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Building Experience Beyond Academics

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THE CARL AND WINIFRED LEE HONORS COLLEGE
CERTIFICATE OF ORAL DEFENSE OF HONORS THESIS

Katherine Ragan, having been admitted to the Carl and Winifred Lee Honors College in the fall of 2008, successfully completed the Lee Honors College Thesis on June 27, 2012.

The title of the thesis is:

Building Experience Beyond Academics

Dr. Ann Veeck, Marketing

Mr. Jordan Holzgen, Creative Writing

Western Michigan University

Building Experience Beyond Academics

Lee Honors College Thesis

Katie Ragan

6/27/2012

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Executive Summary

Objective

The object of this study is to determine the perceived benefits of building experience beyond academics. Specific research objectives will compare and contrast benefits of getting involved with extracurricular activities and holding a job while in college such as leadership experience, skill development, and personal management.

Methodology

This study consisted of online survey through Question Pro with questions about building experience beyond academics such as getting involved in extracurricular activities or holding a job while in college. Western Michigan University students were invited to take the survey via emails from WMU professors and via social media sites such as Facebook.

Recommendations

The main recommendation would be for RSO, Career Services, and academic advising offices to redefine their marketing strategies based on student perceptions and information gathered in this research.

Limitations

Limitations may have included sampling errors, respondent errors, too small of a sample size, and time limitations.

Introduction

The inspiration for this thesis came from my experience on the executive board of Residence Housing Association on Western Michigan's campus. I have been involved in this organization all four years of my college career, but this past year was particularly difficult to recruit and retain members. Because of this, our executive board wanted to start an initiative to show students why it is important to become involved on campus and build their leadership beyond academics. I used this project as inspiration for my thesis topic.

Getting involved and building experience beyond academics is important to developing students on a holistic level. Academics provide the instructions and theory for life while involvement in co-curricular activities is a jumpstart in practice and application.

Think about learning to ride a bike riding a bike. You can read books and study about the principles of bike riding, but putting what you learn into practice by actually doing it is what helps you develop your skills and talents.

Morgan W. McCall, Jr.'s book *High Flyers: Developing the Next Generation of Leaders* talks using such experiences to develop the "right stuff" to become successful. McCall says,

*"Doing development" means understanding how experience teaches, what its lessons are, how to use it more effectively, and above all, how to link development to a company's business strategy so that people with the talent to lead the company are learning what they need to know.*¹

He continues on to say,

*...if executive leadership is mostly learned and the school from which it is learned is experience, then the "competencies" that differentiate leaders from followers are the result of accumulated experiences, not their antecedent.*²

This thesis intends to explore perceived benefits of getting involved in co-curricular activities compared to holding a job and academics. It will consider perceptions of Western Michigan University students based on demographics, academic standing, and involvement in co-curricular activities.

¹ McCall, Jr. M. W. (1998). *High flyers: Developing the next generation of leaders*. (p. 2). Boston, MA: Harbard Business School Press.

² McCall, Jr. M. W. (1998). *High flyers: Developing the next generation of leaders*. (p. 5). Boston, MA: Harbard Business School Press.

Methodology

Data Collection

The questionnaire was designed online using Question Pro. Western Michigan University students were invited to participate in the survey via emails from professors and through social media site invites such as Facebook. Students were able to complete the survey at their convenience from Monday, June 18, 2012 to Sunday, June 24, 2012. Data was downloaded from Question Pro on Monday, June 25, 2012.

Questionnaire Design

The survey included questions on

- What co-curricular activities students participated in
- Whether or not the student had held a previous leadership position
- Perceptions of benefits of extracurricular activities, holding a job on campus, and academics
- Demographics
- Academic status

There were 11 questions and an optional twelfth to provide an email address for the chance to win one of three \$20 gift cards in a drawing.

Sample Size

73 students participated in the online survey. Only Western Michigan University students enrolled during the Spring 2012 semester were permitted to participate in the survey.

Findings

Frequencies

Perceived Benefits of Academics

Perceived Benefits of Holding a Job

Perceived Benefits of Extracurricular Activities

Perceived Benefits Compared

Frequencies

73 Western Michigan University students participated in the survey.

Participated in Activities

Extracurricular Activities	50
Greek Life	6
University Sports	10
All sports	20
Community Service	16
Sports	17
On-Campus Job	27
Any job	57
Off-campus job	31
None. I am not involved in anything other than academics.	0
Other _____	4

Held any leadership positions

Yes	52
No	20

Gender

Male	34
Female	38
Other	0

Marital status

Single	71
Married	1

Current living situation

On Campus	19
Off campus within or on city limits (with parents, guardian, or spouse)	6
Off campus within or on city limits (not with parents, guardian, or spouse)	34

Off campus outside city limits	13
--------------------------------	----

Academic year during the Spring 2012 semester

Freshman	1
Sophomore	2
Junior	31
Senior	34
Graduate	4

Academic college(s)

College of Arts and Sciences	20
College of Aviation	2
Haworth College of Business	47
College of Education and Human Development	5
College of Engineering and Applied Sciences	4
College of Fine Arts	2
College of Health and Human Services	1
Lee Honors College	14
Graduate College	-

Perceived Benefits of Academics

Below is a chart of possible benefits of academics. Benefits are listed from most perceived as a benefit of academics to least perceived. The average ratings are listed on top of each of the bars.

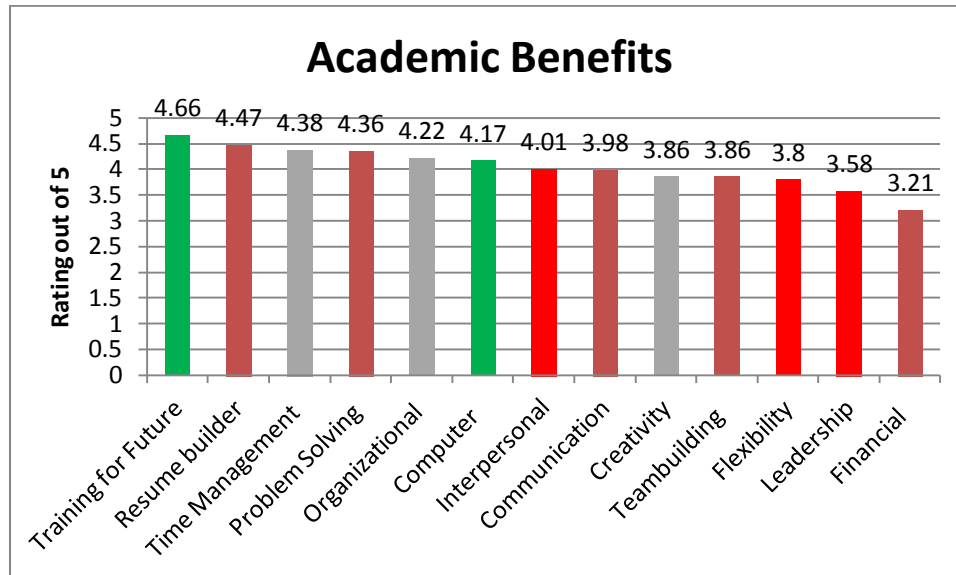
KEY TO BENEFIT CHARTS

GREEN means academics had the highest rating for this benefit compared with holding a job and extracurricular activities.

RED means academics had the lowest rating for this benefit compared with holding a job and extracurricular activities.

GREY means that we cannot be 95% confident that there is a significant difference in the ratings between academics, holding a job, and extracurricular activities.

FIGURE 1: ACADEMIC BENEFITS



Perceived Benefits of Holding a Job

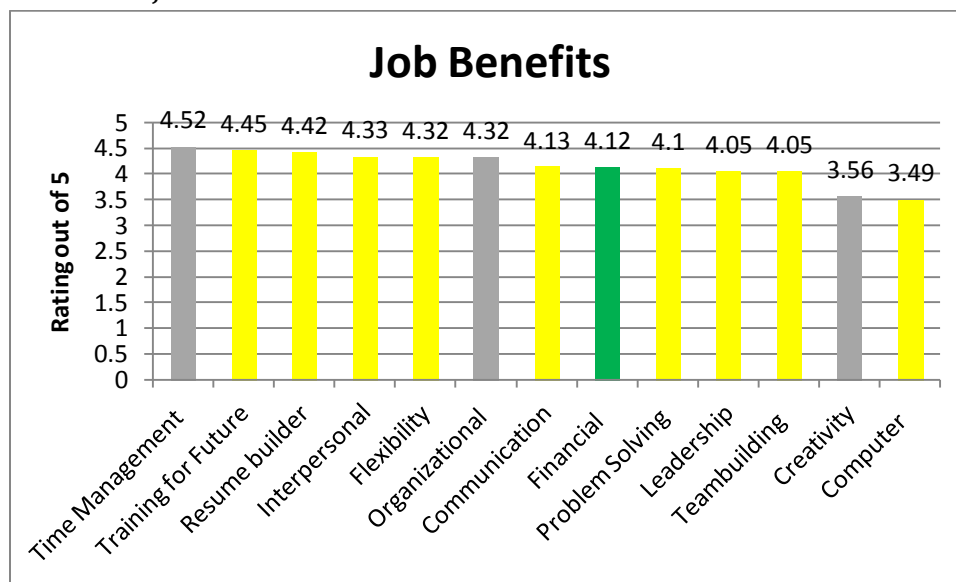
Below is a chart of possible benefits of holding a job while in school. Benefits are listed from most perceived as a benefit of academics to least perceived. The average ratings are listed on top of each of the bars.

KEY TO BENEFIT CHARTS

GREEN means holding a job had the highest rating for this benefit compared with academics and extracurricular activities.

GREY means that we cannot be 95% confident that there is a significant difference in the ratings between academics, holding a job, and extracurricular activities.

FIGURE 2: JOB BENEFITS



Perceived Benefits of Extracurricular Activities

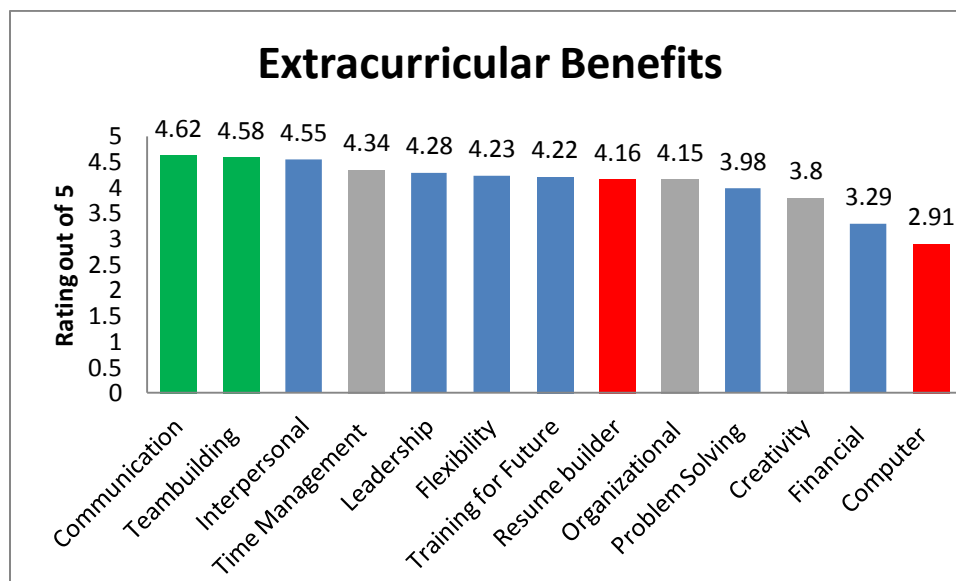
Below is a chart of possible benefits of extracurricular activities. Benefits are listed from most perceived as a benefit of academics to least perceived. The average ratings are listed on top of each of the bars.

GREEN means extracurricular activities had the highest rating for this benefit compared with holding a job and academics.

RED means extracurricular activities had the lowest rating for this benefit compared with holding a job and academics.

GREY means that we cannot be 95% confident that there is a significant difference in the ratings between academics, holding a job, and extracurricular activities.

FIGURE 3: EXTRACURRICULAR BENEFITS



Perceived Benefits Compared

Comparing benefits between academics, holding a job, and extracurricular activities

Western Michigan University students were asked to indicate their perception on a 5-point scale, with 1=not at all a benefit and 5=definitely a benefit, of how much they perceived the following list of skills to be a benefit of academics, holding a job on campus while in school, and extracurricular activities.

- Communication Skills
- Computer Skills
- Creativity/Innovation
- Financial Management Skills
- Flexibility/Adaptability
- Information, knowledge, or training acquired can apply to future
- Interpersonal skills (relating well to others)
- Leadership/Management Experience
- Looks good on a resume
- Organizational skills
- Problem-solving/Analytical Skills
- Teamwork/Teambuilding Skills
- Time Management

A paired samples t-test was conducted on each of the skills to see if there was a difference between perceptions of a certain skill between academics, holding a job on campus while in school, and extracurricular activities. For each skill, a graph has been made to compare differences in ratings between academics, holding a job, and extracurricular activities.

KEY TO COMPARISON CHARTS

- The **RED** bar indicates academics.
- The **ORANGE** arrow indicates the significant relationship between academics and holding a job.
- The **YELLOW** bar indicates holding a job.
- The **GREEN** arrow indicates the significant relationship between holding a job and extracurricular activities.

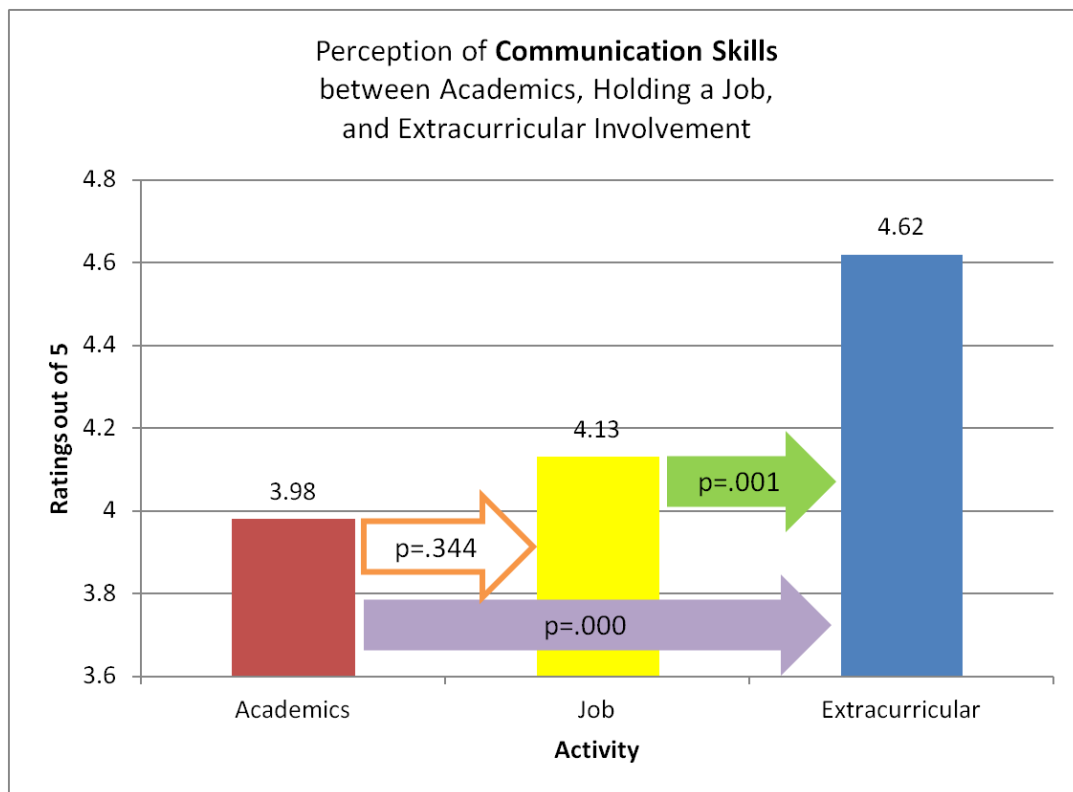
- The **BLUE** bar indicates extracurricular activities.
- The **PURPLE** arrow indicates the significant difference between extracurricular activities and academics.
- **SOLID colored** arrows indicate a significant difference with 95% confidence. **OUTLINED** arrows mean we cannot say with 95% confidence if there is a significant difference.

Communication Skills

We can say with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between how much communication skills are perceived as a benefit of academics and extracurricular activities and of holding a job and extracurricular activities ($p=.000$ between academics and extracurricular activities and $p=.001$ between holding a job and extracurricular activities). Students view extracurricular activities (4.62) to more likely to provide communication skills than holding a job (4.13) and academics (3.98).

We cannot say with 95% confidence that there is a statistical difference between holding a job and academics ($p=.344$ between holding a job and academics). Below are the average ratings on how much communication skills are perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular involvement and the p-values for each.

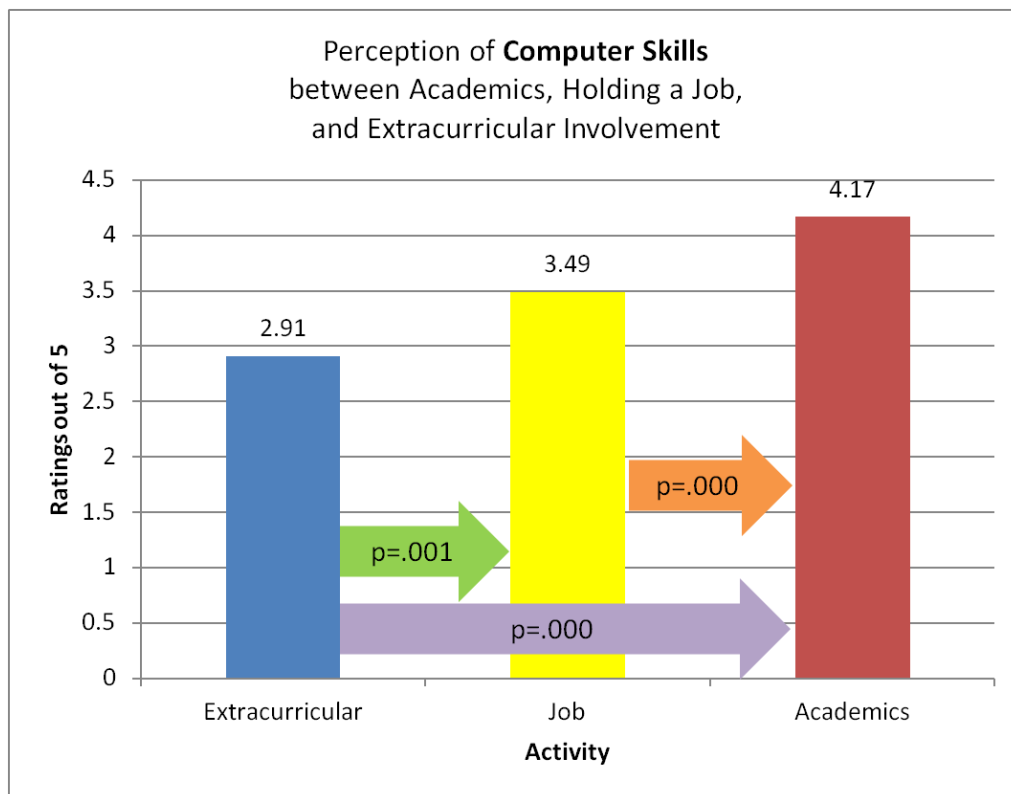
FIGURE 4: PERCEPTION OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS AS A BENEFIT



Computer Skills

We can say with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between how much computer skills are perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular activities ($p=.000$ between academics and extracurricular activities, $p=.001$ between holding a job and extracurricular activities, and $p=.000$ between holding a job and academics). Students view academics (4.17) to more likely to provide computer skills than holding a job (3.49) and holding a job more likely than extracurricular activities (2.91). Below are the average ratings on how much communication skills are perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular involvement and the p-values for each.

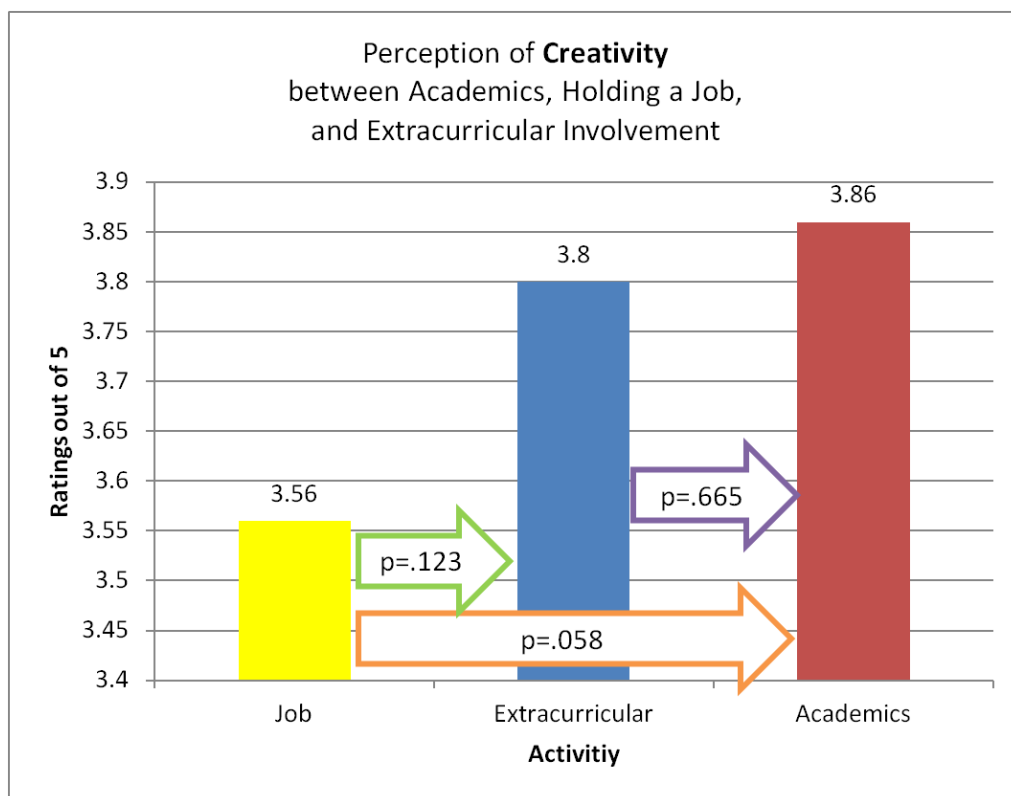
FIGURE 5: PERCEPTION OF COMPUTER SKILLS AS A BENEFIT



Creativity/Innovation

We cannot say with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between how much creativity/innovation is perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular activities ($p=.058$ between academics and holding a job, $p=.123$ between holding a job and extracurricular activities, and $p=.665$ between extracurricular activities and academics). Below are the average ratings on how much creativity/innovation is perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular involvement and the p values for each.

FIGURE 6: PERCEPTION OF CREATIVITY AS A BENEFIT

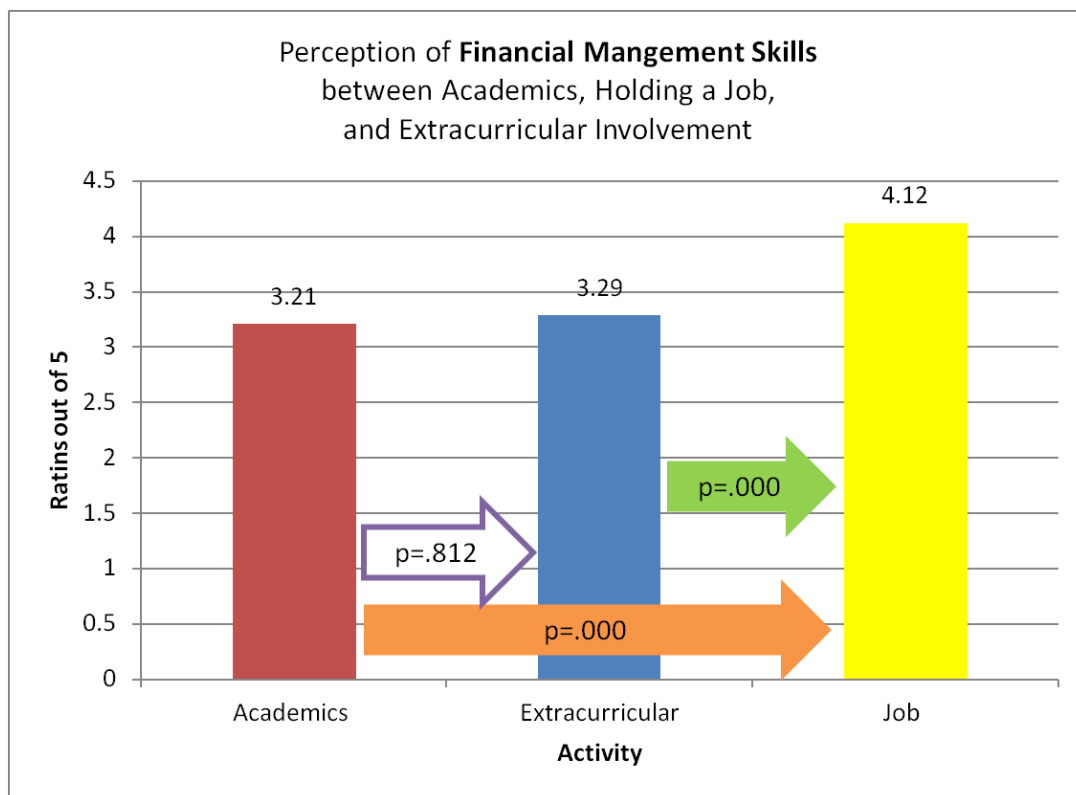


Financial Management Skills

We can say with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between how much financial management skills are perceived as a benefit of academics and holding a job and of holding a job and extracurricular activities ($p=.000$ between academics and holding a job and $p=.000$ between holding a job and extracurricular activities). Students view holding a job (4.12) to more likely to provide financial management skills than extracurricular activities (3.29) and extracurricular activities to be more likely than academics.

We cannot say with 95% confidence that there is a statistical difference between extracurricular activities and academics ($p=.812$ between extracurricular activities and academics). Below are the average ratings on how much financial management skills are perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular involvement and the p-values for each.

FIGURE 7: PERCEPTION OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS AS A BENEFIT

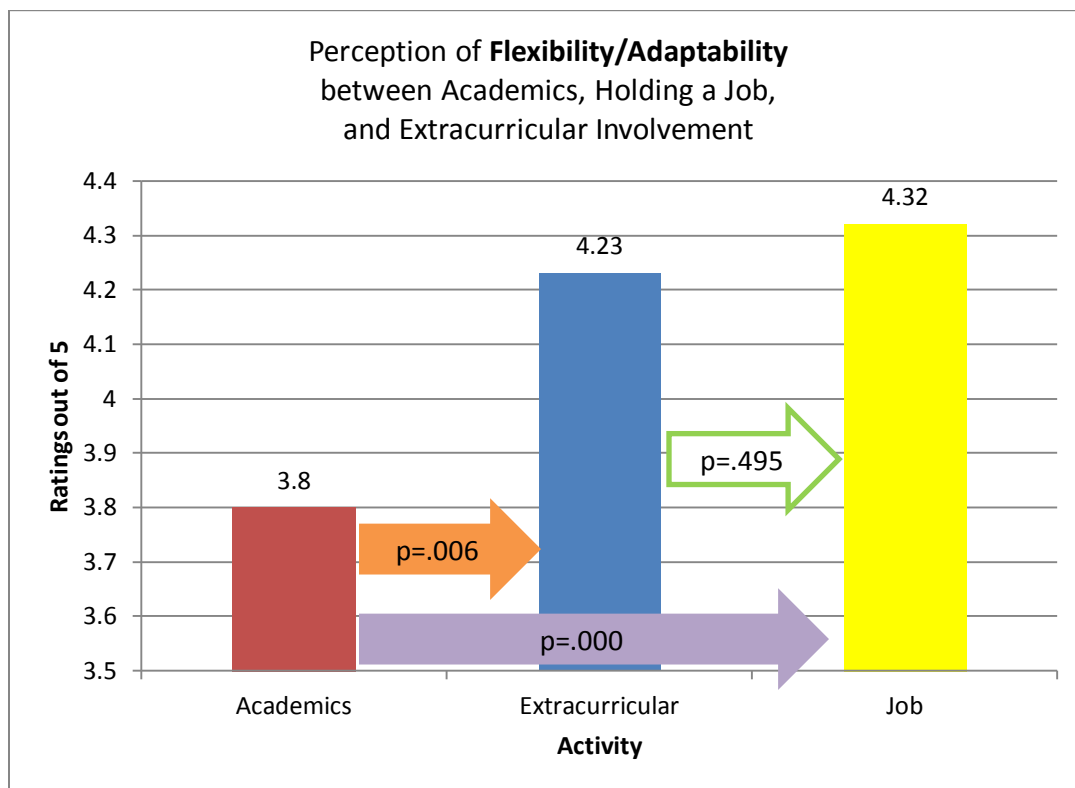


Flexibility/Adaptability

We can say with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between how much flexibility/adaptability is perceived as a benefit of academics and holding a job and of academics and extracurricular activities ($p=.000$ between academics and holding a job and $p=.006$ between academics and extracurricular activities). Students view holding a job (4.32) and extracurricular activities (4.23) to more likely to provide flexibility/adaptability than academics (3.80).

We cannot say with 95% confidence that there is a statistical difference between extracurricular activities and holding a job while in school ($p=.495$ between extracurricular activities and holding a job). Below are the average ratings on how much flexibility/adaptability is perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular involvement and the p-values for each.

FIGURE 8: PERCEPTION OF FLEXIBILITY/ADAPTABILITY AS A BENEFIT

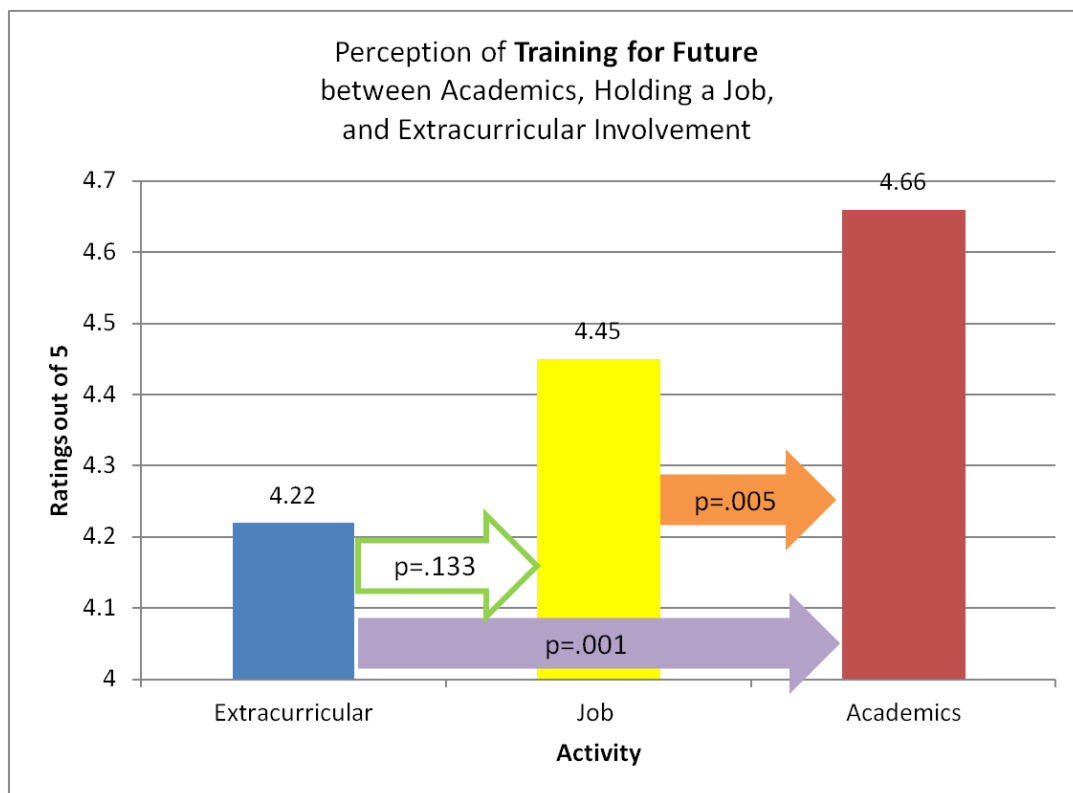


Information, knowledge, or training acquired can apply to future

We can say with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between how much information, knowledge, or training acquired are perceived as a benefit of academics and holding a job and of academics and extracurricular activities ($p=.005$ between academics and holding a job and $p=.001$ between academics and extracurricular activities). Students view academics (4.66) to more likely to provide information, knowledge, or training for the future than extracurricular activities (4.22) and holding a job (4.45).

We cannot say with 95% confidence that there is a statistical difference between extracurricular activities and holding a job while in school ($p=.133$ between extracurricular activities and holding a job). Below are the average ratings on how much information, knowledge, or training for the future are perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular involvement and the p-values for each.

FIGURE 9: PERCEPTION OF TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE AS A BENEFIT

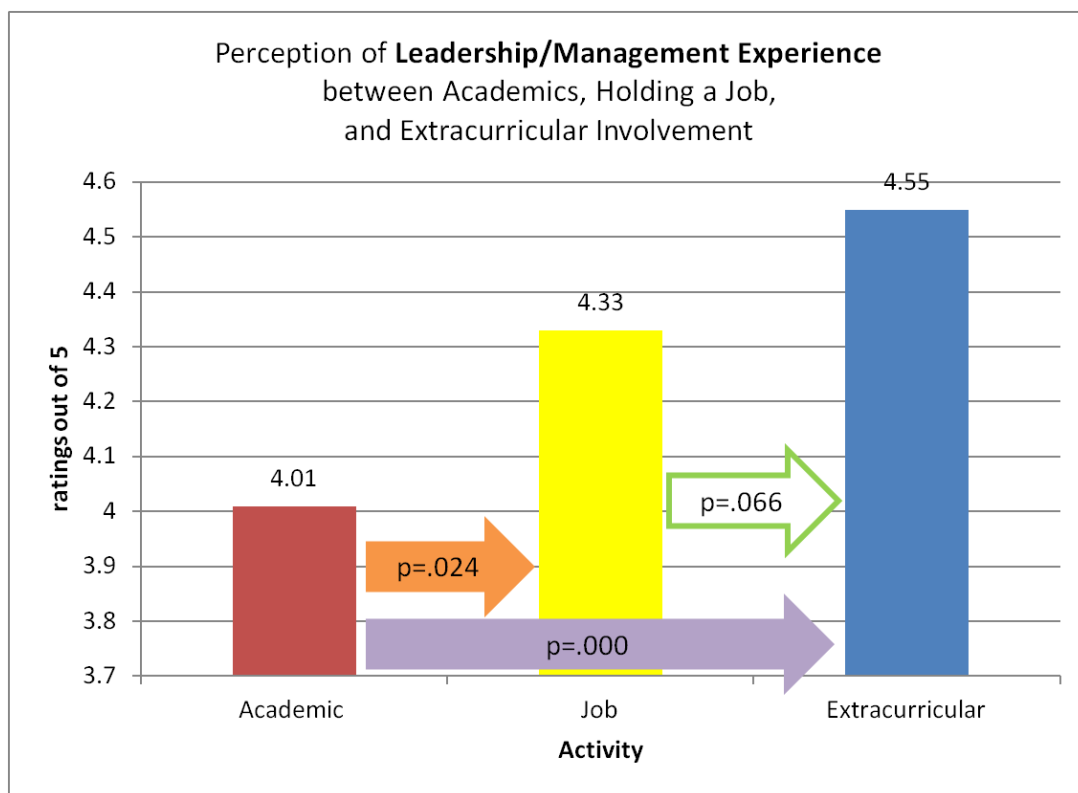


Interpersonal skills (relating well to others)

We can say with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between how much interpersonal skills are perceived as a benefit of academics and holding a job and of academics and extracurricular activities ($p=.024$ between academics and holding a job and $p=.000$ between academics and extracurricular activities). Students view extracurricular activities (4.55) to more likely to provide interpersonal skills than academics (4.01) and holding a job (4.33) more likely than academics.

We cannot say with 95% confidence that there is a statistical difference between extracurricular activities and holding a job while in school ($p=.066$ between extracurricular activities and holding a job). Below are the average ratings on how much interpersonal skills are perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular involvement and the p-values for each.

FIGURE 10: PERCEPTION OF INTERPERSONAL SKILLS AS A BENEFIT

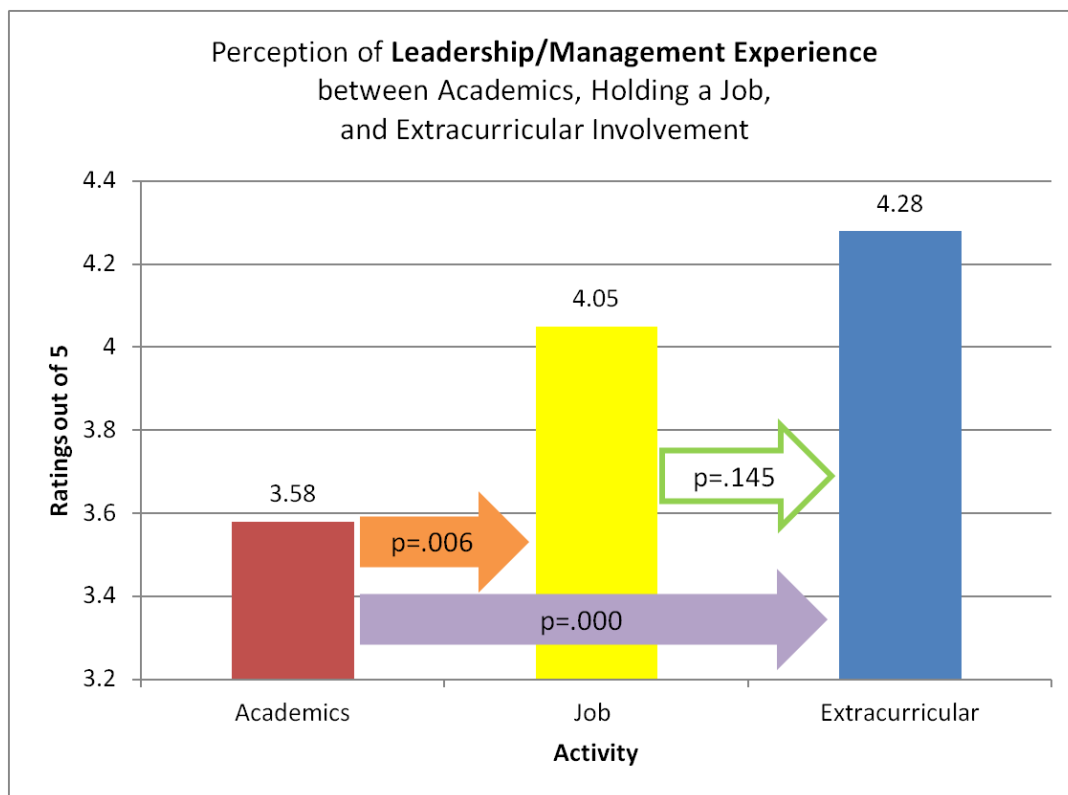


Leadership/Management Experience

We can say with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between how much leadership/management experience is perceived as a benefit of academics and holding a job and of academics and extracurricular activities ($p=.006$ between academics and holding a job and $p=.000$ between academics and extracurricular activities). Students view extracurricular activities (4.28) to more likely to provide leadership/management experience than academics (3.58) and holding a job (4.05) more likely than academics.

We cannot say with 95% confidence that there is a statistical difference between extracurricular activities and holding a job while in school ($p=.145$ between extracurricular activities and holding a job). Below are the average ratings on how much leadership/management experience is perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular involvement and the p-values for each.

FIGURE 11: PERCEPTION OF LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE AS A BENEFIT

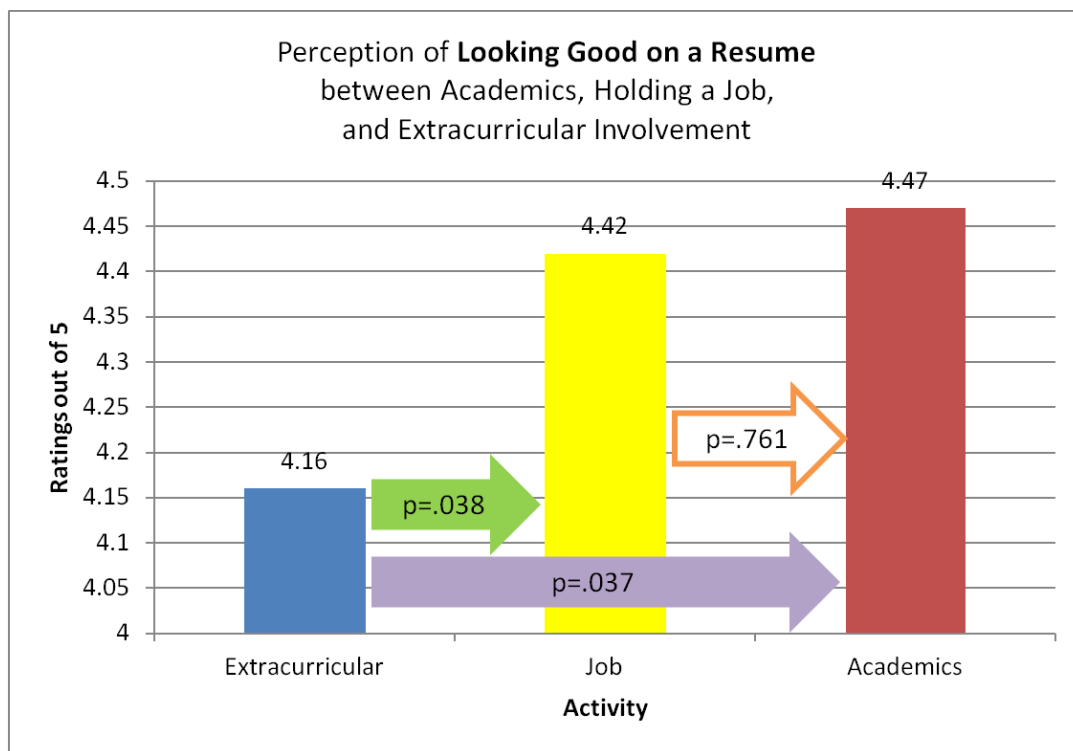


Looks good on a resume

We can say with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between how much looking good on a resume is perceived as a benefit of extracurricular activities and holding a job and of academics and extracurricular activities ($p=.038$ between extracurricular activities and holding a job and $p=.037$ between academics and extracurricular activities). Students view academics (4.47) to more likely look good on a resume than extracurricular activities (4.16) and holding a job (4.42) to more likely look good on a resume than extracurricular activities.

We cannot say with 95% confidence that there is a statistical difference between academics and holding a job while in school ($p=.761$ between academics and holding a job). Below are the average ratings on how much looking good on a resume is perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular involvement and the p-values for each.

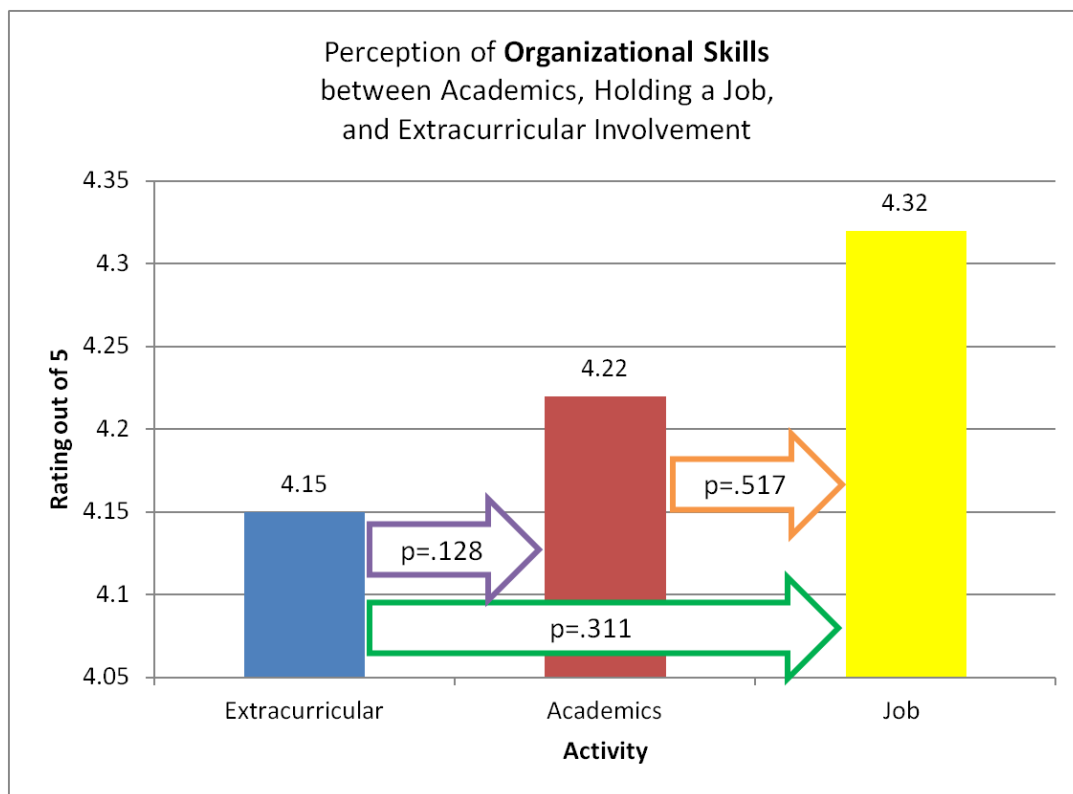
FIGURE 12: PERCEPTION OF LOOKING GOOD ON A RESUME AS A BENEFIT



Organizational skills

We cannot say with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between how much organizational skills are perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular activities ($p=.517$ between academics and holding a job, $p=.311$ between holding a job and extracurricular activities, and $p=.128$ between extracurricular activities and academics). Below are the average ratings on how much organizational skills are perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular involvement and the p values for each.

FIGURE 13: PERCEPTION OF ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS AS A BENEFIT

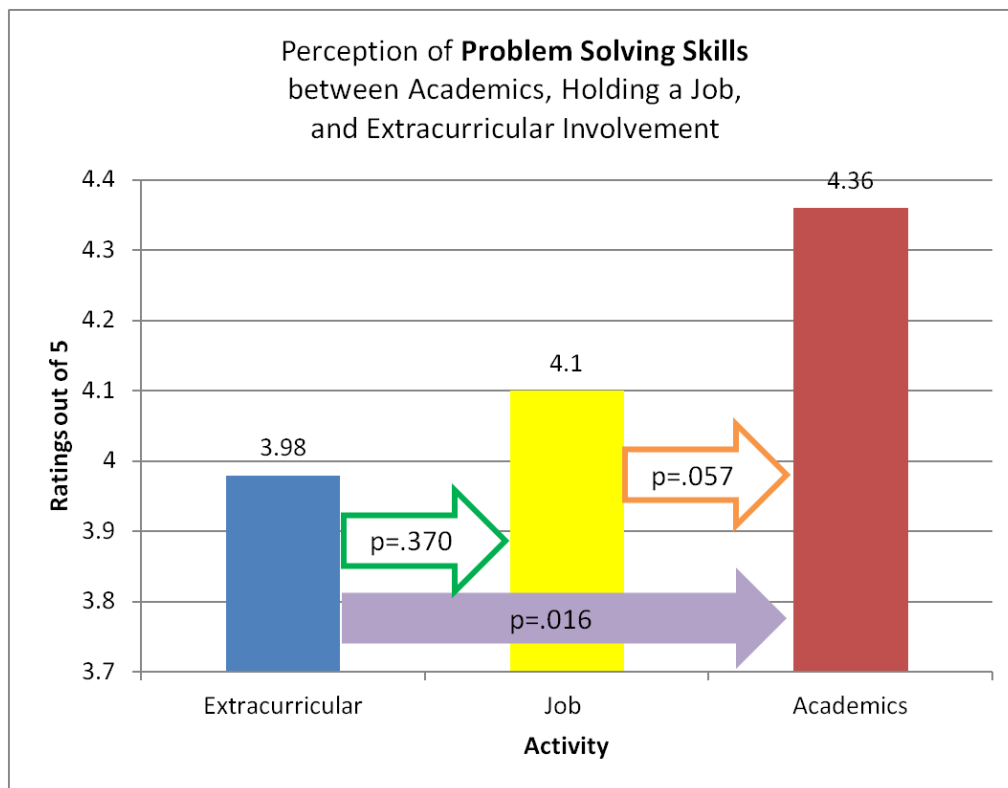


Problem-solving/Analytical Skills

We can say with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between how much problem-solving/analytical skills are perceived as a benefit of academics and extracurricular activities ($p=.016$ between academics and extracurricular activities). Students view extracurricular activities (3.98) to more likely produce problem-solving/analytical skills than academics (4.36).

We cannot say with 95% confidence that there is a statistical difference between academics and holding a job while in school or between holding a job and extracurricular activities ($p=.057$ between academics and holding a job and $p=.370$ between holding a job and extracurricular activities). Below are the average ratings on how much problem-solving/analytical skills are perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular involvement.

FIGURE 14: PERCEPTION OF PROBLEM SOLVING/ANALYTICAL SKILLS AS A BENEFIT

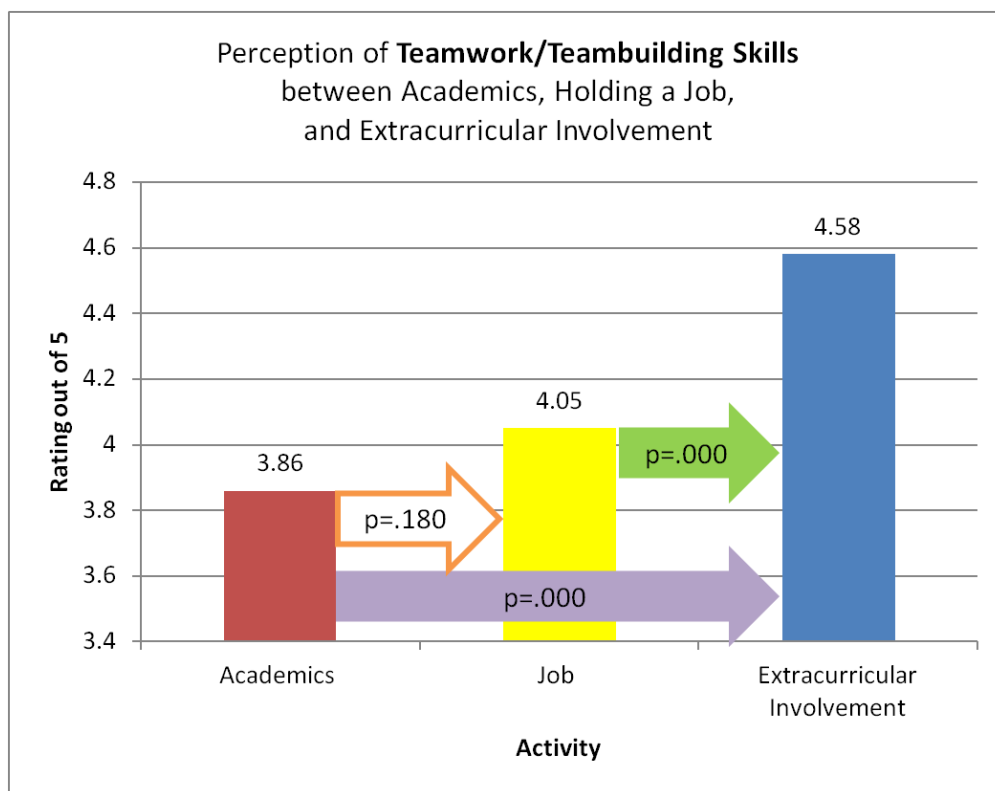


Teamwork/Teambuilding Skills

We can say with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between how much teamwork/teambuilding skills are perceived as a benefit of extracurricular activities and holding a job and of academics and extracurricular activities ($p=.000$ between extracurricular activities and holding a job and $p=.000$ between academics and extracurricular activities). Students view extracurricular activities (4.58) to more likely produce teamwork/teambuilding skills than holding a job (4.05) or academics (3.86).

We cannot say with 95% confidence that there is a statistical difference between academics and holding a job while in school ($p=.180$ between academics and holding a job). Below are the average ratings on how much teamwork/teambuilding skills are perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular involvement.

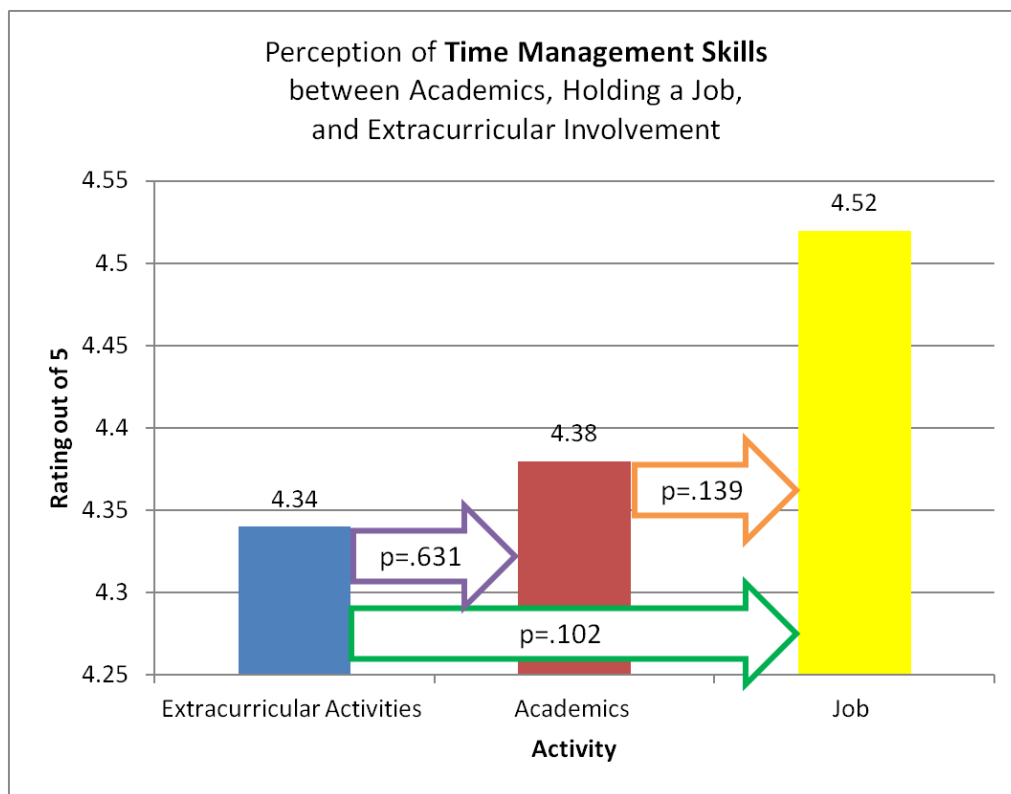
FIGURE 15: PERCEPTION OF TEAMWORK/TEAMBUILDING SKILLS AS A BENEFIT



Time Management

We cannot say with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between how much time management is perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular activities ($p=.139$ between academics and holding a job, $p=.102$ between holding a job and extracurricular activities, and $p=.631$ between extracurricular activities and academics). Below are the average ratings on how much time management is perceived as a benefit of academics, holding a job, and extracurricular involvement and the p values for each.

FIGURE 16: PERCEPTION OF TIME MANGEMENT AS A BENEFIT



Limitations

This section contains limitations of the research.

Sampling Error

The methods of distribution for this survey may have gathered a bias population who are more involved than others would have been had the survey been distributed differently or at a different time of year.

Respondent Error

Participants could have intentionally or unintentionally responded inaccurately. Some questions may have been misleading or confusing to the participant.

Size of Sample and Time

This survey was administered at a less than ideal time for a large variety of WMU students to participate. Possibly a different time of year could provide a larger sample and better, more accurate feedback.

Recommendations

This section contains recommendations based on the analyzed research.

Although more research may have to be done on what type of benefits or skills student would like to acquire, Registered Student Organizations, Career Services, and academic advising offices may find this information useful to know how their fields are currently perceived. Based on the given perceptions, these offices could challenge or embrace these perceived benefits to build a better marketing strategy for themselves.

If further research were to be done, a recommendation might be to broaden the sample size beyond WMU students to, for example, an actual workplace to gather what actual benefits are compared to perceived. Including alumni who have been through these experiences and are now applying them in future careers would be the next step in this process..

Acknowledgements

Dr. Ann Veeck

For being my Thesis Mentor and for her patience, guidance, and assistance through the process of completing this thesis

Jordan Holzen

For all his love and support in everything I do

Residence Housing Association 2011-12 Executive Board

For inspiring the “Building Experience Beyond Academics” topic

Appendix

HSIRB Project Approval

Informed Consent Document

Questionnaire

Original Research Proposal

HSIRB Project Approval

Date: June 18, 2012

To: Ann Veeck, Principal Investigator
Katie Ragan, Student Investigator for thesis

From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 12-05-25

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project titled “Importance of Building Experience beyond Academics” has been **approved** under the **exempt** category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note: This research may **only** be conducted exactly in the form it was approved.

You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project (e.g., ***you must request a post approval change to enroll subjects beyond the number stated in your application under “Number of subjects you want to complete the study”.*** Failure to obtain approval for changes will result in a protocol deviation. In addition, if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

Reapproval of the project is required if it extends beyond the termination date stated below. The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: June 18, 2013

Informed Consent Document

Western Michigan University
Lee Honors College

Principal Investigator: Dr. Ann Veeck

Student Investigator: Katherine Ragan

Title of Study: Building Experience Beyond Academics

You have been invited to participate in a research project titled "Building Experience Beyond Academics." This project will serve as Katherine Ragan's thesis for the requirements for undergraduate graduation from the Lee Honor's College of Western Michigan University (WMU). This consent document will explain the purpose of this research project and will go over all of the time commitments, the procedures used in the study, and the risks and benefits of participating in this research project. Please read this consent form carefully and completely and please ask any questions if you need more clarification.

What are we trying to find out in this study?

The object of this study is to determine the perceived benefits of building experience beyond academics. Specific research objectives will compare and contrast benefits of getting involved with extracurricular activities and holding a job while in college such as leadership and management training, skill development, and social and networking opportunities and how these experiences can assist in future careers.

Who can participate in this study?

Western Michigan University students will be asked to assist in the research since this group is most affected by the thesis topic. You must be a Western Michigan University student to participate in the survey.

Where will this study take place?

The survey will be available online via Question Pro. Surveys will be promoted through WMU professor emails and online networking sites such as Facebook. A link to the surveys will be provided in the invitations.

What is the time commitment for participating in this study?

The online survey will take no more than ten minutes to complete and may only be completed once per participant. You may complete the survey online at any time until June 17, 2012 by clicking on the provided link.

What will you be asked to do if you choose to participate in this study?

The online survey will involve questions on your demographics and your perceptions on benefits of extracurricular involvement compared with holding a job and academics. For the demographic portion of the survey, you will be asked to select answers that best apply to you. Other portions of the survey will ask you to rate your perception of skills or benefits in relation to extracurricular involvement, holding a job, and academics. Your information will be kept confidential and no one else except Dr. Veeck will have access to the information.

What information is being measured during the study?

Data will be analyzed using a number of statistical techniques including descriptive statistics, ANOVA, t-tests, chi-square analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to compare and contrast benefits of getting involved with extracurricular activities and holding a job while in college such as leadership and management training, skill development, and social and networking opportunities and how these experiences can assist in future careers.

What are the risks of participating in this study and how will these risks be minimized?

The only perceived risk to you is the time lost completing the survey. Students' names will never be linked to the data and information will be kept confidential.

What are the benefits of participating in this study?

There will be no direct benefit to you other than a chance to win one of the three \$20 gift cards if you choose to participate. Your answers are likely to help encourage more students to get involved on campus beyond just academics to build their experiences to help in future careers.

Are there any costs associated with participating in this study?

The only cost associated with participating in this study is the time lost completing the survey. Students' names will never be linked to the data and information will be kept confidential.

Is there any compensation for participating in this study?

You may voluntarily submit your email addresses on the last page of the survey to be eligible for a drawing of three gift cards of \$20 each. Students will need to complete the survey to be

eligible for the drawing. The email addresses will be delinked from the survey by Dr. Ann Veeck prior to data analysis. Students' names will never be linked to the data.

Who will have access to the information collected during this study?

Only Dr. Veeck and Katherine Ragan will have access to the data. The email addresses will be delinked from the survey by Dr. Veeck prior to data analysis. Students' names will never be linked to the data.

Analysis of the collected data will be used to write and present a thesis defense and report to fulfill the thesis requirement to graduate from the Lee Honors College at Western Michigan University. The results may be shared within departments of Western Michigan University and could be published in an academic journal.

What if you want to stop participating in this study?

You may take as much time as you need to reflect on whether you want to participate or not and may talk to anyone you feel comfortable talking with about the research. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. There will be no repercussions for choosing not to participate.

You can choose to stop participating in the study at anytime for any reason. You will not suffer any prejudice or penalty by your decision to stop your participation. You will experience NO consequences either academically or personally if you choose to withdraw from this study.

The investigator can also decide to stop your participation in the study without your consent. Should you have any questions prior to or during the study, you can contact the primary investigator, Katherine Ragan at (269)567-8565 or katherine.m.ragan@wmich.edu. You may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Institutional Review Board at 269-387-8293 or the Vice President for Research at 269-387-8298 if questions arise during the course of the study.

This consent has been approved by the Western Michigan University Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) on 6/19/2012.

Do not participate after 7/19/2012.

By clicking "I Agree" below to participate in this survey I agree I have read this informed consent document. The risks and benefits have been explained to me. I agree to take part in this study.

☐ I agree

Questionnaire

1. Which of the following activities do you participate in on a regular basis during the academic year? (At least 2 or 3 times per month) [Check all that apply.]
 - a. Extracurricular Activities
 - b. Greek Life
 - c. University Sports
 - d. Community Service
 - e. Sports
 - f. On-Campus Job
 - g. Off-campus job
 - h. None. I am not involved in anything other than academics.
 - i. Other _____

2. If you checked "None" for the previous question, please comment on why you have chosen not to be involved with activities outside of academics?

3. Do you hold (have you previously held) any leadership positions?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

4. Please rate on a scale of 1-5 with 1=not at all a benefit and 5=most definitely a benefit.

Which of the following do you perceive as a benefit of getting involved in co-curricular activities such as registered student organizations, Greek Life, community service, sports, etc. while in school?

	1 Not at all a benefit	2	3	4	5 Most definitely a benefit
Communication Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Computer Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creativity/Innovation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial Management Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexibility/Adaptability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information, knowledge, or training acquired can apply to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

future					
Interpersonal skills (relating well to others)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership/Management Experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Looks good on a resume	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organizational skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Problem-solving/Analytical Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teamwork/Teambuilding Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No perceived benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Please rate on a scale of 1-5 with 1=not at all a benefit and 5=most definitely a benefit.

Which of the following do you perceive as a benefit of holding a job while in school?

	1 Not at all a benefit	2	3	4	5 Most definitely a benefit
Communication Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Computer Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creativity/Innovation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial Management Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexibility/Adaptability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information, knowledge, or training acquired can apply to future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interpersonal skills (relating well to others)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership/Management Experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Looks good on a resume	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organizational skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Problem-solving/Analytical Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teamwork/Teambuilding Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No perceived benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Please rate on a scale of 1-5 with 1=not at all a benefit and 5=most definitely a benefit.

Which of the following do you perceive as a benefit of academics?

	1 Not at all a benefit	2	3	4	5 Most definitely a benefit
Communication Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Computer Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creativity/Innovation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial Management Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexibility/Adaptability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information, knowledge, or training acquired can apply to future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interpersonal skills (relating well to others)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership/Management Experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Looks good on a resume	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organizational skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Problem-solving/Analytical Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teamwork/Teambuilding Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No perceived benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. What is your gender? [Check one]

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Other

8. What is your marital status? [Check one]

- a. Single
- b. Married

9. What is your current living situation? [Check one]

- a. On Campus
- b. Off campus with parents, guardian, or spouse (within or on city limits)

- c. Off campus not with parents, guardian, or spouse (within or on city limits)
- d. Off campus with parents, guardian, or spouse (outside city limits)
- e. Off campus not with parents, guardian, or spouse (outside city limits)

10. What academic year were you during the Spring 2012 semester? [Check one]

- a. Freshman
- b. Sophomore
- c. Junior
- d. Senior
- e. Graduate

11. Which academic college(s) do you belong to? [Check all that apply]

- a. College of Arts and Sciences
- b. College of Aviation
- c. Haworth College of Business
- d. College of Education and Human Development
- e. College of Engineering and Applied Sciences
- f. College of Fine Arts
- g. College of Health and Human Services
- h. Lee Honors College
- i. Graduate College

12. Thank you for participating in this survey! Please enter your email address below for a chance to win one of three \$20 gift cards.

Original Research Proposal

Western Michigan University
HSIRB Application

Building Experience Beyond Academics Survey

Principal Investigators: Ann Veeck, Ph.D.

Student Investigator: Katherine Ragan

Abstract

To build support for an honors thesis topic on the importance of building experience beyond academics while in college, a survey comparing benefits of getting involved in extracurricular activities, holding a job, and academics will be administered to Western Michigan University students. The questionnaire will take about ten minutes to complete.

Students will be invited to voluntarily submit their email addresses on the last page of the survey to be eligible for a drawing of three gift cards of \$20 each. Students will need to complete the survey to be eligible for the drawing. The email addresses will be delinked from the survey by Dr. Ann Veeck prior to data analysis. Students' names will never be linked to the data.

Analysis of the collected data will be used to write and present a thesis defense and report to fulfill the thesis requirement to graduate from the Lee Honors College at Western Michigan University.

Purpose/Background Information

The object of this study is to determine the perceived benefits of building experience beyond academics. Specific research objectives will compare and contrast benefits of getting involved with extracurricular activities and holding a job while in college such as leadership and management training, skill development, and social and networking opportunities and how these experiences can assist in future careers.

Subject Recruitment

All WMU students are eligible for this study. Students in select classes will be invited to participate in the survey. The goal is to have at least 500 completed surveys. The potential subjects will be recruited via electronic survey and through requests on social networking sites with the survey administered online. Students will be sent an email or notification inviting them to take the survey with a link embedded in the email or notification that leads to the survey. An assortment of classes will be selected that provide a mix among freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, and graduate classes. Permission from the instructor will be obtained before surveying their classes.

The email or social networking message will read along the lines of:

Hey Broncos!

If you are a current student at WMU please take the time to complete my survey for my Honors Thesis on the importance of building experience beyond academics while in college. It will take you less than 10 minutes to complete!

At the end you can enter your email address to be entered to win one of 3 \$20 gift cards.

Click the link below to complete the survey

[link provided here]

The survey will only be open until [specified date]!

Thank you so much for all of your help!

Sincerely,

Katie Ragan

Informed Consent Process

In the case of electronic surveys sent to all students in select classes, the consent document will serve as an email invitation to participate in the survey. The Consent Letters are attached.

Research Procedures

Methods of Data Collection

Subjects will be invited to take a ten minute survey with questions about building experience beyond academics such as getting involved in extracurricular activities or holding a job while in college. The survey will be administered via <http://questionpro.com/>. Information collected will be downloaded into WMU's SPSS software for analysis.

Instrumentation

The survey contains scales measuring perceived benefits of getting involved in extracurricular activities, holding a job, and academics, as well as demographics (questionnaire is attached).

Location of Data Collection

The survey will be sent via students' WMU email and through requests on social networking sites.

Duration of the Study

The questionnaire will take about ten minutes to complete. The study will take no more than a year to complete.

Methodology

Design

Classes will be selected to represent students of different class standings and students will be invited to participate via social media sites.

Analysis

Data from the questionnaire will be analyzed using a number of statistical techniques including descriptive statistics, ANOVA, t-tests, chi-square analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis.

Dissemination

I will present the results of the study in oral and written form as fulfillment of requirement for graduation from the Lee Honors College. Summary results of the survey will be disseminated in written and oral form to interested SALP faculty and staff and used to improve methods to recruit students to get involved on campus. The findings might also be presented at professional meetings and published in an academic journal.

Risks and Cost to and Protections for Subjects

There will be no known inconvenience to the subjects who complete the questionnaires except for the time it take to fill in the instrument. All data will be treated as anonymous. Subjects who do not wish to participate in the survey may decline the invitation to participate.

Benefits of Research

Subjects will not directly benefit from taking this survey. It is hoped that knowledge from the survey will be used to encourage more students to participate in extracurricular activities on campus.

Confidentiality of Data

Surveys will be anonymous. Electronic data will be password-protected online. No direct ties to the person providing the information will be possible.

Appendices

- Questionnaire
- Consent document