

**Loyola University Maryland**

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**2012 – 2013 Messina Honors Pilot  
Focus Group Feedback Report**

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**May 2013**

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Office of Institutional Research

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This report was prepared by the Office of First-Year Research, in the Office of Institutional Research, using data collected in a student focus group.

## 2012 – 2013 Messina Honors Pilot Focus Group Feedback Report

### Introduction

A key initiative outlined in Loyola's 2008 – 2015 Strategic Plan was to establish living-learning communities for all first-year students. This initiative, named Messina, will be phased in over a three-year period, starting with the Class of 2017, and will replace the current collection of first-year programs (Alpha, Collegium, and FE100).<sup>1</sup> In fall 2012, 43 students who entered the Honors program as first-year students (4% of the incoming class) participated in a living-learning community that served as a pilot for the Messina program.

Messina students engage in two seminar-style courses which are linked by a common theme to facilitate learning across disciplines; students take one course in the fall and the other in the spring semester. One of the professors teaching these courses is also the student's Core advisor. Additionally, students engage in an enrichment hour designed to enhance learning from the course using out-of-class experiences; these opportunities allow students to develop relationships with their professors, administrators, peer leaders, and fellow classmates. Finally, students have the opportunity to live in proximity to each other which aims to foster a community around learning.<sup>2</sup>

In spring 2013, six focus groups of first-year students were conducted to establish baseline data on the first-year experience prior to the phased-in implementation of the Messina living-learning program. The discussion guide was developed to align with the learning outcomes of Messina (see Appendix A). This report provides results from the study on Messina Honors students. Results from the other focus groups were aggregated and can be found in a separate report available from the Office of First-Year Research, part of the Office of Institutional Research.

### Methodology

The feedback from the first-year Honors students was collected by holding a focus group in the spring 2013. The goal was to have between eight to 10 participants. To achieve this objective, two sets of 20 students were randomly selected from the pool of eligible students and invited via e-mail to the session (See Appendix B for a sample invitation).<sup>3</sup>

The focus group was held on April 8<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. in the second floor conference room of Flannery O'Connor Hall. Invitees were notified that dinner and a \$15 gift card to local area restaurants would be provided to all participants. Thirteen students indicated that they would participate in the focus group; 10 students attended the discussion session. The focus group was facilitated by Shannon Tinney Lichtinger, Associate Director and Coordinator of First-Year Research and Retention Studies in the Office of Institutional Research, and notes were taken by Katelin Santhin, Program Coordinator for Messina.

Students were greeted upon arrival, offered to help themselves to dinner, and invited to get comfortable. Introductions were made and the facilitator explained the role of the Office of Institutional Research on college campuses, as well as the nature of a focus group. It was explained that there were no right or wrong answers and that students

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.loyola.edu/departments/fyp/messina/about.aspx>. (Accessed 04/25/2013.)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.loyola.edu/departments/fyp/messina.aspx>, (Accessed 04/25/2013.)

<sup>3</sup> All 43 Honors students were enrolled spring 2013 and were eligible for invitation.

should feel free to voice their opinions. Students were informed that the discussion would be digitally recorded and notes taken for purposes of writing the report. Students were asked to only use each other's first names during the discussion. They were informed that all comments would remain anonymous by using fictitious names in the report and that only the primary investigators would listen to the recording. See Appendix C for the discussion guide.

Six attendees were women and there were no students of color who participated in this focus group. Participants' intended majors fell across the spectrum of discipline areas. There were four students majoring in the STEM areas, one student majoring in Business, two students majoring in the Social Sciences, two students majoring in the Arts and Humanities, and one student was an undeclared major.

## Executive Summary

### *Reasons for Pursuing a Degree and Expectations for Loyola*

- ◆ Most participants were career-minded in their pursuit of a college degree; college was a sociocultural expectation too. Participants pursued college to learn about themselves, to become independent, and to develop various life skills.
- ◆ Participants chose Loyola for many reasons, including its Jesuit mission, size, location, and wanting a liberal arts education.
- ◆ Participants were excited about getting involved, meeting new people, exploring their coursework and major, and studying abroad while at Loyola.

### *Jesuit Mission and Values*

- ◆ The Jesuit tradition was implicitly woven into many facets of everyday life at the university. A couple of participants who attended a Jesuit high school thought the Jesuit tradition could have been integrated more intentionally than it had been.
- ◆ Reflection was integrated into participants' lives through thinking and re-thinking what they learned in class, engaging in discussions with professors and peers, participating in service experiences, and finding quiet time to reflect on experiences for self-improvement and to promote relaxation.
- ◆ Participants' evaluated how their values, attitudes, and beliefs influenced their decision-making when confronted with opinions that differed from their own, and as they refined their educational goals which influenced how they planned their curriculum.

### *Critical Understanding*

- ◆ Participants readily identified habits that facilitated success, including: developing time management skills, getting involved on campus, meeting new people and being authentic in doing so, taking care of oneself, learning to budget money better, and getting to know one's professors.
- ◆ Participants said new students should access these resources in order to be successful: their Evergreens, their professors, The Study, and the Career Center.
- ◆ Participants engaged with course material in meaningful ways when their instructors encouraged class discussion, related material to current events and showed real-world application, established a safe space so students could express themselves, challenged them to support their opinions and arguments, and challenged to think in different ways.

### *Connections to the Loyola Community*

- ◆ Participants all agreed that they found community by getting involved on campus, through their Evergreens, and in their residence halls with the help of Resident Assistants.
- ◆ Participants raised concerns that it was difficult to get connected to Baltimore outside of the "Loyola bubble", there is a perceived divide between those who are involved and not involved on campus, and it was difficult to get to know all other first-year students because they are spread out across residence halls.

- ◆ Aspects of community could be improved by having large, widely publicized events which aimed to bring people together that focused on celebrating and learning about diverse cultures. Having activities that brought the first-year class together could help promote a sense of community too.

### *Advising*

- ◆ It was beneficial to have one's professor as his/her advisor because the professor knew the student on both a personal and intellectual level, and this helps when advising a student.
- ◆ Suggestions for improvement to the current advising system included: having an advisor in one's major, being able to switch to a major advisor as early as one wanted to, and having general academic advisors who only focused on advising new students.

### *Integrated Learning*

- ◆ Participants fixated on a particular Honors course when sharing their thoughts on the connections they were making across their coursework the first year. There was both positive and constructively critical feedback about how this course was structured and how it prepared students to analytically think, speak, and write. One participant noted that it helped him in other coursework.
- ◆ Participants made connections between coursework and out-of-class experiences by developing an appreciation for knowledge, learning to critically analyze and evaluate current events, applying course content to current topics, and learning how to reform poor habits like procrastination.

### *Cura Personalis*

- ◆ Participants perceived having engaged with the Core value of *cura personalis* their first year and a variety of experiences contributed to this: coursework, interacting with peers and forming friendships, engaging in campus clubs and activities, engaging with Campus Ministry, going to the Fitness and Aquatic Center (FAC), working with Core advisors, and knowing there is a variety of campus resources available to support students' success.

## Detailed Findings

### ***Reasons for Pursuing a Degree and Expectations for Loyola***

Most participants were career-minded in their pursuit of a college degree. When the group was asked why they pursued a college degree and what they wanted to get out of it, Michael first responded with “[A] career,” which was followed up by Amy who indicated college was, “[P]reparation for med school.” Timothy summed it up by saying, “...[I]t’s certainly become the case that if you’re going to get a job with a career in mind it’s usually useful to have a four-year degree even if it’s not, you know, dead-centered on what that job is going to be.” For many going to college was a sociocultural expectation too. Several participants shared that the college experience would help them learn how to meet and interact with people different from themselves, develop life skills, provide opportunities to learn about themselves and grow, and to develop independence. Participants were most excited about getting involved on campus, meeting new people, exploring their coursework and major, and studying abroad while at Loyola.

Participants offered a variety of reasons for why those chose Loyola, including its size, location and proximity to home, and its friendly atmosphere. Several participants shared that Loyola’s Jesuit mission and its liberal arts tradition was appealing. For example, Sarah chose Loyola because:

“...being a Jesuit institution [was] very important, and also...the liberal arts aspect is why I picked it [Loyola] because you can have a broader and more complete education than if you were just going into a nursing school or something that’s really specific, or really career-focused.”

Participants’ responses demonstrate that while students are career-focused in their pursuit of a college education, they also wanted to become well-rounded and prepared for the world.

### ***Jesuit Mission and Values***

Students were invited to consider how they perceived the Jesuit tradition was woven into their first year at Loyola. Initial responses focused exclusively on religious doctrine and then participants began to share how universal themes embodied by the Jesuit ideals were woven into their first year. Participants whose responses focused heavily on religious aspects either noted that they never felt “pressured” by the Jesuit tradition, or noted that it was something that you had to seek out yourself by going to church or reaching out to Campus Ministry. For many of the other participants, the Jesuit tradition was implicitly woven into their lives, and they saw that tradition in many facets of everyday life. As Sarah stated:

“The whole idea of *cura personalis*, I have definitely...seen at this school...the posters for the Counseling Center are everywhere and the way that they’re improving the dining program for next year, and like the classes they’re offering...I feel like they’re trying to care for the whole student...”

A couple of students who attended Jesuit high schools felt the Jesuit ideals were not emphasized, or as apparent, in their first year at Loyola as they were in high school. One of these students went so far as to say that he was “disappointed” that the Jesuit tradition was not more prevalent during his first year. Mark explained it well when he said:

“I went to a Jesuit high school and I’m...a little bit disappointed that’s it’s not a little more prevalent, like everyone’s [focus group participants] talking about it like that’s a positive thing...[In high school], they talk[ed] a lot about...the different ideals the Jesuits hold like cura personalis or the magis...and the applicability that those different messages have to our lives is very universal...We had one class...and it was basically, like, how do [the] Jesuits view the world...and everyone [in his high school] took it and while the school was predominantly Catholic, a lot of kids weren’t, but everyone took a lot from that class. Like learning those different values that the Jesuits had. Maybe I’ll see it [Jesuit tradition] later [at Loyola] because that was junior year of high school so, I mean, maybe later on now it’ll show up a little more but...I was...expecting...more Jesuit teachings in the classroom.

Participants were asked how they integrated reflection into their lives the first year. Several participants shared that their professors and class discussions prompted them to reflect upon what they learned and, in turn, that helped them to find greater meaning in what they were learning and how it was relevant to their lives. Professors also challenged students to reflect on their own values, beliefs, and opinions which, in turn, helped them to learn about themselves. These interactions occurred in class as well as during the enrichment hour. For example, Sarah shared:

“Well, today, in our [course name]...the last question was...‘Why are you here?’...And we all kind of sat there. It’s, like, these profound questions that you can’t really come up with an answer to right away...but thinking about them makes you a better person...because...it’s reaffirming your values and your goals in life and your purpose. So even if you can’t answer those giant questions right away it’s still a good thing to reflect on.”

Then Jane added how her professors have challenged her to reflect more, and that has contributed to her growth and development.

“I was not one to reflect much...I never really thought about it; it wasn't something that was prevalent in my life but the...classes have challenged me to reflect more and I do enjoy that...it has helped me to develop as a person and to mature and to think a lot more about my life more than I had before. I do enjoy the professors who do challenge us to reflect more.”

A couple of other participants noted that simply engaging in conversations outside of class with peers served as a reflection tool for them. One participant's service experience through the Center for Community Service and Justice (C.C.S.J.) allowed her to engage in reflection through structured exercises. Finally, two participants used individual quiet time to reflect; one participant used it to discern ways in which he could improve and another used quiet time in order to “process” the day's events and to relax.

Adam shared:

“I feel like I should do it [reflect] on my own...in order to help me succeed...I go through a week and at the end of the week I go..., ‘So, why did I only get three hours of sleep this week?’ And then I try to figure it out...I think it's important that we individually look at it...so that we can help ourselves personally.”

Amy shared:

“Um, sometimes I feel like I am so busy that I don't even have time to sit and even think because I'm studying for a test, a quiz, running back and forth to class. I work eight hours a week [too]...I feel like it's [reflection] something that almost comes last minute, like, ‘Oops, I need to take a five-minute breather’...When...I finally have the room to myself for like five seconds, that's when I sit and...I process everything. I kind of de-stress, more like...self-relaxation...it's almost as important to me that I can just kind of sit and process.”

In addition to the examples noted above, participants shared how they examined their own values, attitudes, and beliefs to understand how that influenced their decision-making when prompted by the moderator. Two participants indicated this happened when they encountered situations where their opinions differed from their peers; these types of interactions helped one participant reconsider her own views on topics. Two other participants shared that understanding their educational goals and aspirations helped them in planning their class schedules and planning ahead for future opportunities, like study abroad. Timothy explained:

“In a very practical sense, I know when I was going over my course selection, for our registration, it certainly hit me that there’s a lot of stuff that has to be shoved into not a lot of time...and so you definitely have to not just prioritize in a sense of what classes come before which [others] but prioritize...what do you *really* want to get done...what is most important to you that you get out of your college experience?”

### ***Critical Understanding***

Participants readily identified habits that facilitated success. Developing time management skills were critical for new students. Other suggestions included: getting involved in campus clubs and organizations; meeting new people, investing in relationships, and being authentic in doing so; taking care of oneself; learning to budget money better; and getting to know one’s professors.

Participants found these resources helpful to them and would encourage new students to: seek out Evergreens for advice, visit professor’s office hours for consultation, and use peer tutoring at The Study. Accessing the Career Center the first year was encouraged too. Laurel shared, “I went to the workshops for your resume, and I gave mine to someone at the Career Center, and got it back with such helpful feedback...I was able to send my resume out...and I got [an] internship.”

Participants offered examples of how instructors helped them to engage with course material in meaningful ways. Professors who simply encouraged class discussion and asked questions helped to engage participants. Eric noted that “small classes” helped to facilitate this and others agreed. Comfortable and open classroom environments were fostered when faculty and students got to know each other outside of the classroom. Additionally, professors who established norms for classroom engagement helped students feel they were in a safe space to openly express their views and raise questions; for example, one professor created a “judgment-free zone”. Participants also engaged course material in meaningful ways when professors had them relate it to current events to demonstrate the real-world applicability of what they were learning (e.g., relating *New York Times* front page news to course material). Finally, Jane shared that having professors challenge students to develop informed opinions was an effective way to get her to engage with course material in meaningful ways.

“I think one of the things that really challenged me last semester, [was] our...professor...she really wasn’t afraid to tell us when we were wrong... But...it’s nice to know...when you’re not on the right track...To be...called out like that and held accountable...shows that they [professors] really believe that you have...something important to say. They [professors] want you to reach for it so I

think that was really helpful... They [professors] really want to...challenge you to think in a different way.”

### ***Connections to the Loyola Community***

Participants all agreed that they found community by getting involved on campus (including service opportunities), through their Evergreens, and in their residence halls with the help of Resident Assistants (RAs). Concerns were raised that it was difficult to get connected to Baltimore outside of the “Loyola bubble”; transportation was cited as the culprit, but there was programming to help new students navigate this. There was some consensus that there is a “divide” between those who are really involved and not involved; there was no “happy medium”.

Participants found engaging in pre-orientation programs helpful in finding community at Loyola, and would encourage new students to do so. Engaging in a pre-orientation program allowed new students to get settled in by meeting new people and they learned how to live with and work with new people before the semester started.

Participants focused on the link between diversity and community when discussing how community could be improved at Loyola. A few participants commented on feeling a separation between ALANA students and the rest of campus, and part of that could be that Loyola has a predominantly white student population. Some of the participants offered ways in which the University could bring people together to celebrate and learn about diverse cultures. Sarah mentioned:

“We talked about this in our Honors seminar...Just because you’re not...Chinese or Native American doesn’t mean you can’t have an appreciation for that culture so I think...to make it clear that you don’t have to be of that race to be in that group [cultural group/organization]...like you can just have an appreciation for that culture...and celebrate that with them...”

There were a number of comments shared that having large, widely publicized events to bring people together that focused on celebrating and learning about diverse cultures could help improve community. Mark explained:

“With the cultural groups, I think, at my high school anyway...the biggest events of the school year were created by cultural [groups] and they had huge cookouts. In terms of Loyola, it would like the entire Quad was, like, Chinese food, like tons of different cultural Chinese food [sic]. And, so, there was sort of a connection there, ‘Oh, I went to your event,’...You...connected with someone [over that common experience.] ...Maybe I’m missing it, but I haven’t seen any huge events like that [here]...”

A couple of participants mentioned that first-year students being spread out across different buildings made it difficult to get to know everyone, and having activities that brought the class together could help improve a sense of community too.

### ***Advising***

There was some agreement that having one's advisor as one's professor was beneficial because the professor knew the student on both a personal and intellectual level. Participants offered a few suggestions for improvement to the current advising system. Most participants were in favor of having an advisor in one's major and being able to switch to a major advisor as early as one wished. Examples were provided where students had handed in their declaration of major form but could not switch to a major advisor until a later date. Some participants even suggested that new students should be assigned to general, non-faculty academic advisors to then be assigned a major advisor when they declared a major.

### ***Integrated Learning***

Participants fixated on a particular Honors course when they shared how they were making connections across what they were learning in their courses. There was both positive and critically constructive feedback about how instructors organized that course which aimed to teach students to analytically think, write, and speak. One participant noted that this course helped him in his other coursework.

Participants eagerly shared how they were making connections between coursework and out-of-class experiences. It was common for participants to indicate that they learned to critically analyze and evaluate all types of information encountered on a daily basis, and to apply what one's learning in class to current events. Adam shared how he was trying to apply what he learned in ROTC and in International Politics to current events by explaining, "[you're] trying to...figure out why [it happened], what caused us to get to this point. It's [the coursework] teaching you to look at things for more than face value."

And Becky shared how taking Core coursework has helped her to develop a general appreciation for knowledge:

"...I've had to take classes for the Core that I don't particularly have an interest in...There are things I'd rather not sit through, but having to do it anyway, I think, teaches you a lesson in still trying to find the positives in something that you might not...enjoy, but something that can still influence your life in a way and that you can try to take lessons from. And even from a history class, as I sat through [course name]...I would struggle through the books but then I would come out and say, 'Oh, okay, this can apply to my life in that way, or I can take this and have a meaningful discussion with someone.'"

Finally, one participant shared how an enrichment hour helped her to address poor habits like procrastination.

### ***Cura Personalis***

To close the discussion group, students were asked to reflect on a question to then write for a minute on that topic. Participants were prompted with: “At Loyola we talk about educating the whole person—the mind, body, and spirit. How have you found this come together for you the first year? What experiences have contributed to this?”

The ten responses to these questions were content analyzed and categorized based upon the types of experiences that contributed to students’ engagement with the Core value of *cura personalis*. The responses demonstrated that participants perceived having engaged with this Core value their first year and a variety of experiences contributed to this; they are listed below from most prevalent to least prevalent.

- Coursework (n = 6)
  - Honors courses (n = 1)
  - Enrichment hour (n = 1)
- Developing friendships and connecting with peers (n = 5)
- Campus activities and clubs (including service opportunities) (n = 4)
- Campus Ministry (n = 2)
- Fitness and Aquatic Center (n = 2)
- Core advisor (n = 1)
- Availability of campus resources to support students’ success (n = 1)

### **Summary**

The primary purpose of conducting the first-year focus groups was to establish baseline data on the first-year experience prior to the phased-in implementation of Messina to understand how new students were engaging with the program learning outcomes, especially as participants in the pilot program.

Overall, there is evidence that Messina Honors participants engaged with the program learning outcomes. Participants incorporated reflection into their lives in multiple ways which, in turn, supported intellectual engagement, informed their decision-making, and helped them to learn about themselves and grow the first year. Still, participants’ responses highlight opportunities to incorporate the Jesuit tradition more intentionally to demonstrate the universal applicability of the Core values in students’ lives.

Participants’ responses also demonstrated a critical understanding of the habits and resources necessary to be successful, and they identified multiple ways which instructors helped them to engage with material in more meaningful ways. Further, participants identified ways in which they connected with professors, peer leaders, and peers, both in and outside of the classroom, to develop relationships that facilitated their academic and social integration. Of note, participants’ responses highlighted a potential area for improvement: helping students to feel a greater sense of community by exploring their commonalities and differences, particularly as it relates to race and ethnicity.

Finally, participants’ responses provided some evidence that they could integrate multiple sources of knowledge gained through various disciplinary lenses, instruction, out of class experiences, and personal reflection.

In the end, there is evidence that students are engaging with the Messina learning outcomes but it is not clear to what extent is can be attributed to the program itself. Going forward, it will be useful to couch these questions in terms of how participating in Messina has contributed to students' learning and development to provide more direct evidence.

## Appendix A: Messina Learning Outcomes<sup>1</sup>

Messina is designed to instill the intellectual curiosity and self-knowledge necessary for a first-year student's successful start to his or her Loyola education, whose commitment to personal and social responsibility reflects the Jesuit, Catholic academic and faith traditions. As a result of participation in Messina, first-year students will show progress to a deeper and fuller understanding of the interconnections unique and essential to a Jesuit Education in a contemporary world. Successful attainment of the following outcomes is not only the aim of the First-Year Seminars but it is the shared responsibility of all – faculty, administrators, peer leaders, and students.

### **Jesuit Mission and Values**

- Develop habits of discernment and reflection in the Ignatian tradition.
- Explore and articulate values and principles involved in their personal decision-making.

### **Critical Understanding**

- Develop habits of reading, writing and intellectual conversation that support academic excellence and engagement.
- Demonstrate increased knowledge and use of campus resources that aid critical thinking.

### **Connections to Loyola Community**

- Establish healthy, mutually beneficial and respectful relationships with others including faculty, administrators, staff and peers.
- Demonstrate a sense of belonging to the community at Loyola University both in and out of the classroom.

### **Integrated Learning**

- Integrate multiple sources of knowledge gained through various disciplinary lenses, texts, instruction, out of class experiences and personal reflection to offer a perspective in the interdisciplinary theme of the community.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken directly from <http://www.loyola.edu/departments/fyp/messina/about/learningoutcomes.aspx> (Accessed 04/29/2013).

## **Appendix B: Focus Group Invitation**

Subject Line: A Special Invitation from Dean McGuiness

The University is interested in what students think about their experience as a new student. We would truly value you sharing your insights and opinions with us!

The Office of Institutional Research is holding a discussion group from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. on Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup> in Flannery O'Connor, room 230.

**You've been selected as one of only a small group of students invited to attend!**

**Students who participate will be given a \$15 gift card that can be used at Miss Shirley's, S'ghetti Eddie's, and Roland Park Bagel Company. Dinner will also be provided during the discussion.**

This is an excellent opportunity for your voice to be heard at Loyola! Feedback about your experiences as a new student will help the University understand how to improve the educational experience for future students.

**Space in the group is limited to 10 students, so you must R.S.V.P. quickly!**

**You may contact Shannon Tinney Lichtinger, Associate Director and Coordinator of First-Year Research & Retention Studies in the Office of Institutional Research, by e-mail ([smtinney@loyola.edu](mailto:smtinney@loyola.edu) or [ir@loyola.edu](mailto:ir@loyola.edu)) or by phone (410-617-2680) by *Monday, March 18<sup>th</sup>* to be a member of the discussion group.**

Please join us! We look forward to seeing you on Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup>.

Sincerely,

*Ilona McGuiness, Ph.D.*

Dean of First-Year Students and Academic Services

*Shannon Tinney Lichtinger*

Associate Director and Coordinator of First-Year Research & Retention Studies in the Office of Institutional Research

## **Appendix C: Focus Group Discussion Guide**

### **Introduction and Welcome (5 min)**

- Introduce facilitators
- Why we asked you here tonight: tell us about your first-year experience
- Ground rules:
  - Enjoy the food
  - Opinions, no right/wrong answer
  - State purpose of taking notes and digitally recording it (no full names used); everything is confidential
  - EVERYONE participates. Be candid, but be respectful of facilitators and peers.

### **Self-introductions (3 min)**

- Name
- Where you are from

### **Reasons for Pursuing a Degree/Expectations for Loyola (10 min)**

- Why did you decide to pursue a college degree? What do you want to get out of it?
- Why did you choose to pursue your degree at Loyola? [PROBE: What makes a Loyola education unique?]
- What are you most excited to learn and/or to do during your time at Loyola?

### **Jesuit Mission and Values (15 min)**

- How has the Jesuit tradition been woven into your experience this first year?
- How have you integrated reflection into your life the first year at Loyola? How has that come about for you?
- In what ways have you examined your own values, attitudes, and beliefs to understand how they influence your decision-making?

### **Critical Understanding (15 min)**

- What habits would you encourage new students to develop to help them be successful their first year?
- What resources would you encourage new students to access to be successful?
- What kinds of things have instructors done in your courses that you found helped you to engage with the subject matter in meaningful ways?

### **Connections to the Loyola Community (15 min)**

- In what ways have you found community your first year at Loyola? (Classes, residence halls, clubs/organizations, campus events, etc.)
- In what ways can we help new students find community?
- In what ways do we need to improve so there is a greater sense of community (i.e., intellectual, residential, social, etc.)?

### **Faculty/Advisors (10 min)**

- Tell us about your advising experience. (Probe: How have you worked with your advisor?)
- Describe your relationship with your Core advisor.
- If you could change anything about the first-year advising system, what would it be?

**Integrated Learning (10 min)**

- How do you see what you are learning in your courses integrating with each other? What connections are you making?
- How do you see what you are learning in your courses integrating with experiences outside of class?

**One-minute Paper—*Cura Personalis* (2 min)**

Now, before you leave, we're going to do a one-minute paper. You DON'T need to put your name on it. I'm going to pose a couple of questions, and I want to you take a moment to think about it, and then you're going to write for one minute on that topic.

- At Loyola we talk about educating the whole person—the mind, body, and spirit. How have you found this come together for you the first year? What experiences have contributed to this?

**Reflection and Follow-Up (5 min)**

Now, you're welcome to take some more time—no more than five minutes—to make any other comments you were unable to share, or that now come to mind, about the topics we discussed today. Use the back of the paper for this. When you're finished you may return it to me and leave. Thank you for your participation!