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Honors Capstone Portfolios

Honors Program

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Jonathan Fjeld Honors Portfolio

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Minnesota State University, Mankato

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Hello, my name is Jonathan Fjeld. I am a Mass Communications/Communication Studies double major at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

On this portfolio, I have detailed my progress throughout the Honors Program, working in the three competencies: Global Citizenship, Leadership, and Research. There is also information about my professional endeavors in the "Professional Portfolio" section of this site.

My mission is this: I aim to be a hard-working, growth-minded individual who is open to what the world has to offer while still valuing what matters most: Quality time with friends & family and being a biographer for the world.

[GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP](#)[LEADERSHIP](#)[RESEARCH](#)[PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO](#)

Hello! My name is Jonathan Fjeld, a student double majoring in Mass Communications and Communication Studies at Minnesota State University, Mankato with an expected graduation date of Spring 2021. During my time at Minnesota State Mankato, I have been involved on-campus with the Honors Program, Public Relations Student Society of America, Student Government, Student Ambassadors, Residence Hall Association and National Residence Hall Honorary during my four years in Mankato.

Outside of the classroom, in my media work, I have been able to use what I've learned in the classroom to further myself. I am a credentialed NASCAR media member for TheRacingExperts.com, the host of my own weekly radio show and news reporter for KMSU and have served as a media relations coordinator for organizations, such as the Honors Program and Students United. Doing media relations, I have used my prior media experience to construct graphics and press releases for the organization and contact outlets on their behalf.

After college, I hope to be working full-time in some form of journalism or public relations. I am open to any full-time opportunities or internship opportunities. To get in contact, click the "Contact" tab above.



Welcome to my professional portfolio landing page! This was done as a part of my Summer 2020 capstone project for my Mass Comm. major at Minnesota State University, Mankato. At the tabs that can be viewed by hovering over "Professional Portfolio," you can view the various projects I have been a part of in the last five years and what work I have done as a part of those projects.

Below you can view my job profile and market report that I did as a part of the capstone project. The job profile was done on Dan Benson, the director for media relations at Minnesota State Mankato. The market report was done on the outlook of Public Relations Specialists in the U.S. and Minnesota, especially in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area. The market report consists of information about the job outlook, training and factors that relate to the future of the job.

The screenshot shows a Scribd document viewer. The top header is yellow with the Minnesota State University Mankato logo and name. Below this is a dark purple section with the title "Director of Media Relations: Dan Benson" in white, and "Job Report" in yellow. The Scribd interface includes a search bar, page number "1 of 13", and navigation icons. The document content shows a running head: "PUBLIC RELATIONS SPECIALISTS AND MANAGERS OUTLOOK" followed by a page number "0". The main title of the report is "2018-2028 Job Outlook for Public Relations Specialists and Managers" with a subtitle: "A look into a role that reflects an ever-changing media landscape for businesses and consumers alike". The author's name, Jonathan Fjeld, is listed at the bottom of the document content.

About Honors

The mission of the Honors Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato is to create future leaders, researchers and global citizens by providing high ability and motivated students with exceptional learning opportunities, mentoring relationships, and a community of scholars that foster their development as future leaders in a global society.

Why Honors? This is My Why:

When I look at my time at Minnesota State University, Mankato, there are different lenses that I look through to contextualize my four years at the university. Whether that be where I was living and hanging out with, what NASCAR season it was, or where I was working, there was one thing that remained constant: My involvement in the Honors Program. I have been surrounded by a community of people who are always striving to go above and beyond wherever they are in their lives, which is something that I have exemplified throughout my college years.

When I first came to college as a Mass Communications major, I was looking for any sort of writing position to gain experience and practice my craft. This is where I found the Honors Beacon, which I wrote for in my first three semesters. This led to becoming the Honors Media Relations Coordinator when the position opened up for Fall 2019. During this semester, I was taking classes centered around graphic design and writing, which meant that my coordinator role allowed me to apply classroom skills to a job setting. The "Media Relations Coordinator" and "Editor-in-Chief" roles I had were also pinnacle positions in my field, which meant I was able to apply the skills I was learning about to a position that would be fundamental to advancing myself professionally. I was able to use my skills to create graphics for social media, edit the Honors Beacon, and write & edit stories, which are all pieces that displayed my skills and creativity.

The program has also allowed me to find an avenue to display my skills and creativity in an area I first dreaded when I was introduced to the competencies: Research. However, in the spring of my third year, I found my niche in a sports communication class I took. We were tasked with doing a research paper that critically analyzed a situation in sports using theoretical constructs and critical methods we had learned about throughout the semester. I decided to study my favorite sport – auto racing – and the career of Danica Patrick, which involved viewing various races and media pieces to develop the arguments of my critical analysis that would be important in discussing the situation of her as a female in the sport or even advancing critical theory. As a fan, I enjoyed studying this topic but as an auto racing journalist already, I especially enjoyed it because I was able to use my prior knowledge to conduct in-depth research that I could use professionally. It also allowed me to gain a new perspective on the sport and showed me how my work as a journalist could stand out from others.

Writing this during the pandemic and in a time of unrest, I think that the Honors community has been wonderful to be being surrounded by. The discussions I have had with people in the program about very serious matters have allowed me to gain a perspective on the world that I otherwise would not have had and it has allowed me to think differently about what we are facing. On a more personal level, being around a group of people who are going above and beyond with their work, even with the stressors of the world being magnified, has shown me how to cope with what is happening in the world and how to continue on. Reading the stories that people have submitted to the Beacon and seeing stories from fellow Honors students on social media that we have added each other has been great for that and also avoiding the disconnect that has almost been inevitable during this pandemic. Serving in the coordinator role, it has also been wonderful having meetings each Friday to not only discuss business with people who I can have a laugh with and get guidance from even as we face the same situation as each other.

Personally, I think when I look back on this time, I will think of how being involved in the program not only allowed me to elevate myself to a new level in such an important time of my life, but I will also think of being shown a way to elevate myself in a healthy way with those who are in the same situation. I think this will be great for reaching the heights of my life and being able to form deep connections with the people who will be important along the way.

Honors Program website: <https://www.mnsu.edu/honors/>

Global Citizenship

This competency demonstrates the ability to exhibit second language and communication competencies and exhibit cultural competency and awareness. Honors students will have demonstrated this competency through their work and activities upon graduation.

Coming from a town of 800 people, I grew up in a community with similar internalized value systems but had experiences where I was able to explore what it meant to be a global citizen at a young age. I lived overseas in the Geneva, Switzerland area for a month when I was 12 years old, which allowed me to communicate with people in the community and from other countries as my dad did an internship with the World Health Organization. This experience, alone, fueled my interest in what it meant to be a global citizen but being able to study it more in college allowed me to enhance this interest and find new purposes to the work I do.

I first started thinking more in-depth about my global citizenship experiences with my Spring 2018 [Intercultural Communication class](#). In the class, we contextualized our cultural experiences around various concepts we learned, such as hegemony, positionality and the intercultural praxis model that allowed me to think more critically about what I had experienced in the [Language Partners Program](#). The model goes through six stages: Inquiry, Framing, Positioning, Dialogue, Reflection, Action. I inquired with my language partner, Fazliddin, about his perspective being a Muslim from Tajikistan who is in the U.S., as the topic of Islam was pressing at the time in the U.S., which led to him inviting me to a worship service with him. This allowed me to frame my view of the religion in a way that made it seem similar to what I had experienced growing up as a Lutheran Christian, which made me think about my own position of having the ambition to seek out an experience I had not grown up with before, given Islam was not prominent growing up. Fazliddin was someone I looked to as a guide through an unfamiliar situation since I could relate to him and find similarities in him, just like a friend or a language partner is a guide to someone unfamiliar with a culture and language for similar reasons. Through him, I developed a dialogue that acted against existing barriers I encountered, in an effort to form my world view.

Finding similarities despite all differences is where my [Spanish classes](#) came into play. One of the most memorable experiences I had in my classes was giving a presentation entirely in Spanish to my class with minimal notecards or reference points. This meant that I was constructing sentences on my feet to ensure I was conveying a certain message to my audience, which gave me a “fish-out-of-water” feeling in some of those moments. That feeling was only temporary and did not last beyond the presentation, but I gained a perspective of how international students, like my language partners, have that feeling whenever they are first interacting with people as they learn the language and get accustomed to the culture.

This sense of knowledge and understanding is something that I delved into deeper with my [Students United Public Relations Specialist position](#). The organization gives a voice to many international students who do not have the same civic standing as domestic students but are just as affected by lawmakers’ decisions as domestic students are, if not more. Hearing what they were going through and advocating for them was my first step in seeing my position in the power imbalance to where I could use my skills and position to empower students. I further developed this skill working with the [Remember Me Too Movement](#). Remember Me Too emerged during the start of the pandemic to advocate for international students’ voices to be heard and their concerns to be addressed, such as trying to find ways to provide for their essential needs. I saw how I could use my mass communication skills and familiarity with civic life in the U.S. to reach out to media outlets to publicize the organization and address the cause with those in power who could make a change. In this way, I saw how I could use my privilege in a power imbalance to try to tip the scales.

Going forward, I want to apply my knowledge to situations I may encounter in meetings, interviews and other places where the person I am speaking with may be trying to get used to the language and culture. I want to continue recognizing the value they serve that goes beyond just the perceived barriers that exist because of our cultural differences.

[LANGUAGE PARTNERS](#)[REMEMBER ME TOO](#)[SPANISH CLASSES](#)[STUDENTS UNITED PR](#)

Leadership

This competency allows for students to demonstrate the ability to utilize personal leadership values and guide groups they are involved in towards a common goal. Upon graduation, Honors students will have been able to demonstrate this ability through their activities and work.

With anything you do in life, there has to be a starting point somewhere. When thinking of how I critically analyze my leadership over the last four years, that somewhere, for me, was being in the [HONR401 Personal Leadership class](#).

In the HONR401 class, I learned about leadership through the lens of the Social Change Model of Leadership (SCML). I used SCML concepts to reflect upon my personal leadership values and what they looked like in my various roles. I pinpointed SCML values of Service, Collaboration, Community, and Purpose as being most resonant with me personally after seeing how it was enacted within the Boys & Girls Club, an organization I worked with for my class project.

Being a part of [Student Ambassadors](#) in the 2018-19 school year helped me apply some of the knowledge I had gained in my HONR 401 class about leadership values and team roles. Our group was diverse in what we each knew about the campus, and in student panels, I, or someone else, would be called upon to answer questions that incoming students would have about specific topics. Each of us using our acquired knowledge to answer questions meant that we practiced effective teamwork in using our skills and abilities to work toward a common goal.

I also utilized knowledge from my HONR 401 class in Spring 2019, when I was working as the [Residence Hall Association's National Communications Coordinator \(NCC\)](#). In the class, we learned about "Controversy with Civility", an SCML concept that describes facing controversy in a civil manner as a group to where your group gains a new understanding from it. I used this concept in my role as NCC to identify and analyze a conflict in which I was caught in the middle. We as a group were able to talk about the issue and how we each wanted to be addressed regarding issues, thus addressing a controversial issue with a degree of civility and a growth mindset. Not only did the group grow from this situation, but I did too. I analyzed how I had been effective with the purpose of addressing an issue, but I was ineffective in how I addressed the issue in the group. I thought more about how I could apply the group's effective approach to issues, while also thinking more about how groups use their diversity to better achieve the group's common goal(s).

The NCC role was the most foundational leadership role I had, and I was tasked with helping make the role happen as I was being trained in by my predecessor in Spring 2018. After working in the role on my own during Fall 2018, I trained in my successor during Spring 2019, and I formed my personal leadership theory of "learn by doing as training" from this experience. I later applied this theory to my [Honors Media Relations Coordinator](#) role as I, once again, trained in my successor in Spring 2021 after being trained in by my predecessor in Fall 2019 and becoming more familiar with the role in Spring 2020.

In Summer 2019, just before starting my Media Relations Coordinator role in Fall 2019, I served as an [Orientation Peer Assistant](#), which was a role that made me think more about my leadership theory within a group of leaders. I applied my personal theory, which worked well at times, but I also felt the pressure of what I believed to be my biggest leadership role to date, and I felt like I was lacking a voice. I believed in my personal theory, but I struggled in the role at times and had limited success compared to others. I took cues from others' leadership styles, to compensate, but that only made things worse as imposter syndrome set in. It also did not help that I disliked the group's use of passive aggressiveness to avoid directly approaching group members about issues, either in public or in private, which made it unclear what was going wrong and who was doing it. However, as I worked more in my Media Relations Coordinator and [Student Government Newspaper Board member](#) roles, I started to grow. I was working in better environments and was able to identify distinct roles in each project that my groupmates and I were passionate about.

As much as I loved being a Newspaper Board Member and being a Media Relations Coordinator, I realized that I was stretching myself too thin and that problem worsened when the pandemic began in mid-Spring 2020. In my coordinator role, we were under tight deadlines and uncertainty, but the strength of my team came through as they recognized the stress I was under. In my board member role, I led the process of picking an Editor-in-Chief for the 2020-21 academic year and was able to see the effective and ineffective ways of leading the process under the deadlines. I realized that my values were in the right place in my leadership roles, and that I was learning a lot from those roles, but I needed to think more carefully about what I was taking on and effectively applying my values to, in order to avoid burn out. Like other college students, I find myself doing whatever I could to be a bold, jack-of-all-trades leader for the future, but I also realized how important it is, to match that with a philosophy of thinking about your purpose, in order to be a successful leader. When there is a purpose and an end goal in mind, it is easier to identify what roles will allow us to fulfill our potential of working toward a group's common goal(s).

With this philosophy in mind, I realize how much I value service leadership and I want to promote values of collaboration, service, and purpose in the organizations I work with to help my groupmates better understand what tools we have for reaching our common goal(s). No less, I want to continue to hone in on my values and identify how they evolve and change as I do.

HONORS MEDIA RELATIONS COORDINATOR

HONR401 CLASSES

ORIENTATION PEER ASSISTANT

RESIDENCE HALL ASSOCIATION

STUDENT AMBASSADORS

STUDENT GOVT. NEWSPAPER BOARD

Research

This competency demonstrates the ability to exhibit information literacy skills, synthesize and integrate ideas, produce original research or creative works, and contribute to knowledge. Honors students will have demonstrated this competency through their work and activities upon graduation.

When I first approached research as a Mass Communications/Communication Studies double major, I was unsure of my abilities as a researcher. However, I went through the process of seeing research in a whole new light, thanks to learning about research concepts in Communication Studies classes. These classes made me realize the value that my passions and career path have when it comes to research.

It all began with the **CMST301: Communications Approaches & Perspectives class** I took in Fall 2018. In CMST301, we reflected on concepts of research and what it meant to be literate in researching and synthesizing information in our research. While doing my research project on attachment theory and social media, I effectively cited others' work that would form the basis of my own original research proposal surrounding attachment theory. The research proposal was built upon the idea of social media being used by some individuals as a way to regulate their emotions and cope with trauma. My interest in the media and its impact on people's lives led me to conduct a research project in **CMST306: Research Methods**. This led me to discover the impact that the media has on people's perception of reality. I furthered my information literacy by learning about what effective, ethical research looks like and applied it to my research when I interviewed a variety of people. This then reflected the nature of the research topic on which I focused.

My CMST306 research allowed me to see how research can be more expansive, which I carried on to **CMST415: Topics of Rhetoric & Culture in Sports Communication** where I began to focus on more original research projects. I learned about various concepts in the class that I applied to my final project on female racer Danica Patrick, who raced six full-time seasons in my favorite motorsports discipline, NASCAR. I was able to blend my classroom knowledge with my knowledge for the motorsport to hypothesize about the impact of marketing and media attention on her career as a trailblazing female figure. I built on my hypothesis by suggesting a better way forward for future female stars who may follow a similar path as her. This research sparked the interest of my professor who expressed interest in possibly helping me disseminate the research at a conference.

After doing a research project in CMST415 that related so closely to one of my interests, I thought more about my involvement with **KMSU's Southern Minnesota News Project**. KMSU was one of my most important and earliest on-campus involvements. I have gone through the process of carefully selecting and interviewing people for over 65 KMSU stories, splicing down clips and piecing together information about research topics for the story, all in an effective and ethical manner to have it be scrutinized and disseminated for the station's audience. I had never realized how closely my KMSU role related to the concepts of research, but realizing it gave my radio station role an added purpose.

KMSU, along with CMST415, allowed me to see the way research can be accessible when one discovers how it fits into what they love to do. Going forward, I want to continue seeking out diverse ways to tell stories that entail concepts of the Honors research competency in order to make my stories unique and interesting for my audience.

CMST 301 & 306

CMST415 FINAL PAPER

KMSU'S
SOUTHERN MINNESOTA
NEWS PROJECT

I aim to be a hard-working person who strives to grow and learn, in order to become a better person with each and every day. I aim to always be opening up to what the World has to offer while emphasizing what matters most: Family, friends, hard work, and being a biographer for the world.



Contact Jonathan Fjeld at fjeldjonathan@gmail.com