After a nice and relaxing spring break, I met with my amazing mentor to discuss the progress I had made on my final product. At this point in time, I had stopped receiving survey responses and I was ready to begin the data analysis portion of my project.

Professor Meyer and I first looked at the survey responses and we threw out the responses that were not taken seriously. By doing so, we could ensure the quality of the data I would be analyzing. Then, we looked into how reverse scoring the data would work on Google Sheets. With the Big Five personality assessment the student volunteers had taken, some of the questions needed to be reverse scored. For example, one of the questions asked the student to describe themselves on a scale of one to five based on whether or not they enjoyed spending time
alone. If the student answered with a four, the test would have to grade that response as a two because the question was attempting to measure extraversion levels. We ended up finding a way to reverse score these types of questions and grade the normal questions. I was really grateful for Professor Meyer’s assistance in this portion of the project. On my original work, I used percentages instead of raw data, making it hard to measure empirical results. Now, I have actual numbers to support my conclusions.

During this mentor visit, we also discussed the importance of empirical correlations. Professor Meyer taught me about the different kinds of variables: R variables and t-test variables. In my study, the R variables included the amount of AP classes a student was enrolled in, the weighted and unweighted GPAs, and the different levels of the Big Five traits. These R variables would need to be correlated in a 13x13 correlation matrix in order to measure the relationships between the variables. Once these variables were correlated, the correlation results would then need to be plugged into a p-value calculator to measure the significance of the finding. A p-value below .05 was significant because it meant that the chance of the correlation being a coincidence was less than 5%. T-test variables are those like school, gender, type of extracurricular activity, and birth order, and are used to compare results from different groups of people. We could use these different variables to measure whether or not the R variable correlations differed from group to group. For example, we could see whether or not boys and girls were higher in conscientiousness and AP class enrollment. I am so grateful for Professor Meyer’s professional advice. Without her input, I never would have thought to correlate the values numerically or by t-testing. I simply would have looked for general trends in the data. Thanks to Professor Meyer, my findings will be more trustworthy and accurate.
I have been learning so much from this mentorship about the data collection and analysis processes. Professor Meyer has been teaching me so much about things I would never have thought to do on my own. As a result, I have a much greater understanding of the statistics behind data analysis in psychological research. I also feel more confident in myself and my results because I know that I have empirical evidence to support my conclusions in this study. I know that when I eventually submit my paper for publication, my results will be significant and reliable.

I cannot express my gratitude for Professor Meyer enough. I have learned so much from her and I am extremely grateful for her willingness to help me with my final product. Before the next mentor visit, I will need to grade the results from the personality tests and finish most of my data correlations so that I can start drawing some conclusions. I am happy with my progress so far, and I cannot wait to see the results of this study.