

# **Building and Empowering Student Leaders and Faculty/Staff in Honors Living-Learning Communities**

Shannon Fairley-Pittman, Associate Director

Jenna Thrash, Academic Advisor

Northeastern University Honors Program

# Snapshot of the Program

- ❖ **Our Institution:**
  - Private R1 urban institution
  - 17,000 undergraduates
  - 3,000 Honor Students
  
- ❖ **Our Mission & Values**
  - “Learning happens everywhere”
  
- ❖ **First-Year Experience:**
  - Honors LLCs
  - Honors Welcome Week
  
- ❖ **Honors Distinction:**
  - 6 Honors courses
  - Interdisciplinary Seminar
  - 3.5 GPA



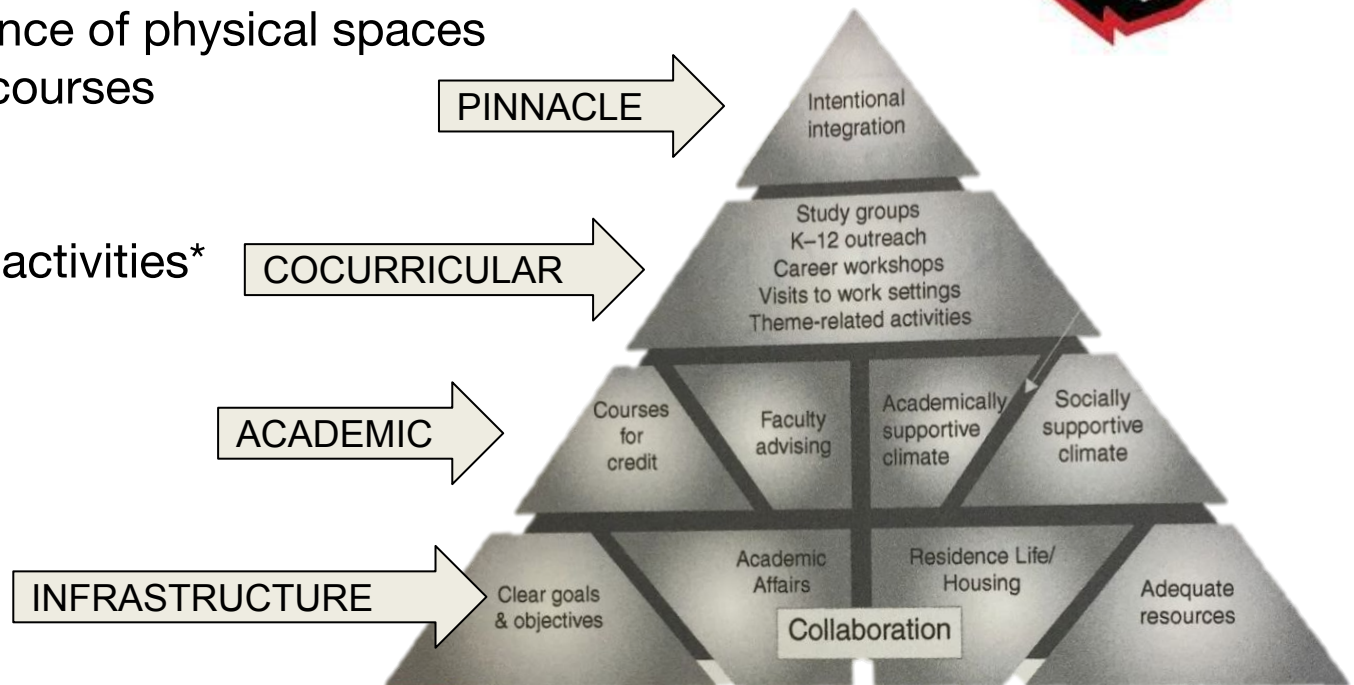
# Framed in Research



- ❖ Infrastructure
  - Defining goals and objectives
  - Residence Life + Honors Collaboration

- ❖ Academic
  - Formalize faculty roles
  - Significance of physical spaces
  - Pop-up courses

- ❖ Co-curricular
  - Themed activities\*



# Student-Directed Learning

A method of engagement in which students are the agents of their collegiate experiences. This allows increased development of creativity, responsibility, and collaboration with the support of staff, faculty, mentors, peers, and alumni. Students become empowered to serve themselves, their community, the world.

- ❖ Student brainstorm and LLC theme surveys
- ❖ Students select their top 3 LLC preferences
- ❖ Students plan the LLC's learning opportunities



# Support Staff

- ❖ Honors Living-Learning Coordinator
  - faculty or staff expert in the LLC theme
  
- ❖ Honors Living-Learning Assistant (HLLA)
  - Honors Upperclass student leader
  - live in the residence halls
  
- ❖ Expectations
  - 3-day Training
  - 1 event or learning opportunity per month
  - Meetings with Honors & Coordinator
  
- ❖ Successful Collaborations
  - meet & greet, during training
  - LLC Idea Exchange, fall
  - LLC Appreciation, spring



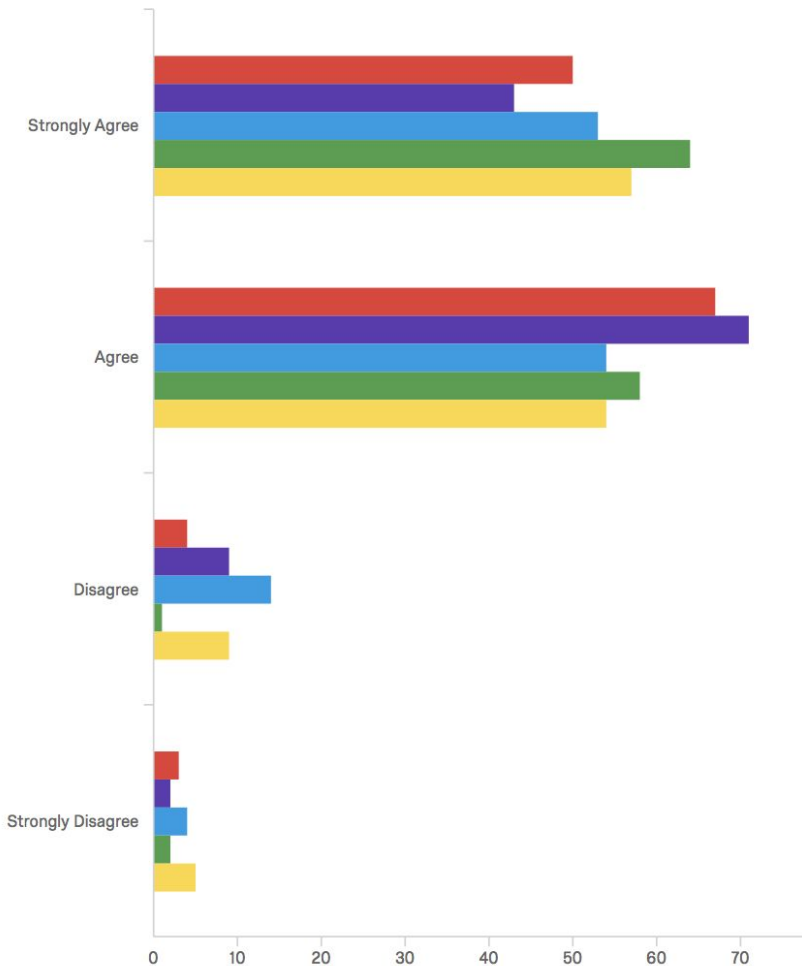
# LLC Launch

During Honors Welcome Week, a half-day event or activity is sponsored by staff/faculty Coordinators, assisted by HLLAs, to demonstrate an ideal learning opportunity within the LLC theme & build community on students' first day on campus.



# Launch Feedback

Q13 - Please rate the following statements. The Honors LLC Launch Day event:



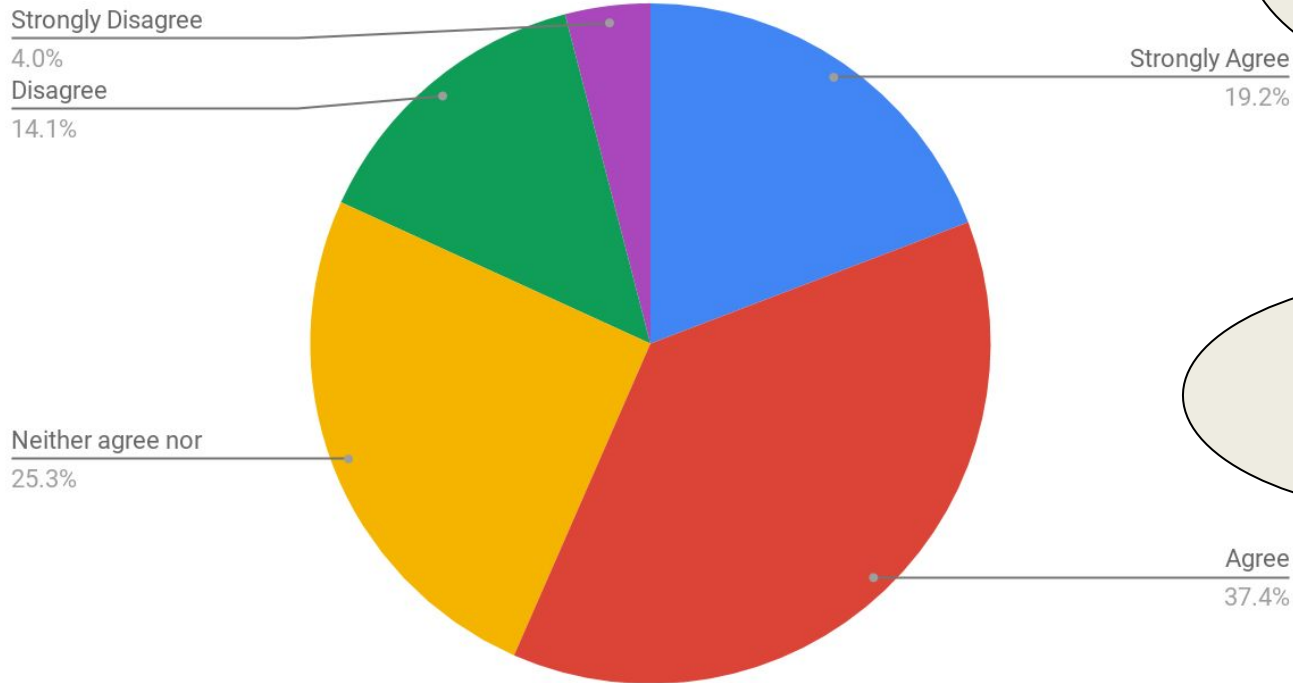
**I hope to do more fun events like this in the future. It was an amazing way to start the year!**

- was enjoyable.
- helped my LLC develop a sense of community.
- taught me something related to the theme of my LLC.
- was effectively facilitated by my Honors LLC Consultant and/or HLLA.
- made me feel excited about participating in future LLC events.

**It was great to have students begin to bond with their LLCs.**

# Student Feedback

I believe living in [my LLC] has helped me transition to college:



**I have met people and discovered opportunities on campus because of my LLC.**

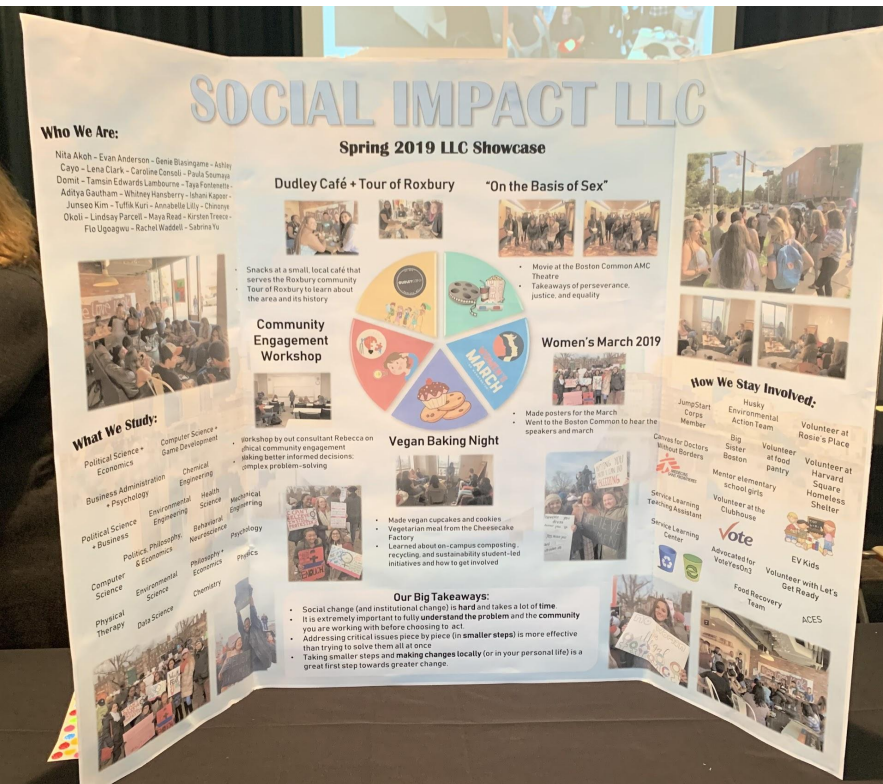
**There should be learning, but in a casual way, more fun than classes.**

- ❖ 225 respondents
- ❖ 83% can name their HLLA
- ❖ Themes of community, building friendships, similar interests, and reflection of the Launch activity



# LLC Showcase

- ❖ Honors first-year students highlight and showcase the interdisciplinary experiences in their LLCs.
- ❖ Professional and personal exploration through peer education.
- ❖ Intrapersonal reflection through social interaction and engagement of activities.
- ❖ Promote the opportunity for Honors first-years students to create a presentation with faculty, staff and upper class student leaders.



# HLLA/C EOY Feedback

## ❖ Consultant

- Students are increasingly disengaged throughout year
- Desire for greater attendance
- A few students attempted to take the lead
- Events (some) should be mandatory
- Implement pop-up courses

## ❖ HLLA

- Challenging to keep the students engaged throughout the year
- Poor attendance - should attendance be required?
- Limitation in staff needs and capacity
- Difficulty in facilitating student-directed learning

**While a handful of students were actively engaged, it was challenging to foster regular participation and attendance.**

**The main issue was that students were generally disengaged and non-responsive because there was no requirement that they participate.**

**A few really took on the attempt at developing a community and trying to do some activities about our topic but very few actively participated.**

## Changes to our program 2019-2020 AY

- ❖ Name change: Consultant ->Coordinator
- ❖ 3-4 learning experiences, fall semester
- ❖ Spring LAUNCH

Thank You!

[www.northeastern.edu/honors](http://www.northeastern.edu/honors)

2019-2020 LLC Themes:

Outdoor Adventure

Foodies

Artistes

Leadership

Animal Enthusiasts

Gaming

Social Change

Globetrotters: Travel & Adventure

Music Lovers

Book Club

Community Service

Athletics

Explore Boston: Healthy Living

Explore Boston: Arts & Culture