

# Harvard College Marathon Challenge

## Post-Event Survey Summary

2007

Questions/Complaints/Blame? E-Mail [marathon@harvard.edu](mailto:marathon@harvard.edu)

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## **OVERVIEW: HARVARD COLLEGE MARATHON CHALLENGE (HCMC)**

Harvard College Marathon Challenge (HCMC) started in 2005. This year, through HCMC, thirty Harvard College-affiliated volunteers raised more than \$35,000 to benefit Project HEALTH and Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA), two charities that mean a great deal to many Harvard students and employees. In exchange for their successful fundraising efforts, HCMC participants received official invitational entries (numbered bibs) to run the 111<sup>th</sup> Boston Marathon on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007. These invitational entries allowed HCMC participants, by virtue of their fundraising achievements, to run the Boston Marathon without time-qualifying; each HCMC participant had up to six hours to complete the 26.2-mile course at her chosen pace.

To ensure diversity, HCMC participants were selected by a process that took into account student vs. staff status, year of graduation, residential affiliation, past PBHA/Project HEALTH involvement, gender, previous running/marathon experience, and especially demonstrated prior commitment to the HCMC program. Each participant paid a nonrefundable \$210 registration fee and was required to meet several incremental fundraising benchmarks. These benchmarks culminated in a \$750 fundraising minimum for each first-time undergraduate participant, a \$1000 fundraising minimum for each veteran undergraduate participant, and a \$1500 fundraising minimum for each non-undergraduate participant. Each participant who did not meet a benchmark forfeited her official invitational entry and all associated monies. Forfeited entries were given to new participants selected from a waiting list. The waiting list was also used to replace participants who relinquished their entries for medical or personal reasons.

Between October 2006 and April 2007, participants used the HCMC listserv as arrange training runs and to discuss the full range of training, fundraising, and related issues. In addition to the listserv, HCMC held several brief, mandatory meetings. Notwithstanding the meetings and fundraising benchmarks, participants were free to choose and vary over time their levels of involvement in HCMC's training, fundraising, and community-building activities. For example, HCMC offered optional track workouts weekly, on Wednesday afternoons.

In the weeks following the 2007 Boston Marathon, HCMC participants were invited to complete an online survey about their overall HCMC experiences. Twenty-eight of thirty HCMC participants (93%) responded. What follows are:

- the survey instrument (pp. 2-3)
- a respondent table linking respondents with their answers to the closed-ended questions (p. 4)
- a statistical summary of responses to the closed-ended questions (p. 5)
- responses to all the open-ended questions, edited only as necessary to protect privacy and to correct obvious spelling and typographical errors (pp. 6-36).

## 2007 HCMC POST-MARATHON SURVEY – SURVEY INSTRUMENT QUESTIONS

### INSTRUCTIONS (please read):

As an official Harvard College Marathon Challenge (HCMC) participant, you put forth a tremendous amount of effort training, fundraising, and (for those who weren't injured or ill) running the Marathon. You sacrificed a great deal to make HCMC become a reality for yourself, and you should feel proud! It is in this spirit that we ask you to take the time to complete this survey while HCMC is still fresh in your mind (and in your body!). To ensure your responses are as complete and lucid as possible, please take this survey when your mind is clear and you're not feeling rushed or preoccupied with other pressing things.

When responding to the questions below, please be as specific, honest, and realistic as possible. Know with certainty that no egos will be bruised or damaged as a result of anything you write, so please don't sugar-coat your negative or constructive feedback. Likewise, please feel fully comfortable sharing the depth and breadth of your positive sentiments. It's perfectly fine if some of your answers are redundant, and it's also okay to go off on tangents. The "Golden Rule" when completing this survey is to please elaborate rather than edit yourself, because hearing more from you is better than hearing less from you! We're interested in unique perspectives just as much as the patterns/themes that are shared among HCMC participants.

The results will be available after they've been compiled.

THANK YOU in advance for your thoughtful remarks and valuable time! Your feedback really is important and really does matter. Remember, HCMC is always a work in progress!

1. Please reflect upon your overall HCMC experience [Note: "overall HCMC experience" encompasses everything from the time you joined HCMC many months ago through the present].
2. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect your *general mood*?
3. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect your *self-perception (confidence, self-worth, perceived abilities, etc.)*?
4. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect your *time management and organizational skills*?
5. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect your *academic performance (or job performance, if you're an employee)*?
6. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect your *drinking (alcohol) and partying*?
7. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect you *otherwise (eating, sleeping, daily routine, social relationships, general thinking, etc. – whatever)*?
8. Thinking back, what initially led you to participate in HCMC?
9. If I had to go back and decide again, I [**would; would not**] have participated in HCMC this past year.
10. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being your *absolute worst* actual Harvard experience so far and 10 being your *very best* actual Harvard experience so far, how would you rate your overall HCMC experience?
11. What was the *best* part of your HCMC experience, and what made it so great?
12. What was the *worst* part of your HCMC experience, why was it so bad, and how could it have been better?
13. In retrospect, what (if anything) could/would/should *you* have done differently to improve your HCMC experience?

## 2007 HCMC POST-MARATHON SURVEY – SURVEY INSTRUMENT QUESTIONS

14. In the future, what can *HCMC* do to improve?

15. HCMC has three stated purposes: (i) training for the Boston Marathon, (ii) fundraising for PBHA and Project HEALTH, and (iii) building a running community. Hearing this, what (if anything) comes to mind in light of your own HCMC experience this past year?

16. Please comment on the listserv (e.g., why you did or didn't feel comfortable posting, how the listserv was most or least useful, etc.).

17. Please share any comments you have about the specific deals that various businesses offered us (e.g., the New Balance discount, the fruit shakes at b.good, the Hilton's Tent City discount, etc.).

18. What brief advice or words of wisdom would you give to potential HCMC participants?

19. Please describe any mental or physical strategies that you used on Marathon Day, either before or during your run (for example, adhering to a particular running-to-walking ratio, thinking motivating thoughts, saying positive things to yourself, visualizing certain images, performing a pre-Marathon ritual or routine, etc.). Be as specific as possible.

20. What else is on your mind about HCMC? Radical ideas, idiosyncrasies, etc., are all welcome – anything goes!

21. I paid the HCMC Registration Fee and set up my personal fundraising page [**before; after**] January 1<sup>st</sup> of this year.

22. This was the [**first, second**] time I ran the Boston Marathon with HCMC.

23. I [**did; did not**] cross the Boston Marathon Finish Line this year.

24. Would you ever run another full marathon (26.2 miles) again? [**definitely; probably; 50/50; probably not; no way!**]

25. If you were offered a slot in next year's Harvard College Marathon Challenge, would you accept it? [**I won't be at Harvard next year (ineligible); definitely; probably; 50/50; probably not; no way!**]

26. As a result of my HCMC participation, I will become more involved with PBHA or Project Health. [**I won't be at Harvard next year (ineligible); nope; doubtful; probably; definitely**]

27. My current Harvard College affiliation is [**1-FR=freshman; 2-SO=sophomore; 3-JR=junior; 4-SR=senior; 5-PR=proctor; 6-TU=resident tutor; 7-RD=resident dean; 8-OG=other Harvard grad student; 9-OE=other Harvard employee; 10-NA=none of the above**].

28. What's your name (optional)? [If you self-identified and fully completed this survey, you'll automatically be eligible to win a pair of movie tickets.]

29. If you provided your name, may we attribute your comments to you when reporting survey results? [**yes; no; I didn't provide my name**]

*Before clicking "Submit," please ask yourself if you were honest, specific, realistic, and thorough in your answers. If you weren't, could you please revise your answers accordingly?*

**THANKS AGAIN!**

**SUBMIT**

**Reset**

2007 HCMC POST-MARATHON SURVEY – RESPONDENT TABLE &  
RESPONSES TO CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONS

The respondent numbers in this table correspond with the response numbers later in this document, so you can link responses with respondents.

Respondent	Question 27 (Harvard College status/ affiliation)	Question 10 (overall rating, 1=worst, 10=best)	Question 21 (joined HCMC before/after January 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Question 22 (# of years running with HCMC)	Question 23 (crossed Finish Line)*	Question 24 (desire to run another marathon)	Question 25 (desire to run HCMC in 2008)	Question 26 (will become more involved-w/charities)
1	8-OG	9	before	1st	yes	definitely	50/50	doubtful
2	1-FR	9	before	1st	yes	definitely	probably	probably
3	2-SO	8	before	1st	yes	definitely	definitely	doubtful
4	9-OE	7	before	1st	yes	prob. not	prob. not	doubtful
5	2-SO	10	after	1st	no	probably	ineligible	no
6	3-JR	8	before	1st	yes	50/50	probably	doubtful
7	3-JR	8	before	1st	yes	50/50	probably	doubtful
8	3-JR	8	before	1st	yes	definitely	definitely	probably
9	4-SR	8	before	1st	yes	definitely	ineligible	ineligible
10	2-SO	8	before	1st	no	definitely	definitely	probably
11	2-SO	10	before	1st	yes	probably	prob. not	no
12	4-SR	6	after	1st	no	50/50	ineligible	ineligible
13	2-SO	10	after	2nd	yes	definitely	probably	doubtful
14	4-SR	8	before	2nd	yes	probably	ineligible	ineligible
15	1-FR	9	before	1st	yes	definitely	definitely	probably
16	3-JR	7	before	2nd	yes	probably	prob. not	no
17	2-SO	7	after	1st	no	definitely	definitely	yes
18	1-FR	9	before	1st	yes	definitely	definitely	probably
19	4-SR	8	before	2nd	yes	definitely	ineligible	ineligible
20	4-SR	9	before	1st	yes	definitely	ineligible	ineligible
21	3-JR	7	before	2nd	yes	probably	probably	doubtful
22	3-JR	9	before	1st	yes	definitely	definitely	yes
23	10-NA	8	before	1st	yes	prob. not	ineligible	probably
24	9-OE	10	before	1st	yes	definitely	definitely	probably
25	3-JR	5	before	1st	no	prob. not	prob. not	probably
26	1-FR	8	before	1st	no	definitely	definitely	probably
27	1-FR	9	before	1st	yes	definitely	definitely	probably
28	3-JR	8	after	1st	yes	definitely	50/50	doubtful

\*Of the 6 respondents who did not cross the Finish Line, 3 chose not to run the Marathon at all due to injury or illness, and 3 stopped running before they crossed the Finish Line. Therefore, 22 of the 25 respondents who actually starting running the Marathon did cross the Finish Line.

**Results summary for closed-ended questions (n=28 respondents):**

9. If I had to go back and decide again, I [**would=100%; would not=0%**] have participated in HCMC this past year.

10. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being your *absolute worst* actual Harvard experience so far and 10 being your *very best* actual Harvard experience so far, how would you rate your overall HCMC experience? **mean rating = 8.2**

21. I paid the HCMC Registration Fee and set up my personal fundraising page [**before=82%; after=18%**] January 1<sup>st</sup> of this year.

22. This was the [**first=82%, second=18%**] time I ran the Boston Marathon with HCMC.

23. I [**did=79%; did not=21%**] cross the Boston Marathon Finish Line this year. *[Note: Of the 6 respondents who did not cross the Finish Line, 3 chose not to run the Marathon at all due to injury or illness, and 3 stopped running before they crossed the Finish Line. Therefore, 22 of the 25 respondents who actually starting running the Marathon (88%) did cross the Finish Line.]*

24. Would you ever run another full marathon (26.2 miles) again? [**definitely=61%; probably=18%; 50/50=10.5%; probably not=10.5%; no way!=0%**]

25. If you were offered a slot in next year's Harvard College Marathon Challenge, would you accept it? [**ineligible=25%; definitely=36%; probably=18%; 50/50=7%; probably not=14%; no way!=0%**]

26. As a result of my HCMC participation, I will become more involved with PBHA or Project Health. [**ineligible=18%; no=11%; doubtful=29%; probably=35%; definitely=7%**]

27. My current Harvard College affiliation is [**1-FR=freshman=18%; 2-SO=sophomore=21%; 3-JR=junior=29%; 4-SR=senior=18%; 5-PR=proctor=0%; 6-TU=resident tutor=0%; 7-RD=resident dean=0%; 8-OG=other Harvard grad student=3.5%; 9-OE=other Harvard employee=7%; 10-NA=none of the above=3.5%**]

**1. Please reflect upon your overall HCMC experience.**

1. I had a great overall experience with HCMC! Before I started I was only a recreational runner--now I think that I have discovered a sport that I will do for many years. I was also really proud to have given something back to the community and Harvard in the form of the fundraising.
2. HCMC was terrific. Most of my training was on my own, but the time I spent training with HCMC was invaluable. The listserv was terrific. Everybody selected to run was an individual that I would have enjoyed getting to know outside of HCMC. [name deleted] was fabulous
3. Very positive - HCMC's a great way to get into the Boston marathon, and the fundraising's very easy.
4. I think it was well organized and kept me motivated and on track. Even though I didn't run with others as much as I had hoped to, it was motivating just to receive the emails and hear what other people were doing.
5. HCMC is great. I ran bandit last year and found this year's experience much more fulfilling. The biggest help was having a community of runners to train with--the e-mail list is awesome. The free shakes at B Good were definitely a plus... I don't know what I'm going to do now after my runs! Basically, being involved with HCMC included the same amount of training as when I ran bandit, but with more support, more events... more fun.
6. My experience was a completely positive one. Most of my interaction with the other HCMC runners came during the formal and informal gatherings we had leading up to race day. It was really great to talk to people about how they were training and get some tips from the experienced marathon runners in the group. The email list also provided a lot of useful information and probably saved me from wearing the wrong stuff on marathon day given the strange weather predictions. As the coordinator, [name deleted] was also very helpful and always replied promptly to any requests I had. While I did not do many group runs before race day, I ended up pacing with another HCMC runner for a significant stretch of the marathon course during the actual race, which helped me mentally and allowed me to reach my target time. It was really great to know there were other runners that you were affiliated with out there on the course and to see them at different spots.
7. Great way to meet people who have similar interests. If you're specific and a little flexible, the listserv is a great way to find running buddies--and those are so important. I really think anybody could do this if they committed to the plan. The few social events were good, or at least had good food. The running is really rewarding and there's no better (or easier) way to get to the start line than with HCMC.
8. My overall HCMC experience was good, but heavily weighted towards the end. I wish I had engaged more in participating in runs over the list > my fault for not actively trying to incorporate group runs in my schedule as much as I could have. I also would have liked to build the sense of group spirit a little more before race day.
9. I had a great time, all the way from way back in the fall at our first meeting in PBH, up to the post-marathon get together in Quincy. I had never run longer than 6 miles in my life and definitely did not consider myself a runner AT ALL! But being with a group that was supportive and enthusiastic, I found it hard not to become excited about running. The HCMC also provided a great forum for group runs/activities and information whenever I had questions. Overall, my experience was GREAT!
10. Completely worth it. Would do it again.
11. Awesome.
12. HCMC provided a great supportive environment for answering questions when I needed help and providing a sense of community.
13. Wonderful experience. The group, the donations/ fundraising/ race day and everything in between: excellent.
14. I was very happy with my HCMC experience this year, despite the complications of being a busy senior who had other priorities during the crucial training months. I'm very glad I had the opportunity to run (and finish) the marathon again. I honestly didn't think I could do it, with my limited training, but I pulled it out with a little help from my friends.
15. My overall HCMC experience was great! I enjoyed the challenge of completing my first marathon and know that it would have been much more difficult without HCMC. It's a great group of individuals who motivate each other to finish the marathon. I was able to find running partners and learn the nuances of marathon running thanks to the listserv. I also enjoyed all of the events and the sponsorships from the various Boston-area businesses.

**1. Please reflect upon your overall HCMC experience.**

16. HCMC is great for finding running partners, and is a great community of people.
17. It was awesome. hard work was enjoyable.
18. I had a tremendous time with the overall HCMC experience. Little perks such as the b.good and New Balance discounts sweetened the deal and made it quite a bit easier to make the effort to raise money for PBHA and Project HEALTH (the little things do make a difference)
19. One of my best memories at Harvard. I thank [name deleted] for fulfilling my dream, not once, but twice. I can't possibly thank him enough. I really can't.
20. It was very good - I got injured a few times, but always worked through it
21. Great. It's always nice having other people to run with. HCMC adds a team element to the individual sport, especially when running on Marathon Monday.
22. My overall HCMC experience was absolutely wonderful. Running the marathon was one of the best projects I've ever undertaken. I learned a lot about myself in the process.
23. Being a part of the HCMC team was a wonderful experience. As a non-student living outside of Cambridge I found it difficult to participate in many of the group runs and would like to have done more with the team. But, that being said, it was still great to be part of a "runner's community" and to know that if I had questions or wanted to plan a run, there would be many people who I could call on. The best part of being on the HCMC team was race day. Meeting up with fellow runners before the race, traveling with them to Hopkinton, and starting with them made a huge difference in my mood and nerves on race day. Overall this was a very positive experience and I would recommend it to both students and non-students.
24. My experience with the HCMC was and will be one of the most memorable of my life. The motivation to post runs and train with others was what made the Boston Marathon such a thrill
25. I had a good time and I thought the list emails were really informative and helpful. I wish that group runs had been more organized or that there had been higher attendance -- a conscious effort on everyone's part to run with the team.
26. For me, my freshman year at Harvard was very much defined by my experience with HCMC. As someone who was accustomed to being a tri-season athlete in high school, HCMC very much filled the void of high school team sports. That said, it provided the structure that team sports in high school gave me, as well as the opportunity to stay fit and enjoy running, but it lacked some of the community feel of a team. To be fair, HCMC serves a different purpose from high school sports, so that was to be expected--however, if there were one thing that I felt could have been improved it would be the HCMC community. The organization of HCMC was great, the website is extremely useful, and as members of HCMC we were provided with so many benefits--whether it was the wonderful resources of the listserv, discounts at certain stores, among other things.
27. I think HCMC is an admirable program that served a wonderful purpose for me by motivating both my fundraising and my training but not forcing anything down my throat. Although the open forum set-up that the program adheres to can be daunting and intimidating (as I, admittedly, often found it), I was always comforted to get group emails, to have people to answer my (many!) questions, and to be encouraged by as I read about their various training runs.
28. great to know that there are other runners out there going through the same thing -- the trouble with distance running is that there is a mental strain, more so even than a physical strain. when you're running with people, it doesn't feel like a waste of time to be out there for hours at a time -- it just feels like you're hanging out with a friend for a few hours, which is wonderful.

**2. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect your *general mood*?**

1. It was really great most of the time. I enjoyed my long runs as a time to reflect on my work and my day and to just let my mind rest for a while. The only part of the experience that was a little stressful was the injury (last year) and worrying about injuries (this year).
2. HCMC and more pacificistically completing the marathon was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life
3. After the marathon was over, I felt good.
4. Overall, I'd say I was happier over the past 6 months than I had been during previous winters (since college swimming).
5. Great. I think that running every day is what keeps me sane at college. I definitely notice a (negative) difference in my mood when I don't run.
6. For most of the fall and winter, it was fun to know that I was training for something big off in the distance. It forced me to get outside and be active on days that I never would have otherwise, which in turn made me feel better and gave me feel like I was accomplishing something.
7. A little nervous at times because you have to be careful. I injured both legs and had to make sure I got enough sleep. There was always that doubt in my mind about "can I do this?" and each week I aced another even-longer run. Nothing like the acute butterflies I felt when I was on the crew team though.
8. Participating in HCMC improved my general mood on days when I ran and made me feel guilty about not running on my off days.
9. Participating in the HCMC experience definitely improved my mood both towards running and in life in general. The HCMC gave me increased motivation to run and increased enjoyment from running. Also, the benefits of running and HCMC in general spilled over into my general life and, I believe, at least partly contributed to my amazing senior year.
10. I'm convinced that running makes people happier.
11. Not much.
12. My general mood improved with confidence that I got from doing HCMC runs and reading the listserv and realizing that other people were in the same boat I was.
13. My mood was great. Finishing the race and achieving the donation goal: great for self-esteem.
14. Well, I wanted to participate in HCMC this year primarily to beat my time from last year. When it became clear a few months into the year that I wouldn't be able to train enough to do that (due to thesis and other academic and social responsibilities), I was disappointed with myself for signing up. There was a time when I ignored all HCMC e-mails because reading the messages made me feel like I wasn't fulfilling my commitment to the group or to myself. I considered giving my spot to someone else. But after thinking more about what running a marathon means and receiving some valuable guidance from [name deleted], I decided to go through with it. I'm happy that I did.
15. The overall HCMC experience improved my general mood. My freshman year has been a transition year so training for the marathon gave me great confidence that I could achieve my goals. Therefore, I was optimistic about my experiences at Harvard and in a good mood.
16. I didn't have to go on my long runs alone, which of course made my general mood much better.
17. made me happier to exercise, have a group to exercise with--and all for the purpose of a great cause.
18. Running always puts me in a good mood, and having a greater goal helped me keep a focused running schedule. Being able to stop at b.good after a workout was always something to look forward to. Their smoothies alone would've made this a worthwhile experience.
19. well, at times, getting ready for the marathon was a major source of stress. I was constantly worried that I wouldn't be able to make it. but, in truth, [name deleted] was extremely helpful in getting me to see this experience from the right perspective.
20. positively
21. My general mood was fairly unaffected. However, after running with people I generally felt better than I do when I'm alone.

**2. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect your *general mood*?**

22. I think it often improved my mood, because finishing a long run is always a very rewarding experience, and I would be in high spirits for the rest of the day. However, I definitely got less sleep due to the training, so I might have been more tired than usual.
23. The HCMC experience affected my mood most on race day. Having the support of the team was HUGE and did much to improve my mood in the days before the race and on race day itself.
24. There is no question that distance running releases endorphins and gives you a high for many hours thereafter. That feeling coupled with the camaraderie creates such mood booster
25. No real effect.
26. Participating in HCMC only affected my mood positively. Training provided me with confidence, a sense of meaning and importance, and even an outlet from external stresses.
27. I consider myself a generally happy person but my participation in HCMC elevated that mood to a unique status of pride and pretty continual, genuine happiness. Every time I told someone about what I was doing and for whom I was raising money, I got the most incredible responses, reminding me just how important our mission is and how significant our fundraising is.
28. bettered my mood

**3. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect your *self-perception (confidence, self-worth, perceived abilities, etc.)*?**

1. I definitely gained a lot of self-confidence and self-esteem from my marathon experience! To know that I can stick with something and do all of the work and training, then actually see things through (especially having come back from my injury) gave me a lot of confidence.
2. HCMC helped me realize that when I set my mind to something, I typically get it done
3. Not really, though it feels good to have finished the marathon.
4. Kept me focused and goal-oriented.
5. Running makes me feel more confident about myself and especially my body. At Harvard, it's very easy to feel insecure (surrounded by such accomplished, amazing peers) but running is such a personal activity that it really contributes to feelings of pride and accomplishment.
6. I am amazed looking back on how much running I did in training, and how distances that seemed impossible to me only a couple years ago now don't seem that abnormal. I always doubted whether I could do a marathon, because of how hard it is mentally and physically, so I have a lot more self-confidence having trained for it and completed it. Also, running without my ipod, which I thought would be extremely hard and might make it mentally much tougher than anything I had done, proved to me that I could steady my mind and energize myself without outside musical support.
7. I can do anything. At first a half-marathon was a big deal, now that's "just" a training run. On marathon day I ran a really good time and even negative-split, something I didn't even think I could do. It feels good to push limits and succeed.
8. The HCMC experience improved my self-perception of my abilities - I now have more confidence that I can do anything that I set my mind to and work hard to achieve.
9. It definitely raised my self-perception. Running a marathon is not just about going out on one day and running 26.2 miles. It is about the months of training, hard-work, and self-discipline that come before the marathon. I believe the marathon is just the icing on the cake. Through this long and difficult (but enjoyable) process, I realized things about myself that I never knew before, and I started to think that I was capable of much more than I ever thought before.
10. I've felt great about myself even if I didn't finish. Most of my friends have still be astounded by my 21 miles.
11. I definitely feel more confident now that I've run a marathon.
12. I definitely felt an increase sense of confidence as a result of being able to set goals and reach them.
13. Nor'easters which don't kill you make you stronger. End of story.
14. I'm not sure if participating in HCMC increased my confidence or sense of self-worth, but it certainly showed me that I'm in better shape than I think I am.
15. The HCMC experience increased my self-esteem because I accomplished something that I had never done before.
16. I'm not sure it had much of an effect this year. It had more of an effect last year when I ran my first marathon.
17. felt the same
18. I'm not entirely sure that I've done something on the scale of running a marathon, or something likewise that required a huge amount of preparation several months beforehand towards a goal that, in the dead of winter, is not easily recognizable. The opportunity for me to go through that experience makes me feel as though I can truly accomplish anything. Oddly enough, it has also encouraged my not-in-shape father to get back in shape no matter how long it takes, just because I was able to run 26.2 miles. The fact that I something I did can be motivation enough for him to positively change his life (as opposed to the other way around) is something truly remarkable for me.
19. I always feel great about my accomplishment after finishing a marathon, particularly Boston. The runner's high is the real deal, but then again, so is the lingering pain in my legs.
20. positively

**3. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect your *self-perception* (confidence, self-worth, perceived abilities, etc.)?**

21. HCMC made me feel more confident. Once finishing long training runs I felt overcome by a sense of accomplishment. This spread to other work to the point where I felt like I could dominate any task.
22. It definitely improved my confidence and self-worth. Running a marathon makes you feel invincible, like you can take on any project.
23. It didn't really affect my self-perception. The actual marathon training and finishing the marathon were huge boosts in my confidence.
24. You can't avoid getting in great physical condition when training properly. Everyone seems to have much more self-confidence when in good shape
25. Probably made me more confident.
26. It definitely improved my self-perception and sense of accomplishment.
27. Completing the Boston Marathon in just about four and a half hours is one of the greatest accomplishments of my life and certainly one I will never forget. I feel on top of the world right now (although a little less so when I try and walk up and down stairs and find my legs a little less than willing to cooperate). A marathon seems like a gargantuan, imposing accomplishment from a distance, but as the miles build up during training, it becomes a reality. Running a marathon had been one of my college goals, but I never thought it would be so manageable. I think I will forever carry with me the pride of pushing myself through those last few miles and thinking, before even finishing, "I want to do that again." My self-perception has expanded positively both through my own reflection on this achievement but also the response I've gotten from others. I have never been so inundated with emails, facebook, calls, messages etc. with nothing but support and admiration, and it feels great to know how many people I have backing my endeavor.
28. n/a

**4. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect your *time management and organizational skills*?**

1. I've always had very good time management skills, but having to organize training around all of my lab work definitely made me put those skills to use!
2. My time management is a mess. HCMC didn't help it, but the club was tremendously respectful and understanding of my other commitments
3. I generally wake up pretty early, so it was a matter of fitting in a run before I went to breakfast and started work. It took time - particularly on weekdays - but not enough that I couldn't handle a 5 (difficult) class courseload and several other extra-curricular activities.
4. Positively - gave me a reason to leave work/squeeze a run in whenever I could.
5. Improved them... running in the afternoons makes me more productive when I study at night. It's a great way to relax, wind down from a day of classes, and recharge.
6. To be honest, I didn't change my time management skills or techniques much while I was training. I did make sure that I always factored in that one long run each week and I didn't let anything get in the way of that, so I guess I got some more experience with having non-negotiable deadlines and schedules.
7. It takes time, but you can fit it. Again, I'm comparing it to a 20+ hour a week varsity sport commitment, and this maybe took 12 hours a week max so it was easy to manage.
8. HCMC helped me to improve my organizational skills in that I had to plan each day out the night before so that I would have time to get my runs in.
9. I have always been pretty disciplined about time management and organizational skills from playing years and years of team sports, so HCMC didn't really affect me in that regard.
10. Running helped my sleep cycle settle down to normal times. I stopped going to bed at 2 or 3. This let me organize my day better.
11. I definitely had to work things in around my runs. So I guess it helped my time management skills.
12. I'm generally pretty organized, so this didn't really impact that.
13. Running takes time. Fundraising takes time. It can only have made my skills stronger.
14. No effect.
15. I improved my time management skills because I had to work my runs into my schedule. Running kept me focused throughout the year.
16. I had to organize my time in order to be able to train. I think training kept me very focused and structured throughout the spring semester.
17. exercising during the day helps me organize my time better
18. Taking five real classes, having a job, working Hasty Pudding, and running the marathon made my time management skills among the best that have ever been. I streamlined my schedule and was invariably able to at least get everything done.
19. I didn't train nearly enough as I would have liked.
20. no real effect
21. Running the marathon forces you to be more regimented. Although I did not run at the same time every day, knowing that you have to run will force you to plan your day more carefully and get things done.
22. It forced me to be more organized and manage my time better. I already have a very hectic schedule, so I had to learn to utilize every hour of my day in order to fit in all the runs.
23. It didn't affect either.
24. I was able to do most of my training in the early morning so that my day was not adversely affected in the least
25. No effect.
26. It definitely helped me. I am definitely someone who is used to managing my time around at least two hours of sports a day. So knowing that I had to cut at least an hour or more out of my day to go for a run was consistent with my past time management skills.
27. Sadly, I don't think that my time management/organizational skills gained anything from this experience, although neither did I lose any. I am used to having regimented practice schedules (like I have had nearly every day for the past 8 years of my life before I started training for the marathon), and because the marathon training was so different from that and entirely dependent upon my own volition I don't think I gained much in this category. Although, I don't think I've ever gotten up so early on so many Sunday mornings to go for long runs before HCMC.
28. n/a

**5. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect your *academic performance (or job performance, if you're an employee)*?**

1. The discipline of my training helped me through a very rough time in my research last year. Overall, I think the experience helped me see my labwork in a new perspective, and I can't help but now find many similarities between the experience of getting my PhD and the HCMC experience.
2. No. Academic performance not affected
3. It didn't.
4. Same as above.
5. Um... I don't think that it affected my academic performance that much. It didn't hurt my performance in school.
6. No noticeable affect. It probably took time away that I would have been studying, but it also made me feel energized and motivated to do work on days I wouldn't have been otherwise.
7. Hard to tell. Again, I'm comparing it to varsity athletics, so I never felt I compromised my classes to train.
8. HCMC had a negligible affect on my academic performance - the pros and cons cancelled each other out. On the one hand, becoming more athletic gave me more energy to do my work, but at times my runs would take up time that would otherwise be spent studying.
9. We'll see at the end of term! But if I had to guess, I think the training made me more focused on work when I had to do it, so I think my academic performance probably went up.
10. Going for a 5-mile run when you are in a rut during homework is one of the best things for rebooting your productivity.
11. I'd say my academic performance was to my satisfaction. If I had spent all the time I spent training studying instead my academic performance would've been better, but grades aren't everything.
12. I think for the better. I am more productive when I have lots of things to schedule and need to structure my time well.
13. I wouldn't say it improved it, but the enhanced organizational and time management skills were noticeably better, which I feel must have had a positive impact.
14. No effect.
15. I believe that the HCMC experience improved my grades. I derived self-confidence from completing the long runs; however, I also alleviated stress on the runs.
16. I don't think my grades suffered. If anything, I think training made me be more efficient with my work.
17. better
18. The marathon was one of a huge number of activities and classes that I was participating in, to the point where I was almost too stretched out to be able to accomplish any quality work. During the most difficult stretch of the Pudding run I wasn't running as often as I should've, but in the end everything turned out ok, mostly because I was semi-lucky and rather well prepared.
19. My academic performance was completely unaffected.
20. it did trade off with my ability to work on my thesis to some degree, but I skimmed on the training instead of the thesis - so not too severely
21. My academic performance was unaffected. That being said, I was willing to skip a run if I had a test.
22. It didn't really affect my academic performance. I always put schoolwork over running, so if I needed to skip a run because I had too much work, I skipped it. But I tried to never put myself in that situation (see #4).
23. As an employee and not a student, my job performance was not affected.
24. I found myself much more alert as a result of the endorphin high
25. No effect
26. I'm not sure it really helped or hurt my academic performance. The one nice thing about HCMC is that I could decide exactly when I wanted to go on a run on a day by day basis so if I had an exam, I could make the day before a "lighter" training day.
27. As with all exercise that I do, running contributes immensely to my academic satisfaction and performance. Yes, it's hard to fit in long runs with academic commitments, but that I something that is essential to my academic experience and always has been. My mind would just explode with cortisol if I didn't go get my endorphin kick every day. I think, also, that the time management that such rigorous exercise requires contributes immensely to academic efficiency.
28. n/a

**6. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect your *drinking (alcohol) and partying*?**

1. Not much- I gave up alcohol for the last three weeks of training, but it was not too much of a sacrifice.
2. I don't drink alcohol. I didn't even drink soda during training though!
3. It didn't.
4. Traded the after-work drinks for many after-work runs. Fridays were also a bit more low key as I rested up for Saturday runs.
5. I drank and partied less. You just can't stay out until 3a.m. on a Saturday night if you're getting up to catch an 8:40a.m. bus to Wellesley. While I drank regularly in the fall, I haven't had a night of heavy drinking since New Year's... largely because of training. Also running makes me more aware of my body, which makes being hung over feel that much worse.
6. I had to cut back on drinking and partying shortly before the marathon, but it did not really hamper my social life for most of training. I really didn't mind the times that I couldn't drink as much as others because I knew I was doing it for a larger purpose that would be ultimately much more fulfilling.
7. Gave me an excuse not to if I didn't want to. I generally stayed in the night before long runs, but you can certainly have a few beers and be fine.
8, HCMC didn't affect my drinking and partying.
9. I drank less as a result of training for the marathon. I had to be more disciplined about what I put into my body and when. I couldn't go out one Saturday night and drink with buddies, and then expect to get up early Sunday to go for a 10 mile run. I had to learn that some nights I would just stay in and relax, watch a movie, etc. in order to get all my training done. But, in the end, I have no regrets for partying and drinking less.
10. About a month before the marathon, I completely stopped drinking and staying out late. Although having early and quiet nights was at first strange, it ended up being quite nice.
11. I cut out alcohol consumption almost completely for the last couple of months of training.
12. Not too much. I'm generally not much of a drinker anyway.
13. I didn't drink alcohol for 1.5 weeks before the race, and to attend social events with a rock-solid 'excuse' for not drinking really made me more aware of the lack of necessity to drink at social functions. This was a noticeable positive thing from the HCMC experience. To run a marathon, you really can't party the weekend/ week before. It's great.
14. No effect.
15. I'm not a huge drinker and participating in HCMC made it easier for me not to drink. I knew that drinking would make me feel horrible during the long runs and my friends didn't put pressure on me to drink either because they knew I had to run the next day. I still socialized though.
16. I often went to bed earlier than I wanted to so that I could get a good night's rest and be able to go on a run the following day. This sometimes wasn't the most fun decision, but it kept my life structured and kept me healthy.
17. N/A
18. No, it didn't at all. I didn't go out the night before the marathon, but I did the Friday and Saturday beforehand. I don't think that this affecting me in any way.
19. It didn't really affect my partying. I'm enjoying senior spring and all the activities that come with it. I even went to senior bar the night before and the night after the marathon. It wasn't that going out was nearly as important as the marathon, it was just that I felt I could run the marathon without sacrificing the fun of senior spring. perhaps more accurately, I was willing to take the calculated risk and it worked out in the end.
20. lessened it the last weekend
21. Not a whole lot during most of the year. For 2 weeks before the marathon I stopped drinking altogether in an effort to sleep better and maintain good hydration.
22. While I have never been that big of a drinker or partier, I found myself drinking and partying even less, simply because I'm not going to stay out drinking until 3 AM when I have to get up and run 13 miles the next morning.
23. n/a
24. I did not affect my partying in any way
25. no effect
26. Participating in HCMC probably did not affect my partying as much as it should have, and as a result I ended up being more tired than I should have been.
27. Well, I don't drink, so that wasn't an issue for me, nor do I party with any great regularity. Yes, I went to bed early most Saturday nights for early Sunday morning runs, but I had been giving up my Friday nights in the fall for early Saturday morning crew practices, so it wasn't like much changed in that regard.
28. n/a

**7. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect you *otherwise* (eating, sleeping, daily routine, social relationships, general thinking. etc.– whatever)?**

1. I think that doing HCMC helped to give me a better relationship with my thesis advisor (who is an avid runner). I also came to appreciate my relationship with my boyfriend even more, because he was SO supportive during all of the training, and especially my injury.
2. I slept less but realized that I needed less sleep to get by
3. I had a set routine - run in the morning, do stuff later - that held for several months. It felt pretty good!
4. Appetite went way up when I initially started training, then leveled off a bit. It picked up again when I started with the longer (10+) runs as I would be starving the day after one of those. I was surprised that I didn't see more of a change in my body overall, although I do feel more fit and think I had more energy.
5. I swear by running. If I ever become famous, and someone asks me what is the secret to my success, I will reply "at least an hour of exercise every day." Sometimes this is running and sometimes cross training, but I find that when I run I eat more healthily, sleep better, am less stressed out/moody, have a more positive image of myself and of Harvard, etc. etc. Running is a miracle drug.
6. I felt much more tired than usual after some of the long runs and often felt as if I needed more sleep. I also felt much hungrier, which was sort of fun because I could eat a lot more than usual and not worry about it.
7. Bigger appetite. Endorphins are so good for you.
8. The HCMC experience affected my general thinking about running - now I think that I can do any race (up to 26.2 miles that is!). I'm excited to get more into the running world and enter and train for more races in the future.
9. I believe that all the training and running contributed to a much healthier, active lifestyle overall. I started being more strict and disciplined about eating, sleeping, and anything else about taking care of my body. Also, it gave me extra motivation and incentive in other aspects of my social and academic life.
10. Made me respect Boston more by leaving the bubble and seeing places by running.
11. None.
12. It gave more structure to my daily routine which was generally a good thing and made me more productive.
13. It made me a better person, that's all I know.
14. Less sleep, I guess.
15. I was a competitive swimmer in high school, yet I believe that I had to alter my habits more to run the marathon. I had to sleep a little bit more to recover from the runs (especially the marathon itself) and had to consider what I ate better. Running gave me a great routine for college since my day could have gotten really unstructured. This is a theme in the survey, but it kept me focused on a goal and my body was tuned to achieving that goal.
16. I was busier and usually rushing to fit in runs because my schedule was already so packed. Sometimes, it was a bit tiring.
17. I slept better, ate more, felt happier all around
18. I tended to run at night (8-10pm), so I'd almost certainly always get a good night of sleep. If I was tired of being in the room (there was a time when I wasn't getting on with my suitemates well), it was nice to always have the option of running to get away. Yes, running away from your problems is healthy. Girls love hearing that you're running the marathon. It was a great thing to casually slip into conversation.
19. I don't think I did enough training to answer this question.
20. oh, positively on balance - I slept better, ate more regularly, etc.
21. I slept a lot better during training. I was tired when I was supposed to be but wasn't too sore to sleep by any means. I ate a whole lot more - I always felt hungry.
22. I think it just made me more confident in everything that I did. And I was a lot more fit while knocking on doors campaigning!
23. The process of training for the marathon affected my routine such that I planned each day as part of a training schedule where long runs were on Sunday, rest days on Monday and Saturday, etc.
24. My daily routine was enhanced as I generally just felt better all day...

**7. How, if at all, did participating in the overall HCMC experience affect you *otherwise* (eating, sleeping, daily routine, social relationships, general thinking. etc.– whatever)?**

25. I probably slept less, but I was just really busy in general.
26. In terms of sleeping and eating, I don't think I listened to my body quite as much as I should have. It was amazing to me how quickly the mileage I was running crept up on me without even really noticing it, and I think I should have been eating and sleeping more.
27. I think one of the only negative things from my HCMC experience was a growing sense of stress in my running as the marathon approached. I felt like I had to get in a certain number of miles every day and ended up anxious about my running. I think, however, that this was due to my being behind in my training because of an injury sustained in February that threw off my training.
28. was very helpful to get experienced advice from other runners! what to wear, how to carbo-load, how to recover from minor injuries -- very supportive list!

**8. Thinking back, what initially led you to participate in HCMC?**

1. I thought it would be a great opportunity to run my first marathon and meet people outside of the chemistry department.
2. I signed up on a whim but it was one of the best decisions I made this year
3. Wanting to run the Boston marathon. Also, raising money for two good charities.
4. The challenge of doing the marathon and having a good group of people to train with.
5. I ran bandit last year and wanted to experience the marathon with a number.
6. My own self doubt about whether I could do a marathon, which I knew I had to face someday, was the major factor. But I also know that if I could get into the HCMC group and have people around me doing it, it would be easier, so that made me really want to win a spot in the lottery. I was also encouraged a lot beforehand by friends and probably wouldn't have done it if they hadn't convinced me I should.
7. I knew people who had run it in the past, and if they could do it, so could I, right?! I also quit my varsity sport so I needed something for endorphins. HCMC gave my recreational exercising a focus.
8. Participating in HCMC allowed me to meet two goals at once. After participating in crew last year, I wanted to participate in an organized athletic activity again but one that allowed for a great degree of flexibility. I also enjoyed raising money for PBHA organizations as I serve as one of the directors at the Harvard Square Homeless Shelter.
9. I was led to participate in HCMC for two reasons: one, I wanted a new challenge for my senior year (a challenge I would always remember), and two, I had always dreamed of running the Boston Marathon as an ultimate athletic goal.
10. I wanted to run in the Boston marathon while I was here at Harvard.
11. I wanted to challenge myself in a completely different way.
12. I missed the camaraderie of team sports.
13. Last year rocked. Probably the best experience of my freshman year. Fundraising thru HCMC again was really wonderful.
14. I like the personal challenge of running a marathon.
15. I wanted to participate in HCMC for a variety of reasons. First off, I thought that running in the Boston Marathon would be an amazing experience, the kind that gets on the "life to-do list" but often doesn't get done. Second, I knew that running a marathon is no trivial act and that it requires lots of planning and support. The more that I found out about HCMC, the more I knew it would be an excellent community with which to complete my first marathon. Running so many miles can get lonely and it's not exactly a varsity sport team, but the community of runners in HCMC is great. I have enjoyed learning more about them (and learning running tips from them) on the long runs and on the listserv. Third, I was attracted to the fact that I could be meeting a personal goal WHILE raising money for two great organizations. I was not running for myself, but for the individuals that these organizations serve.
16. I really enjoyed running Boston with HCMC last year.
17. I love charity and I love exercising. perfect combination
18. It sounded like a good idea at the time. Fortunately enough, it turned out to be among the best ideas of the year.
19. This was my second year. The chance to run the Boston Marathon as an official runner while helping charities that I truly believe in is unbelievable. I loved it and don't regret a second of it.
20. I really wanted to run the marathon, mainly.
21. Word of mouth is how I heard of HCMC. I got into marathon running just to have a long-term goal that I could strive for.
22. I initially wanted to participate in HCMC because I really wanted to push myself and see what I could do. I chose HCMC because I'm really involved in PBHA and thought raising money for the organization would be a worthwhile activity.
23. As an employee of Project HEALTH I felt that the opportunity to participate in the Boston Marathon AND raise money for my organization was a fabulous one.
24. I have always wanted to run the Boston Marathon and I have been working at Harvard for 17 years and feel very much committed to the institutional mission. I cannot think of a better way to tie those two loves together

**8. Thinking back, what initially led you to participate in HCMC?**

25. I wanted to run the marathon again and to run it with a team this time.
26. I love running. I knew that I wouldn't have the chance to be a part of a running team here at Harvard but I still wanted to be part of a running community.
27. One of my number one college goals was to run the Boston Marathon and walking through the student activities fair back in September, I jumped at the chance to join the lottery. While completing my application, I began to realize exactly what it meant to me to undertake such an adventure and became all the more excited about running for a greater purpose and in conjunction with other people. As a volunteer for a PBHA program, the fundraising really hit home for me.
28. I really wanted to run Boston. Also, I trained alone for San Francisco, which really sucked -- wanted a group to train with.

**11. What was the *best* part of your HCMC experience, and what made it so great?**

1. The best part of the experience was finding out that I really liked long distance running. I had some REALLY great long runs where I just felt awesome. That and actually finishing the marathon.
2. The people and the feeling of completing the marathon
3. Running the marathon was awesome - the spectators and course are fantastic.
4. Breakfast in Lowell and the ride out to Hopkinton were great and the first time I felt like I really got to know some of the other participants (even though I had run with a few before). The amazingly discounted spa coupon that I picked up at the expo was also a high point!!
5. The events. I love meeting other runners.
6. The best part was showing up on race day with the other HCMC runners and walking to the start line with a few of them. If I had been alone, I know I would have been incredibly nervous, but since I had people around me, I felt much calmer and had a lot more fun at the start all the way to the finish.
7. Marathon Day. Finding everyone in the dining hall early and riding out there was great. Gives you a sense of team in what would be an otherwise very lonely and individualistic endeavor.
8. The best part of the HCMC experience was completing the Marathon on race day.
9. The new people I met. They encouraged me to train and run more and made my experience way more fun and exciting. Also, I now have new friends who I never would have met otherwise.
10. The b good shakes and the 2nd day after long runs. I haven't felt so good since I've been at college.
11. Crossing the finish line was amazing.
12. Having other people join me on runs that I thought were going to be difficult and being able to accomplish them.
13. Race day. Come on. Giving a post-race interview on channel 4 comparing the weather conditions to 'running through the produce aisle with the misters on'. HCMC gives you celebrity status. No. Really, seeing all sorts of friends and family along the course, so special.
14. The best part running the marathon in less than ideal conditions--it made things fun and interesting.
15. The best part of my HCMC experience was marathon day. I thought that it was great to go out there on a tough weather day together and then to run the marathon switching between various HCMC groups. The BEST part for me was the journey of the marathon. I really liked giving high fives, the Wellesley scream, the BC drunkards, the ladies giving out oranges, the candy giveaways, the couple on heartbreak hill, the ridiculous signs, the hilarious runners (beer can man), and the haahvad chant. I think that subconsciously I was having so much fun out there that I hesitated to finish! It was like a party along the course. Crossing the finish line was also a great feeling and I REALLY enjoyed the post-marathon celebration in Quincy. Being able to talk with others who had just experience the same range of joy/amusement/pain was one of the highlights of my HCMC experience.
16. Long runs with friends.
17. training, meeting great people.
18. Physically running the marathon. Having all the crowds and people out to support you and getting to interact with the crowd made the whole thing worthwhile (especially as a first time runner).
19. crossing the finish line. it's always the best feeling in the world.
20. right after the marathon was over, knowin I had done it
21. Other than the massage after the marathon, the best experiences were the Wellesley runs. They made the marathon a realistic run and ended the thought of the hills as the feared entity they've become.
22. Running the marathon! Realizing that all of my hard work and effort paid off, and that I could actually run a marathon and not end up in the hospital was the best feeling in the world.
23. The best part of the experience was race day and the days before the race. Having the support and advice of fellow runners made my preparations for and my running of the marathon such a positive experience. If there was something I was nervous about I could post a question on the listserv or talk it through with other runners. On race day being with the other HCMC runners helped so much to calm me down and getting me psyched for the run.
24. I was very proud to represent Harvard in the most famous marathon in the world
25. Getting a number, meeting people, etc.

**11. What was the *best* part of your HCMC experience, and what made it so great?**

26. I had two best experiences. One was the day of the marathon (which I unfortunately was not able to run in because I became ill the week before) when I bumped into a fellow freshman HCMC participant. His excitement and pride in finishing the marathon was just so refreshing; I was so happy and excited for him that I forgot about the fact that I didn't even get to run. My second best experience was finishing my longest training run of 22 miles.

27. I think numbers one and two are the marathon itself and the Sports and Fitness Expo. I don't think I've stopped smiling since I crossed the finish line. That was AWESOME. I had the time of my life and want to go back for more and more and more. What a culminating event! The Expo was really what set my mood for it, though. I was feeling nervous and uncertain until I went to the Expo and walked away with a grand sense of camaraderie and anticipation for what everyone told me would be "a great day." The weather forecasts didn't seem to matter any more because I was going to be out there with 25,000 other people, so who was I to complain? I also really liked that I had the option of group runs through HCMC but was given total freedom in structuring my training. While this worked well for me, being a rather disciplined person, I could see that this would be a really poor arrangement for someone who just "wanted to run a marathon" but didn't know even where to start in organizing that endeavor, especially if he/she were intimidated by the listserv.

28. running with friends!

**12. What was the *worst* part of your HCMC experience, why was it so bad, and how could it have been better?**

1. My injury- which was bad in its timing and poorly handled by UHS. I think that UHS has greatly improved from last year.
2. No part was bad. Training in the winter was difficult
3. There weren't too many people at my training pace, so the listserv wasn't much help. But that might just require a short weekly email update from everyone, with their current paces and training goals for the coming week.
4. Training through the ice storm in February...boo for New England weather.
5. The nor'easter... yuck. Hopefully we'll have better weather next year! (Not much HCMC can do about this, unfortunately!) Also, I didn't finish this year... I was running with a friend and we stopped at Mile 21. I did finish last year, though, in 4 hours 17 minutes... so it's do-able! This year stopping was more mental than physical. I don't want to be a discouragement to anyone because it's totally possible to finish!
6. From the standpoint of uncomfotability, I think the worst part of the HCMC experience was doing some of the longer runs on really cold days, but these were also character-building experiences. No real way to make this better.
7. It's sort of lonely. Very few of my friends actually came out to watch. Running is not a team sport, as much as we try to make it one with the listserv. After rowing (the ultimate team sport), it was sort of solitary. And while a lot of sports will wipe your mind clean, you have all this time while running to mull over your day/life/whatever, and that's not always a good thing.
8. The worst part was not being engaged in the group/team experience - which was mostly my fault.
9. I can't think of one....maybe the immense pain in my legs at mile 24.
10. The race day weather was awful. Not much anyone could do about that.
11. Shin splints hindered a lot of my training efforts and set me for awhile.
12. Being injured and not being able to participate as much as I would have liked.
13. Seeing my buddy [name deleted] get shunned out of the HCMC dessert party after training with me all season long, and running a killer marathon, while bandit. The exclusion of bandits from HCMC functions and activities is pretty lame. Not everyone who applied to get into HCMC won the lottery. Honestly, stop shunning people from HCMC events. It's honestly the last thing we need to help our cause and campus awareness.
14. The worst part was not feeling as prepared as I wanted to be to run the marathon.
15. The worst part of my experience was when I was hurt with tendonitis in my knees and I couldn't run for a couple of weeks and then I had to ice and stretch before my runs, which complicated my postings to the listserv so I had to run alone more than I would have liked.
16. I got pretty sick during the marathon this year. It wasn't my easiest run... but I still finished so I'm happy about that.
17. getting sick the day of the race--not gotten sick
18. Exactly one week before the marathon I somehow acquired strep throat coupled with an acute allergic reaction. I never thought that I would not run it, but that week of doubt (without any running) was frightening. My tip: Don't get sick.
19. the four miles before that finish line:)
20. I guess injuring my knee
21. When I would post long runs with no reply and then see HCMC people running while I was.
22. I think the worst part was trying to find the time to fit in all my runs. Sometimes I would get really discouraged when I was up all night working and then supposed to go on a really long run, and ultimately not be able to do it. It could have been better if I had managed my time better!
23. The worst part was not being able to participate as much as I would have liked in HCMC runs/events. I live and work in Boston and found it challenging to get out to Harvard for group runs and activities. This had more to do with circumstances outside of my control than about HCMC, though.
24. N/A
25. Injuring myself during training; not much I could have done to make it better.

**12. What was the *worst* part of your HCMC experience, why was it so bad, and how could it have been better?**

26. The worst part of my experience was finding out a week before the marathon that I wouldn't be able to run.

27. Well, aside from my injury, which was nobody's fault really but mine (and the blasted cold weather's), I am finding it hard to pinpoint a bad aspect. This is probably because I'm still on such a high that all marathon-related things seem just dandy. I think the only thing is that I would really have liked to meet everyone in the program at more than just the first required meeting. I think that making certain events mandatory would be nice because that way setting up runs on the listserv doesn't seem as scary.

28. n/a

**13. In retrospect, what (if anything) could/would/should you have done differently to improve your HCMC experience?**

1. Been more careful in my early training not to increase my mileage so quickly.
2. I would have trained more...run more often with the group
3. Trained smarter, so my quads didn't seize at mile 14. I still finished though, and in a solid time :)
4. More stretching and yoga. I knew I should have been doing it all along, but just couldn't find the time when I was taking so much time already for each run.
5. I should have done more short runs. I wasn't in as good of shape this year as last year. I also should have seen a PT, since I never addressed my summer knee injury and (shockingly!) my knee keeps bothering me.
6. I probably would have done more group runs on the longer run days. I was afraid about pacing and how I would feel but I realize now that running with others actually makes it a lot easier and so for some of those long runs, I think I would have liked to pace with somebody a little bit faster so I could have improved a little more.
7. Stretch more/be more aware of injury. I lost a lot of time with that in the early parts. The backdoor into UHS helped a lot though. [name deleted] was great with that.
8. I would have posted more to the list serve and gotten together a group of running partners to train with before the marathon.
9. Nothing. I felt like everything went well.
10. I would have posted more emails for runs and completed more long runs.
11. None.
12. I wish I wasn't so shy and hesitant about doing group runs. I definitely felt self-conscious of the fact that I wasn't as fast as most people.
13. Ran more with the group. The "post your run time and people will show up" thing doesn't work. I wish more HCMC runners would run together, and I wish we had a system in place to further facilitate that. More diversity with the ski team (lots of runners), track team (lots of really, really good runners), ARC (ditto), etc. Why make HCMC so isolated? Why exclude so many bandits.
14. I could have trained harder...
15. I would have posted to the listserv more and arranged more formal running groups, maybe even workout groups.
16. Gone on more shorter runs with people. The problem is that I'm always squeezing in those runs between classes, so it's difficult to meet up with people.
17. tried to sleep more the week of the race even though I tried to but I guess not enough to stay healthy.
18. With about six weeks left before the marathon I really let up from my training schedule. I was running only 2 times a week, mostly because I was busy with Hasty Pudding and because it was the start of midterm season for my five classes. In retrospect, I wish that I had kept up at least the tiniest bit more, so that I didn't doubt myself as much in the week before the marathon.
19. I should have trained more and when I experience setbacks such as injuries I need to be patient in coming back.
20. trained more
21. Actually followed a training plan.
22. Managed my time better. Posted on the list-serve more (but that was also a product of my time management--I could never post on the list because I never knew exactly when I was going to run).
23. I would try to participate in more group runs.
24. I would have liked to run with more of the team members. I only had a chance to run with 5 others throughout my training period
25. I should have allotted myself more time. I was too busy this semester.

**13. In retrospect, what (if anything) could/would/should you have done differently to improve your HCMC experience?**

26. I would have reached out to other HCMC participants more. At the beginning of the year, I tried to setup a dinner for all the freshman members to get to know each other but no one really ended showing up. After that, things just got so busy--but I should have worked harder to reach out to more people. A sense of community is really up to the individual to build upon--so I should have made more of an effort.

27. In the absence of many structured events, I wish I had made a more concerted effort to get to know HCMCers. There must be personality traits of work ethic, dedication, compassion etc. that we share, so I imagine that most of us would get along quite well, which I found to be true once I met people on race day. I think it might have been nice to find some friends with whom I could run if I wanted an occasional group run. I wish I had taken more out of it than the fundraising and marathoning part. There is an integral social aspect that I feel I missed.

28. more group runs! more often! wish people would reply to posts more often as well.

**14. In the future, what can HCMC do to improve?**

1. In addition to all of the running activities, it would be great to get the runners together with someone from one of the Harvard gyms to talk about strength training. I think that my leg workouts were one of the main things that kept my healthier this year.
2. HCMC should do a better job of introducing the runners to each other. Maybe like a buddy system?
3. Fix the listserv with weekly email updates? There really isn't too much I can suggest.
4. I know organized runs are hard and disheartening when people don't show, but I was a little envious of friends who trained with Team in Training/other organizations like that that had a little more of a group pressure feel. Running is an individual sport, but the team aspect can be extremely rewarding.
5. More slots for runners? More events?
6. One of the most helpful things for me was doing the second half of the course with [name deleted] in March. It really helped having some idea of where I was when I was actually running the marathon, so I would suggest that HCMC encourage all runners to do that, maybe even at the same time on some Sunday, and then meet up afterwards for food or something. It could be another little event or something.
7. I think having more people would help. There are a lot of people on the listserv, but come marathon day there aren't that many people who are running your pace and you sort of feel like the team disappeared.
8. I think HCMC can do better in perhaps having a get together once a semester where we learn a little bit about all the different members in the group (with cheesy ice-breakers, etc...). Also, I think HCMC could match up people of the same speed from the beginning as running partners/accountability buddies. That might make people more engaged and invested in training with another person throughout the year.
9. Publicize itself more around campus. Everyone who does HCMC seems to like it, and I think a lot of kids on campus want to run marathons and fundraise, but not too many people know about the HCMC.
10. I think if we could set up a day of the week, like a Wednesday or Thursday, and pick a dining hall to eat together at. I really liked a lot of the people who I met on the post-marathon meal and wish I had gotten to know them earlier.
11. More group events
12. I think it's great! The supportive/encouraging emails are really great.
13. Make HCMC more open to everyone wishing to participate. I'm not saying change the number of slots, because that's not possible. But make events more public, make the whole experience more open, friendly, and chill. Bandits are marathoners, too, and their exclusion really gets to me.
14. HCMC is a well-oiled machine.
15. I think that HCMC is doing a great job. It could try to put on more events during the training so the runners can get to know each other and the posting on the listserv isn't as awkward for some people. I realize that this is very hard to do because people are busy, but it's something that I'd be willing to help out with if selected in the future. I think that if there were an incentive/requirement to come that attendance would increase. Also, I think that a veteran runner should discuss race strategy a couple of weeks before the marathon because the Boston course is so unique (as I found out).
16. I wish I had gone to more events like pasta parties. Maybe if they were more consistent, the community would be stronger.
17. nothing it is absolutely amazing.
18. Maybe one or two more meetings so that people really get to know each other just a tad better. Nothing too extravagant, just casual get-togethers.
19. More organization in the training program. like tufts. if we can institutionalize the group run, then we can step forward as an organization.
20. not sure
21. Have a running seminar on running form in order to get a lot of people out and running together in a group. And have a set time every Saturday and Sunday when we would go on group runs. It would eliminate the guess work every week and create a routine.

**14. In the future, what can *HCMC* do to improve?**

22. I really have no complaints, but maybe have more socials at the very beginning? I think if people don't get to know each other right away, then they shy away from the later socials because they don't know anyone and think it's too late.
23. I can't think of any suggestions for improvement. I thought [name deleted] and the other HCMC leadership did a pretty fabulous job of organizing and motivating the team.
24. I think the University and the FAS should recognize the program and the efforts of [name deleted] more. I would expect that Harvard should take this as seriously as Tufts
25. I would like to see it become more of a group, community-based program. I know running is an individual sport, but I think there is more that the group could have done to be more cohesive.
26. To be honest, I don't think I could have asked for HCMC to have done anything differently. If anything, I just would have been more participatory in HCMC events.
27. I think that there has to be a way to improve camaraderie within the group. Maybe it was just me, but I felt like I met everyone in the program in the day of the race.
28. encourage more group runs, perhaps more social events to get to know other runners, so that more people are inclined to reply to the email posts.

**15. HCMC has three stated purposes: (i) training for the Boston Marathon, (ii) fundraising for PBHA and Project HEALTH, and (iii) building a running community. Hearing this, what (if anything) comes to mind in light of your own HCMC experience this past year?**

1. I think that HCMC fulfilled all of these purposes for me!
2. HCMC fulfilled all three of its stated purposes
3. HCMC really hit (i) and (ii), but (iii) didn't really happen (for me). Perhaps it should team up with other running groups around campus, or even intramural house committees, to build a running community.
4. I was definitely motivated by all the students - I don't think I could have found the time or motivation to train for that in college.
5. HCMC succeeds. Slower runners should post more on the listserv, but I'm just as much to blame for this as anyone.
6. I think the HCMC accomplished all of those things, although I didn't go on that many group runs so part iii was not as big a part of my own experience. Part of this is simply scheduling, since everybody here is so busy, but part of it is also that I doubted I would be able to pace with some others when in fact I probably could have and it would have been good to push myself. I'm not sure the best way to improve upon that, but perhaps one way might be to do some kind of a test, however imprecise, in the beginning of the year to see how people might pace during the actual marathon and then allow people to match up with running partners based on that.
7. We did all 3. The fundraising is obviously now maturing and much more organized. PBHA is a great and grateful group.
8. I think HCMC could do a better job of building a running community - but it meets the first two purposes quite well.
9. I think HCMC does all of those very well.
10. I didn't take advantage of the running community enough.
11. I don't think I ever really felt I was in a running community, but everyone has different schedules and everyone runs at a different pace, so it's difficult to create a true sense of community.
12. I don't know how much of a genuine community develops, but maybe that's just because I wasn't able to do as many group runs.
13. Unfortunately, I feel as though I did most of my training away from HCMC. Everyone wants to run with others, but I feel that training with a team I am more familiar with in terms of training methods is one which will help me to achieve my marathon time goals.
14. I'm not sure how strong of a running community was built this year, but that may be because I was on the periphery.
15. I think that HCMC follows these statements and does a great job. Perhaps there could be more information on appropriate training methods that in turn could build up more running community; there could be a "how to train" workshop or something. I realize that there are a lot of training plans out there but just exposing people to these plans could be helpful. Doubtless, the listserv provides ample opportunities to train for the marathon and to meet other runners. The firstgiving page was also great for raising money although I did more individually by check when I went home.
16. I think (i) and (iii) were most important to me.
17. awesome
18. I'd say it does a tremendous job on all three fronts, especially on the third count. Since I've been training for the marathon and talking about it with classmates, I've spoken to/convincing a number of people of what a great program it is, both through the lottery and through the listserv for posting runs. Or just me running with my friends, and hence having something in common that wasn't there before.
19. We need to work on iii. Nobody can complain about our work on i. or ii.
20. that it achieved all 3
21. Great training and obviously successful in raising money. The running community was not very strong - at least in comparison to what it seemed the Tufts group had during the marathon.

**15. HCMC has three stated purposes: (i) training for the Boston Marathon, (ii) fundraising for PBHA and Project HEALTH, and (iii) building a running community. Hearing this, what (if anything) comes to mind in light of your own HCMC experience this past year?**

22. I think all three of those goals were fostered in some way, although I never really got involved in the running community. but there were plenty of opportunities to do so, so I only have myself to blame.
23. All three objectives very successfully accomplished.
24. All of the above
25. The first two were satisfied; the third, not as much.
26. HCMC provided me with the information I needed to train, the opportunity to fundraise and the ability to join a community: HCMC accomplished all three of these goals.
27. I am incredibly pleased and proud of my accomplishments in achieving the first two of these three stated purposes but am a little shakier on the third. I definitely feel as though there is a running community, but I feel very much more like a spectator than an active member of that community. I think that stems not from fear of the listserv but rather discomfort with running with strangers. I didn't feel like there were enough appropriate forums in which to formally meet other HCMCers in order to feel comfortable enough to go running with them. In addition, I happen to love my solo running, so I was not in desperate need of such a community. That said, I was very impressed and appreciative of the immediate and helpful feedback I got from listserv members whenever I had questions to ask. The community definitely exists, I just don't think it played a significant part in my HCMC experience, which, now that I think about it, is quite a shame. I really enjoyed meeting everyone on race day and wish that that had happened much earlier.
28. all three are awesomely done.

**16. Please comment on the listserv (e.g., why you did/did not feel comfortable posting, how the listserv was most or least useful, whatever else comes to mind about the listserv, etc.)**

1. My schedule in lab is highly variable each day, so I did not really feel comfortable posting runs- I often got delayed by an hour or more or had to cancel runs at the last minute. But I tried to participate in posted runs whenever I could!
2. The listserv was very helpful. I plan to stay signed up
3. It was useful at the start to join up for runs, but after that... there wasn't really much use for it, other than for meeting updates.
4. Fine.
5. The listserv is a great resource. The "9 miles at a 7min/pace" e-mails are somewhat intimidating, but whenever I posted it was a great way to find running buddies.
6. The list-serve was really helpful for all the little hints that people gave out. One of the best parts of the HCMC experience.
7. It's good if you're specific and can be a little time flexible. More would always be better though. It's frustrating when nobody wants to come with you. Definitely the best way to "build a running community" though.
8. The listserv was very useful - I wish I had posted more. I felt a little uncomfortable as my times were much slower than most of the times posted as well as just being unorganized in not knowing what time I was going running the day before (in order to send an email).
9. The listserv can be daunting at first, but once one become comfortable with it, it is a great resource.
10. I found the listserv to be a great resource. I personally didn't post often b/c whenever I had questions I found that most ppl had already asked.
11. Listserv was a nice way of getting info.
12. Sometimes I felt self-conscious about being too slow (~10 min mile)
13. It's great, but people didn't really show up for runs, myself included. I felt comfortable posting.
14. The listserv was important for runners to link up for runs and share information about running. I personally didn't advertise any runs this year because I wasn't training seriously for the marathon (due to thesis, injury, etc.).
15. I think that the listserv was useful and would have posted more if my knees weren't as unpredictable as they ended up being. I struggled to get a consistent icing/stretching timing down to the point where I felt comfortable posting a run at say 7 am and knowing that I would make it at 7am without leaving a runner stranded.
16. I like it.
17. it was good
18. Truly, I ran at weird times and at interesting paces, but the listserv is a great idea and was operated well. Personally, I enjoy just being out on the river at 9pm with no one but me, my shoes and my ipod tearing up the asphalt, so I didn't really post my runs. I did take advantage of a few early morning runs, though, as well as some weekend runs, and I was very appreciative of those opportunities.
19. it's never been what we've hoped. perhaps with time, more people will begin to post.
20. it was useful at finding runs and getting information about the marathon, how to train, etc.
21. The listserv is great. Although some people pawn their thoughts as running, training, and recovery facts, most comments are helpful. The almighty Harvard College Marathon Challenge e-mail keeps everyone up to date and allowed me to separate e-mails about logistics and e-mails advertising for runs.
22. I didn't always feel comfortable posting because everyone who posted was much faster than me. While I realize the only way to fix that would be to post slow runs myself, it was still a little intimidating.
23. I posted a few things on the listserv, including questions about injuries and running partners. I think the listserv is a great tool for connecting lots of people to a common purpose- running! I didn't post runs on the listserv because most of my runs were in Boston or scheduled at the last minute.
24. I posted a lot of runs to the listserv. I found that it motivated me to follow through on my runs and also allowed me to get to know others

**16. Please comment on the listserv (e.g., why you did/did not feel comfortable posting, how the listserv was most or least useful, whatever else comes to mind about the listserv, etc.)**

25. The listserv was great! I felt comfortable posting.
26. The listserv was great. It was very informative regarding training techniques, clothing, weather, injuries. At first I didn't feel comfortable posting just because I was new to the area and never really knew where I was going on run, so I preferred to just tag along with others on their runs. Later I guess I'd just gotten accustomed to running on my own...as well as I am more of a last minute decision maker about when I am going for my runs, so I didn't think people would respond on such short notice.
27. I absolutely felt comfortable posting my questions, concerns etc. and was delighted with the response that I got. It is an excellent resource, especially for novice marathoners. I had more than enough questions and all of them got answered. I never posted a single run to the listserv, mainly because I was never running at designated times and ran more to fit my schedule, as in, when I finished a problem set, I'd lace up and head out. This made any kind of planning ahead difficult. I also often started my runs unsure of how long I'd go for, and I kind of felt like a burden posting such vague run descriptions. The only HCMC run I went on was the jog down to the Expo, which I quite enjoyed. I recognize the merits of running in a group but found that it was hard to fit my schedule with someone else's. I think the listserv is absolutely great. Even if I wasn't going on runs with people, I read every single posting and took heart and inspiration from all the training runs people were posting, thus inspiring my own solo runs. Although I wasn't particularly active, I did feed a lot on the listserv as a motivational tool.
28. useful!! I think we would have higher response rate if there were more social events to built the community, over the course of the semester. (perhaps more dinners together, or more dessert sessions to entice people :).

**17. Please share any comments you have about the specific deals that various businesses offered us (e.g., the New Balance discount, the fruit shakes at b.good, the Hilton's Tent City discount, etc.).**

1. The fruit shakes at b.good were wonderful! I did not really take advantage of any of the other things this year because I had most of the gear I needed.
2. b.good was terrific, as was Marathon Sports
3. I never used the discounts.
4. New Balance was great. I had one fruit shake right after a run and felt nauseous so I never went back. I don't know about others, but I can't really digest the smoothie right after running and would have loved to take advantage if they offered it at other times of day via a discount card or list at the register.
5. The fruit shakes are wonderful! They actually let you have real milkshakes too if you ask. I thought all of these deals were great, though I didn't use the clothing store discounts.
6. The fruit shakes at b.good were crucial for me because I always counted on them after my long runs. I also took advantage of the Marathon Sports store discount.
7. I only used Marathon Sports discount and the b.good shakes, both of which are excellent and I would highly recommend.
8. The fruit shakes at b.good were awesome!!! Those shakes provided extra incentives for me to go on my long runs. Mango is definitely the best.
9. The b.good and Marathon Sports discounts were MUCH appreciated (and used).
10. The fruit shakes at b. good were amazing. I'm hooked. Whenever I go for a long run from now on I will probably go get a shake afterwards. It's great for the runners and I'm convinced its good for attracting customers.
11. I only used the discount at marathon sports.
12. The fruit shakes were great!
13. AWESOME. All the businesses were super friendly, especially B-Good's. What a fabulous way to enhance the experience.
14. I used the EMS discount and the free shakes at b.good this year. Discounts and free stuff are always appreciated by college students (and everyone else)!
15. The fruit shakes were good and they were very nice when I went.
16. LOVE the fruit shakes at b.good. I didn't really use the others.
17. great! especially B.GOOD
18. b.good discount= best idea ever Since going to b.good and getting their shakes, I've gone back for burgers and in fact recommended it to friends as a great place to go. They're definitely making their money.
19. the fruit shakes at b. good and the people who work there are awesome. I didn't take advantage of the other discounts.
20. the shakes were awesome - I didn't use the other stuff
21. The fruit shakes are phenomenal. Marathon sports gave me bad shoes so I am not real keen on them. Other than that I didn't utilize many discounts because I already had clothes.
22. Loved them!
23. The Marathon Sports discount was/is fabulous! I didn't use the others, but the fact that HCMC offers so much to its runners is great, especially since most of the participants are students or others who don't have a bundle to spend on gear.
24. I did not take advantage of these great offers
25. B.good was great! I didn't use any other discounts.
26. They were great--I especially really took advantage of the fruit shakes at b.good!
27. The fruit shakes were the only deal that I took advantage of and, let me tell you, keep that one going! They were both delicious and excellent post-run snacks. Also, it was so nice to get a word of encouragement or congratulation from the guys working there.
28. I LOVE the fruit shakes :-D was awwwwwwwwwesome. didn't use the others.

**18. What brief advice or words of wisdom would you give to potential HCMC participants?**

1. Take it slow at first and make sure that you really have the time to devote to the longer runs near the end.
2. HCMC is an opportunity to help PBHA/Project Health and also yourself. It was one of the most rewarding, giving, best experiences of my entire life
3. Fundraising's easy - setting a schedule that accommodates training's a little more difficult. It can definitely be done, though. Definitely.
4. Go for it, but take it seriously too. You NEED to do the training!
5. Train, train, train. I ran pretty much every day last year and had a much easier marathon than I did this year (when I slacked off a bit more). Also, believe in yourself! Most people who ran finished well.
6. I would say to stick to the training schedule and make sure you do some long runs with others in a group, because it will help you to stick to a pace during the actual marathon if you force yourself to do it during training. Also, as I said earlier, running the second half of the course from Wellesley at least once is a must.
7. Start early. Anybody can do this if they start early and go slow. It would help the injury issue, and then if you get stuck one week and mess up your training (after all, shit happens) then it's not such a big deal.
8. I would say to be actively engaged from the beginning and to find running partners. That way, you won't be scrambling/unprepared come two weeks before race day.
9. Enjoy the entire process. It may seem long and daunting to train for a marathon, but if you are disciplined and do your training and enjoy it, the entire process can be a lot of fun and will be a memorable experience.
10. The mental aspect is the most important. On race day I lost my mental focus and I couldn't finish.
11. Running a marathon is a lot of fun.
12. You'll get as much out of it as you put in, so put a lot in!
13. Do it. You'll never have more fun. Must-do experience for any Harvard undergrad. It will really change the way you think about your body, your capabilities, and your undergraduate experience. DO IT, or someone else will, and they'll have the time of their life.
14. One should approach HCMC as an extracurricular activity, not just a fun thing to do on the weekend. Serious training requires a serious commitment.
15. ENJOY THE MARATHON- It's really a great experience; you don't need to shoot for a time goal in order to make it a rewarding experience, just being out there is awesome.
16. Marathon training takes time and dedication. Running with a group helps keep you dedicated.
17. do it!
18. I'm stealing it directly from the adidas poster for the marathon, but seeing it say "I've come this far, what's another 26.2 miles?" was something I find rather inspiring.
19. Be diligent with your training and seek out others to run with. Use the listserv not just to find running partners, but to make friends over the many months.
20. don't let up the training
21. If you want to run a marathon, this is the avenue for it. Lots of people are inexperienced and a few have great experience and are willing to help. There are a huge range of paces and really no reason not to lottery for an official number.
22. Get involved in the running community!
23. Do it. It's absolutely worth all that you'll go through.
24. Go for it! POST RUNS
25. I would advise them to have a training plan and to make sure that they will be able to make time in their schedule for all of the runs. Running a marathon unprepared is worse than not running at all.
26. Meet other HCMC participants and use HCMC as a venue for what it should be--such a great, excited, enthusiastic and knowledgeable running community!
27. It sounds cheesy, but just believe in yourself. A marathon seems like an incredibly daunting project, but all you have to do is keep putting one foot in front of the other, no matter your pace, that's all it takes. Give this program your full gusto (particularly if you're a novice marathoner because we tend to have quite a lot of that excitement) because everybody feeds off of that. If you're nervous about the listserv and want to do group runs, start small, say, by just taking the T out to Woodland with a posted group or take the jog out to Fresh Pond. It seems like this is the easiest way to get to know people. Then, you can meet them before you ask them to run with you etc.
28. take advantage of the community :)

**19. Please describe any mental or physical strategies that you used on Marathon Day, either before or during your run (for example, adhering to a particular running-to-walking ratio, thinking motivating thoughts, saying positive things to yourself, visualizing certain images, performing a pre-Marathon ritual or routine, etc.). Be as specific as possible.**

1. I ran with a partner, which was key, because we faded at different times and were able to each push the other through the tough parts. My goal during the race, after I realized that it was going to be a tough day for me, was just to keep the same pace and not slow down during the hills or at the end. And that worked pretty well!
2. The Wellesley runs were invaluable. I made sure I had music and promised that walking was okay but riding transportation back from a run was NOT
3. Don't walk, keep running! I tried to hit negative splits at the start, but my quads started acting up around mile 14, so I went into "emergency mode" and just tried to finish the race. Which I did, and not far off my original goal.
4. I tried to think of it as 3 5-milers and a 10 miler (well, really 11.2). Really, the only thing that got me through the last 6 miles though was having friends meet me at miles 18 and 19 to run me in. Those hills are killer and I strongly recommend having friends meet you if at all possible. That's right when you want to give up and walk and I certainly would have if they weren't there.
5. I picture myself pulling on strings with my thumb and forefinger, as though pulling myself forward. Sounds silly, but it works! I also picture a giant rubber band around a light pole ahead of me attached to my waist pulling me forward... I read this in Runner's World magazine and it's a great visualization technique. Run with a friend, and figure out whether positive or negative self-talk encourages you more. (IE "You can do it!" or "Don't be weak!") Whatever works, works.
6. Pacing with another HCMC runner was big for me, because it had me going faster than I otherwise would have for the middle part of the marathon. Also, setting benchmarks like, "just got to make it to the next mile marker," or "just got to make it to the Citgo sign," really helped me push through the pain from mile 23 to the end.
7. Eat a lot in the days beforehand. The taper will make you feel sluggish and out of shape but it really does work. If you want cheering for you, just run on the side of the road near the spectators. The HARVARD jersey is a chick magnet! And when they yell for you, give them a thumbs up or something. I makes you feel a little bit better just doing it and pretending to be positive.
8. As a first-time marathoner, these are the things that kept me going: I never looked up on hills. On any incline, I tried to keep my head down until I reached the top. This worked for me for every hill, including Heartbreak. I ran with a partner that I was accountable to (I don't know what I would have done at mile 22 on my own!). I met someone with fresh legs to run the last 2 miles with me - so key. I also stacked the people that were cheering for me towards the end of the race so I knew I had to at least get that far. I got Gatorade every other water break at least (if not more often). I also walked through which I think made a big difference.
9. Before the marathon, I just tried to get as mentally prepared as possible and think positively. I knew I had done all of my training, so I knew I was fully prepared. I made sure to eat right and rest during the week leading up to marathon Monday. During the marathon, I just kept telling myself, 'Okay, only 26 miles, and then you will be a Boston finisher! Don't stop, don't give up, just keep going, one foot after another.'
10. I can only give advice in the form of a negative. Whenever I was running, I kept thinking of how far I needed to go and my aches and pains. Overall that defeated me on race day.
11. My strategy was really just to keep running til I got to the finish. I took a couple of breaks to stretch my back and I walked for a few seconds while drinking Gatorade because I kept spilling, but other than that I just kept on going.
12. didn't compete.
13. Never, never, never give up. I hurt quite badly at mile 7/8, but stuck to my plan, stuck to my splits, and didn't look down. Even though, two days post race and unable to walk down stairs, pain is completely temporary. Everyone is going through the same weather. It doesn't rain in Kenya, and somehow those guys manage to run with only extra hat and gloves. Never, never, never give up.
14. I ran with a partner, which helped take my mind away from the monotony and pain of running.

**19. Please describe any mental or physical strategies that you used on Marathon Day, either before or during your run (for example, adhering to a particular running-to-walking ratio, thinking motivating thoughts, saying positive things to yourself, visualizing certain images, performing a pre-Marathon ritual or routine, etc.). Be as specific as possible.**

15. Because I was worried about the potential effects on my knees, I stuck to walking every 2.5 miles for about one minute. I had done this on my long runs because it kind of stems from Jeff Galloway's training method, but in retrospect I'm not sure how effective this was. It may have been better just to run the thing straight through because my knees were hurting on the hills in miles 19-20 anyways. For some reason, in the days before the marathon, I didn't do the positive/motivating thoughts although I did them almost religiously for swimming. Perhaps it's because I felt that I had prepared for such a long time? Or I was somewhat nervous about my knees? I'm not really sure but I regretted not thinking more positive thoughts...it should be noted that I did go to the EXPO twice to get myself fired up though. I'm not sure how the whole taper thing worked out because I didn't feel at my physical best on marathon day. In my opinion, I peaked at mile 13, which is odd because I had done 24 mile runs. I ran 14 miles twice two weeks before the marathon and then didn't run more than 45 mins in the week leading up to the marathon. I did the carbo-loading thing but I didn't really find it effective. I'm kind of dumbfounded about my performance race-wise; if this were any other performance I'd be very disappointed but the marathon experience makes my feelings about my performance go away. I'm happy to have finished and to have 'soaked up" the Boston Marathon experience to the degree that if I run it again I'm not sure if I'd do it fast. The competitive side of me would like to run a fast marathon, but somewhere else and to save the fun stuff for Boston (and maybe get in a fast Boston sometime too).
16. Umm... I didn't have any. The goal was to enjoy myself.
17. N/A
18. If you ever find yourself tiring on the marathon course, just give yourself to the crowd, and they'll take care of you. I truly didn't get too tired during the course of the run (except until the 23rd mile), but it was always fun to go the crowd for high fives or to pump them up for a while.
19. I was struggling with injuries during the race and decided on two basic strategies. The first was to go at an even pace throughout the race. The second was to stop and stretch after every mile. I ran a smart race based on the singular goal of finishing and it worked.
20. I ran with two other people who were about my pace
21. Mentally I tried to zone out and avoid counting the number of miles left or amount of time left, even though it was difficult. I tried focusing on the crowd as much as possible to forget about what I was actually doing. Seeing people you know is the best mental boost you can get. It gives you strength and lets you forget your physical pains. Physically, I used body glide wherever seems were or wherever my skin would rub. I also put it all over my feet to save myself from blisters. Beyond that there was nothing special I did.
22. I'm Catholic, so I used a meditation mantra while running--something to take the focus off the pain when it got really hard. Chanting something over and over gets you into a zone and helps get through the tough spots.
23. I have a lot of pre-Marathon rituals that include certain foods, clothing prep, not sleeping (not by choice.) In addition to the rituals, I did a lot of visualization of running the race, finishing the race, and what it would all be like. During the race I kept visualizing crossing the finish line and receiving my medal, while having someone else tie and untie my shoe to get my time chip! I also thought of every single person who donated to the Challenge, sent me a positive email or message, or wished me good luck. I tried to absorb all of their positive wishes and the cheers of the crowd and use that to push me forward.
24. Runner's World and Coolrunning.com have some great routines for training. I followed them closely and was very happy with the results
25. I basically just tried to be as positive as possible.
26. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to run on marathon day.

**19. Please describe any mental or physical strategies that you used on Marathon Day, either before or during your run (for example, adhering to a particular running-to-walking ratio, thinking motivating thoughts, saying positive things to yourself, visualizing certain images, performing a pre-Marathon ritual or routine, etc.). Be as specific as possible.**

27. Surprisingly, to myself, I didn't need/do any of this stuff. I just laced up and chugged it out. I think that going at a slow, steady pace was crucial. We did 10 minute miles the whole way through, and I felt great at the end. The most important thing for me was to have someone to run with who I made myself think was depending on me, forcing me to live up to the challenge and my goal and not let her down. It was this driving compassion that really brought me through. I think it's important not to get too caught up in mind games because you can psyche yourself out. Just do it.

28. well, the race does not really start until mile 18 or so. before that, feels like any other training run, so you tell yourself that. a lot of the mental preparation comes with telling yourself you're ready from pre-race days -- I feel good because I've eaten the right things, I tell myself I've trained x miles already, so it's really no big deal, etc. running for a certain stretch with a partner also helps - I ran the first 11 with someone before we split off, and during the course it's helpful to sometimes strike up conversation/run a short stretch with even random strangers :).

**20. What else is on your mind about HCMC? Radical ideas, idiosyncrasies, etc., are all welcome – anything goes!**

1. I wish I had done one of the Fresh Pond runs in retrospect- but I usually did my long runs then...
2. HCMC should have more community building efforts (like dinners). I realize that this is hard because everybody has a different schedule. [name deleted], you were a huge help through this whole process
3. Needs a better name. HCMC is pretty difficult to say in conversation.
4. Any thoughts for doing more of a running club? The Saturday morning Fresh Pond runs, some shorter races, maybe some trail runs?
5. I liked the buses last year! I know that HCMC can't organize these, but it's nice to be able to have friends and bandit runners ride with you.
6. Haven't mentioned it before, but the website was great for fundraising and I know I got more money than I otherwise would have because of it.
7. The website is great. Keep it up.
8. Running Buddy of the Week? HCMC Weekly Weight Lift? Free/Discounted Runner's World Subscriptions Personal Websites for Entering in Weekly Mileage A 10K or 5K race earlier in the year that HCMC could participate in as a group. Group cross-training
9. I think in the future, somehow making sure there are more group runs would be better.
10. I think it could be a good idea if the Saturday before the race we could also reserve a JCR like we do post-race. People could decide on running partners and here advice for preparing.
11. None.
12. no.
13. I wish HCMC were just more open, friendly, in touch. I absolutely hate meeting people after the marathon, HCMC people whom I'd never even seen before. Mostly my fault, sure, but I wish I really got to know everyone in the group, instead of chatting through a listserv.
14. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to do it again, [name deleted]!
15. I think that I've spilled it all out.
16. My answer to #25 is probably not because I am writing a thesis and thus won't have the time to train. Sorry!
17. If this were a full-year program where Harvard students run with high schoolers (maybe inner-city kids) after-school that would be cool because what I like about HCMC is the idea of running for a good cause.
18. Truly a wonderful experience. Probably the 2nd greatest thing I've done this year (the 1st was meeting Scarlett Johansson). After doing this, though, I want to do all manner of things, including hike the Appalachian trail. This is all thanks to the excellent opportunity that was afforded to me by HCMC. I can't be grateful enough.
19. [name deleted] and I will have time to discuss this question on future runs.
20. hmm. can't think of much at the moment.
21. We need to get Harvard to cancel school on Patriot's Day.
22. Thank you so much for letting me participate in this program! It changed my life!
23. Nothing else.
24. As I mentioned in a previous question, I belied the University should support this fine effort more officially. Promoting good health and exercise in the community is great but it needs to start locally in the Harvard community
25. n/a
26. Not being able to run in the marathon made me realize even more how much I was looking forward to it--I'm just so grateful to HCMC for giving me the incentive and motivation to actually train for a marathon and I look forward to running one at some point.
27. I am so inspired by everyone in this group and the great gusto with which we all approached the experience. I am amazed by the talent and dedication I encountered and admire the program for fostering and recognizing such incredible people. I am honored to have had the experience of being an HCMC'er and hope to be able to repeat!
28. greeeeeeeeeeeat desserts!!! wish I had gotten to know the community better before the end :).