Student Interview #3

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I again interviewed Daniel who is a Junior at Oklahoma State University (OSU) studying American Studies with a Pre-Law concentration and Global Studies with a Geopolitics concentration. He is an honors student living on campus in the honors dormitories and is an active member of the university's student council. This summary of the third interview questions presents a focused reflection on Daniel's idea of a successful student's output.

**Question 1: What do you think you will “get out of” your experience in college?**

Daniel initially mentioned the degree or, “piece of paper”, that will qualify him to apply to jobs he is interested in. However, he continued to describe many of Bok, Pascarella, and Terenzini’s institutional outcomes as well. He explained that he hopes to leave with “the ability to relate to many different types of people on both a personal and professional level”. This reflected his desire to communicate, live with diversity, and live in a more global society which aligns with Dr. Bok’s institutional outcomes (Penn State, p. 14).

Daniel continued by describing the charities he has become involved with during his years on campus. He hopes to continue helping his local community and wants to keep bringing attention to the need for winter clothing and food donations to these charities. He explained that being involved with these charities has changed his perspective of his community and he can’t imagine leaving college without continuing to help his local community in need. I was moved by his passion for the charities he described and how excited he was about their growth since he began working with them two years ago. This passion reflects outcomes that Pascarella and Terenzini suggest including moral development, psychosocial change, a change in attitude and values, and improved cognitive skills.

**2. Of the outcomes you anticipate from your college experience, were they what you originally expected? If yes, why? If not, what did you originally expect?**

“Overall, yes, however, I think the university experience has exceeded my personal expectations”, Daniel stated. He continued to explain that when entering college, he didn’t know exactly what to expect but wanted to be involved in campus life and student government. He is surprised that he was able to take advantage of so many opportunities within the student government and get involved with charities that he is now passionate about. He also did not expect to participate in doing practical work within the student government that directly affects his peers. “I know campus politics are small in terms of the big picture, but it’s given me an idea of how things actually work,” he said. Daniel further explained that he has practiced communicating with many different departments and people with different priorities. He didn’t expect college to give him opportunities to actually practice navigating the politics of communicating about important issues and work together to reach common goals.

Again, Daniel’s answer reflects Pascarella and Terenzini’s outcomes for college because his practical involvement in student government has helped him prepare for his career after college and practice verbal, quantitative, and subject matter competence through practically exploring communication skills in an official student government setting. It certainly aligns with Dr. Bok’s outcomes of preparing for work and expanding Daniel’s interests (Penn State, p. 14).

**3. What do you think contributed the most to these expected outcomes? Why?**

Daniel responded, “I was willing to get involved on campus and took advantage of the opportunities OSU provided…I was also prepared for college because my parents were very demanding in that I explored lots of interests. I’ve been in key club, toast master’s club, and even practiced electrical engineering. I think because I’ve explored different fields before college, I was able to invest in marching band and campus politics…even in my freshman year”. He also credited the honors college for giving him many advantages including preferential class enrollment and facilitating networking with other honors students.

Daniel is a highly motivated and high achieving student. He attended college intending to attain the skills and qualifications to pursue a career in politics. The outcome that seemed surprising to him was his interest in helping underprivileged communities and minority groups. We frequently were distracted from the initial questions to talk about policies or experiences that have negatively affected subpopulations, and I am impressed by how passionate Daniel was in articulating the issues to me and proposing possible solutions. He mentioned that before college he was interested in these populations but thought he would be more interested in other logistical aspects of government. Now he is not sure what specialty he hopes to pursue, but it is clear to see that he has experienced substantial moral and cognitive development throughout his college experience.

References

Penn State World Campus. (n.d.). Lesson 6: Intended Outcomes for College Students. In HIED 846: College Students and Success: Fall 2020. Retrieved from https://psu.instructure.com/courses/2082730/modules/items/29942849