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Supporting the Success of Honors Commuter Students

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Abstract:

This paper will review a variety of ways to support commuter success on campus, specifically for Honors Students. Honors Students typically have an intense workload that expects detailed focus into a variety of specific areas for class purpose as well as an expectance in extra-curricular activities and volunteer work. Because of the high expectations Honors students face, there is a need for universities to provide support networks for students. Universities can support their students in a variety of ways, however specific emphasis needs to be placed on Honors students who commute to campus. The author argues two influential ways that can effectively support Honors students that are transitioning to college and/or continuing college education. The first is an example of tangible support and having a student area for Honors students on campus. These usually manifest themselves as “Honors Lounges” that provide a physical area on a campus specifically for Honors students that isn’t inherently focused on studying or academic activities. The main focus of these Honors spaces is to have a space specifically for Honors which could be the only physical place on campus for Honors students that commute. Resident Honors students have the additional resource of a dorm on campus which functions as “their space” on campus but for commuter students, they are in need of somewhere on campus to call, “theirs”. A more personal approach to providing support for commuter students is having Peer Mentors available to students. Peer Mentors that are Honors students themselves are especially useful because they’re able to empathize with students with the shared experience of being a college Honors student.

References

Biddix, J. P. (2015). *Understanding and Addressing Commuter Students Needs*. San Francisco, CA: Wiley Periodicals Inc.

Johnson, M. L. (2009). The Role of Peer Leaders in Honors Freshman Experience Course. *Honors in Practice*.

This article was literature intended to explain how the role of peer leaders has shifted in order to accommodate Honors freshmen. This gave a summary of how peer leaders are utilized in Honors Freshmen Experience course. I will be using this literature as an example of how peer leaders can influence an honors student success.

Krause, K.-L. (2007). Social Involvement and Commuter Students: The First-Year Student Voice. *National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition*.

This article was a qualitative study exploring the interests and attitudes of commuter students in regards to social involvement. The study interviewed commuter students to understand how social interaction on campus within the first six months of attending college affected their success. I will be using excerpts from the interviews in the study to support my reasoning that commuter students need special support in integrating with peers especially those of the Honors caliber.

LEICHLITER, M. E. (2013). Creating Opportunities for Peer Leadership in Honors Education. *Honors in Practice*.

This article provided literature about peer leadership in Honors education. It identified different components of a peer leader and how that can be used in Honors courses. I will be using information from this article to support my argument on the necessity of Peer Mentors that are Honors students in order to attain success about the commuter population.

Smale, M. R. (2015). "I Am More Productive in the Library Because It's Quiet" Commuter Students in the College Library. *College Research and Libraries*.

This article reviewed different ways commuter students utilized college libraries in a qualitative study. The study produced fascinating insights into the everyday life of a commuter student while also providing detail about the needs of students. I will be using research from this study to argue that honors commuter students need physical places on campus for success in college.