might result from being in this study?

No foreseeable risks

How will we protect your information?

I/We plan to publish the results of this study. To protect your privacy, I/we will/will not include any information that could directly identify you.

I/We will protect the confidentiality of your research records by omitting your name, and replacing it with a lettered pseudonym. Your name and any other information that can directly identify you will be stored separately from the data collected as part of the project.

It is possible that other people may need to see the information we collect about you. These people work for Taylor University and government offices that are responsible for making sure the research is done safely and properly.

What will happen to the information we collect about you after the study is over?

Your name and other information that can directly identify you will be kept secure and stored separately from the research data collected as part of the project.

Your Participation in this Study is Voluntary

It is totally up to you to decide to be in this research study. Participating in this study is voluntary. Even if you decide to be part of the study now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. If you decide to withdraw before this study is completed, the details collected from the former half of your interview will be destroyed

Contact Information for the Study Team and Questions about the Research

If you have questions about this research, you may contact **Jen Cline, jennifer_cline@taylor.edu**

Contact Information for Questions about Your Rights as a Research Participant

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the following:

Taylor University Institutional Review Board
236 West Reade Avenue
Upland, Indiana 46989
Phone: (765) 998-5188 or toll free, (800) 882-3456
Email: irb@taylor.edu

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. I/We will give you a copy of this document for your records. I/We will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I understand what the study is about and my questions so far have been answered. I agree to take part in this study.

_____
Printed Subject Name

_____
Signature   Date

Consent to be Audio/video Recorded
I agree to be audio/video recorded.

*YES*_____   *NO*_____

_____
Signature   Date