UCSB WE1S Focus Group 1
Undergraduate Group
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00:48 **Presenter A:** Welcome everybody, thank you so much for coming. We're thrilled to have you. I'll start the presentation. Thank you for participating in the survey, for indicating interest, um, we're really thrilled to hear your perspectives today. So, just to give some context, the WhatEvery1Says Project is a Digital Humanities project - we'll be talking a little bit more about what that means - um, and our main goal is to figure out how people talk about and think about and feel about the humanities. And the main way that we're doing that so far is by looking at printed materials like newspaper articles and social media. Um, but the reason why we are incorporating human subjects research into our protocol is because we really want to understand if the perspectives that we're seeing in print are matching up with perspectives that people have in our own community. So, that's what we need you for and we're really pleased that you're here to help us. We couldn't do it without you. Um, so the very first thing that we should do is to point out that each person has an informed consent handout, and this gives some context about the project and about what we're going to be doing with the materials that we're gathering through our human subjects research....**[skipping overview/icebreakers]...**08:21 We have more questions than we will get through, kind of on purpose. Um...not kind of on purpose, ON purpose. And so, the idea is that we will talk through as many of them as are interesting to you, and if we don't get to everything that's fine. It's meant to be a kind of guide.

Presenter C: Yeah, so. We don't need to necessarily--and, as **[Presenter A]** said earlier, you have seen some of these questions already **[noises of affirmation]** You don't need to necessarily cover every single one. They're just kind of like, talking points, um, but

what we really want to know is your opinion, so if you feel strongly about something in particular, feel free to talk about that. So first we'd just kind of like to open with this top question here. How did you choose your major?

Speaker 1: Do you want us just to like chat ….

Presenter C: Yeah, when we were kind of talking about this activity, we were envisioning that it would be like a conversation between you three, so don't feel the need to turn to us to look for cues. Just go ahead and talk amongst yourselves.

Speaker 2: Cool.

Speaker 3: Um, well I picked my major because I started out as psychology, um, which I still want to do, like with my life, but it's a Bachelors of Science and you have to take a lot of Bio classes. And I'm not at all a detail-oriented person. So, um, that did not work out. I got all the way to like the last two Bio classes and after that, I tapped out. Um, and I love Political Science, and like, understanding the world around me, so I figured that would be good.

Speaker 1: I came in knowing I wanted to study economics. It had just been what I liked in high school. My Dad's an Economist so that probably influenced it in some respect, but I don't want to be an economist like him, I just, I never did, I just wanted to study economics. And I wanted to double in History and I took a few History courses, and they were really interesting, well-taught, um, but I was spending a lot of time reading like for class, and I was like well I can do the reading outside of class and just not go to class and write these essays, 'cause what I was, you know, what I liked about writing History essays was the writing much more than the like looking through obscure historical texts for the best supporting evidence. Personal preference. Um, and so I decided that I'd get a Writing Minor, and, and I got a Writing Minor. But partway through Economics I took Econometrics -- I won't describe what Econometrics are, for people who don't know, but, essentially the statistics of Economics -- and realized that all of the economic theories I was being taught, which were interesting to me, were only applied in the real world, through statistics. And so I thought I'd get a Statistics

minor. And then it was so frustrating to sign up for Statistics classes as a non-major that I declared a major, thinking that I'd bail before I graduated and just walk with the minor, once I'd taken the classes, and then I realized that I could get the major without having to stay any longer, and I liked the Statistics courses, and so I stuck around and did that. And it's the end of my fourth year and I'll be out of here at the end of this quarter so it's kind of worked out well.

Speaker AL:	Are we allowed to ask follow-up questions, or...? [...] Just out of curiosity, ah, how do you balance in your mind your love for history on the one hand and statistics on the other? Those don't seem naturally to go together.

Speaker 1:	I read a lot of history and follow the news very closely. I was involved with *The Bottom Line* **[student newspaper]** with **[speaker J]** and, and, like care deeply about about those topics, but in an academic setting, it just wasn't for me...

[**Speaker:** Also congrats!]

Speaker 1:	...And Statistics, Thank you, Statistics turned out to be like the more I learn, the more I'm like "this is probably the most powerful tool developed in the past like fifty years." It's been like, they've gotten really good and in like twenty years with computers it's gotten really powerful, and so it's pretty fun!

Speaker AL:	I've got to tell you, one of my great regrets after forty years in this profession is not enough statistical knowledge, now that it's coming into play in the kind of work that we're doing in the humanities.

Speaker 1:	**[interrupting]** That's what I...yeah, It feels like I like humanities and social sciences like all of the best questions -- not that, ok that's not fair -- *many* great questions in pretty much all fields involve statistics, and it's the same statistics between any field.

Presenter A: Did you want to share...?

Speaker 2:   Um, I came in undeclared actually, I remember I applied to UCSB as a CS major, as a Comp Sci major, um, 'cause my high school was very like STEM-oriented, and I actually got in undeclared **[ ]** I was really lucky, actually, um but then I took a couple Linguistics classes my first year, last year, and I thought it was really cool. I always liked learning languages. I grew up bilingual, I speak Portuguese at home, so I was really interested in learning about languages in general. Um, and then global studies...yeah?

Speaker 1:   I...I was just gonna say, one of my biggest regrets in college is not having spent time learning language, so that's good you at least got that opportunity!

Speaker 2:   That's kind of how I feel about Stats, cause I've never taken Stats class. Never in my life, not even in high school.

Speaker 1:   It should be a GE requirement. Sorry...that's not part of the conversation until later!

Speaker 2:   And then Global Studies, I took um... I kinda added it on just 'cause it seemed more, like marketable. And it like overlaps pretty well with the Linguistics major, so I was like "ok I'll take this".

Presenter C: Are you thinking about doing any of the like, um, emphases in the Linguistics major?

Speaker 2:   Yeah, actually I'm doing the speech and technology, yeah speech technologies minor, um, emphasis.

Presenter C: Oh cool.

Presenter AL: So as an undergraduate, when you say that Linguistics is "cool,", quote-unquote, what's that adjective mean? **[laughter]**

Speaker 2: Um, I guess it means, uh... I'm interested in how people like, express themselves in other languages. Um, how, like...the phrases you use, like the words you use, like, they're different in other languages but they all kind of mean the same thing. Like you can express yourself equally well in one language versus another. Um, so that was like the starting off point. 15:10

Presenter AL: So "cool" means intellectual interest...?

Speaker 1: I think for undergraduates in college... In high school it's different, maybe, but college definitely like... "cool" is something you're passionate about that makes you connect with the world more. And like, that's almost universally agreed upon, I think **[laughs]**

AL: So "cool" doesn't, for example, mean...it's something that makes you look cool to other people, or peers and so on...

Speaker 1: **[interrupting]** I mean if you can drink a lot of beer, that's -- I mean probably cool too **[laughter]** but like, not the same way. And I think people would...that would be more controversially cool than being passionate about something.**[noises of affirmation]**

C: So it doesn't...this working definition of "cool" doesn't really take prestige into account, would you say?

Speaker 2: No...It's like interchangeable with "interesting" to me.

Speaker 3: Yeah. Or like... prestigious to you, like very very...

Speaker 1: **[interrupting]** I think it stops being...it's not like prestige in the eyes of your peers, it's like...it's just you're excited about what you're doing.16:14

C: Would you say that "prestige" had any influence on how you chose your major?

Speaker 3: I think that's just a matter of individual values. If you value prestige, then it will. Like I do a little bit, so Poli Sci was definitely...like for me a better choice than Sociology. 'Cause I feel like Poli Sci is more prestigious, and you can do more prestigious things with it, but I don't think that's necessarily the most common view point, so definitely an individual thing.

Speaker 1: I mean...I wanted to graduate a quarter early and just walk away with a Writing Minor, a Stats Minor, and Econ degree. That seemed like enough. And then upon realizing that I could get the BA... I like Stats a lot, but I don't think it mattered - I could be studying the greatest thing on earth, I'm just tired of school. **[laughter]** I've taken a lot of classes, I've been here for like, you know - I've got Senioritis. It took this long to hit me, but it hit really really hard **[laughs]**, and that's prestige -- I know that that BA, on top of the Economics BA is like...will look very good for almost anything I want to do.

AL: Seems like a little bit of a um, an unpredictable conversation in this regard. You know lots of people talk about today's generation of students as those who are concerned about getting a career first of all, and their parents are, and they talk about prestige of different majors and so on, but the first thing you all wanted to talk about was this kind of intellectual passion.

Speaker 1: I think a lot of people feel the way you just described. We're just three other people who feel differently.

AL: Yeah...? My next question is do you think you're atypical? Or, I guess you are atypical 'cause you're here, with us, right? **[laughter]** So..

Speaker 3:   I think the fact that we're here shows that we have probably a decent amount of intellectual passion, 'cause we're gonna sit and talk about the humanities for an hour and a half so you have to be passionate about it. **[laughter] U**m...but like for people who aren't as passionate about it and are just more money-oriented, then like...yeah, they would do what you're talking about

C: So would you say that they...choosing a humanities major would be indicative that you're *not* money oriented?

Speaker 3:   Depends on the major for sure. Um, like, English majors -- which is like, you guys -- but like if you're *just* an English major and that's all you're doing, like you have to be *passionate* about it. You know? **[laughter]**

A: This is too real for me...

Speaker 3:   **[more laughter]**: Like it's true! And like, that's awesome, like so cool, and English is amazing. Like I'm taking my first English class right now and I'm realizing that I'm just getting credit for just reading. Like that's amazing! I love reading! That's incredible! And you could do all four years of that. Um, what was the question? **[laughter]** 19:17

C: Um, whether or not, like, choosing a humanities major is indicative of not being money oriented. So, um...

Speaker 3:   Um, probably a little bit. Or like, uh, like if you're money oriented, you'll go into Engineering. Or you'll do Law, or Medicine, or something, you know? But that being said, you can still do a humanities major and go to Law School or Med School. Yeah.

AL: Um, one of the other questions here is uh... a variant of that would be this; do you talk to your parents and friends about majors the same way you're talking to us about it here? Or do you have any reflections on the way you talk to your peers or your parents about majors? For example, did any of you have to convince your parents that you're...you know what you're doing and this is a good idea? 20:12

Speaker 3: My parents don't really care. Um, which is kind of funny 'cause they're the ones paying for it, but like um, they just want me to do whatever it takes to just be out in four years. Um, but like with my peers, it's different. Like, one of my friends is pre-Med and whenever we talk, about any classes, she'll always bring it back to being pre-Med and, like low-key, she makes me feel kind of crappy about it. And there are certain people like that, and you then don't want to talk about your major with them 'cause then they're like, "oh". You can just tell they're thinking in their heads, like "well you're not pre-Med, so... you're just a humanities major." Like there's real passion that goes into that.

Speaker 1: A lot of those pre-Med people have their parents telling them like, "be a Doctor, be a Doctor."

Speaker 3: Yeah, she's like that.

AL: I was supposed to be a chemistry major. And I really steeled myself up, prepared myself, rehearsed myself, to tell my engineer dad and my mom. Being Asian immigrants and so on, that this wasn't what I wanted to do. So that was a tough conversation. But it worked out pretty well **[noises of affirmation]**

J: My parents still don't like fully support my decision. 'Cause my mom is a doctor and my dad's an engineer so it's like, it's like, there's a lot of like STEM influence in my household, so yeah, um...

AL: [to Speaker 2] And what about you? Do you have thoughts about the parent situation, or about your peers...?

Speaker 2:   Well I think my parents, um, are pretty supportive, um, of what I chose. They're definitely like [incredulous imitation] "Linguistics?" [laughter] But they're like "ok if that's what you're interested in, go ahead and study it." Um...I have older siblings too, and especially my older sister, she - when I told her, she was like "what are gonna do, like when you get out of college?" Um, I think she kinda like... instilled this fear of job insecurity into me, a little bit. Which is why I decided to emphasize in the language of [?] language technologies major, instead of like "Language, Culture, and Society", which is also really interesting to me, but...yeah she kinda made me think about being like more prudent, I guess? Sorta thinking ahead like "what am I gonna do when I get out of college?" What's gonna be, like, something consistent er something that I'll be able to--like career-wise--be in.

AL: So what kind of answer do you give to the question 'what are you gonna do'? [laughter]

Speaker 2:   I don't know! I don't know myself. I'm just like "oh, well... language is everywhere? So, it's like, you can apply it to a lot of different things" but I myself don't really have an answer to that yet. I don't know what I want to do with this degree. I just know that I like it [noises of affirmation]

AL: Just a reflection from someone who's older here. You know, there are only a few majors that lead from point A to point B directly. Pre-Med is one of them. Almost all other professions zig-zag all over the place to get to where you want to go. Think of all the creative industries, for example, where you start out getting someone's coffee as your job and kind of learning the trade, and everything else -- there are a lot of careers like like that, that don't have a point A to B trajectory. It's just hard to tell your parents though, what the next point is there, on the way! [laughter]

J: Do you know about possible career paths for Linguistics?

Speaker 2:   Mmmm, I mean with this one, with this emphasis, right now it's like looking at natural language processing, and like AI and stuff like that. Um, I'm taking a class about like corpus linguistics right now, which is like analyzing huge bodies of linguistic data. Basically kind of like stats? Sort of. Um, so stuff like that. But, I don't know, maybe **[Speaker C]** could tell us? **[laughter]**24:09

C: Um, yeah, so "speech technology" can mean a lot of different things. So, it can um, it can be related to the types of stuff that we're gonna talk with you all about in a bit, talking normally...It can also be like the technology behind, like, Siri, or Google searches, um... or you could even go into like audiology, which is like the creation of hearing aids and like diagnostic tests for hearing and stuff like that. So there's a lot of different avenues, um, for speech technology. **[shuffling]**

AL: And we used to have in town Panasonic Speech Recognition labs. They left about ten or fifteen years ago, something like that. And they used to have a branch here. I took a field trip of students over there, and they were full of engineers on the one hand and linguistics and social scientist people on the other. It was really interesting.25:06

C: Okay, so maybe we should move on to the next grouping of questions. So the theme-- or like through-line rather of all these questions, is, like what does the word "humanities"...

Speaker 1:   **[interrupting]** Wait...Can I actually add something from the last grouping that I think people should consider?

Participants: [Yeah sure!]

What you were saying about like almost all the majors having like nonlinear paths, like you graduate and you figure out what you want to do, that's that's definitely true, that's like Engineering and Pre-Med people kind of have that, right, and no one else. But there are levels, I think definitely. And that's even within the humanities. Like Linguistics, realistically, like knowing a bunch of languages? That'll help you a lot everywhere, like in a global world, like, that's going to be useful. The saying goes, of like Political Science and

understanding of relations, but you know...I don't wanna harp on English or Sociology or something, but it is realistic to say that even though you can learn very like powerful critical thinking skills in those degrees...like, you know like people often go on successfully into Law or, you know other organizational tasks - you have people in business - you *do* need to learn other skills that have to do with, you know, like have a certain amount of either like Law or Accounting or some kind of numbers or something... It's a very select number of people who take English and, using directly what they learned in English, like end up being professors or studying... There are skills, but it's like, even Economics--which is super overhyped, let's just be... have that on the record, but the major Economics doesn't teach you very much, practically, more than any other major. And it certainly... has like... you know a lot of people who are just in it for the money, like they wanna be in business. But realistically, you do get, you know, a smattering of statistics, calculus, and some, like, critical thinking because there is like actual literature in Economics, that requires more reading than other sciency disciplines. It's 'cause Economics isn't really sciency... But but it's worth saying that like... you know, yeah, it's not all linear, but from Economics, people tend to go to like consulting jobs and, and positions where like you know from the start, even if it's not what they end up doing, like they're financially stable, and even if they might hate their jobs and their lives, that's a choice they can make... And I think with people who are pursuing other degrees like, you have to augment it with something, pretty much no matter what. Like with English: Journalism, or or like really great research of your own, or other internships in other industries, like that's...at least having looked at employment data, coming out of just UCSB. Like, this is the case. They're huge differences in mean and the median salaries among the majors, and that's both within like, right out of graduation, 10 years out of graduation, like lifetime afterwards... It's a real real real big difference in the means. That's just like, Yeah, there are exceptions....28:20

AL: It is true that English majors--the higher proportion of them go on to graduate school, tend to be professors, and so on. One way to hear what you're saying is that it would help if English majors also had some special kind of domain knowledge, ah, about something that is useful to others.

Speaker 1: [yeah]

AL: Or their skills are matched to some more sharply focused set of communication skills, like Journalism or something like that.

Speaker 1:   Yeah.

C: :   I'll say my partner, um, was a Literature major and when we graduated he had a really hard time, um, **[participants whispering in background]** It's not that you don't learn any skills, in like an English or a Literature or similar kind of field, but it's just very difficult to market those skills, because it's not quite as transparent of a track. Like you were saying, **[AL]**.

AL: Yeah. So what do you say to the CEO? There are lots of CEOs to say these things in public, like in newspaper articles, and interviews -- they say things like, um "yeah, all these people that come into my firm who have specialist degrees in like Business and Economics and so on, they are valuable, but I also value people who have general thinking skills and general communication skills, um, so Philosophy majors and English majors, History majors." Do you find that kind of CEO statement, not credible, or...?

Speaker 1:   No, no, I think that's -- wanting all sorts of different perspectives is credible.. but if it came down to like... you have one person who you can work with in your company. Do you choose the PhDed Economist or the PhDed, like, Writing professor? You can get good communications, but it's like, again, plenty of people have an MBA in business, they're really one-track-minded, but especially about the time we're in a PhD in Economics, most of those people are...they're real academics, like everyone else, they're trying to understand a lot of the world. Their interest isn't just the basics... and that's the same with a lot of these profitable majors at the highest level -- I think, in my experience talking with people who are at that level of education in STEM fields... but then even when you get, you know, below the highest level of education, it again...you want, of course, you want a mix of people. But we're talking about averages, not overall. So it's like, you know, do you have... an equal amount of all kinds of people? My hypothesis is no, and I would - I could present data that I think would back that up.30:56

C: Well, and...like, just because somebody has the kind of specialist degree, say, like Engineering or whatever, that doesn't preclude them from having those kind of general skills, right? So I think the way people who are doing the hiring might see it is, "well, I can hire this person who not only has this specialist degree but also these kind of general critical-thinking people skills that one might learn in um a Humanities-type major" Whereas the humanities, they look at the humanities person, and say they don't have that specialist knowledge, and they just have a stronger background in those more general skills. So it feels like you're kind of missing out.

Speaker 1:   I think that's really well said.

Speaker 3:   I remember reading an article that said that something like 16 to 17...no, it was like between 10 and 15% of all majors are Business majors. UCSB is like an exception, 'cause we don't have that, so we don't see that. But basically, everyone does Business and they start to kind of blend together into just a Business clump. **[laughter]** and like if you're looking to hire people, it's like...I don't know, like...um, I just feel like having the perfect degree doesn't necessarily set you apart. It's about how you market yourself above all else.

AL: Plenty of CEOs though are skeptical of Business degrees. They're kind of an, anti-Business degrees...

Speaker 1:   Yeah, Business degrees are pretty lame. It's just if you get an MBA, then, then you are very legit and Business degrees tend to get MBAs, so...

C: Would you say that you would've maybe been more likely to, or felt better about picking a humanities major, if humanities programs made more of an effort to teach their students how to make themselves marketable? And how to make their skills marketable, post-graduation?

Speaker 3: I think that's a great idea, overall.

Speaker 1: The Writing minor is super great at helping you make yourself marketable. They are just really good at it. It's super. Anyone should take it.

AL: So what would that look like for the humanities? Engineering, for example, they teach you how to, ah, pitch, to like a venture capitalist, right? They kind of rehearse that. What would this kind of self-marketing training look like for a humanities major, do you think?

Speaker 3: I think that marketable skills are pretty universal. Um, like those specific skills can be applied to wherever you work. But like being able to pitch yourself, and being able to talk about yourself and interview well...and critical thinking especially, in being able to look into the future and predict outcomes, is like very important. And I think any major could, um, benefit from learning about that. But, ah... So I would say just general life skills would be good...cause like for Humanities majors, like, they don't even talk about that.33:51

AL: Yeah

Speaker 3: Um, and...if you're going to do a more impractical major, then it would be really cool if they taught you almost *extra* practical skills to kind of back it up. Even if it's only a few classes, like...

AL: And then there are practical things we can do, too. Like **[Av]** is taking an independent studies course with me, and I suggested she create kind of portfolio. And in **[J]'s** case, **[J]** is also taking an independent studies course with me and she is preparing a research report. So these things show up in your CV, and they're ammunition with which to market yourself.

Speaker 1:   I mean, I know at least in the Statistics Department--Economics department isn't really good at this-- in the Stats department, like half of the upper division classes, maybe more...in a bunch of them, half or more of the class grade is based on final project that you do with the group with other people, and you're analyzing real world data. It's very much like, a kind of like a real world project a lot of the time. And you deal with the problems of groups, and you deal with having to analyze data that's realistic, and the report that you make at the end is something that you can show to employers, and say like, "Look, I worked on this, this is the proof that I can make the statistics". And essays, like for one class, I think, don't carry the same weight as even like the statistical report from one class. Because, you know we're talking about the market skills are all, like, the same. And I think that there's a set that are universal, but then there's a set that get, like, technical. That's like...then that's like specializing so it's a little different... that kind of marketable skill than universal ones. But it is, like, very valuable, just...

AL: So more project-based research, right?

J: [Do...?]

Speaker 2:   I will say...I'm in a class right now, English 165, taught by **[instructor]** that's called "Inside Creative Industries". And it's the first class I've taken all my four years, where we are analyzing like, real-life current books, and we're making like pitch projects, and she's like teaching us how to have like, good meeting skills and pitch an idea that you have to create... And it's an English class! And, I don't know if she's actually taught it before, but...all of us have commented, like, this is pretty unusual for us. But we really like it, and we all took it because we want those skills. 36:09

J: Do you feel like part of the reason why certain majors are considered more marketable or profitable--like Economics, like STEM--is because they deal more with the real world in your experience?

Speaker 3: I think so. Almost definitely. Like, Linguistics would be like, *not,* because you're looking at like word etymologies, and like... I don't know, like people who major in Latin, you know, it's like, "That's a dead language, like, what are you doing?" **[laughter]** That's by far the most impractical major you can do because you can't...it's not applicable. Like, I chose...um, for Poli Sci, you have to choose an emphasis. And I chose International Relations. Not 'cause I truly like International Relations, very much. But every single class that you take for it, for the most part, teaches you how to interact with people, teaches your decision-making processes, and teaches you to be future-oriented. And like, I would rather learn how to do that than like... I don't know, I would prioritize that above all else. Because that makes...like it gives me those skills, and it makes me more confident that I would be a better employer--employee--which comes off in interviews. Those are the skills I think are really helpful.

J: I have a quick follow-up question. You say that Poli Sci teaches you those decision making--

Speaker 3: **[interrupting]**, no, just the International Relations classes specifically...

J: Yeah, the international relations...Do you feel like it teaches you how to apply those skills?

Speaker 3: Um, I think it depends on the class. So for Congress, which is 155. like you go and meet every day, and you do a lot of public speaking, and you talk to people, and obviously it's about Congress bills, so it's not like "applicable" to the world in general, but learning how to speak in front of people, and how to debate, and how--especially compromise--like, that can be applicable. It's just a different subject matter...but the actual skills are like, the framework? and you just fill it with different things.

AL: Here's a question, I think there's a natural segway to the next group of questions...

A: I think we might...oh, go ahead! But I think we might have to do the presentation bit...

AL: [Okay]

A: **...**But please, go ahead...

AL: It's also a nice...maybe a conclusion for this unit as well because it goes back to your early love of History **[indicating participant, general agreement]**. One of the things that people think about when they think about the humanities is that, among all the disciplines, the humanities disciplines have a great deal of concern with historical knowledge and records. That's true of History, obviously, but it's also true of English. Really, this department is an English/History Department, that is the history of Literature and so on... 39:03

Speaker 3: Yeah, the linguistics history is very important!

AL: Yeah. So, thinking outside the box of our individual careers and so on, about social needs...Where does the training and learning about History go, if... If people are concerned about self-branding, marketing, using...you know, applying their skills to useful, present-day data? Do you have reflections about that?

Speaker 3: For History. I would say...like, every subject matter you can learn something from it. For History. I would say understanding the past and how it leads to the present right now is very helpful, 'cause you can... view patterns. And then you can learn to look for those patterns for the future...which is literally all most people want, they just want to predict for the future so that they can earn money. Or like, cure cancer, or anything. I think understanding how the past got to the present is very helpful. You can make...apply it to how the past turns to--or how the present turned into the future.

Speaker 1:   I think it's, it's not really a problem, because for the people in humanities, the whole major is filled with courses for History. Adding one more, or changing one to be, or a few, to be focused on like, merging the rest of the major with what they can learn in the real world wouldn't track from that. And for all the other majors that aren't humanities, who have GE requirements, they take a certain amount of humanities. They have just different access to the courses that are the general learning, geared towards humanities people. They have their own, in their own majors, you know, their own general learning programs, or their majors can figure out how to make them if they want them 40:55 But also I think it would be like... the Writing minor just as a resume writing class. Like, a whole class, like, a whole class spent on writing a resume. A whole class on writing a cover letter, and then like, another class spent on reviewing what you do, and it's all really technical and hands-on. And like, another class just spent on online, promoting yourself... and it's focused, like "how do you write a LinkedIn profile?" Like, you know...you're learning how to market yourself, but you're also learning how to see through the veil of marketing that others are presenting. It's a critical thinking skill, as much as anything else. And I think that, in a class that was just like...like the introduction of writing series that everyone has to take, unless you have like really special qualifications...

AL: I gotta tell you that I'm on a planning committee for the Data Science major on campus, which may or may not be approved in next few years, and the humanities component I'm pitching for is like this: I wanna develop a course in writing for online jobs. I want a...you know, a course called "telling stories with data"? So, are these courses of the kind you have in mind?

Speaker 1:   Yep! That's be great!

A: That's a good segway to--

Speaker 2:   **[quietly to speaker 1]** You're like a walking pamphlet for the writing program...
[speaker 1 laughs, agrees]

A: --to the stories that we're trying to tell with our *own* data--

AL: [Okay]

A: --maybe that would be good--

J: Oh yeah! This is really cool, guys!

A: Yeah, please help yourself to more food if you like **[shuffling]**. So this is part 2, our presentation about what the digital humanities is, and what our project is doing. Have you guys...are you guys familiar with the term "digital humanities"?

Speaker 2:   Sorta 42:31

A: Sort of?...Okay, great, so we have a range...that's great. Um, so some other terms that you might hear are "computational literary studies" or "distant reading". So all of these terms kind of share similar, similar goals...**[A explains digital humanities, public humanities, purpose, etc 42:48 - 48:27]**

 A: So, what is the topic modeling? **[AL]** is going to explain to us...

AL: **[**Oh, that's my cue! **[laughter]**] This is my little song and dance about the primary method we're using...

A: [Yes!]

AL: ...which will come as no news to our statistics major here, the kind of statistical work in involved. So topic modeling has been much talked about in computational science but, social science as well, the humanities...in the last 10 years or so. It's a method originally designed to classify large volumes of documents. For example, if you have a million articles in science or in medicine and you wanna classify into several kinds of buckets of the topics, this is how you do that. Essentially, it works like this...**[AL**

explains topic modeling methods, algorithm, purpose. A shows and explains an example of "live" topic model 49:07 - 52:43]

A: I can actually give an example of a live topic model that we can show you... **[A shows and explains an example of "live" topic model, Collection 14 {52:48 - 54:08}]**

A: **...**So one of the things that we'll be showing you in the handout, in just a second, is um...five topics that we took from a model of student newspapers and Reddit sources, and what topics came back as the most important for the keyword "humanities". Um so, this is just meant to give you a window into what our process is like. And so now, we're going to give you guys....well, I think everybody actually has the handout in front of them...**[shuffling]. [AV]**, did you want to explain what it is...?

AV: Yeah, I'm good to go! Um, so there's a couple of pieces...yeah, three on here...that we're gonna read **[shuffling] [AV explains handout, purpose, etc. A steps in to explain as well. Students read through articles, work on handout 54:58 -- 1:08:57]**

J: Even if you guys didn't have the chance to read everything to the end, I was wondering if you guys wanted to look at the first article, the one from Dartmouth, and just kind of share your first impressions with me. What stood out at you? How do you feel? **[shuffling]**

Speaker 2: I definitely related to it.

J: Mm-hmm. What part of it? What specific part of it do you think that you related to the most?

Speaker 2: Um, the part... they talk about a lot of pressure to major in high-end, marketable majors...Um...also the part about--I mean the the whole section about being a double major, 'cause I'm a double major, so I felt targeted **[laughs]**

J: Yeah!

Speaker 2: So...but I did relate to that, um...feeling like adding another major would, um, like add to my resume and make me look better, even though I don't necessarily...I'm not necessarily super passionate about Global Studies or something.

J: Interesting!

Speaker 2: I definitely like, prefer Linguistics. I just chose Global Studies, because I was like, ."Okay, this kinda looks good, so let's go with that." Um... But yeah, the pressure to major in something that's perceived as, perceived as marketable. So like STEM.

J: Yeah. So do you feel like a significant number of students who might be more interested in humanities feel pressured to add, like a more STEM, like a more marketable degree? 1:10:27

Speaker 2: I feel like there's a lot of um...focus on like technology and computers, at least. And in that sense, I think people might feel some pressure to... if not like, pursue a career in that, or like study something, then at least gain skills, like computer skills, and things like that.

J: Interesting. What about you **[Speaker 3]**?

Speaker 3:   One of the...I guess, um... I feel like when they're talking about double majors or even just one a major one a minor, I think a lot of people have one that is practical. And one that they like. And, I think that's a good idea, but, uh... I think it's a lot of...like reading all this, is a lot of science going into this, when your major has so little to do with your future, unless it's like "Pre Med" or "Pre-Engineering". Like, you'll end up doing what you're supposed to do or what you wanna do, it doesn't really matter what you major in. Um...

AL: You saw the fact about the, um...the person was an English major, we ended up at... the head of the Economics branch, or whatever that is, yeah.

Speaker 3:   Exactly. And like, my mom...I think I'm probably very influenced by this, but my mom...she dropped out of college after a year, and has been very successful her whole life and is now the CEO of her own company, and like, she didn't... Your major doesn't matter as much as a lot of people think it does, and I think they're trying to say that in theory.

J: I have another follow-up--**[Speaker 1]**, do you want to say anything?

Speaker 1:   No, you you can share what you were gonna say in response to them.

J: Um I had a follow-up question. Just reading this article myself, I was wondering... do you guys think that the university where this article comes from impacts the...like the credibility of what's being said? Like, for instance, do you feel like your experience at UCSB has been similar to the experience of these kids that Dartmouth? **[silence for a few seconds]** I can kind of explain where I...

Speaker 1:   **[interrupting]** I, I can answer that question. Cause there's a line that I actually talked about this. They say "new majors are introduced through an established review and approval process. They are rarely introduced to the college. In part, the students already

have the flexibility to construct their own intellectual programs by modifying their majors."

J: Mm-hmm

Speaker 1:   No room to do that, no room to do that [here]. You have to take within your department. It's really hard to get classes outside of your department if you want to. If you want to, like, just take a Stats course or a Math course. Really! Like if I wanna take a Global Studies course, I couldn't! And I'm a fourth year. I should be able to sign up for whatever the heck I want, but I can't. Um, so yeah, it doesn't make it unreliable source, but it makes it a reliable source for students at *Dartmouth,* maybe...

J: [Yeah]

AL: [We just have to look at the numbers of our size here, the student body...]

Speaker 1:   ...but it's definitely like a different experience...

AL: ..is like this **[gesturing]**. Comparatively our faculty is like *this* **[gesturing]**...

Speaker 1:   **[yeah...oh, it's]**

AL: [...Dartmouth has a whole lot of students, and their faculty is like *this* [gesturing]...]

Speaker 1:   Yeah, that's exactly, exactly...I mean, it's not our fault, but it is like... this is the reality that a humanities education at an Ivy League University is going to be different than one at a public university, no matter how great we can make it, given the resources. They have more than...1:14:15

J: **[And also I think like...]**

Speaker 1:   ...than other people.

J: ...[Speaker 3] was the first person that brought up this, like... are you the first person to address the concept of prestige? And I feel like in a lot of ways, like, and Ivy League education, or at least in the name...like, the name itself can get you pretty far in itself. And I read an interesting article the other day that talked about how humanities majors and Economics majors are kind of not rising but like staying steadier at Ivy League schools because it's not just the name, it's like the faculty in the places you can go...

Speaker 1: Yeah

J: ...or like the people you know, connections like... at a smaller school with more prestige, it's a lot easier to get places with a major that is not considered as "marketable", versus...like, my own parents say that it doesn't matter where you go to school, if you study Computer Science or Engineering because you're learning technical skills 1:15:16

Speaker 1: Yeah. There's this--I have a--there was a quote earlier, that I can bracket [?] the things that we've been talking about, which are like, "a Liberal Arts education is meant not to prepare students for a specific profession, but to provide them with the tools to succeed in any field." And I think that *is* the intention... It's not the outcome, necessarily, in a lot of departments. And I think like even, [on the handout] I wrote even...I think some courses, and *maybe* some, almost entire disciplines have this problem; of you're not learning critical thinking as much as a perspective on things and...you're not taught about critical thinking you're taught *a perspective*, which is like... a lot different and a lot less valuable if you wanna do a bunch of different stuff.

J: I agree with the perspective comment a lot. Because I feel like in a lot of humanities classes like, you read a book and then you go to a lecture and then the teacher gives you-- the professor gives you an interpretation, but it's more of like, you learn to interpret through practice and exposure. You are not given tools you need to fully do that interpretation of yourself, you just listen to a lot of other people's interpretations and then after a long period of time, you start developing your own.

Speaker 1:   It's hard with big classes.

J: Yes **[laughs]**

Speaker 1:   It's tough with big classes.

AL: I'm teaching one right now, that **[J]** is taking. **[laughter]**

J: You get talked *at* instead of being talked *to*.

Speaker 1:   Yeah, it's hard to get to the fact that...

J: Just to move things along. Does anyone have anything else say about this first one? Okay, do you wanna move on to the Reddit comment, which is a little less elegantly worded and a lot more emotional.**[laughter]** Does anyone has some thoughts right off the bat?

Speaker 1:   I hope their grammar was better in their MA **[laughter]**

Speaker 2:   My first thought was, he says at the bottom, he says, "Not everyone can write a 70-page essay with ease", um, and that's true, but also there's very little practical application to being able to write a 70+ page essay, unless you wanna write a book.

AV: Or work for the government

Speaker 2:   **[agreeing]** or work for the government. **[laughter]** But I understand where he's coming from, but I don't think that point really holds up very much, because I don't think you need to be...like at a practical, society-based level, you don't have to be able to write a 70 page paper with ease. Like engineering majors, writing and reading skills will be more than enough. Um...yeah. But like, I see where he's coming from. And I do agree.

J: This comment is very colored by emotion, I would say. It sounds it's almost like defensive

Speaker 1:   Yeah. Yeah I do think it was also good, he made a good point that was like it *is* a kind of intelligence, that like... regardless of the value to others...

J: [that's true]

Speaker 1:   **...**not everyone can do it. Like, it's not...you're not stupid if you can't do math, but you read be really well and write the paper. But I...I wrote the exact same thing, which is like, who wants the MA thesis?

J: Yeah, our society...like, it values productivity and speed so much now, so that even though this *is* an intelligence in its own right, it's not like "useful". Everybody always says "Is this practical" and "is this useful" and because like...our generation, we value speed...

Speaker 1:   And it's also like, imagine...imagine if anybody could write anything, like...and they spend a long time they write 70 pages like... Yeah, sometimes it's gonna be junk, 'cause it will be bad writing. It'll be a topic that's not interesting. Like, that doesn't mean that society is just valuing what...seems interesting at the very least, I think.

J: Yeah. That's true...1:19:11

Speaker: Maybe to a fault sometimes..

J: **[That sounds interesting, though!...] [to Speaker 2]** Do you have anything you want to add to that? Like, what were your thoughts on this?

Speaker 2:   This one...I...um, looked at one comment he made. He was talking about how he feels stupid because um...History is simply easy. He buys into that side of view. And I kinda related to that. I feel like people sometimes say the humanities are like, easy. And I know I have heard a lot of people be like--especially writing English papers--they're like, "Oh, I can just BS that. I don't need to spend that much time on that"

J: Mm. I've heard the same thing.

Speaker 2:   Yeah, so I think that just points to like... people don't really value those kinds of majors as much, um... and you can't really BS, like, math, without outright cheating. So I think that also factors into it. But yeah, that really stuck out to me.

J: I have a question for you guys. I know we're running a of time a little bit, but do you feel like the humanities is an intrinsically easier subject than STEM, or do you feel like the way that the humanities is taught and tested, versus the way that STEM is taught and tested **[Participant sneezing. "Bless you!"]** is more...like, I've heard a lot of people say STEM is test-heavy and the material is itself not more difficult or easier, it's just... they found like, a formula that makes it difficult for students to all do well. Do you understand where my question is going?

Speaker 1:   I've turned in essays I know were crap, I know they were bad, and I got an A. I got an A. And so it's like... maybe I'm a man of harsh standards, but I think in some classes...there isn't like a strict--for good reason, different from most STEM fields--there isn't like a strict set of right answers, but sometimes there isn't the strict requirement for critical rigor, and how you're approaching your thinking. Sometimes there is, but it's just hard to know like you're gonna get.

AL: Well I'll tell you, the English professors have stopped grading with Fs through Cs...

Speaker 1: Yeah

AL: ...for punctuation problems. We just don't do that anymore.

Speaker 1: But punctuation sucks. I edit at the newspaper and people are terrible **[laughter]**, even people who *want* to write well, like, they're not good at punctuation...

AL: But there was an age when that happened. When if you couldn't punctuate, if you spliced the sentences together, that was a poor grade. We don't do that anymore...

Speaker 1: Yeah. I mean, it's difficult with international students too...

C: Yeah...I'm like, TAing a class in Linguistics right now about Language, Power, and Learning, and we've talked a lot about different ways of evaluating students' writing skills. Um, and it's very difficult because you don't necessarily know the type of educational or linguistic background that your students are coming from. So it seems kind of unfair to say "grade a non-native speaker of English's essay in the same way in which you would grade a native English speaker's essay". So, it just, it...I think that you're right, **[J],** that grading is not as straightforward in humanities disciplines, and that makes it really difficult to hold people to this kind of universal standard. **[noises of affirmation]**

Speaker 1: Here's something worth considering, though. 'Cause there are like, differences in like all these backgrounds that are worth considering, and we can provide resources, but at what point does it become like...we need to have a standard of like "everyone knows how to write a sentence", that isn't just fragments strung together with commas

repeatedly for a paragraph? Like, everyone knows "where to put a period", and "where to put quotations". Like, the fact that people are coming to college and don't know how to do those things, that's understandable--our K-12 system sucks. But by the second or third year, isn't it the responsibility of a good humanities education to be bringing them up to speed? Otherwise they're just getting left behind, never learning those things. And we can say like, "Oh it's because of the background. We need to empathetic" but it's like that's giving ourselves a free pass for not having taught people who didn't get the opportunity to learn and just...and leaving them in the dust not knowing how to punctuate well. I don't wanna hire someone that doesn't know, or work with someone that doesn't know to do those things, because I don't wanna have to teach them when I'm the boss, I want them to know. And that sucks, but that's the case. But it's like regardless of background, it is true.

AL: Unfortunately a larger social issues at stake as well. I mean, in this country you can become president, without putting a sentence together. **[laughter. "Yes, unfortunately"]** Whereas in other countries you can't...

Speaker 1: [...and it might change...]

AL: ... like in the UK, you still need to be eloquent. So...

J: Yeah. The reason why I asked because I personally feel like a huge part of the so-called "prestige" that STEM and Engineering majors have is because, in their minds, their major is more academically rigorous, more test-heavy, more...there's like a strict curve, and a lot of people fall under the curve. So if you set the curve, that gives you like, an extra level of superiority. But I think, just as a discipline, the humanities is much harder to...it's harder to categorize. It's harder to teach, it's harder to grade. And I feel like... for instance, I just took a midterm in **[AL's]** class, and he had a very generous extra credit section that rewarded people that had shown up to class **[laughter]**. You know, it asked specific things that he had done in class that day, to test if we had been there, if we had remembered, if we had understood... And my really good friend, who is a pre-med major, she got angry, and she was like "In my two years of being here, I have only ever had one extra credit question on a test, and my professor asked me to do a problem that used material that was three weeks in advance. Like, three weeks ahead of where we currently were" and we had... that led to a very interesting discussion between this. 'Cause she was like "I wish I had done humanities. It's so easy" **[laughter]** And I was like...I asked her, I was like, " but..." and she was like, "You get free extra credit points", and I was like "Do you think the extra credit points were free though?" Like,

they weren't. it wasn't asking me a joke, it wasn't something, a freebie, it was actually testing my retention, but I think that in her mind--because it wasn't so rigorous, and straightforward and like so...just difficult, like, I think it made my class seem so much easier, and I think it made my major seem so much easier. Like, I've told her my GPA and she has been like, "Oh but it's just all humanities classes, right?" And I feel like, there's just such a great divide forming between STEM and humanities majors, and a lot of it is based on resentment. A lot of it is based on like, kind of just, misinterpreted, misunderstood ideas of superiority.

Speaker 3:   Um, I have a follow up to that...

Speaker 3:   So I...so when you get to like Bio majors or Psych majors, or any type of science, you have a ton of people who want to be that major. And so they have to make the classes harder because they can't have that many majors...

J: Yeah

Speaker 3:   So being a Bio major, is like *really* difficult, because you have to get past like 10 pre-requisite class. Pre-requisite classes. And every single one is meant to kick people out of the major, to see who's left standing. Like, that's why I didn't so Psych. Like, that's fine, I did *not* make it **[laughs]**

J: It's the curves, too. That's like, where the whole idea of the curve comes from.

Speaker 3:   And like, um, like not as many people wanna be an English Major. So they don't have that problem. You wanna be an English major? You're welcome to. And like for Bio..you only...like, the classes will get more interesting once you get past the early classes, so as a second-year your friend would be struggling so much right now.

J: Yeah

Speaker 3:   Because she's about to get into the major, and when she gets *into* the major, she finishes like Biochem, she gets to take classes she'll enjoy. But if you do English, you start out with that. And I think that's a huge part of it. **[noises of affirmation]** And if you do like Bio at a private school then I bet people really love it...

J: Yeah **[laughs]**

Speaker 3:   **...**because they don't have to worry about that **[exactly!]**, but that's another public versus private thing, and I think that's important to consider.

J: Yeah. A good take away is that a lot of people's issues or struggles are not so much the subject, that you also have to take into account the way it's taught. Like education.1:28:05

Speaker 1:   I...really quickly, I do think it's worth acknowledging that, although... I think across STEM, like people in Economics think that it's so tough. And there's no more work there than English, especially not for the division, like, once you're through that like, cutthroat, cutting people out of the major thing. But Engineering majors, like, their lives are hard and the average GPA for Engineering majors is lower than in humanities.It is just statistically harder on average to get the same GPA in the social science or humanities than in an Engineering than it is in the social science or humanities. And I think--and again "STEM" is too blanket, that includes too many different fields. To say that, like, everything technical is harder, but again, it... It's worth considering the scale that--Engineering people shouldn't look down on the humanities, they should accept, like... And I've met...actually, most of the Engineering people I know are pretty humble about that. They're like, "Yeah I couldn't write an essay. Like I haven't written an essay, I couldn't, and I respect those that do." They're great about it, but on the other hand, I think a lot of people don't recognize the fact that like, they are working harder to do worse a lot of the time, and it...that's...you know, *I'm* not out doing that. I respect the hell out of them. And then, so that might be worth...like, we wanna advocate for the humanities, but we also do wanna acknowledge the fact that

like, it's not that it's inherently easy or harder, but that there are differences.
["exactly!"]1:29:43

A: Just it's really good, I think, point to end on, because I wanna be respectful of your time, and I know we're a few minutes over. But on the last page of the handout **[shuffling, unintelligible]**. So the most important question is #7, if you want to enter into the raffle for $300 in gift cards, please put your name and email. It's optional. So make sure you do that before you leave. But I just wanted in like two minutes to ask about question #6. So one of the things that we're trying to do for the project is to create advocacy materials for the humanities. Um, so, what form do you think these should take? What would be most, um...helpful in addressing some of these issues that you guys embraced today? Are there resources that you think would have been helpful to you, or to your peers, that you've not seen that maybe it could be provided to you?

Speaker 3: Wait, so you're asking...

Speaker 2: Yeah, I actually have a clarifying question. Do you mean advocacy as in "promoting the humanities as a major", or advocacy for humanities students?

A: Oh, I guess, um...I guess we mean promoting humanistic knowledge and practice at large. Not necessarily a major, would you agree with that? But perhaps also advocacy in terms of addressing some of these divides that we've talked about. So like, what could help make STEM majors and humanities majors understand each other better, or what could help address some of these...maybe even the private/public university divide that you guys were mentioning.

Speaker 1: The private/public thing is awfully hard to address. We are not gonna have classes that are as small as Duke or Harvard, and..

J: [I mean--]

Speaker 1: **...**we're not gonna have the resources to just throw money at professors who are studying those things, like they will. They have bigger endowments, makes it a lot easier.

Speaker 3: I also think a lot of the humanities, as a whole, is like, very much a societal value that like... I don't think it's gonna change any time soon. Cause it requires people to slow down, and read, and enjoy what they're doing and like...

Speaker 1: Yeah, people just need to like looking at books more **[laughter, agreement "Yeah!"].** or something!

Speaker 3: Yeah! Exactly. And like, that's hard. Um, I would say make sure that it's a requirement. Like I know we have requirements now where humanities majors have to take math classes, and vice versa, but I feel like people try and find ways to get out of that, and it needs to be a requirement for people to have to write essays. Like, engineering majors need to take classes that require you to write a really long essay. Just to get it. And like, English majors need to take classes that require you to do math, to like understand. And like, I think empathy is the only thing that can really solve any of this, and you have to force that upon people by putting them in each other's shoes. 1:32:44

AL: One way to translate that is that we need to build some general education courses that are designed from the ground up to serve that function, **[noises of affirmation]** whereas we have a whole bunch of GE courses that are GE courses by accident so...

J: I like what **[Speaker 1]** said about making a Stats class a requirement. 'cause I do...I know **[A]** can't write this down 'cause I'm part of the research team--but, I do believe that, if we were to institute stricter general education requirements, like Stats, like...there's a math requirement for Humanities majors, but it's like, "Math for the Social Sciences", and it's very basic Algebra. It's very easy for a lot of people to just breeze through.

Speaker 2:   They're all word problems.My friend took it. It's like, it's--

J: **[I took it! Yeah]**

Speaker 2:   --it's like a weird reading math. Yeah, it's a reading math class.

J: It's, it's not... if we have more stringent requirements, I think humanities majors would be more prepared, or they'd feel like they have the skills, so that they could pursue the humanities major happily, knowing that they *do* know how to have preliminary coding experience. And they do know how to topic model a little bit, or know some stats.

A: Do you think there's a way to make the general education courses *related* to your major? 'Cause one issue that I see perhaps happening is that you take a humanities class as a non-humanities major, and you wouldn't see the, the bridge from that class to whatever you go on to do. It would just be something to kind of "get through".

Speaker 3:   I think that's okay. Like, you're, you're paying a lot of money to be at college. Like, expand your boundaries. Like, you *should* do that, absolutely... and, um... what was I gonna say? But they do do...they do that a little bit, where... 'cause for Psychology you have to take Psych 10A? And they teach you R, which is a coding language. And like, so they do, they cross over sometimes but there should be a lot more of that, I think.1:34:40

AL: My own general philosophy about this is that we need more ways to...create a communication bridge between what society values and what students think is valuable here, within the university. It's not clear that those two sets of values match up very well, communicate very well. So it'd be nice to find ways to bring professionals who are successful, from different careers, to talk to students. Like famous English majors, for example, with successful engineers and vice versa. Lots of myths exist in the university about what society finds valuable. I'll tell you one myth: that Engineering gets you all the way through. Engineering is very hard, and it gets you that first job. And it gets you a good first salary. It's not clear how far that takes you in life satisfaction. And there is a glass ceiling there. My dad was a structural engineer, part of

a whole generation of people who were immigrants to this country as engineers. And unless you're really lucky, and from the right social class, and from the right ethnicity as well, you never break through the glass ceiling to the management level. So you're just always an engineer, right? So, there are ways in which being fluent in English, and having the communication skills, and all the social skills, the thinking skills, actually gets you the next level. But that's not clear here, where you're concentrating on your Engineering courses. 1:36:11

Speaker 1: I think in, in advertising the humanities, it might make sense to look across the humanities departments, and hand-pick courses that seem like they are *more* focused towards certain major that... I don't know exactly what that would look like. That might be for someone else to figure out **[laughs].** But I can imagine... just in promotional material, thinking like "what are our courses in the humanities that might help with like... if you wanna be a management, what might be valuable for that?" Like, you know, promoting. **[Noises of affirmation]**

Speaker 3: That's a really good idea.

A: Well maybe--

Speaker 1: **[interrupting] -**'cause I think part of it--sorry, at the last--there're just so many, there are so many things that most people don't spend nearly enough time looking through the catalog, and just figuring out every single opportunity.

AL: That's a good idea, actually. **[general agreement]**

Speaker 2: So you'd have like a list of classes, for like every major, to be like..."here are classes outside of your major, GE requirements, that work well with your major".

AV: So like, "Humanities for Engineers"

Speaker 1:   Yeah.

Speaker 2:   "Coding for Writing Majors" or something **[noises of affirmation]**

AL: I've got an improvement on this idea, which is that the department should be incentivized, by Dean and Administration to create courses of this sort, A. And B, the courses that get listed under this rubric are selected by panels of students--

J: **[**Yes!**]**

AL: --who've taken those courses. So they're certified by students, right? As courses that they find valuable for...

J: The, the 34A series--so like, the "Math for Social Science Majors"--like, I feel like, in its origin and inception, it was designed to be like a, a math class that could serve social science students really well, 'cause it's all like word problems. But, it's so...like, it's considered the easiest of the math classes. Like, if you get a B in that class, you're like, a failure, or like you didn't try anything like that. So I feel like it's also really important to make sure that you're not dumbing down those classes--

Speaker 1: [I mean, Calculus is so important, and they don't teach you very well!**[laugh]]**

J: And you're not attaching them--**[to Speaker 1]** yeah! And you're not like, attaching a certain stigma to it. Like, you're making sure that it's something--that even though it's "Humanities for Engineers", it's a class that humanities people can also take and enjoy--

A: [Yeah!]

J: --'cause no math majors...you can't take the 34A series--like, "Math for Social Science Majors"--if you *are* a Math major, which I think is very flawed in of itself, because it attaches is kind of hierarchy to math classes **[noises of affirmation]**

A: Yeah, I think...I've heard something similar of like, Engineering Ethics classes? I think it's the case that you cannot take it if you're not an engineer **[Yeah!].** So like, you...if you're just interested in that issue, you can't take it, because you have to be in that major. So it seems like those issues are around. Well thank you guys so much--

AL: Thank you for your time!

J: Yeah, we appreciate it!

Speaker 1: Thank *you*

A: --yeah, thank you so much. Please put your name, if you wanna be entered in a raffle please take the sandwiches, with you... **[shuffling, thanking, saying goodbye]** 1:39:18