



Grand Valley State University

History Department Plan Book

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Introduction

This campaign is focused on the decline of the Grand Valley State University's history department's number in majors as well as students registered for classes. The client for this campaign is the GVSU history department. This campaign will attempt to understand the reasons as to why there has been a drastic decline, along with planning strategies to counteract this decline. The goal for this campaign is to enhance the internal and external perception of the history department. This goal will need to be tested to measure the success of this campaign. One way to test the success would be to look at the number of students who enroll into history classes for the following year after the campaign.

The GVSU history department has a very specific situation. As of right now, the department has experienced a two-thirds drop off of students who major in history. Since 2005 to 2014, they have lost 62% of students enrolled in their courses (GVSU History Department, 2016). The department is currently not diverse or united as a faculty (Dr. Chapman & Dr. Murphy, personal communication, September 14, 2016). This creates a problematic situation and challenge. A department in this situation can create difficulties in promotion and uniting staff to work towards a common goal. On top of this, the faculty doesn't collaborate with others often (Dr. Chapman & Dr. Murphy, personal communication, September 14, 2016). This is due to GVSU structure, and because some professors already teach multiple classes across varying departments, this could possibly explain the faculty's ability in outreach. Along with this, the department doesn't have an updated website or other electronic forms of communication. This drastically effects the department's ability to reach out to students of interest for the major and classes. However, the department has created events and talked to

students in classes to help recruit. Overall the current status has some forms of outreach to students but isn't very up to date or united.

On top of the department's situation, they have distinct strengths and weaknesses. In the form of strengths, a key factor is their class sizes and faculty involvement. From student's perspective, the smaller classes allow more one-on-one interaction with professors. This helps students work and grow within campus. Also a good amount of the faculty is very willing to work with and be involved with their students. However, there are some weaknesses. One of the biggest problems is the department's ability to communicate to students outside of their classes. The lack in communication can create issues with recruitment as well as students entering the major. One of the contributing factors appears to be students understanding of what to do with a history degree. This understanding can be linked to the department's inability to communicate. As stated before, the department has issues with unity. Also the department is stretched thin between helping with general education courses, upper level courses, research and other department classes.

For GVSU's History Department, we are going to be focusing this campaign to expand their outreach to students and impact their perception of the department and their courses. The current problem of the department is the loss of enrolled students. This means efforts should be focused on changing internal and external perception. If efforts are not made, this department will see major cutbacks and become an under-used asset to the university. This will also make the department less focused on future history majors. Overall the importance of this campaign is to further the department and make it more accessible to students of interest.

This campaign will have specific objectives. The first of these will be to increase the number of student's knowledge of the department and major. Many students currently believe in the stigma that people with a history major can only be teachers. An additional objective is to enhance the number of communication channels the history department faculty can communicate through. One of the major weaknesses the department currently faces is their ability to communicate to students. Lastly, with declining rates of students, another objective is to increase the number of students enrolled in the history major. These three objectives will be an important concept to focus on throughout this campaign.

Altogether the GVSU history department faces a large amount of difficulties with their declines in majors and student admittance. This decline can be seen through records given from the history department. The goal of this campaign is to enhance the internal and external perception of the history department. This will be done by focusing the campaign towards faulty outreach and redefining what it is to be a history major. These objectives and strategies will be discussed further thought out this plan book.

Secondary Research

Abstract

Over the years the history department has run into issues in their recruitment along with issues in student retention. That have caused an overall decline of student body. Preeminent issues have been retained to possibilities of students being unaware to what a history degree can do in the job market. Research has also concluded the possibility of students being uncertain and stressed about their futures. This research was done through using keywords in GVSU databases. Most research found has pointed to students wanting degrees that don't only offer economic success, but good hire rates that ensure a job.

Methodology

For this campaign research was primarily done through GVSU databases as well as their library search system. The research done in this was first focused on a better understanding of history students as well as faculty. This was done through search terms such as history students, faculty, and majors. These terms were used to hone in on articles and papers that discussed people who worked in their field. However, very few documents were able to be found in this fashion. Research then was focused around looking at other college level departments that were experiencing loss of student body. As well there were searches that focused around what can be done with a history major, tactics for getting a job with a history degree, and what cause people to choose their majors. This became essential background information especially when we are trying to help recruit students.

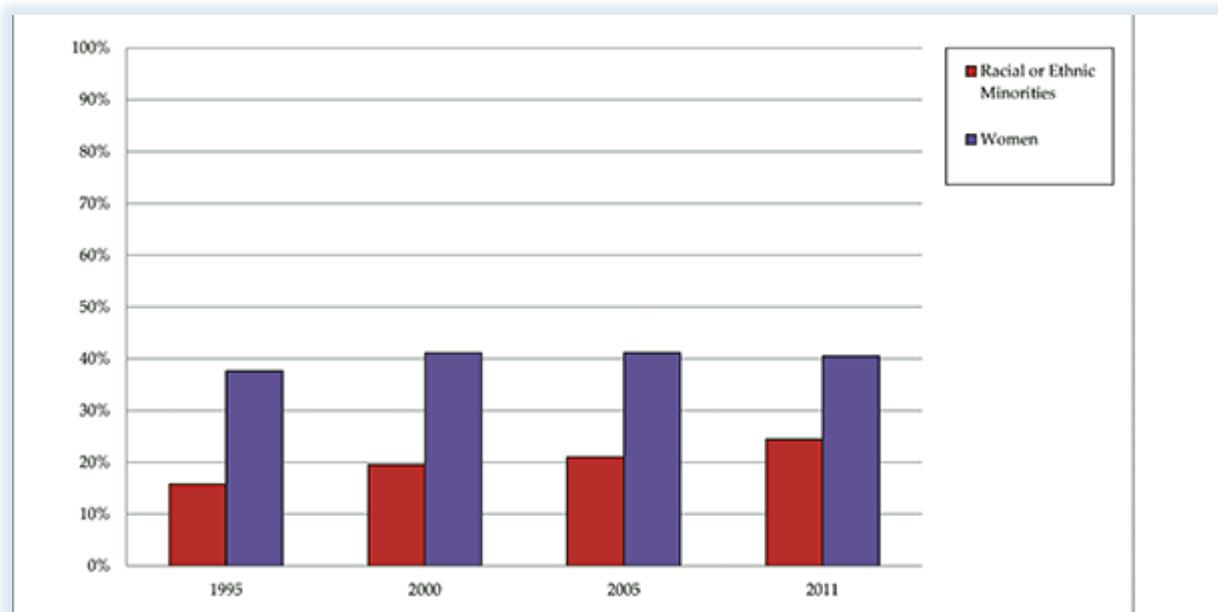
Outside of the databases, google search engine was particularly helpful in finding articles that reinforced previous ideas. Many of the articles were helpful in sections such as demographics for a target audience. Along with information of uses of a history degree. These types of articles helped reinforce database works to paint a better picture of the board background information of the client and audience. The information gathered will be prevalent and helpful in creating strategies for the campaign.

Audience Analysis

When looking at the people who are choosing college majors, it is important to understand what causes them to choose, why people are not choose history majors. Initial research was done to find possible explanations as to why people have been moving away from the history degree. Julia Brookins (2016) discussed this in her online article *The Decline in History Majors: What Is to Be Done?* In the beginning of the article, she talks about possible factors that may have contributed to the nationwide decline of history students. A few of the major elements are moving away from specialties, history's reputation for rigor, reliance on introductory courses to recruit, and declining career prospects (Brookins 2016, p.1). For further explanation, when students are pushed away from there area of focus it causes many of them to not want to continue further study. On top of that, many students are intimidated to take on challenges the major offers. This includes heavy research and application of critical thinking. This can be very difficult and intimidating. As for using general courses for recruitment, many students who had interest within the field have already gained the credits via AP classes. This causes them to miss outreach from professors. Lastly, in terms of jobs, many people still believe in the stigma of only teaching as stated above. Brookins also discusses a few case studies, such as University of California (Brookins 2016, p.1). She states that the number of majors fell 45 percent from 2007-08 and rebounded completely. She claimed that the department now offers a richer and more intense education experience. This is shown through their smaller seminars and more hands on research based work. This appears to have worked for this case study and may be a helpful example.

Another piece of information to look at is the demographics of students. Since we are trying to understand as to why students are not joining the major, we need to look at the kinds of students who are in the major. Robert Townsend (2013) has displayed research that shows a few demographics of history students across the US. Throughout the past few years there has been a steady increase in women and people of racial and ethnic minorities throughout the program. This can be displayed in Fig 1.

Fig. 1



Historians .org, Percentage of Undergraduate Degrees in History Earned by Women and Minorities, 1995-2011

This graph explains that different types of people need different representation. Where many departments, including our own, aren't very diverse it can cause misrepresentation and cause people to turn away from the major. This is another possible cause for the lack of students.

When looking at the audience, it is also important to understand how the department has changed. Changes in history structure could explain why people are moving away from the major. Michael Rubin (2012) wrote in an article explaining the loss of history students at Yale (p. 1). Initially he talks about the change in structure. He claims that many professors entering the field in the early 2000s began changing their curriculum to be more focused around cultural, gender and social aspects of history. Perhaps the change in criteria could be an additional cause to the loss of students. The studies themselves may have turned into an additional off put to students.

Target Audience

College students as a target audience are somewhat difficult to read and plan for. They are constantly in tune with some form of social, visual or printed media. Many students are often unsure about their futures and extremely stressed out. Ronald Feldt and Christina Upderraff discuss the factors on student stress, “the inability to manage the stress response in college is associated with poor college adjustment, depression, and reduced life satisfaction” (p. 3). Many different sources factors can result in stress for students. This can also affect their decision making and can cause uncertainty. This then can greatly influence what and why people choose a certain field of study.

When people are deciding their majors, they often choose based on risk and economic success. Claude Montmarquette (2002) suggests “a tradeoff between the economic return to education and the risk of failure” (p.2) when students are deciding what major to take on. This coincides with past research on the topic. Students are looking to where they can ensure economic gain and safety, especially when taking on large student debt. The history department has a presence of rigor and difficulty, which may cause students to worry they may fail out of a major. This would cause them to lose money that is adding up to loans. Because of the current idea of history majors only being able to become teachers, this can cause students to stray away from the major. Because of their perspective, they wouldn’t have enough economic reward and too much risk.

An important idea to think about is how students are recruited. For many college students today, there are high levels of uncertainty when choosing what major to follow.

Anthony Cook (2009) discusses some tactics that can be helpful for gaining students as well as retaining them to certain college majors. One of the primary points Cook raises is that students should be offered large amounts of support when discussing and deciding their field of study. Offering support and allowing hands on work can be a great deal of reassurance. With many students being unsure of their future, they are more likely to pick a major that feels safer in levels of difficulty and economic safety.

Research

Much of today's stigma is focused around teaching, and many people don't think there are many alternatives. Even some members of the history department agree with this idea. There are many possibilities that can be found through research. Geteducated.com has detailed information to the possibilities of a history degree in the job market, salaries and even strategies for getting a job with the degree (Geteducated.com 2016). The article states a range of possibilities from jobs that work with the stigma such as teaching, curators, and librarians, while also listing many not-thought-of jobs such as writers, lawyers, advertisers, and marketing specialists. This source provides a simple look at the unknown possibilities of this degree. However, this information still needs to be explained and expressed to prospective students. There are varying levels of financial status. Some of these jobs have either very high or very low levels of financial security. The jobs in the legal world, such as lawyers and legal assistants, can make salaries around \$77,000 to \$115,000. While others, such as curators and research assistants, only stay in a range of \$45,000 (Geteducated.com 2016). To many students, this may appear as a risky field to enter due to varying levels of financial status.

Along with the previous information, it is important to understand that there are many different capabilities of the major. Debbie Andalo (2006) discusses the various and competitive fields a history degree can work in, such as marketing, communications, and even in fundraising groups (p. 1). This small excerpt discusses these possibilities in some detail. However, the excerpt does explain that these fields often have many applicants as well as small hire numbers.

Another thing to think about in this retrospect is the types of skills that are acquired in this major. Often students who are deciding a major are looking at the types of skills, opportunities, and work they will be doing. Cambridge University displays this information accurately. The webpage explains use of intellectual, communication, organizational, interpersonal, research, computer literacy, and foreign language skills. These are things that must be applied behind this major. The terms appear technical, but they apply to students who are enrolled in criteria that involves languages, critical thinking, analysis and group work. These are all things that can be looked at in terms of what types of work will be done in school but also within their prospective jobs. Topics like these should be brought up when trying to enhance student and faculty understanding of what can be used with a degree in history.

When looking at information as to what people think about history degrees, there needs to be research about what people think of towards college and why people choose degrees over others. One of the common things people are debating today is the cost of college and the major of choice. According to Robert Reich (2016), former U.S. secretary of Labor, "For one thing, a four-year liberal arts degree is hugely expensive. Too many young people graduate laden with debts that take years if not decades to pay off" (p. 1). This often causes great consideration as to what fields students enter. They want to ensure they will make good money after they graduate to be able to pay back such heavy loans. When looking at job perspectives of the history degree, many people immediately think they could only be a teacher. This is an immediate put off to many students interested in the field. On top of this, Reich (2016) mentions the possibility of adding more skill-based learning (p. 1). This idea would create more

interests into fields by allowing students to gain a better understanding of the type of work they would do.

It is important to understand what people did after graduating with a degree in history. Graham Snowden (2010), states that masters courses lead to specialisms such as focuses into certain eras or regions history. When looking at what people did after getting the degree, 51.7 percent entered employment, while most who entered employment, were doing work related to history (Snowden 2010, p.1). In addition, almost a fourth of graduates went on to further education, while only around 10% of students were unemployed (Snowden 2010, p.1). This is a relatively low rate for students who graduated with a history degree. This gives a good level of rerun and promise to those skeptical of entering history courses. Overall, the information found for this objective is important and should be focused on during planning for strategies.

Primary Research

Abstract

This campaign's primary research was founded around a focus group and survey that was conducted through surveymonkey.com. During the focus group, 11 students were asked questions that were based around their knowledge of the history department, and experiences in history classes. During the survey, 63 students were asked questions that involved their fields of study, their majors of choice and the ways they receive information. Much of the information found enhances the idea that students are unsure of their futures as well as choose majors that are economically stable. These results can be taken to form tactics and strategies for the campaign.

Focus Group Methodology

This campaign's focus group was created out of 11 Grand Valley students who were all either freshmen, sophomores, or juniors. All students had either chosen their major or were undecided. These students were asked a series of questions that were based around their current and past experiences with history classes, both high school and college level. They were also asked to elaborate their experiences. Students were also asked about what positives they experienced as well as why they chose their current majors or why they would choose a major. These created a discussion between students that lead to finding new information that backed up secondary research.

Focus Group Results and Discussion

After the discussion that took place with the focus group, it appears that many students today are very unsure about the history department. Many students do not know what types of curriculum and possibilities there are for graduates with a degree in history. Many students are often opposed to taking these courses due to their forms of difficulty, structure, and topics that are studied. Many students also found that they enjoyed classes that involved a good amount of student participation, such as having students reenact historical events. Many people have stated in the group that they don't enjoy the subject but adding ways for students to provide current and applicable insight helps. Also, people in the group have stated that they prefer to move towards subjects that can make more money or have lasting impact on other people.

On terms of why students chose their majors, many of them wanted to either make a difference, do something they enjoyed, make money or ensure they were able to get a job. The overall range of majors pertained to science and medical students, film students and psych students. The students who were part of the group were a great example of why people choose their majors. They were able to help explain that many of them wanted to move forward and make a difference in their careers. Many of the medical students wanted to help people and make change. They also included that they thought that people could not get that type of return working with a history degree. This however, reinforced that they were not aware of job opportunities with a history degree. The lack of knowledge of the department and its capabilities is a large factor to why there has been such a decline in students.

What needs to be asked from this is what is important about this information. What we can take and understand from this is how students perceive the history department. We have learned that students either have almost no background knowledge of the department. This means that we should be focusing and spreading information in our action plan. Spreading information about the department will be key for our success. Also, the focus group results adds to our secondary research that explained that many students are unsure and stressed about their futures. Due to this, many students stay away from the program and don't look into the major or curriculum. This is another primary reason why there should be focus on spreading information and creating higher outreach to students. With the current status-quo of the department, it makes sense for many students to view the major a risky and not safe in a job market. The less that is known will most likely result in there being less students attending classes and applying for the major. This type of information also allows us to plan strategies that will not only promote the department but change its structure to make it more applicable and positive to prospective students.

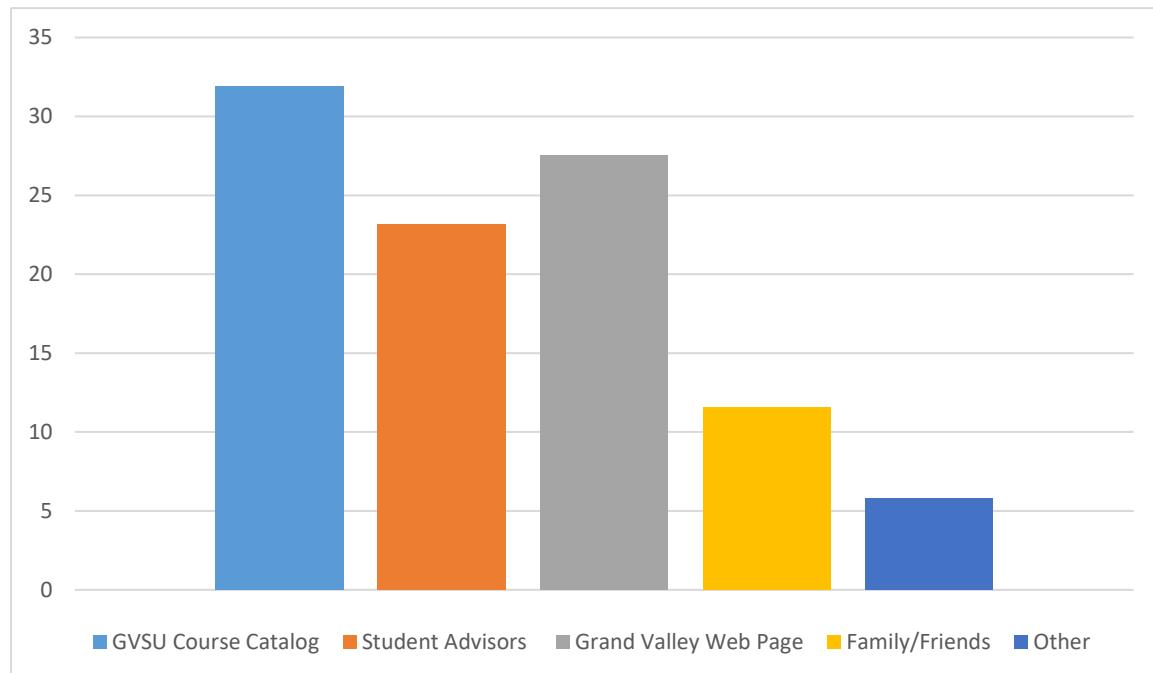
Survey Methodology

Primary research was created through a survey generated at Survey Monkey.com. This survey invite students to anonymously respond to questions that were related to college, high school, and media based experiences. During the time of the survey 69 students were questioned and fully responded to each question. These questions were created to create information about what majors students choose, how they receive information, how they experienced history classes. The results founded are beneficial to creating and planning strategies and tactics for this campaign and will ultimately lead any plans created.

Survey Results and Discussion

One of the most valuable questions asked during the survey was focused on how students receive information about Grand Valley. It was found that the primary number of students found information in the course catalogue, web pages, and advisors. This type of information will lead the action plan by telling us what types of mediums and communication styles will be used to contact students.

Where do you receive information about majors/minors offered at Grand Valley?

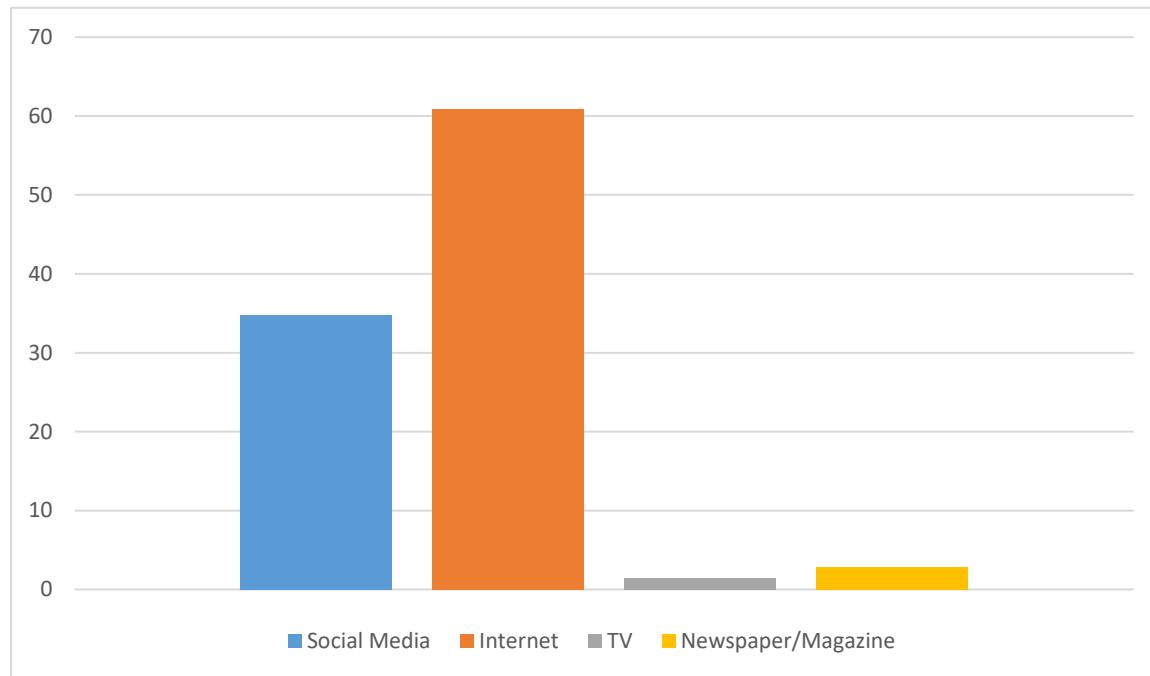


From what can be seen above, the primary focus of this campaign should be done through digital media, such as webpages. The course catalogue, which can also be found online, and through student advisors. This means any tactics should be focused either through digital

communication or through personal communication. Using online mediums such as webpages and social media will be beneficial to recruitment. Also promoting history faculty as advisors and expanding their outreach will also be beneficial.

Another key question that was asked was focused around how students gather and discover information. Due to the importance of spreading information of the department and classes this will be very important as to how strategies and tactics are planned. This type of information will decide how we express information and interact with students.

What is the main way you discover information?



What this question tells us is how who are going to contact students and spread information. This graph displays that using digital media such as social media, and internet advertising will be very successful in getting our message to people. We want to be able to

contact and make impressions with as many students as possible, in order to do so using things communication channels such as digital media will be the most successful.

From the data gathered in this survey, it shows that many of the students who participated have some but not a lot of exposure to the department. Moving forward, tactics and strategies should be based around presenting the unknown to students. These plans should incorporate the internet and social media due to the high amount of people gaining news from these sources. Some of the information shines new light onto the subject as well. Many students didn't say their worst skill was in history. This shows that there are prospective students that may have interest in the field. Many students have not had exposure to college history early on. This is another group that should be targeted. When planning, much of our tactics should be based around early exposure, making the unknown known and be done mainly through social and digital media. These outlets will be the deciding factor when choosing how to display this information to new students.

Campaign

Action Plan

The first objective to start this campaign will be focused on increasing the number of students enrolled in history courses. This means that we will be looking at current numbers of enrolled students in history courses this year and implement public relations strategies between and during school years to increase the number of students. This will be done through social media, events, and public outreach.

The first strategy for this objective will be targeted at college students and will done through social media. This will take place during the year in between period of school semesters. This tactic will involve creating a Twitter account for the department that includes obscure and interesting historical facts, which will be followed with a tagline “find out more in GVSU’s history course.” The tweet will also have a link that sends the user to the department’s website for more information. This will be done to increase the amount of interest in history courses improving their recruitment numbers.

The second strategy will be incorporating changes to the GVSU history department course themes. From the information founded in our focus group, students want a more practical and relevant information in history courses. The tactic for this strategy will include changes to incorporate reenactments and bring modern day relevance to the course, such as comparisons to pop culture. This will be done to make the courses more attractive to students due to many of them wanting more interesting topics.

The final strategy will be focusing towards college students. This strategy will be implemented in between school years. This will take hold of digital media to create social media

videos from current students and alumni. These videos will be alumni expressing why they choose the history major, what job they plan to get after school and why they chose it. This tactic will be used to counteract how that many students don't know much about the major in general. This idea will help promote the major hence increasing the number of students in the department.

The second objective this campaign will focus on is to increase the number of communication channels the history department has to communicate with students. This strategy will be done through digital media and personal communication. Social media will be effective for because our findings from the survey that most students use the internet for information. These changes for this objective will take place for a full year during the campaign.

This objective's first strategy will be targeted towards college students. This strategy will take place through digital media focusing on social media. The strategies goal will be to counteract the department's lackluster outreach to prospective students. This strategies tactic will be using promotional social media to push a new department website. The new website will provide detailed information to promote courses and have direct contact with professors. A tactic like this will be used to greatly improve professor's connections with students.

The second strategy will be targeting high school students, and interacting with them through personal communication. This event will be done during high school spring and fall semesters. This tactic will be an event carried out through current history professors and students going to high schools to express the benefits of history courses and degrees. This will be done to eliminate high school student's uncertainty of what fields to go in as well give the

faculty a larger group of people to recruit from. Overall this strategy and tactic will help stop uncertainty and promote the department.

The last strategy for this objective will be targeted towards freshmen college students. This will occur during summer registration for freshmen, where through personal communication, history professors and students will be handing out flyers that advertise the department and its courses. This tactic will be an event that is ongoing during registration that help promote and explain more about the department. This type of direct connection to students will provide the department a chance to directly outreach students besides the ones already in their courses.

The final objective will be to increase student knowledge of a history degree and department. These tactics will be shown through mainly impressions online. This will take place through a full year for the campaign. It will be focused towards college students and will be key in helping improve requirement.

The first strategy will be social media based and will use advertising to promote job possibilities. These social media posts will be linked to the many unknown job opportunities such as lawyers, writing, and advertising. These posts will say “Looking for a job in this field? Get a degree in history.” This will be followed with a link to the history department’s website that will provide more information. This will not only inform students of the possibilities of the major but also promote the major. This will be carried out because many students are unaware about the department and the jobs it leads too.

The next strategy will be focused on digital media that uses video to express future job possibilities. This video should be created and used within the class at Grand Valley that help students decide their majors, as well as be shown in GVSU history department general education courses. This video will present possibilities of different majors, including the history major to improve student knowledge of the possibilities of the degree. This will be done because of the major lack of student understanding of the major.

The final strategy will be directed at college students through the use of student advisors. This means this will be done through personal communication and during the school year. During this time advisors will be promoting major possibilities to freshman who are undecided or for people who know what career they want but not what major. Advisors will provide information on diverse major choices and careers they can enter. This will be because many students get information from their advisors.

Budget

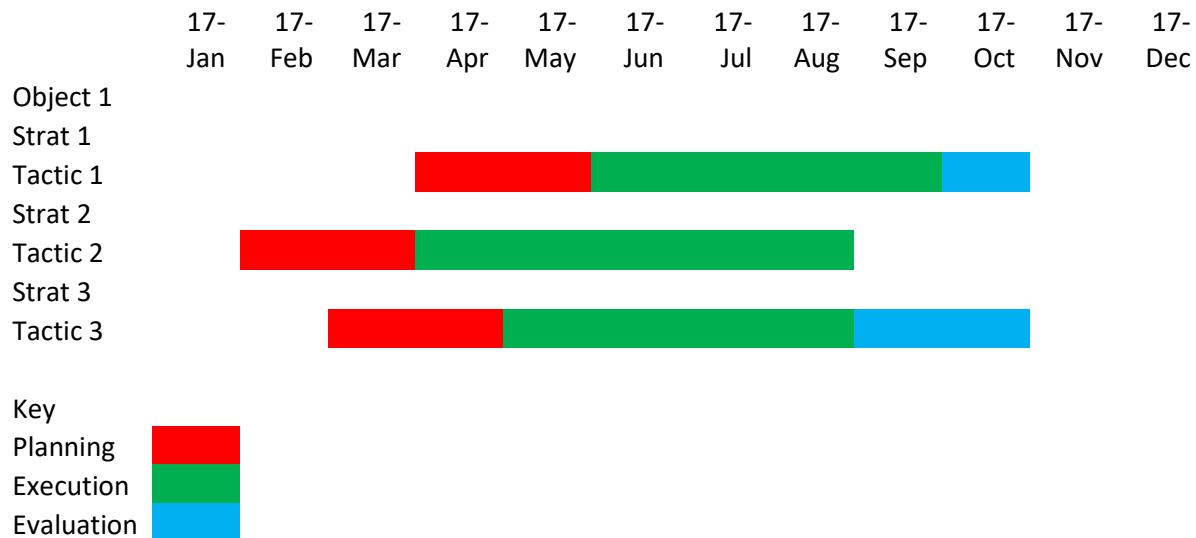
Objective 1				
	Price	Amount	Time Frame	Total
Twitter Promotions	\$200 Max	Per Click	4 Months	\$200
Camera Equipment	\$300		Rental	\$300
Audio Equipment	\$200		Rental	\$200
Student Editor	\$0		Rental	
			Total	\$600

Objective 2				
Item	Price	Amount	Time Frame	Total
Travel (Gas)	\$140		4 Months	\$140
600 Color Flyers	\$150		4 Months	\$150
2000 Color Flyers	\$500		3 Months	\$500
			Total	\$790

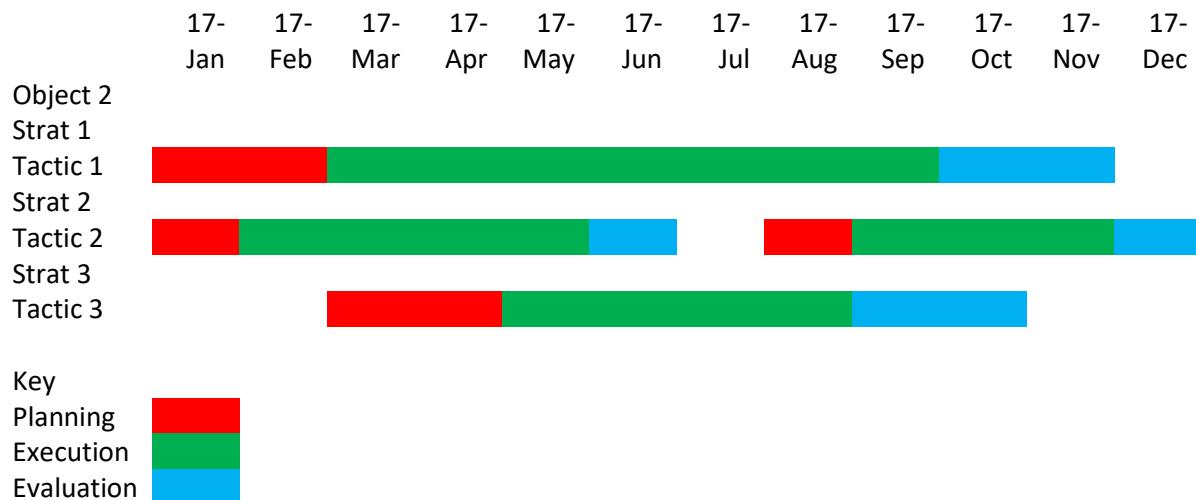
Objective 3				
Item	Price	Amount	Time Frame	Total
Camera Equipment	\$300		Rental	\$140
Audio Equipment	\$200		Rental	\$150
Student Editor	\$0			\$0
Facebook Advertising	\$350 Max	Website Impressions	1 Year	\$350
Advisor Time	\$15.50	Per Hour	30 Hours/9 Months	\$4,185
			Total	\$4825

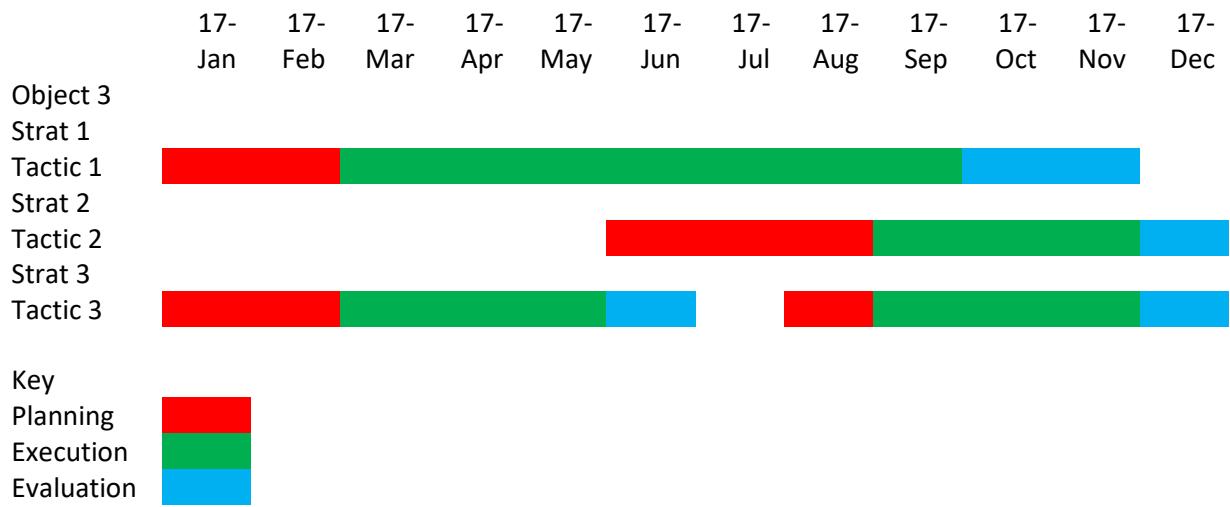
Campaign Cost	Totals
Objective 1	\$600
Objective 2	\$790
Objective 3	\$4825
Total	\$6215

Timeline/Gantt Chart



Timeline/ Gantt chart





Evaluation

During this campaign there have been specific goals, objectives, strategies and tactics formed. The success of these will determine whether the campaign has been successful or not. When looking at all of this information it is important to understand how to evaluate these ideas to measure their level of success. For this part of the campaign I will be restating my objectives and the proper way to evaluate each one of them.

The first objective to be evaluated is the objective to increase the number of students enrolled in history courses. Evaluating this objective is very straight forward. Before the campaign begins there should be a recorded number of the students who are currently in history courses. During the execution of the objectives strategies it is important to start recording the number of students who enroll in courses. At the end of the campaign there should be a comparison of these two numbers to see whether the number of students have increased or decreased. If the number has gone up the objective has been successful, if not, the objective failed. If this objective fails there should be movement to adding additional strategies and tactics that increase the appeal of the department. These types of tactics should involve expressing job titles and job skills that are learned through the department.

The next objective, to increase the number of communication channels, will be evaluated in two ways. For the digital media strategy, this will involve looking at webpage analytics for the department website. These numbers will need to be compared to see if the website has seen an increase in use traffic. For the personal communication strategies, they will need to be evaluated by looking at the number of students who are enrolled in history classes after student registration ends. Like before these numbers will need to be compared to past years numbers to see if there has been an increase or not. If this objective fails additional

strategies and tactics should be created for even additional communication channels. This would involve creating social media accounts, such as Facebook or even snapchat. Additionally student groups and clubs could be an additional channel.

The final objective to be evaluated, which is to increase knowledge of the department and major, will be evaluated by comparing numbers of students who apply for the history major. Much of this objective has been directed to increase the number of majors through increase knowledge of the department. For this to be tested there will have to be record of the number of students who are current history majors. Then there will need to be a record of how many students are then history majors after the campaign. The difference in numbers will explain if the objective has worked. If there are more majors then in past years the objective worked. If not then the objective has failed. If this objective fails, it would be important and beneficial to incorporate advertising this knowledge to student groups, and via department communication channels such as the website, and through personal communication.

Appendix

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Survey

1. Have you decided on a major?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
2. Have you ever considered Majoring/ Minoring in History?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
3. What is your main way of discovering information
 - a. Social media
 - b. Internet websites
 - c. A book or magazine
 - d. Other _____
4. What is your weakest skill/class?
 - . History
 - a. Math
 - b. Writing
 - c. Science
 - d. Other _____
5. What is your strongest skill/class?
 - a. History
 - b. Math
 - c. Writing
 - d. Science
 - e. Other _____
6. Where do you find information about Grand Valley?
 - a. Course catalogue
 - b. Grand Valley Webpage
 - c. Advisors
 - d. Friends and Family
 - e. Other
7. Have you considered majoring/minoring in History?
 - a. Yes
 - b. no
8. In your high school, were you required to take a history class?
 - . Yes
 - a. No
9. In high school, did your faculty ever bring in a college graduate that persuaded (when it comes to your future college/major) you in any way?
 - . Yes
 - a. No
10. If you have taken a History Class at Grand Valley rate your classroom environment and usefulness of information provided?
 - Scale 1- 10

Moderators Guide

I. INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Breanna Greer and Megan Jezak and we are the moderators today.
2. The purpose of this discussion is to talk about receiving and processing information, specifically in regards to the History Department at Grand Valley. I'll be asking your opinions and your experiences.
3. We are independent market research consultants. I don't work for any particular company and I don't have anything to sell.

II. GROUND RULES

1. This session will last about 1 hour.
2. This session is being audio taped and after the first few minutes I won't be taking notes.
3. Observers are present. Notes may be sent in.
4. There are no wrong answers in marketing research; we are looking for different points of view. I want to know what your opinions are.
5. Everyone needs to talk but each person doesn't have to answer each question.
6. Please talk one at a time and in a clear voice, avoid side conversations. It is distracting to the group and I don't want to miss any of your comments.
7. Exchange points of view with each other – you don't need to address all answers to me.
8. Does anyone have any questions before we begin?
9. This is a non-smoking session.
10. Please put all cell phones and pagers on vibrate.

III. BACKGROUND (5 minutes)

1. Please take the first few minutes to get to know the person seated next to you.
2. I'm going to ask you to introduce him/her to the group. I'd like you to tell us something about that person such as their interests and hobbies, if they have a family, and how long they have lived in the area.

IV. Previous Experience - General (10-15 minutes)

1. Why did you decide on your major/minor?
2. How long have you been in support of that major?

- **Were there outside factors influencing your decision?**
- 3. **Do you have experience working with your major, such as internships, jobs and volunteer hours, that has helped you decide on your major/minor?**
- 4. **Did you have a deciding conflict between majors where you felt one major had more advantages than the other ? What advantages are these?**
- 5. **Has anyone switched from one majors/minor to another? If so, what was your reasoning behind the switch?**

V. Previous Experience- Specific (30-40 minutes)

1. **How knowledgeable do you consider yourself regarding The History major? What types of classes do they offer? Do they offer anything unique?**
2. **What is the image of this history major? What reputation does it have? What are some of its downfalls? What image and reputation do they have?**
3. **What do you value most about history classes?**
4. **Overall, how satisfied are you with the history classes?**
5. **Would you recommend history classes to others? Why or why not?**
6. **How interested do you consider yourself to this history department? What could they do to make you more interested?**
7. **Is there anything that would encourage you to make history your major/minor?**
8. **How many of you use the online resources available from this company? If not, why not? (Probe: with specifics of known online resource issues.)**

VI. COMMUNICATION (5 -10 minutes)

1. **Where do you get information about the different majors?**
2. **How well does your source of information relay information to you?**
3. **What's the best way for the history department to relay information to you?**

VII. ADVERTISING/PR (20 minutes)

1. **Have you seen any advertisements for history department? If so how did you see the advertisement?**
2. **Review communication materials.**
3. **What do you like about this ad? Is there anything you dislike?**
4. **Is it memorable? Does it seem credible?**

VIII. CLOSE (5 minutes)

Thank you for your comments and your time. This has been a valuable session. Focus groups are one technique that assists researchers in satisfying customer needs. Thank you again.

Tactic Example 1:

Press Release:

Media Contact:

Alex Faber

248-778-8367

faberal@mail.gvsu.edu

GVSU History Professors and Students Engage in Community Outreach to Grand Rapids Public

Schools

Grand Rapids, Michigan – This past week Grand Valley State University History Professors and Students are at Gerald R. Ford High School. These members of the college are at this school to engage students and promote going to college. They have been giving presentations on different degrees and the jobs capabilities of varying majors. This type of outreach has been done to help promote students want to build their future in college.

“This type of outreach doesn’t only engage these students to build their futures, but also helps guide them to majors and programs that are often not looked at” said Dr. Smith a Grand Valley State University History Professor.

These professors and students plan on visiting multiple schools in the Grand Rapids area. There are even plans for the upcoming fall where these individuals will go to the other side of the state and Chicago and promote college.

“It’s great being able to share what we are passionate about as well inspire future groups to chase their futures” Shared John Smith a current GVSU History Student.

###

About GVSU History Department: The department is a student centered program that is committed to scholarship and service. Their goal is to enlarge the state of knowledge in our field through our active engagement in intellectual and creative pursuits.

Tactic Example 2:

Tweet example for Twitter account:



A screenshot of a Twitter tweet from the account @GVSUHistory. The tweet content is: "While Fidel Castro had over 600 attempts on his life, find out more here: <https://www.gvsu.edu/history/>". The tweet includes standard Twitter interaction buttons: Reply, Retweet, Favorite, and More. The timestamp "June 16" and the option "Embed this Tweet" are also visible.

While Fidel Castro had over 600 attempts on his life, find out more here:
<https://www.gvsu.edu/history/>

Reply Retweet Favorite More

June 16 · Embed this Tweet

Tactic Example 3:

Sample Flyer



What careers are there with a degree in history?

- Lawayer
- Advertiser
- Museam Curator
- Legal Assistant
- And more!

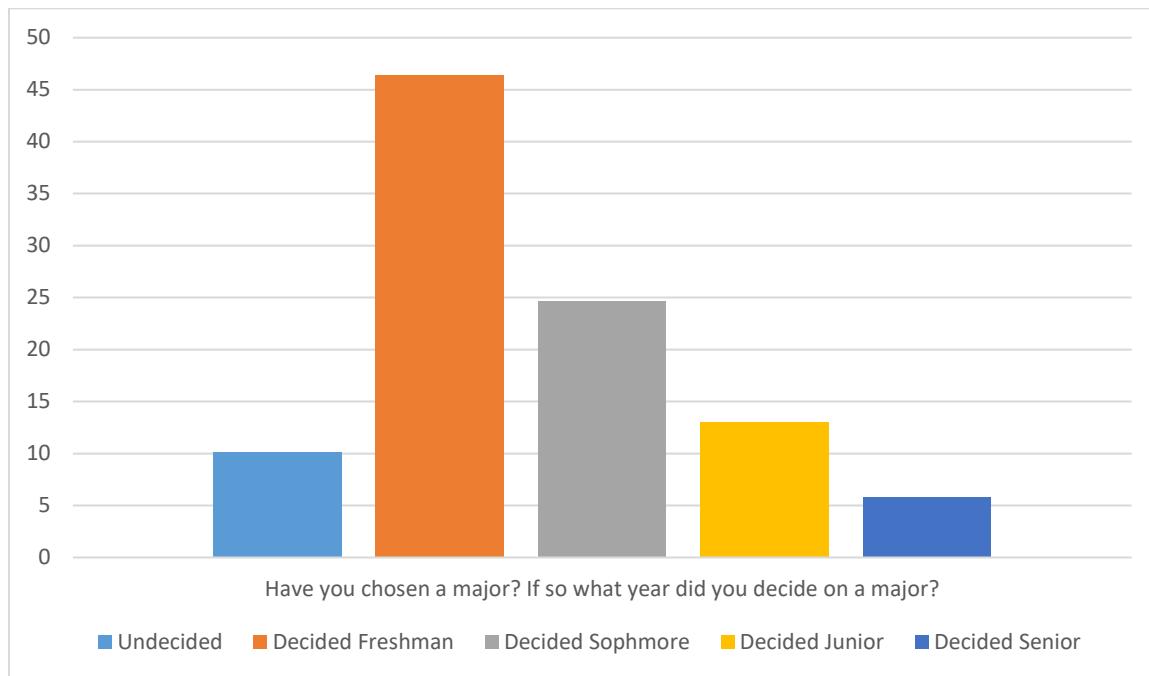


Want to know how the past effected today?
Enroll in classes today!

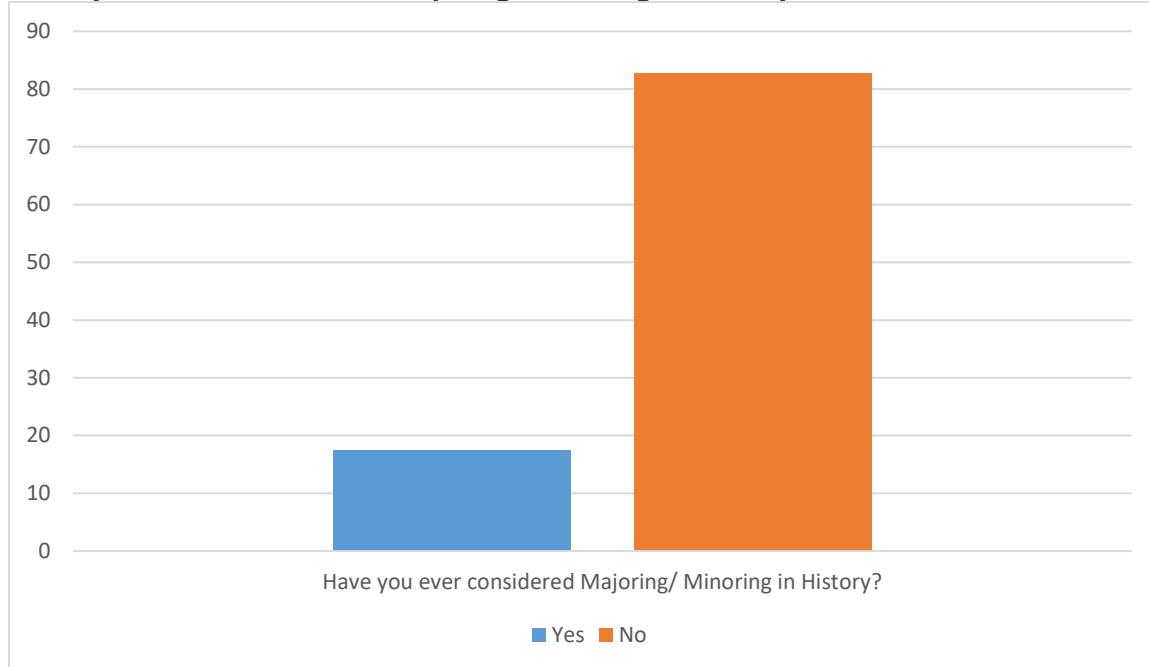
Find out more at our website: <https://www.gvsu.edu/history/>
Follow us on Twitter! @GVSUHistory

Survey Results

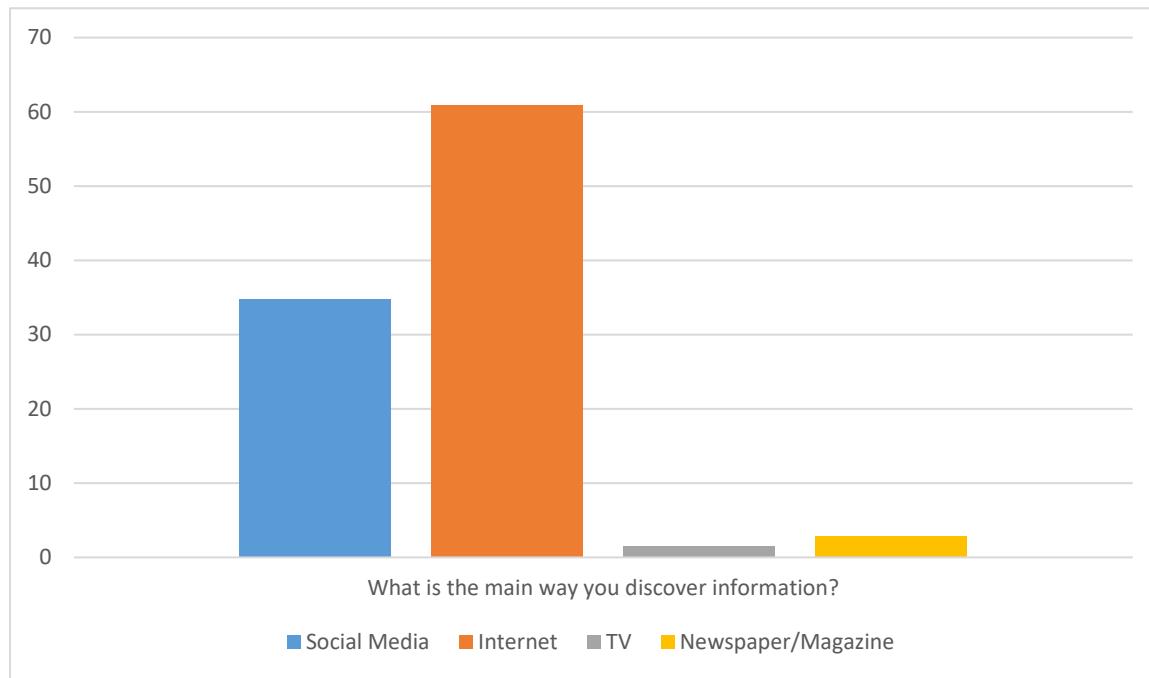
1. Have you decided on a major?



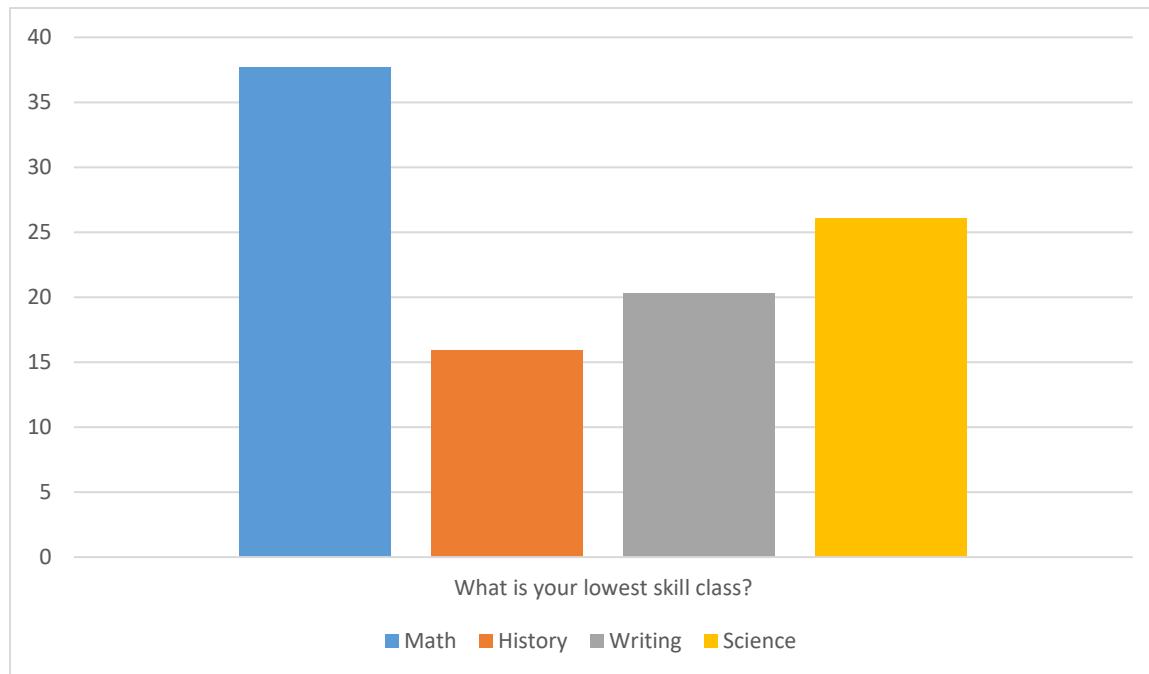
2. Have you ever considered Majoring/ Minoring in History



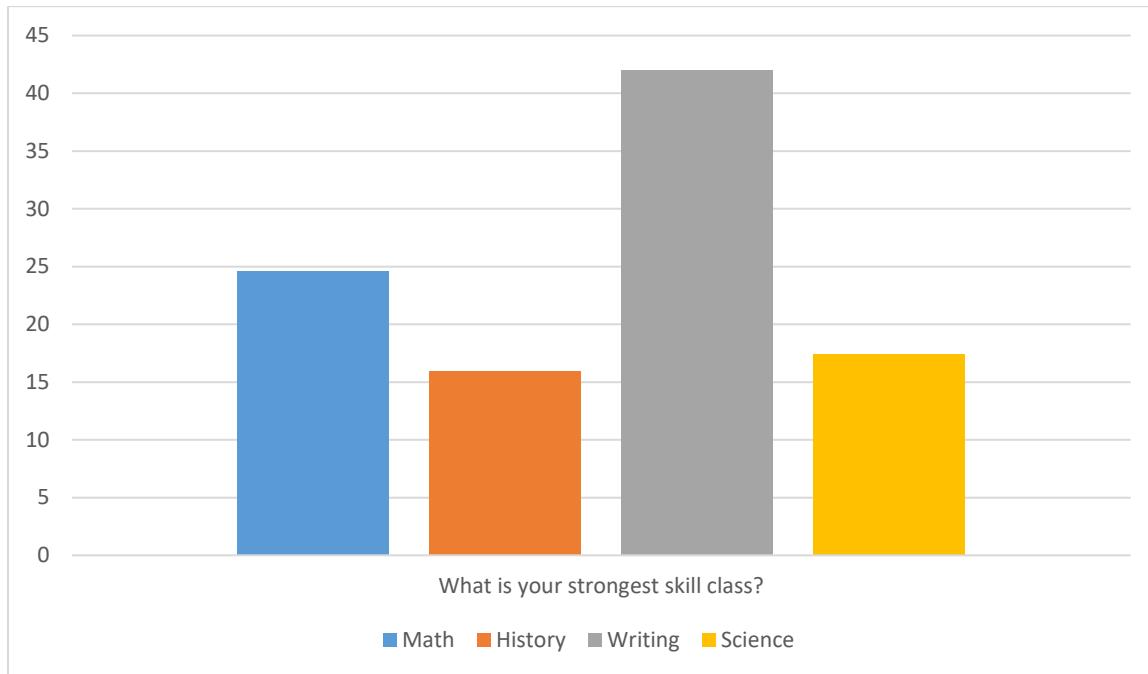
3. What is your main way of discovering information



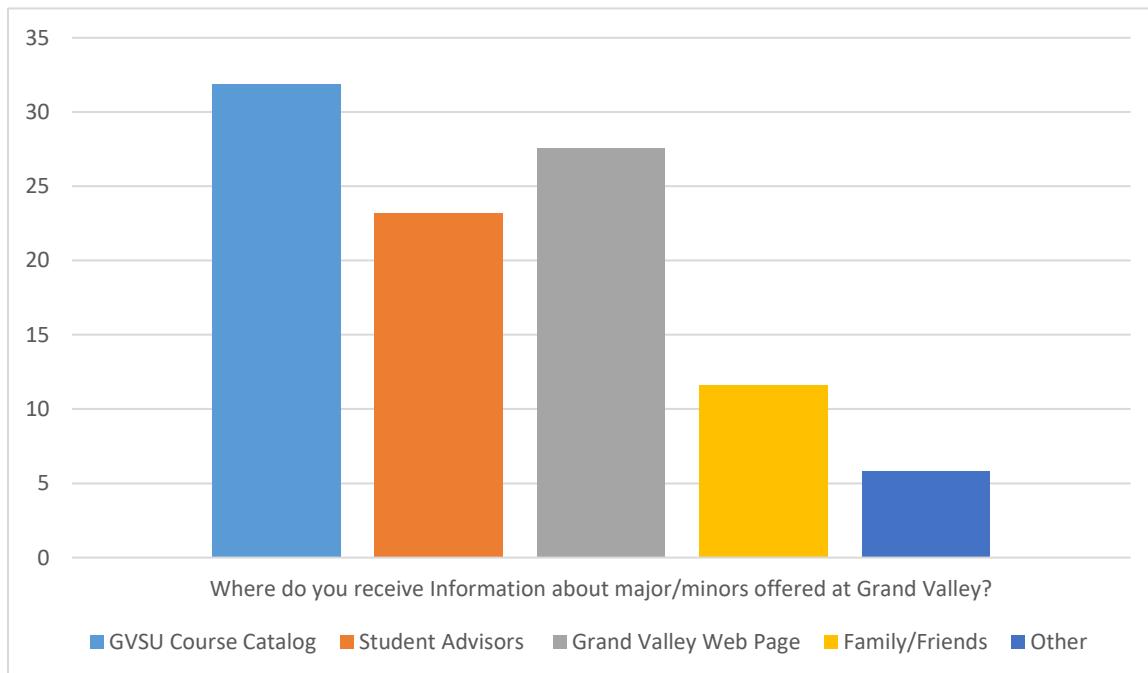
4. What is your weakest skill/class?



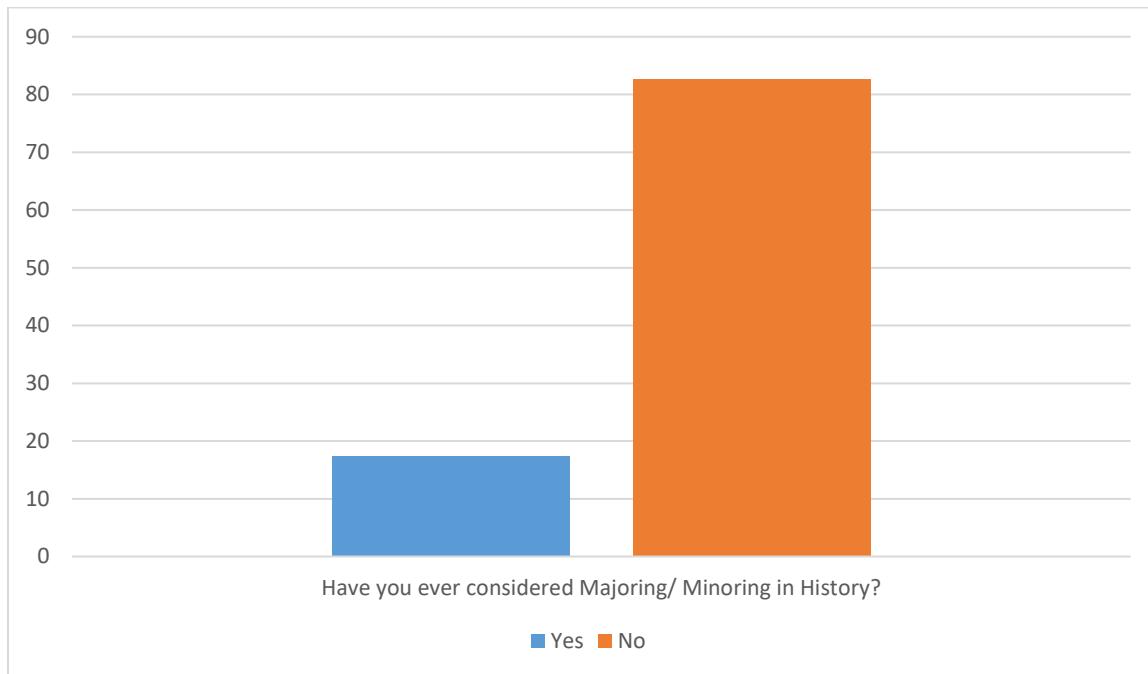
5. What is your strongest skill/class?



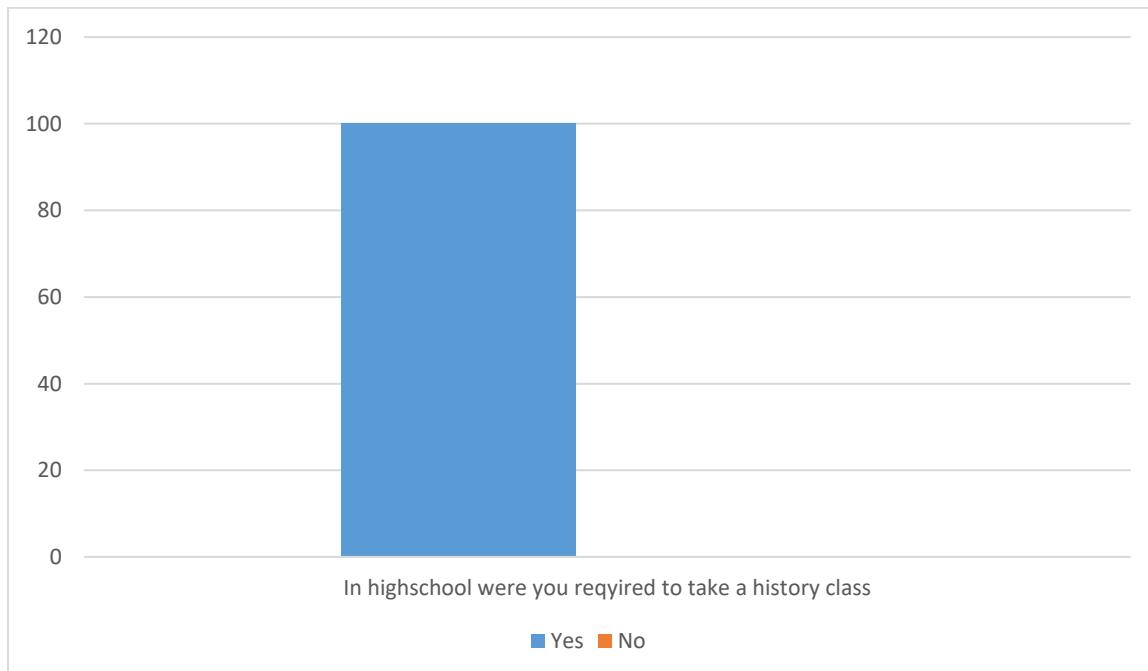
6. Where do you find information about Grand Valley?



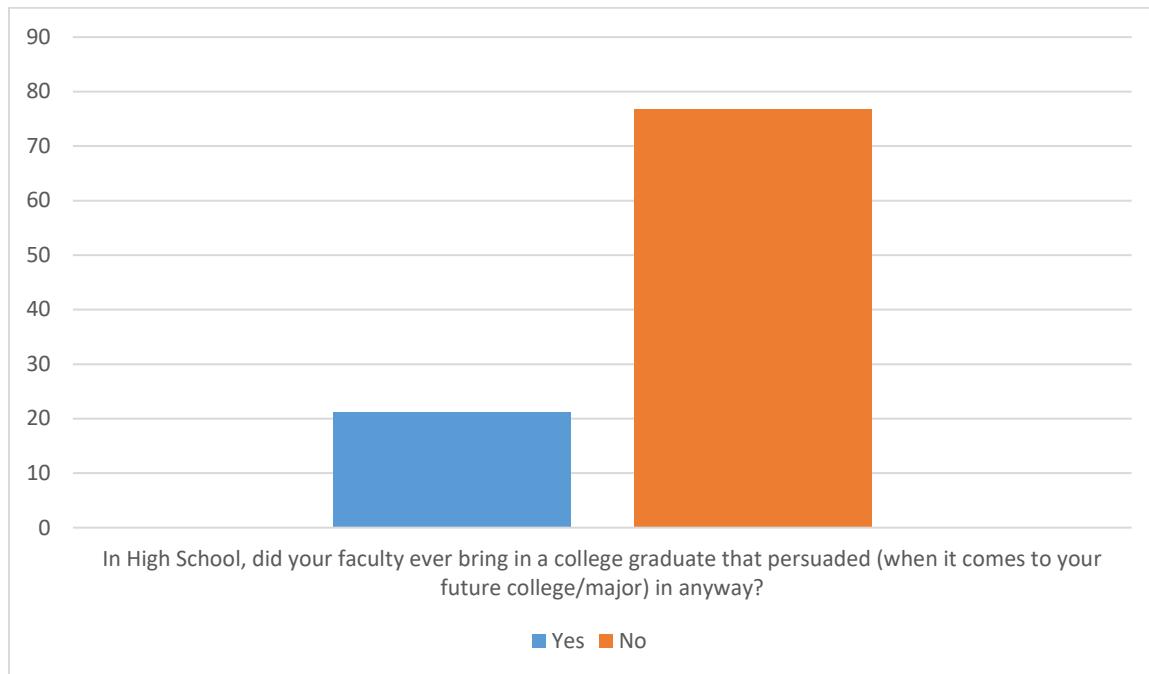
7. Have you considered majoring/minoring in history?



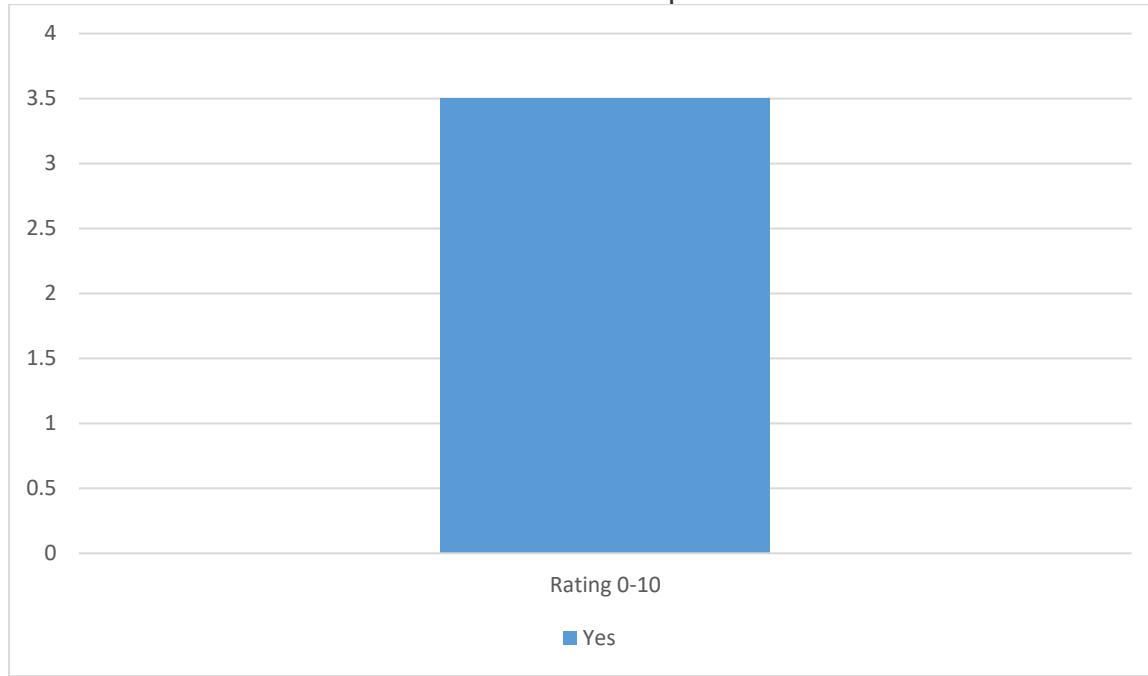
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Online Copy 12-11-16:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/9yanialtgiceunx/Final%20PR%20Campaign%20Format%202.0.docx?dl=0>