UCSB WE1S Focus Group 2
First-Generation College Student Undergraduate Group
13 May 2019

[Transcript begins at 5.40 after greetings and idle chatter]

A: So, thank you all for coming, we're really pleased to have you. My name is [A] and I am a post-doc with the WhatEvery1Says Project, I've worn my shirt [**laughter**] um, and I just wanted to uh, first explain kind of what the project is, and I feel very excited to have you all here. So, the project is thinking about how people talk about the humanities, how people feel about the humanities, and how people think about the humanities and speak about the humanities. And the main way we're doing this is through printed materials, so mainly newspaper articles, social media are our two main factors right now. And we wanted to expand the project by introducing human subjects research as a component of it, for the specific reason that we want to see if our print materials – how closely they are related or not to the experiences of people in our own community. So we're really excited to hear from all of you, this is what you can help us with, we need your expertise, um, so thank you for being here. Just a, a few words about the informed consent handout, in front of you, so the most important thing to know, um, is that this session is being audio-recorded; there's two recorders, one at the end and one here. Um, this recording will never be made public, it is only for us to listen back to for the discussion, um, and any comments that you guys make whether written on the handout that we'll get to at the end, or spoken [faint rustling in background] will never be attached to your real name if we use them in any outputs of the project. Um, and you can leave at any time, don't, uh, you're not obligated to answer any questions that you're uncomfortable with, you can, um,

you're totally in charge of how much personal information you share with us or not. Any questions about that aspect? **[silence]** Okay, great. Um, let's see So, we particularly wanted to have this session to focus on the first-generation experience, which I believe all of you said in your survey that you were first-generation, is that true? That you think of yourself as that?

Speaker 1: Um, in terms of first-generation, I know there's like, different definitions. Would it be like, my parents came to America, and I was the first one born here? Or am I **{unintelligible}** the one to have immigrated here.

A: We're really interested in your own definitions. So, what does it mean to you?

Speaker 1: Um, I always grew up thinking that my parents were Generation 0 and that I'm Generation 1.

A: Okay, okay.

Speaker 1: **[intermingled with A]** That's what I always thought.

A: Great.

AL: Like me, I immigrated at age 5, so I think of myself as Generation .5 **[laughter]**

Speaker 1: Yeah, I think that's a term as well.

A: Great, well, maybe we should introduce ourselves. We'll introduce ourselves first. My name is **[A]**. 08.38

J: Um, I'm [J]; I'm an undergraduate research assistant on the project.

A: And maybe we should say our majors.

J: Oh yeah, I'm a, a Poli[tical] Sci[ence] and English major [**inaudible**]

Speaker 2: Hi I'm [Speaker 2], I'm an actuarial science major.

A: Oh, great.

Speaker 3: Hello, I'm **[Speaker 3]**, I'm a Language, Culture, and Society major. And then also, a disclaimer on the first-generation thing, I had read it differently, as like, I'm a first-generation student. [Multiple noises of affirmation]

AL: **[intermingled with Speaker 3]** Yes, that's my definition.

Speaker 3: And also, as far as immigration status, uh, if immigrant generation is Generation 0, then I'm a second-generation immigrant.

A: Okay, great. Yeah, we're really interested in the many definitions that people mean when they say first generation, so I'm really glad we have multiple perspectives.

AL: And that particular duality is quite interesting, that it means both first generation to college and first generation in this country, and sometimes they overlap, of course.

09.40 My name's **[AL]**, I'm a professor here, [inaudible], I've been here 33 years now that I can count, and I'm the director of this project.

Speaker 1:   My name is [Speaker 1], I'm a first-year linguistics major [inaudible]

A: Awesome. Great, we have a wide range of majors as well, that's fantastic. Great, um, okay. Last time we did an icebreaker, should we do that again? [Noises of affirmation] Okay, so the icebreaker is to turn to the partner next to you and say if you were a dessert, what kind of dessert would you be. **10.19 [laughter, conversation about dessert types with many voices for around 1 minute]**

A: **11.20** Okay great. Um, so [speaking to a late-comer] do you want to introduce yourself? We just all went around [inaudible]

Speaker 4:   Hi, I'm [Speaker 4] [inaudible]

A: Okay, great. Awesome, fabulous. So now do we feel that the ice has been broken? [laughter]

Speaker 3:   Should we ask [Speaker 4] what kind of dessert she would be? [noises of affirmation]

A: Oh, sure. [Asks Speaker 4 what kind of dessert she would be, Speaker 4 replies an ice cream!] **[11:48]**

A: Okay! So, I just wanted to give a brief overview of our agenda for the day, so. . . Part 1, we're going to have an open-group discussion about the humanities and your own experiences, and we're particularly interested in how your experience as a first-generation student has impacted your relationship with the humanities or not. And then in Part 2, we're hoping that one benefit of the session for you guys will be to learn more about the digital humanities and some of the methods we're using in

our project. We'll give a brief presentation about that, and then at the end we're really excited to ask you guys for feedback about the materials we're using and also on some of our early results, and on the handout at the end we'll read through some articles, and some of our early hypotheses and results and ask for your feedback to see if it resonates with your experience or not. So we're really excited about having your expertise there **12.55**

A: Okay, um, so I guess we can start off with the discussion. So, we had purposefully more questions than would be possible to get through, so the goal is for you guys to pick up on whatever aspects of this are interesting to you. We will kind of be in the background asking follow-up questions but we really want you guys to just talk to each other, and have an open discussion in whatever way you choose. So, the first main theme that we wanted to address is – how do you choose your major? In particular, did you feel that a major in the humanities is open and accessible to you? Why or why not? What were the main things that influenced you when choosing your major? How do you talk about your major with your friends and family? Was that part of the influence in how you chose your major? Do you feel like your major defines you, either for yourself or for others? And lastly, what impact does being first-generation have on what you chose to study. So, anything you want to start with? Yeah, go ahead.

Speaker 3: Well, um, I guess . . . most concisely, starting with the last one, being a first-generation student in my household whenever I go home, it doesn't give me the support of being able to go home and have intellectual conversations and learn things from an academic perspective that I've never encountered before, because I've never had that experience surrounding me. And so, uh, like I went into linguistics because I thought I wanted to be able to understand the world through [unintelligible] like even if you're talking science you're using language. And so that's kinda my . . . my conscious choice to try to take a holistic view of things, because of where I'm coming from going into it **14.03**

Speaker 2: Being first-generation, is a. . . well, being first-generation both in-terms of college and in coming to America, I grew up really, really low-income, so what impacted me on choosing a major was choosing a major that I knew was going to make a lot of money in the future, so I could [garbled] so I wouldn't put my kids through a lot of the struggles that I've been through. 15.15

Speaker 1: Um, when I first came here I was intending to major in something in STEM, like, a STEM-related field, also because of financial reasons, um, I feel like being from a first-generation background, you kinda have this responsibility of establishing this financial stability, before, um, before. . . I guess like, venturing out onto your own desires, but, uh, I talked to my parents about it, and they said as long as I can do what I want and I like what I'm doing, I can do whatever I want.

Speaker 4: Um, being first-gen I did struggle a lot –

AL: I didn't hear that, what did she say?

Speaker 4: **[louder]** I struggled a lot [AL: mhm] so English wasn't my favorite. [unintelligible] and the reason why I chose it is because I placed very low. So then, I noticed that I wanted to develop my writing skills, and then, um, math was always my strongest subject, so I ended up just choosing English to have better skills in writing. With my house [unintelligible]

AL: Just to share with you some of my personal background, I immigrated at age 5 to this country. Got picked on a lot at school, we complain about adults being racist but some of the most racist people on Earth are little kids [laughter] So, lots of fights in school and so on. And I wanted to learn English so I could speak better than them. That didn't decide me to become an English major, however, I started out as a Chemistry major, y'know, my dad's an engineer, so, uh, it was very important to my folks that I follow a STEM path, that had to do with financial security as well. Um, when I came home from college to tell my folks that I was switching to become an English major, that was a big deal. They were a lot more supportive than I had anticipated, even though I had rehearsed all of the negative outcomes that were possible. I still remember the response that my dad gave me, which is really interesting from a first generation perspective, he said, you should do what makes you happy and makes you do well, but from my perspective as an immigrant, he said, the only profession that matters is one you can take across a border with you. Which is an interesting perspective on choosing a career. 18:16

J: Just kind of going off that: would you guys mind sharing some of the reactions, if there was a reaction, from your parents, your relatives, your friends...?

Speaker 2: Well, actuarial science, not a well-known major at all {**laughter]** Um, and so, you know, we got the whole speech of, basically the-- Or, like, not to be, for the whole stereotype in immigrant communities-- Ah, "lawyer", "doctor", "engineer". And so, when I said, "I want to do actuarial science"... There's also a lot of accountants...accounting is also, like, I guess, accepted in the community. But my mom, because she had never heard what actuarial science is, she was a really hesitant on it. She was like, "Oh, are you sure you don't want to be an aircraft engineer?" **[laughter]** And I'm like " ...Yeah, I'm sure" And then I actually searched up... like, a super simple Google search on actuary salary and then like, aircraft engineer salary **[more laughter]** "Mom, they make exactly the same. And like, actuaries actually make a grand or two more on average." And that's whenever... I actually saw a shift **[laughs]**, and she was like, "Oh okay." **[laughter]** But she also wanted to like, brag to her friends that her son's an aircraft engineer, but I'm like, "No, I hate [unintelligible]" **[laughter]** Um, and then... And then yeah, and then as time went on, and as family friends found out our major, both my major...they were the ones that also convinced them too, 'cause they were like, "Oh I know this one actuarial science... I mean, this one actuary, that they do 'blahblahblahblah'", and like, they talked it up for me **[noises of affirmation]**. And like, one of my dad's friends, was like, "He wants to be a what?" and my dad was like "an actuary." And he was like, "Support him as much as you can! That is one of the craziest majors I've ever heard of, and I know this one person that did 'this, this, and this' with it" and was like...was a just really hyping me up and I'm like "Thanks!!"I **[laughter and noises of affirmation]**

J: That's great!

AL: Out of curiosity, why did you choose actuarial science, as opposed to, like, accounting?

Speaker 2: So actuarial science.... I actually came upon it in 10th grade, whenever... so in 10th grade... so summer going into 10 grade is when I first start taking college classes and then... But then whenever you start taking college classes, do...taking classes that fulfill GEs and fulfill your majors, is like the most ideal thing you can do. And I didn't know what I really wanted to do. Growing up I was always like "I wanna be a dentist", but then my brother was like, "Oh look at all these math classes you have to take" or something. And I was like, "Uh, I don't wanna do that." And then, so I was like, "Okay, I don't want to be a dentist anymore" **[laughter]**. And then two years after he told me that I was in math class and my teacher... we were doing statistics, and every time we would do something--and it was an Algebra Two class--every time we'd do something in that class, I'd always be like--her name was Ms. Cleary--I'd always be like "Ms. Cleary, when are we gonna ever use this in our lives? Like, we're doing parabolas and ellipses, and this doesn't make any sense". And she's like "Go consult the chart in the back." And there was a chart in the back that was like "nurses use those parabolas" and I was like "no they don't!" **[laughter]** And then we were doing statistics, and I'm like, "Okay, Ms. Cleary, like honestly, who's gonna use statistics other than statisticians?" And she was like "Actuaries". And then she started going off on like, if I didn't become a math teacher I would become an actuary and--

AL: Wow

Speaker 2: --like, "this is how much they make", "they're like, one of the happiest professions in the world", perfect work/life bALce", and like, "this, this, and this". And I'm like, "Oh my gosh". So I looked into it, and then it was actually since then that I became obsessed with like, UCSB and wanting to come here, because they have such a good actuarial science program. And then...

AL: I'd like to meet this Ms. Cleary! **[Noises of affirmation: "Yeah!", laughter]**

Speaker 2: Yeah she...and then, the year after, I got another math teacher, and he's like, "You want to be an actuarial science major?" and I'm like, "Yeah", and he's like, "You're the second person out like--how many years have I been teaching?--like ten, fifteen years, like, that's ever told me that they wanna be an actuarial science major." And then he goes...he's like "Wait right here", and I'm like "Okay". So he goes in the back,

pulls out his actuarial books **[gasps]** he's like "I just wanna trap myself in a room for a month and just study this, so I can have bragging rights that I passed one test". And I'm like "Oh, Okay!". And then... yeah, he himself was a math major, I think he went to like CSU Long Beach or something? And yeah, so just like, here and there whenever I do meet people that are familiar with the profession, like, it also gives me a little boost. But I also like statistics at the end of the day. So, I guess that's also a good plus.

AL: There you go.

A: Awesome. Did anyone else want to share their family...? 22:48

Speaker 3:   Yeah, um... So mine...my experience with sharing my major with my family, and like the people who got me here, is a lot more uncertain. So like, I chose my major of my own volition. I went through all the college admission process, like, without their input. **[noises of affirmation]** At first I came out here under Linguistics, 'cause I knew I liked the way that... that language changes across.... well, codes, languages. Um...But then I took "Chinese 1" and "Classical Greek 1" in my first quarter, along with "Intro to Ling". And I said, "I don't want to be a translator" **[laughs]**. So then...Actually this is really funny, cause I got a phone call last week from my sister and, like, one of the things she asked me, she was like "what do you wanna do after you get your degree?" 'cause like, that's a logical question. And like, the fact that I don't know is one of the reasons I've been thinking about taking more school after this. Like grad school, or whatever. Cause that's really the only place where linguistic analysis is appreciated **[noises of affirmation]. Um...**But yeah, it's more just... I appreciate how much I could connect with my major, and the way that I put it is like, if I hadn't found linguistics--and specifically LCS--I probably wouldn't still be in school **[noises of affirmation]** So just that satisfaction is, like, the reaffirmation.

A: That's fantastic.

Speaker 1:   For me personally, I don't think... my parents didn't really know what Linguistics was, so I had to explain it to them. I actually went on Google Translate, and I like

translated it for them **[laughter]**. Um...and they still didn't really get it. So like, I feel like the way I explained it to them, I had to...put it in like, a very sciency...I tried to paint it in a very sciency way, like "there's a lot of research involved" **[laughs].** Yeah, which is kind of fitting 'cause...like the linguistics at... I wanna go into like, computational linguistics, so it's a little bit more techie. So it kind of fits with what I told them. I wasn't lying! **[laughter]**

Speaker 2: What's computational linguistics?

Speaker 1: Oh, um, it's like linguistics? But, you use, like, computational analysis to, I guess, like analyze all the data and stuff? And also it kind of connects a little bit to, like, natural language processing with computer science, but I think it's less computer sciency and more on the linguistic side. **[noises of affirmation]**

Speaker 3: We actually have a course here called "Comp Ling"

Speaker 1: Yeah!

Speaker 3: And uh, it's a big rush **[Speaker 1 affirming]** but like, I took it once and it was, it was difficult, but if you're interested, it seems like a good step.

Speaker 4: So for my... my family actually like... when I told them about my major, they were kind of like...I feel they were kind of blindfolded, just because they didn't go to college. And every time I just, like, brought up that I was gonna be an English major, they always question it. They would always be like, "Why are you gonna be an English major when you already know English?" **[laughter]** You know? Even my aunt, like... I told her and she's always like "Why are you like, studying English? You already...Don't you know the language already?" or like "What do you even study there?" And I had like, kind of to explain to her. And for...and then they would always assume "Are you gonna be a professor? Are you gonna be a professor?" **[noises of affirmation] A**nd I'm like "You're totally attacking me with all these questions." **[laughter]** "I don"t even really know myself." So like, everything is

like...even my friends, like, they would always think I was gonna be a professor. I kind of thought about it, just because they always had these questions. And then I like, questioned myself and I would be like, "Are you gonna be a professor?" **[laughter].** So I'm like, "Oh I'm not quite sure." Maybe perhaps, but.... yeah, they were always just like, assuming stuff. But I feel like they didn't know, like, what it was. Just if I were to explain to them, like they would have had a **[quietly trails off]**

A: How do you explain it? I'm so... curious is like, how do you...when they say, "What are you doing?" or "what are you studying?", what do you say?

Speaker 4: Um, usually I just... Well, for my parents, I just tell them like, "Oh I read, I study, since..." like where I... I study like literary stuff...like, I read books, but I'm also learning about the 1600s, and like all of these other... But it's not only like the present--

Speaker 4: --so I'm learning about also...about like slavery... because English, if you think about it, English is connected to all subjects. Not only like, English itself, but it's also connected to slavery, criminal justice... So I tell them, like, it's connected to everything. So you kind of read a variety of books, but it helps you like, be kind of like more analytical?

Speaker 4: and it helps you develop your writing skills, also like critical thinking skills. So it's kind of a process.

Abigal: Mm-hmm. That's great.

J: Do you mind if I ask you a follow-up question? What do your parents say when you tell them...Like, when they think that you're gonna be a professor? Like, is there a positive or a negative connotation attached to that?

Speaker 4: Hmmm....

J: In the minds of your friends or your family?

Speaker 4: **[confusion]** Wait, sorry, I didn't--

J: No worries! **[laughs]**

Speaker 4: I'm kind of...

J: That was kind of confusing of me.

Participant 3: Yeah yeah.

J: I wanted to know, like...because you said that your family and your friends, like, ask you if you're gonna be a professor. Do they have any thoughts about that career choice for you?

Participant 3: Sorry, the career what?

J: The career choice for you? Do they, do they...When you say...When they think, "Oh, you're gonna be a professor" Did they like that? Or do they not like it? Or are they kind of neutral?

Speaker 4: Oh!, Well my parents...Yes. Because they think...well, they're...they didn't go to college, so they think "Oh, I'm gonna be a professor." So that's like, kind of proud for them **[noises of affirmation]** That helps them like, feel confident about their, their children...For my...my friends also, they do feel like "Oh, that's so cool" you know? Like, "you could edit my paper!" **[laughter]** And I'm like, "Yeah, I got you." **[more laughter]** I have helped them, but, um, I feel like it's a positive thing? **[noises of affirmation]** Just because, like, they feel like they're happy for me. But um...at some point I did wanna be a professor, but I'm still like, in the borderline of "wanting" and "not wanting". But... because I also wanna go like...I don't know, I wanna be like, something... I wanna c--...I actually writing essays, but I don't know where, like, where I could fit into that. Like, maybe like the newspaper or something. **[noises of affirmation]** but--

Speaker 3: We have the prof---

Speaker 4: **...**but I want to...huh?

Speaker 3: I don't mean interrupt, but we have the professional writing minor here, and like, that's *that* 30:17

Speaker 4: Yeah, I'm still debating on what I want to do, 'cause I'm still trying to like, see where I wanna go **[noises of affirmation]**

A: That's great.

AL: Just out of historical interest, about 1910 or thereabouts, the English major began. And it drew out of the an older a kind of major in the 19th century American system and elsewhere: Classics, Latin, Greek. So you ask yourself "why were so many people taking Latin and Greek back then?" That's because Classics training was perceived of as the general preparation training for anything important you wanna do in life. So if you wanna be a leader of your nation, of your business, of society, you

take that because it was this general philosophy of language and everything else. English, for some time, had that kind of early preparation kind of, you know, "ready for anything" kind of background to it. A little bit different from actuarial science in that regard, which isn't perceived of as, you know, general life preparation.

A: Mm-hmm. Yeah, I feel like this might Segway well into the next group of questions. So, we're really curious about what the word "humanities" means to you. So, when you hear the word "humanities" do you associate certain values with it? Do you actually use the word yourself? Is this a word that you hear your family using, your friends using? Do you use it when you're describing either your own major or other people's majors? And do you use other words, like "liberal arts", "the arts" or "literature"? No, you're shaking your head **[laughs]** Um, so...what words do you tend to use?

Speaker 4: "Humanities"

A: Really? Ok

Speaker 4: Just because like, I always hear, like "Oh what department are you In? In the humanities building. I'm a humanities major.

A: Okay, great, so it has... So for you "English" and "humanities" are the same th--

Participant 3: Mmm-hmm. mm-hm

A: Oh, tied together. Okay, great. Yeah, [Speaker 3]?

Speaker 3: Um. I...I don't know, I usually refer to the major. Or like, if I'm talking about humanities is in contrast to STEM **[noises of affirmation]** Um, and...well, I don't really use it otherwise **[unclear].** The only other term that I kind of like is "soft science" as opposed "hard science".

A: Ok

Speaker 3: And...like yeah, that's kind of the definition of "humanities'. It's like the study of people, which is a soft science because people are valuable **[laughter]**

Speaker 1: I, um...

A: What about you? Oh, sorry, what were you gonna say?

Speaker 1: Oh! I was just gonna say, I hear "social science" interchanged with "humanities" a lot--

Speaker 3: Yeah

Speaker 1: I don't know if that's like...different. Do you know if there's a difference?

Speaker 3: I feel like those are synonymous, but then also just one more word that I really don't like is "pseudo-science".

Speaker 1: Oh, not psuedo-science! **[laughs]**

Speaker 3: Like doesn't...didn't that happen in like, the government, recently, somebody accused some other politician of being a "pseudo-scientist" 'cause they had a poli-sci degree?**[laughter]**

A: That sounds plausible

AL: That's a reputation that the social sciences have been trying to live down since forever. But they're not like physics, right? They're not a hard science. So the relationship between social sciences and the humanities is very interesting. In the United Kingdom, for example, when they use the phrase "the Arts", which we don't really use over here, they sometimes mean both "the humanities" and "the social sciences" together. In this country, we tend to separate them out. Like, on our campus, we have a separate division for, you know, the humanities and fine arts on the one hand, and social sciences on the other. And then we have the sciences over there. So it's a little bit different in different parts of the world 34:02

Speaker 1: I would say, just from the perspective of a so-called "social science major", I think the distinction between social science and the humanities is that the social sciences--like Econ, Psych, PoliSci--would actually prefer to be referred to as "social sciences" than "humanities". Because, in a weird kind of way, I think PoliSci majors would rather be considering social scientists than humanities, because it's harder than the humanities but not as hard as the hard sciences.

Speaker 2: Personally, I group the social sciences and humanities together, but whenever I break it down, I'm like "*social* sciences". And those types are all the majors that have to do social sciences [?]. And that makes more sense. Um, and to this day, I still don't understand what "liberal arts" means. Because somebody says "I go to a Liberal Arts college", I don't understand what that means **[laughter].** Or like "I studied math at a liberal arts college"? I think of liberal arts as dancing, and then I'm like, "How do you study math at a dancing school?"

A: Okay, yeah **[more laughter]**

Speaker 1: I thought Liberal Arts was just, like, encompassing everything. It's like a little of everything. Like, the most "well-rounded" education someone could get. I...yeah, that's what I...**[trails off]**

AL: And so, historically, that is what it means.

Speaker 1: Okay!

AL: It's very distinct in the United States higher education system. So, in Europe for example, you don't apply to a school and then shop around and take different kinds of courses. You apply based on a major, so you apply for that major right from high school. So you end up in that major, you don't take any other kinds of courses. We in the liberal arts system, which means that you're expected to take different kinds of courses and become more well-rounded somewhere in that process, you choose a major and specialize.35:48 However, in recent times, because of the STEM "science versus humanities" division, we have STEM and then everything else gets blurred together. **[laughter]** So now "liberal arts" tends to mean "non-STEM", right? So it becomes increasingly synonymized with the Humanities and the social sciences.

A: I think the liberal arts question bring up a really good point, which is actually our next set of questions, which is "what is the purpose of a college--"

Speaker 3: [**interrupts**} I just have a quick question, sorry if I--

A: Yeah, please.

Speaker 3: Um, you said that there's a distinction between the hard sciences and the soft sciences... wait...the hard sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities? Those are like three separate fields?

AL: Normally the, um, STEM sciences are "over here", and the social sciences are "here", and the humanities--and arts--are "here". And then the artists are kind of strange. They're not exactly sure where they belong **[laughter, babble]**.

A: Do you all think of linguistics as straddling the Humanities and the social sciences?

Speaker 3: Definitely

Speaker 2: I think it's a hard social science

Speaker 3: Yes

Speaker 1: I always thought it was a...like, part of humanities. But, I went to the--what was it?--the NSF meeting? And they consider linguistics a social science, and it can really--

A: [Okay]

Speaker 1: --like**,** the graphics I'm like "oh, it's a social science!"

Speaker 2: I think of it as a social science, because linguistics... inherently, it's language, language is always social.

A: Okay

Speaker 3:   Yeah...it's human!

Speaker 2:   So, it would fall into social science. This is my opinion **[laughter].**

Speaker 3:   I'm a linguist, and I agree. **[more laughter}**

Speaker 2:   So like, social science, I think of whatever has to do with people, and then, um... technically which is a very loose definition that I'm presenting **[laughter]**...but then humanities is...I mean, I feel like humanities is anything that didn't fall into "STEM" or social sciences.

A: Okay **[laughter]** **37:42**

AL: There's one other distinction we haven't talked about, which is that--by comparison with the social sciences--the humanities have a much greater interest in the historical **[noises of affirmation],** and **you [speaking to unnamed participant]** you talked about that. So normally, your social scientists are interested in things that are happening now, right? People you can interview--

Speaker 3:   Yeah.

AL: --and so on.

Speaker 3:   Is history humanities?

Speaker 2: Yeah, that's exactly what I was thinking right now!

AL: Yeah. Well, history is a humanities discipline **[noises of affirmation]** Yeah, but so is an English Department if you think about what we do. We teach courses like in the renaissance, right?So, we teach the history of English Literature.

A: But sometimes history is in second place...

AL: Yeah...sometimes it is yeah.

A: Yeah.

J: **[garbled]** Is Communication one of the social sciences?

[All Participants: "I don't know." "Oh, that's hard!" "I don't know what Communication studies." "Everything!" [laughter]]

Speaker 1: I don't see why it is considered social science...

J: What about--?

Speaker 3: Right...

J: --sorry, I don't want to throw out these random majors, but media studies? What do you guys think of that?

Speaker 1:   What *is* media studies? **[laughter]**

Speaker 2:   Yeah, a lot of it I've heard, but I don't know what they do **[more laughter]** Um...

J: I'm just interested to know your thoughts--

Speaker 3:   Like--

J: --about what they do.

Speaker 3:   I think that for media studies...I mean, this is taken from your [AL's] course, but um...media studies would probably be a social science, because media is *usually* in an attempt at communication **[noises of affirmation]** Like, even it it's just an abstract, "communicate this out of me", not even *to* somebody, like, that's still...

Speaker 2:   Like, *film* and media studies?

Speaker 3:   Yeah. Film is one of the a branches of media. Some people study books.

Speaker 2:   I count it as a humanities. Well, I guess now that... I guess now I'm redefining social sciences as we're talking more about it **[laughter]**, because I think of "social science" as anything that is used to predict human behavior **[noises of affirmation. "oh, okay"]** I guess that's how I'm defining it, then. And I don't know if you could use film and media studies to predict human behavior.

A: So the "predict" is the key word.

Speaker 2:   I think so.

A: As opposed to...what?

Speaker 2:   What did I say before...?

A: In the humanities? Like, what does the humanities do, if it's not predictive?

Speaker 2:   Oh! So like, for example, humanities... if you take dancing, you're not predicting human behavior. But if you're taking Econ, you're like, "Oh, people are more likely to do this based on time, demand, and all"

A: Okay. How do you describe actuarial science?

Speaker 2:   I would put it into STEM, because it has to do with math.

A: Okay. That's really interesting.

J: Yeah!

Speaker 2:   But that...it could...but it also bridges social, social sciences. Because you also do take Econ... so actuarial science encompasses so...like, three or four different majors.

It's statistics, Math, Econ and...um... I just had it in my head and I completely forgot...oh my gosh...

J: Financial math?

Speaker 2: Oh, and computer science!

J: Computer science **[laughs]**

Speaker 2: And then you have, like, a little bit of writing in there too... um, but it's mostly those four. So, you know, if you'll...So I feel like it bridges a little bit because of Econ **[noises of affirmation].** Because actuarial science you're trying to predict a lot of...like, using statistics to predict a lot of like, what's gonna happen, "what's the chance of this happening?", but it's more "probabilities" than it is "this is how humans are going to act". Um...I guess that... I feel like, I feel like it bridges the two. **[noises of affirmation]**40:59

J: I'll ask a major-related question. I'm sorry, I'm **[unintelligible]**

A: No, no go ahead!

J: Do you consider, like, business? finance? to be... because you're working with people, but it's all very numbers-oriented. The bigger question I'm trying to get you guys to think about is whether or not you think, like, all of these very diverse majors can easily be categorized into these three large categories?

Speaker 2: Yeah. Yeah, I don't think so **[noises of affirmation]** um...

A: Or if they even *should* be, maybe. Like, should these categories exist at all?

Speaker 2:   But, business...um...

Speaker 3:   We don't have a business major, and I think [unintelligible]

Speaker 1:   **[incredulous]** We don't have a business major?

Speaker 3:   Yeah. I don't know if that's the right move [?] **[laughter]**

AL: We're a very weird university. No business school, no law school, no medical school. **[noises of agreement]**

Speaker 2:   Uh huh. You're right.

Speaker 3:   I just do research. A lot of it. **[laughter]**

Speaker 2:   Um, but business? Honestly I don't know what they, I don't know what they teach.

Speaker 3:   They take other people's money. **[laughter]**

Speaker 2:   So do actuaries. **[more laughter]**

A: Well, maybe just to close this discussion, we could briefly think about what's the purpose of a college education, and particularly: do you guys think that, for the first-generation student or in the first generation experience, do you think that college has a unique meeting for you, that it might not have for others? Or do you see it as more of a continuum or a constant that might be the case for everyone?

Speaker 3: I think that... as far as like the individual experience of college, it's very different if you were raised, from like a young age... Like, When I was in middle school, people were telling me that I was gonna go to college because they thought that like, like I could do it. But I didn't think at all...Like, I didn't take that seriously at all, because I knew the college was *expensive*. Like, I'm in a lot of debt right now, and that's something to be thankful for, which is a weird position to be in. Um, But for other people who have had it laid out for them a lot more clearly, like... more support to get them from like point A to the next point, until they get through all of college **[noises of affirmation]**. It's more of like that ...it's a, it's a little bit more concrete? Because it's something that you have... it's almost like somebody else has already laid out for you. So you just have to follow it. **[noises of agreement]** Whereas being a first generation student without that type of reinforcement, like... I gotta make up the whole story.

A: Mm-hmm. Yeah, do you find that to be a... What kind of a process do you find that to be?

Speaker 3: Continual.

A: Okay.

[J]: That's a good answer.

Speaker 3: [laughing] I'm still a third year.

J: Would anybody else wanna...?

Speaker 2:   Um...do I think college has a unique meaning? I just think it adds...prestige? For the person. Um...sort of like a... Just like a certification, I guess.

A: Mm-hmm. Is that unique, you think, to the First Generation experience?

Speaker 2:   Oh, to the First Generation experience...Um, for the, to the first-generation experience, being the first one to...yeah. The prestige at least. Because it's like you have... This is the first person to go and, you know, not work for..for their youth **[noises of affirmation]** And then they go...they have a more, or are expected to have a more white collar job. **[murmuring]**

Speaker 4:   I really [**unintelligible sentence**]. I mean like for myself. Like, I feel like... I agree with his...it adds like prestige. And it boosts up like your...kind of...not...like your level, but like your, um...

Speaker 3:   Social status?

Speaker 4:   Yeah, yeah, social status...Just because, like, your other cousins didn't go to college [**noises of affirmation**] So they see, like, you're the *first* one to go. In a way...in a way that also feels like from an motivation for them? Just because... I have like a younger cousin. And he's always like... I don't know, I don't know if he sees me as a competition or a role model, but I always see him, like "Oh, you're getting good grades." I'm gonna do that **[noises of affirmation]** So I see...like, it does create a, a unique meaning, just because like, I...from my experience, in that way.

A: Great, does that make you feel good?

Speaker 4:   Yeah. Yeah, if feels really good. Like, satisfied with my own person?

[A]:   Yeah

Speaker 4:   Also, like... it gives me strength and wanting to, like go for it, and keep, like, being determined, and just...keep, keep following my path **[noises of affirmation]** Because I, I feel like I'm capable of doing stuff, no matter what other people say, just because I'm...I come from a low-income...and it's kind of like, I would say kind of ghetto?

[A]:   Mm-hmm

Speaker 4:   So, I feel like that also, also like... I feel like I'm capable of doing it, even if I come from this community, which is low income **[noises of affirmation]** So...yeah.

A: That's great. 46:16

Speaker 3:   Um..kind of going off of that, too...like for me, I have my niece and nephew, who...like, I kinda helped raise them before I came to college. Um, and..we were at Walmart? And my niece was gonna buy a backpack and I bought it instead **[laughter]**. And like, in that kinda way I do try to like stand for them, and give them something to like, motivate themselves.

A: Yeah

Speaker 3: And that puts me in the weird position of not having that for myself. **[noises of affirmation]** And then, like... there's like a... I think tenacity is the word? That like comes out of that. And it, it...like that's one of the bigger drivers in like, not stopping. 'cause like if I didn't, then that's just, like a fallen uh....icon? For like, the people that look up to me.

A: Mm-hmm. Great.

Speaker 1: Yeah...I have two younger sisters, and, me being the first one to come to college, um...I always just felt like...I'm kind of bumbling around, I don't *really* know what I'm doing, but I'm doing my best. And um...I just hope to like, give whatever advice I get through these experiences. And like, give it back them, to them so they can, I guess, when it's their turn for college, they can do... have an easier time? **[noises of affirmation]** and focus less on like, stuff like... I don't know, I wanna say like, like applications and stuff? Like those things shouldn't be that hard, I think.

AL: The social responsibility is really important in a first generation discussion. **[noises of affirmation]** One's responsibility to one's younger generation. But also to one's parents. You often hear from from first generation immigrant children...who say things like "I feel responsible, because my folks worked so hard here" and they say, "We're working hard so you can go to college" right? it's your responsibility to...fulfill their, fulfill their ambitions **[noises of affirmation]** Here's a question: Do you think that there are things that UCSB could be doing better to support first generation students here? Ensure that they feel that they're able to get through, and you know, just basically have the help they need.

Speaker 1: I actually feel like UCSB is doing a pretty good job.

Speaker 1: I have friends at like, UCLA and they, they, they're also first-generation and they have a...a... I feel like they have a harder time than me. 'cause help is really hard to get there. Like, speaking to administrators or even like counseling and stuff like that

[noises of affirmation] I heard from someone else, um... they said UCLA is a place where if you're asking for help, you're in the wrong place **[laughs]**

Speaker 2:   Really? Wow...

Speaker 1:   Like, you're going to the wrong school **[laughter and incredulity]** So I feel like UCSB...I feel like, if you just look for help, you'll find it. 49:26

Speaker 2:   Yeah, I feel like coming in...like, before I even come to the school, I was getting emails from EOP, **[noises of affirmation]**, I was getting emails from..um, they even sent me this one, mes-- um, email--I don't even know if it was through EOP, or if it was actually through this org on campus. Yeah, it was this org on campus, they got their, um...EOP's mailing list, and then sent it out. It's called the SIRRC it actually means an annex [?] **[noises of recognition and affirmation]** And so...they're advertising their GSO program, which is for first-generation students, for them to do the orientation on campus. And that was amazing, as a first generation...like, before I'd even come to the campus that was the first thing that, you know was... this first generation community that I was able to build. and then I came here and then...so I already had a group of First generation friends, I had a first generation meeting I could go to every week **[noises of affirmation]** I had, um... they reached out EOP, all those EOP meetings, and then there's always... those are, I feel like primarily all the first generation things that I would constantly be... like...

AL: Do they help you, or assist you in in any way in thinking about what majors to take? In going through the whole process here, and deciding what you want to do?

Speaker 2:   Yep...I've noticed that they do a lot of, like... they have a lot of those events going on, **[particpant: "Yeah"]** Um, I don't go to them. But I know that they have them.

Speaker 1:   Yeah, I feel like that's good enough. Like, always knowing like..the *option* to seek help. It's very comforting, I think. Um, yeah... I feel like their... choosing a major, it's

a lot more personal, it's harder for like, a general EOP um, officer to [**unintelligible**] a way. I think it's something one comes up on their own.

Speaker 1: Maybe like undergraduate... oh what are they called? The...Samantha Little?

Speaker 3: Yeah, the undergraduate advisor.

Speaker 1: Yeah, the advisors **[laughs]**. they help out a lot. If anything. **[noises of affirmation]**

Speaker 4: For me, um...I do feel like UCSB is doing a great job. Just because, like, I know that there's ONDAS--

Speaker 2: Oh yeah, ONDAS, there you go...

Speaker 4: For like first gen, EOP, SIRRC too, um...what else? The Transfer Center **[noises of affirmation]** And I feel connected, and like not an outcast? **[noises of affirmation]** So those helped me. like, kinda feel like confident and a part of UCSB. So I think that...also, like he mentioned, they do send you emails, and like EOP, um, has given me like these resources just for financial as well. Like, if I wanna pay for my health fees, just because I don't have the health, health insurance here? **[noises of affirmation]** So I feel like there is good resources here. You just have to look for them. And then, um, you have to like seek for help. But there is a good help here, like the programs EOP. During the summer. I also did that. I was gonna do SIRRC too, but like I, I had something...conflict.**[noises of affirmation]** So I feel like they are there. But you need to like, search for it.

Speaker 2: Yeah

AL: What is SIRRC?

Speaker 2:   SIRRC? Um, it's called the "Student initiative for Retention and Recruitment Committee".

AL: Okay. Got it.

Speaker 2:   So they help with retention and recruitment of first generation students--

Speaker 1:   And we also have a book bank.

Speaker 2:   Oh, yeah

AL: What's a book bank?

Speaker 1:   Um, like, they have like books in there, like if you wanna use them for the quarter, you can rent them. But then return them back--

AL: Ah, okay. I didn't know that.

Speaker 2:   Yeah. it's like a library, in a way.

Speaker 1:   I never returned one, actually! **[laughs]**

J: It's um...like you can donate your books at the end of the quarter--

AL: Okay

J: **--**and they'll go to the bank, and then...it's different than like the library or the bookstore **[noises of affirmation]**, because you can just borrow them and return them

AL: Okay

Speaker 2:   Which is ridiculous, that...'Cause the book bank is is super news, it's like a year or two...a year old--

J: It's not well advertised...

Speaker 2:   Yeah, not well advertised, not well-funded... Like, it's literally just one room--

Speaker 3:   **[quietly]** this is the first I'm hearing about it.

Speaker 2:   Really? it's like one room, maybe half the size of--

Speaker 1:   It's like an annex

J: It's an annex. **[unintelligible]**

Speaker 2:   --it's half the size of this room. It's actually an annex, and then the office is like, half the size of this room.**[noises of agreement]**

AL: Are they, mainly like textbooks, or...?

Participants: "Yeah". "Yes". "Yeah, it's textbooks"

Speaker 2:   And so, it's like grossly underfunded. It's an amazing resource that I don't know why all campuses don't have, and I wanna guess maybe it's because of like, you know, money **[noises of affirmation]** Where like if the campus were to post something that big, book... people who sell books would be like, "Oh, we're like losing money"

Speaker 1:   For sure, for sure. **[noises of affirmation]**

Speaker 2:   But in general, amazing resource. I rented out I think two books, this quarter from them. But I think that we should definitely have them like...have, like, expand the book bank to like, have its own huge section. Maybe like even in the library or something like that, so people could just go get books that they need, and--

AL: And they should have a represented book from all the different disciplines, right, yeah.

Speaker 4:   Yeah, it's like student donations--

Speaker 2:   Yeah **[general agreement]**

Speaker 1:   I just wanted to mention...Yeah, that would like, kill, kill the textbooks sales, for sure! **[laughter and agreement]** But I do really like how the li-- the library has textbooks too. I feel like--

Speaker 2:   But it's course reserves.

Speaker 1:   --which I think it's totally fine. I mean, I don't know anybody who uses the textbook, like, every day--

Speaker 2:   All the time? Yeah, true.

Speaker 1:   Yeah. That makes sense for me.

Speaker 2:   But it's select books.

AL: Yeah, the problem is that textbooks have gotten outrageously expensive **[noises of agreement]**. I mean, just inhumanly expensive. 54:52

Speaker 2:   I feel like, unless the book is like *super* new, you're kind of able to find it if you try a little bit. Like I know there's a lot of websites that pirate it. Sorry, I don't know if I'm allowed to say this...**[laughter]**

J: It's okay!

Speaker 2:   But you know, you're able to like, pirate it...**[more laughter]** Um, online...and then so there's a bunch of websites for that. You have the book bank, and then you have the course reserves, and then you have taking pictures of your friends' book too. **[laughter]** Um, So, hopefully, textbook costs are something that we're all able to avoid at the end of the day. **[general agreement]** I know there's a program within um, LACCD colleges, that...that they have a fund to pay for textbooks. But I hope that, I hope that's not needed.

Speaker 1:   EOP does that, I think...

Speaker 2:   Really?

Speaker 1:   Yeah, if you need money to buy textbooks, um, they do cover it **[noises of affirmation]**

Speaker 2:   Which I wish they were just invest more in the book bank. 'cause the book bank even says that too: if you need a book, they'll order for you. But, um, yeah. I wish they would fund the book bank more **[noises of affirmation]**

A: I think maybe...so Speaker 3 can give the last comment.

Speaker 3:   Um. Yeah, I think it was... Like, I have a little bit of a story. I think it's kind of a double-edged sword? The way that like, first generation support goes? 'cause on the one hand you do have these specialized resources for the people that need it, but like the establishment of those resources, then creates like...like you had said you had a whole group of First-gen friends. But like, being first gen, makes you...like, that is a qualifier. Before you being a student **[noises of affirmation]** And like, that identifies you in a certain way. But like, just this past week, I went to El Centro, over there behind the library? And like, I applied for food stamps and it was super easy, and that's something that I specifically needed. **[noises of affirmation]** So...yeah.

A: So-

Speaker 3:   -it's just--

A: Sorry, go ahead.

Speaker 3:   It's like, it's like the interaction of... We all have an identity, and it's like a matter of...not even necessarily a combination, but just like, recognition that you're here.

A: mm-hmm. So do you think sometimes the first generation piece takes away from the student piece? Like, takes away from establishing commonalities amongst the entire student body?

Speaker 3:   Um...yeah. Because when you think of college, you don't take a first gen. You think of--well, at least for me--I think of like, people who came here with college-educated parents. And like, college-educated aunts and uncles. And...like it's a... it really is just a very different experience when you don't have, like, that. **[noises of affirmation]**

A: Great. Well, thank you all for your comments. I think this was a really powerful discussion. Do you agree? Yeah. Well, maybe we can move to part two. This is the presentation about our project. Um, so, have you guys heard the term "digital humanities" before? 57:49 No? So, there's some terms that you might hear in this family. So "computational literary studies" or "distant reading" are relative terms to the digital humanities. Um, and one way to think about it is this: So if we were going to ask a research question our immediate thought might be, Well, we'll go to the library and we'll read as many books as we can, 'til we can answer the question. But what if you wanna read this many books all in once **[gestures]**? So this is where digital humanities can help you. So a way think about digital humanties is that it's allowing us to ask traditional research questions, but at a larger scale, in a way

that's aided by computers and computational methods. So we can essentially expand our reading capacity beyond what one person could physically do.

Speaker 2: So, like, you ask a question then the computer comes up the answer?

A: Not quite **[laughter]** So there's still, there's still a huge amount of human interpretation that goes into understanding the answers that the computer generates for you.

Speaker 2: Oh! So like, sort of like, "do you believe this character was a good father or bad father?" Like those kind of questions?

A: Um..it might help to get to the examples and arguments we have **[laughter]** but yes, those are very, very good questions. I think maybe if we talk about our method of topic modeling that might help to answer. Um, but first just the goals of our project. So, the subtitle is "the humanities in public discourse", and by "public discourse" we're generally meaning newspapers and social media. So we have several interrelated goals. The first goal is to understand--through research--how the humanities are framed in public discourse, the news media, what narratives are being told about the humanities, and to whom do they belong? And then you'll notice that "public humanities" is also a term up at the top there? This really pertains to goals 2 and 3. So, we don't just want to stop after we've done the research, we want to activate it in a way that could be impactful to our community. So, goal number two is advocacy. We wanna use our research to inform the creation of resources that can promote humanistic knowledge and practice. And then goal three, which I think gets to a lot of the ideas that you all have been talking about, is inclusion--so, understanding how diverse and underrepresented groups engage with the humanities and how we might increase the accessibility of the humanities, and perhaps particularly the Digital Humanities to these groups. So, throughout the project, I think the first generation experience has been a real important site for us to think about this. That's something that's been...

AL: Yes, I'll tell, have told my project, you know. Humanities is, some people say, in crisis these days. By comparison, to STEM and so on. If think about the future, boy, what better proving ground than first generation students of one kind or another? Because that's where the, kind of, battle is gonna be fought, right? That's where the hardest kinds of discussions have to happen, where you have to convince like your parents and your friends that *this* set of majors is also worthwhile to do, among all the other majors that are possible. **[noises of affirmation]**

A: So, how we going about this? So so far, we're looking at a lot of newspapers...**[A explains the WE1S project: Keywords, outcomes and advocacy 1:01:18- 1:04:29]...**So, what is topic modeling? Do you [A] have time to do this, before you--?

AL: Yeah. I have to leave, unfortunately, after this.

A: Okay. Great. So this is our main method that [A] will explain.

AL: So you asked earlier about the nature of computational linguistics, and this is affiliated to the whole family of methods that use computers for things that are not computer science. Topic modeling is one of the methods of computational linguistics, text analysis, and machine learning, by which we're using computers ask questions that we really couldn't ask before. For example...**[AL explains topic modeling methodology 1:04:58 - 1:09:55]**

AL: So that's what we were doing. And I have to go, unfortunately! I'll take a few sandwiches though...

A: Yes, please do! Take as many as you want, take a lot...

AL: Yeah, thanks!

A: So we actually have an example here, of a live topic model that we can show you guys. So this one is made using the student college newspaper articles, from about the last 10 years. It's about 16,000 articles that we're modeling in this case. We're using the word "humanities" as a search term and we've chosen that we want 200 topics, so 200 of these buckets, as [AL] was describing.

Speaker 3:   Professor...?

J: [AL]

Speaker 3:   [AL]?

AL: Yeah, that's me **[laughter]**. Yeah, **[spells name]**. Yeah.

A: So this is an interface that we're using, it's one of several...

...**[continues explaining the Reddit/UWire model; including different example topics, top articles, etc 1:10:38 - 1:11:27**

AL: Sorry I have to go early! It's really nice to meet all of you **[various acknowledgements and goodbyes]** Thank you for your time and generosity, and sharing with us.

[Participants: Bye **[AL]** Thank you!]

Speaker 1:   **[to A and AL]** Do you teach in English?

A: Yes! Yes, We're in the English department. Yes! you should take the seminars-

AL: -but I started as a chemistry major! **[laughter]**

Speaker 2: I don't know if you are aware of this or not, but--I don't know if it would be a good thing to your research--but there's this game that you could look into, um, online where it starts... it gives you, it gives you like a starting Wikipedia article, and it'll be something no-**[noises of recognition. "Oh, yeah!'].** Yeah, and then it'll just say, like, starting Wikipedia article, "Cleopatra". And then it's like, get to...like, keep on going through until you get to like, the second game console or something.

A: I like it! Oh, gosh! And it has to link the articles that--?

Speaker 2: Yes. So then each--

A: **--**link you to each one? Oh my gosh.

Speaker 2: --one, you know, from "Cleopatra" you go to each of them, from Egypt you go to like 'Gaming' or something, you know, like that.

A: Yeah, yeah. Wow, okay. Great.

Speaker 2: I don't know if it would help you, but...

A:　　　　　Yeah. **[to J]** we should look into that!

J:　　　　　We should! We should play it during What Every1 Says--

A:　　　　　We should play! Yes, that sounds good.

J:　　　　　'cause it's like a race, whoever can get there the fastest...

Speaker 3:　　Is there like a place to get prompts?

J:　　　　　What?

Speaker 2:　　No, it's like a game...

Speaker 1: .　　It's a little group that gets one prompt.

Speaker 3:　　Yeah, but like how do you...how are you given your goal of what you're trying to, the topic you're trying to get to?

Speaker 2:　　oh

J:　　　　　It's just random.

Speaker 2:   Yeah, it's just random.

J: Like, I could say anything...

Speaker 3:   But like where...what's the source...like what do you, it's online, right?

Speaker 1:   You just make it up.

[various explanations about how the game works]

J: ...and like the theory behind is that Wikipedia is so interconnected, and all the ways that you go anywhere. **[noises of affirmation]**

A: Right, cool. Yeah. So I think one key takeaway here is that we're not using the computer to exclude reading. We're using the algorithms to kind of guide us to reading that we might do. So if we find a topic that we're really interested in, then we might go through these articles and read them in depth, and see if we can understand more fully what they're telling us. And one feature that's interesting is that we can do this by key words...

[After the brief interruption, A continues to explain the Reddit/UWire topic model, keywords, top articles, etc 1:13:48 - 1:14:29]

...So, this was meant to give a kind of overview of our methods and our thought process And now what we wanted to do is to get your input on some of the things that we're doing, so everybody got this handout **[various shuffling]** The goal here is to see, um, to look at these articles and materials, and to see how closely or not they resonate with your experience. So you are the expert in your experience, and so, there's no right or wrong answer certainly...So the first thing is an article from the Dartmouth student newspaper... 1:15:13

[explanations/directions about worksheet, emphasis on students' personal experience, small clarifications, students quietly working, etc]

J: 1:25:28 If you guys aren't done, don't worry about it. In the interests of your time...So, um, do you guys have any thoughts about the first piece you read? The article from Dartmouth?

Speaker 1: I actually resonated a lot with it, 'cause um...because I feel like, linguistics? I've thought about it and I've done a lot of research and, um...like the career I want to go into, they hire from people with computer science backgrounds. And that like, really got me into thinking like, "maybe I should add a more technical, um, skills set while I'm here in college". So, I thought a lot about double majoring in like Stats or something. Or like minoring, at least **[laughter].** And um, I just thought a lot about stuff like this. Yeah.

A: Yeah. Are there other comments?

Speaker 4: So, I mean, I did also resonate with one of the statements it said here. "There's a lot of pressure me to major in what was perceived as high-end or marketable majors". Which at the beginning I was very strongly led [?]. So I thought like, maybe they would hire more STEM majors instead of like English majors? But then I said, like, "No I wanna develop my own writing skills for my own" **[noises of affirmation]** You know, like, I don't know, like get...like, just because they're gonna hire me for anything...they're eventually gonna hire me, but like, they're just wanting marketable majors like Econ and all that. But like, it doesn't matter what, what major it is. So, um...I also resonated with one of the themes...for like...no, no, I didn't resonate with one of the statements. He says, like "A double major makes students look more academically serious". I don't like... Like, if I were to double major--'cause I'm not a double major--so I think it wouldn't make me look academically serious, just because I feel like eventually you're gonna get the degree, but they're gonna hire you no matter what. Um, no matter what, what major you are. 1:27:58

A: mm-hmm. Great, okay. Great, are other...?

Speaker 3: Um...I liked the quote here that says uh...it was by Emily Hoffman. She says, "I never had this long-term plan that these majors would get me this career. It was more about getting a well-rounded education, and being able to explore as much as possible while at college". I'm actually... Well I've already decided this, but I'm gonna take up Philosophy as a double major

A: Oh, great!

Speaker 3: For the purpose of taking a fifth year..

A: That's awesome

Speaker 3: And that's very much like this, except uh...like she's switching between problem sets and essays, and I would just be switching between different essays **[laughter] 1:28:39**

A: Great

J: There's a specific line on this...**[indicating Speaker 2]** do you have anything to add?

Speaker 2: Go ahead!

J: There's a specific quote, for the section of the article that i want to point you to. It's on the back page **[shuffling]** It says, "When choosing a major, students should participate in the ongoing conversation between peers, deans, professors, and employers to dispel myths." Do you guys feel like, at this school--And then, further down, it says, um "she worked with career services to create a majors to careers directory, that includes majors..." Do you feel like, at UCSB, you have the benefit of

working with this kind of hands-on experience? With deans and professors and academic advisors?

Speaker 2:   Depends. I mean--

J: Can you clarify?

Speaker 3:   I feel like for me, at least my first two years, I didn't really feel like it 'cause it was just like, "wow, these are these academics that know so much!" But, um...like towards the end of this past summer, or towards the end of fall, I actually got in contact with one of the people in the Linguistics department, and I, uh...**[name],** I don't know if you...? **[murmurs of non/recognition]** um, but anyways, I was taken on as like a volunteer transcriber. And that's like, literally a first step towards research. So, it's a lot more accessible that it might seem **[noises of affirmation]**

Speaker 1:   I had a similar experience. I'm doing it with Kennedy, actually...

Speaker 3:   I loved him... **[laughter]**

Speaker 1:   I feel like the administration and like, the faculty here, they're just gonna support you in what you want to do. They're not gonna...I feel like they might be a little bit afraid of pushing you in the wrong direction. I feel like none of them really try to *convince* you to do anything, but if you know you wanna do something, they'll help you, that kind of idea. **[noises of affirmation]**

J: So do you feel like the faculty advisors are easily accessible to you? **[several:** Yeah, yeah] Okay....does anyone have any other thoughts on the article, or do you want to move on to the...?

Speaker 2:   I think that it was really interesting, um how she was talking about that directory she made. Because I [unintelligible]. But during...so part of this org that I'm , that I'm part of, for alumni weekend we put on this, this event. It was called like--what was I--"First Gen Alumni Mixer". **[noises of affirmation]** And it was basically to show that what you major in does not determine where you're gonna end up. And so we brought up first generation...we brought the people who were first generation, and we, you know we, that's kind of what we did. That was the whole purpose of it.

A: Did you find it convincing?

Speaker 2:   I did. I don't know if other people did **[laughter]** We didn't take surveys, sadly.

A: No, that's great! Yeah, this is kind of what you were saying, right? that your major doesn't determine everything about your future.

Speaker 4:   Yeah...

A: Yeah. Where do you feel like that idea comes from? like, is that something that you've heard other people say? that your major won't determine what you're gonna do?

Speaker 4:   I feel like it...it just doesn't determine you, just because like, everybody thinks differently? **[noises of affirmation]** So like, everybody works differently. And just because...for example, like, we were both English majors **[J agrees]**. She would think differently, her interpretations and analyses would be different, and so are mine.

A: Right

Participant 3: So I feel like we're different **[noises of affirmation]** And we're not, like, we're not the same to like...we're just like different. And English is kind of like, what's it called...? There's different interpretations when it comes to like the readings and stuff. So that's why I feel like we wouldn't be defined by the major itself.

A: Mm-hmm. Great, great.

J: Yeah, that's an awesome perspective. Do you guys want to move on to the second part? **[shuffling]** 1:32:47

Speaker 3: I just have a comment really fast--

A: Yeah of course

Speaker 3: **--**cause that gave me a good thought. But it's more like, um...like a major doesn't define you, and like, you don't define the major **[noises of affirmation]** but it's like, your perspective on the major that defines your path.

A: Your perspective on the major?

Speaker 3: Yeah, 'cause they said like people with completely unrelated majors ended up doing certain careers that like...it doesn't map, like right off the bat. But that's just their life. and that makes sense. **[noises of affirmation]**

Speaker 4: That's true. Just because, my sisters a-- she studied psychology, I believe? And now like, she works at a law firm. So I'm like, that's kind of interesting, you know? How it was she chose the path **[noises of affirmation]**

Speaker 3:   Yeah!

A: Yeah, do you guys see a lot of examples of that? **[general agreement]**

Speaker 2:   My cousin majored in sociology, but now she's in accounting **[laughter]**

A: I was just wondering, for time, if maybe we should just ask the last question.

J: Oh yeah

A: So, the most important thing is number seven. If you'd like to enter the raffle to win one of three gift cards **[laughter]** Write down your email...

Speaker 3:   To where?

J: We haven't bought them...

A: Oh the gift cards? I think they'd be to Amazon. **[general acknowledgement and clarification, suggestions about communally redistributing the wealth, etc]**

A: 1:35:35Well maybe just as a final question: So we mentioned advocacy as a goal. So one of the things we're trying to figure out is how we might create resources that might help students to navigate their relationship to the humanities. Maybe before college, during college, or after college. And the humanities, not necessarily just as a major, but also as part of one's life, apart from what you're majoring in. Are there resources that you feel would be helpful to you in achieving that? or perhaps researches that you already use, that you have found effective?

Speaker 4: For our major?

A: For the humanities in general. Yeah, but I mean English would be a good example as well. Yeah.

Speaker 4: Oh,for my major it's just like the Writing Center.

A: The Writing Center?

Speaker 4: Yeah, the CLAS? I always go, since community college. Sometimes I would go from scratch. In community college I would go from scratch. At first I was kind of embarrassed and shy, cause like... I just started building my confidence just going day after day. But like, CLAS, does play a big part in what I what I [**mumbling, trails off]**

A: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Great, okay

J: **[Speaker 1]**, were you gonna say something?

Speaker 1: Oh yeah. I was just gonna say, I feel like the main concern for a lot of people not wanting to do humanities is like, the career opportunities? **[noises of affirmation]** I mean, just having like a clear, um, idea of what all the possible careers that humanities majors would be-- would excel at, I guess? Would be a really helpful thing to convince people to do what they want.

A: Yeah, what form do you think could be most effective for that? Like, a series of interviews of people sharing their experiences? Or...statistics?

Speaker 1:   Honestly, just like a list **[laughs]**

A: A list? okay.

Speaker 1:   Yeah, statistics are always nice! **[laughs]**

Speaker 2:   A list of links for jobs to apply to. **[General agreement: "Yeah!']**

J: Okay, that's a really good idea. That's a really good idea.

Speaker 2:   Um, But also on the flip side of like, all--like the whole, "your major doesn't dictate where you go", I know a lot of graduating seniors that majored in humanities that are really panicking right now, that are like "Oh, I'm only--like, this job only pays like, like 20,000, and I have like to work this many, plus this many doesn't get accounted 'cause this is like volunteer, which I have to do for this position. **[noises of affirmation]** You know? So they are panicking about that. And it's like, "Oh, I also have to get my own place 'cause it's in like, New York", and Like "I have to do this", you know what I mean? **[noises of affirmation]** So I think the list would definitely help.

A: Okay

J: I have a question. Um, how would you feel about humanities majors with more technical experience? like coding, or experience with stats, quantitative analysis?

Speaker 2:   So like, if you majored in English with like, a minor in Computer Science? Or something like that?

J: Yeah, and like, in general we've heard a couple different suggestions thrown around for how to incorporate...'cause like, another concern, brought up in a different focus group, was the reason why humanities majors might feel unprepared for the changing workplace is because they don't have technical skills--

Speaker 2:   oh

J: --like that. But then someone--do you know [Person]? **[Participant:** Yeah] [Person] was like, "Oh make stats a general education requirement.

Speaker 1:   Yeah...

J: So like, just... we're trying to think of different ways to incorporate the technical skills into ...

Speaker 3:   I think that that comps ought to be a lot better GE [?] **[noises of affirmation and agreement]**

A: Computer science?

Speaker 1:   It's not offered as a minor here, which is really weird to me--

Speaker 2:   Yeah, it's not. **[garbled]** -comp sci minor.

Speaker 3:   I mean--

Speaker 2:   Econ is also not offered as a minor--

[Speaker 1: Yeah!]

Speaker 2:   -which, I'm like, "why?" It would have been an amazing minor, **[general agreement and laughter]** because I really wanna minor in it but I don't have time to double major in it, so it's like I'm in this sort of limbo.

Speaker 1:   I think that--1:39:18

Speaker 3:   That helps all the college students know how to work their money **[laughs]**

Speaker 1:   Yeah, yeah for sure! I think it goes back to the idea where "Classics" were once [?]. Like, it encompasses everything. But like, now, the humanities doesn't encompass everything. Being able to encompass more of what, like, this present day, and even like the future would be like, would be really helpful for the major.

A: Yeah, what do you think it needs to be that? Like, what's missing from the "everything"? **[laughs]** Like, what is it not encompassing?

Speaker 1:   I...I feel like, like technical skills, for sure. I think a lot of, um... Yeah, one of my cousins works in, um...or, they majored in, like, business. But they learned like, coding and web design on their own **[noises of affirmation]** and that really helped them find a job. And they use their humanities for like, coming up with like...it's like their... what is that called, when you come up with like, ideas?

Speaker 2: Invention?

Speaker 1: No, no, no, no. Like "innovations"--

Speaker 2: Oh, innovation

Speaker 1: --like "entrepreneurship" kind of stuff?

Speaker 2: OK

Speaker 1: Yeah. And it all comes together and I think it's really nice.

A: Great, okay

Speaker 3: Yeah, as far as like, the separation between, um, like technical skills and like the humanities, I think [AL] puts it a really, really good way. He talked about like, the separation...He used two words, "poeisis" and "techne". And, um, like "poeisis" has to do with...like matters of creation, like the liberal arts. And then "techne" has to do with like, the hard, the hard science. I think that one of the bigger things holding in people back...like, it was for me... is it's a lot easier to think about like the really, really broad topics humanities puts in front of you than it is to try to act on them. Be--like, by nature of them being so broad. Like, it's a lot of food for thought, it's a lot to try to work through 'cause we only have, like, a physical body.

A: Yeah. So would a solution be to provide more avenues for application?

Speaker 3: Um...Yeah. I mean, I think-- I like that the Comp Sci minor idea, or like the idea of like, putting... Yeah, putting technical skills in front of humanities majors.

A: Mmm-hmm Great.

Speaker 2: Minors are great for that **[general agreement]**

J: Like, we have the professional writing minor. It would be great to see a STEM equivalent. **[general agreement]**

Speaker 2: Um, is there--would Iranian studies and translation studies fall--like what would that fall under?

Speaker 3: That's humanities

Speaker 2: Oh.

A: I would say humanities

Speaker 2: Okay, then I also have many humanities minors **[laughter]**

J: It's 6:38, we should--

A: Okay, we should let you guys go, but thank you so much **[both thanking participants, inviting them to take sandwiches, shuffling]**1:41:58