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Honors Capstone Portfolios

Honors Program

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Mackenzie Glaser Honors Portfolio

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MACKENZIE GLASER

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Hello and welcome to my portfolio! I am currently an honors student at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I love to read, travel, and workout. During my years at MSU and beyond I aspire to grow as a person and learn what I love and how to do it well.

My personal mission statement is as follows:

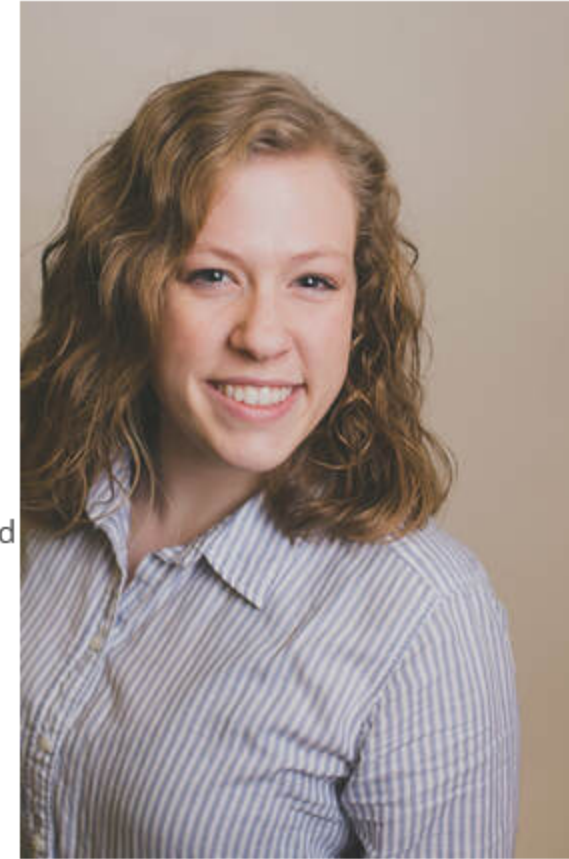
" I aspire to create positive change in the mental health field, criminal justice system, and in my personal life by supporting individuals and their unique needs."

My overall experience in the honors program has been one I look fondly on. I remember freshman year I signed up for the honors learning community and that is where I met people that I am still very good friends with. I owe that to honors definitely. My participation in the honors program has pushed me to achieve things I did not think I could do in my undergraduate career.

I definitely did not think I could participate in [research](#) or [study abroad](#) or be the [vice president](#) of a club. This program was a push to do just that. This group of like minded individuals allowed me to gather support and resources to do things that I did not think I could do as a college student.

My experience at MNSU has been greatly impacted by my participation in the honors program. Through my reflections and additional classes, I feel as if I have been able to reflect on a deeper level about my experiences and in that way get more out of them. I also would not have met the friends I have now without the honors program. My experience at MNSU has also been impacted by the amount of extra activities I had been a part of. The honors program allowed and pushed me to achieve more and be more involved than I ever have been and in turn made my college experience that much more fulfilling.

This program also helped to push me academically and professionally. Being a part of the honors program made me aware of so many more opportunities than I could find without as well as [workshops](#) and [classes](#) to excel my professional career. Professionally I have used the work ethic that is fostered in the honors program to reach new heights and gather amazing references. My reflection skills that have been grown in this program also allow me to learn so much more from different situations and examine more sides and implications of the issue. This in turn has allowed me to do more in depth problem solving and get to the core issue.



Honors Program

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.

The competencies are as follows:

Leadership:

Upon graduation, honors students will have demonstrated the ability to utilize personal leadership values and guide groups toward a common goal.

Research:

Upon graduation, honors students will have demonstrated the ability to exhibit information literacy skills, synthesize and integrate ideas, produce original research or creative works, and contribute to knowledge.

Global Citizenship:

Upon graduation, honors students will have demonstrated the ability to exhibit second language and communication competencies and exhibit cultural competency and awareness.

Leadership

Upon graduation, honors students will have demonstrated the ability to utilize personal leadership values and guide groups toward a common goal.

In high school I did not really occupy any leadership positions other than being in Girl Scouts and being a camp counselor. Throughout my college career I believe I have become more cognizant of my leadership style and what characteristics I do not like in a leadership style. I was able to articulate these things by reflecting on my experiences regarding value and teamwork in leadership.

The first area of leadership that I expanded upon over the course of my undergraduate career was values. My HONR 401: *Developing Your Mentor Philosophy* course helped me gain a deeper understanding of my leadership values. Through this class I was able to learn to listen to my team as well as have a symbiotic relationship between me and a mentee. I utilized what I learned in this class by applying it to my leadership positions I held, such as being the vice president of a club as well as at my job. This leadership style worked very well for me and I found it made others feel heard and validated as well.

This experience also reinforced strengths and weaknesses I identified as a part of the Strengths Finder assessment I completed in FYEX. The assessment said I was good at collaboration and I used that to my advantage by working as a team and leading by example rather than having a more assertive approach. I also used group work as a way to utilize others strengths and to cover my weaknesses. My weaknesses being conventional skills like programming/information systems, visual art and design, as well as entrepreneurship.

When I was an intern at the LGBT center at MNSU, I was able to use my philosophy of working together to collaborate with the Director and Graduate Assistant to create a great event. I utilized the Directors' connections which covered my weakness of resources. I also strengthened my values by using my leadership philosophy to evaluate others. I saw an amazing utilization of collaboration and understanding in some of the leaders I observed in this position. I also saw some leaders being more authoritative and not really fostering interpersonal connections. I saw this and revised my philosophy to include working with the people you serve in the position.

I used this further and applied it to my position in the *Environmental Sustainability Organization* as Vice President. I put out a survey at the beginning of the semester in order to get a feel for what the members wanted from the club as well as how they wanted to be involved.

The second area of leadership that I expanded upon over the course of my undergraduate career was teams. By being a part of the *Honors Beacon* staff I got to dive deeper into a group dynamic. This group had multiple writers, and two editors. I found that every part was equally as important and one would have to pick up slack for the others if things were missed.

I then expanded on this basic understanding of a team and applied this understanding to my experience being a Vice President and Social Media Coordinator for the Environmental Sustainability Organization on campus. Through this experience, I used this understanding of a group and elaborated on it by working with my board members to restructure the club. We worked on a common goal of getting a better idea of what our members wanted and to promote continuity of the club. We did this by splitting up tasks based on what worked in the past, introducing member surveys, as well as introducing more social events to promote more of a connection between club members. This was interesting as we all worked together and did well, I would say that COVID did put a dent in plans but ultimately did not deter us.

Further articulating my leadership philosophy, I used all of these experiences to learn to value the input of others. I also value making personal connections with the people I interact with in order to best serve their needs and to make them feel heard. I also value leading by example and encouraging participation.

I plan on furthering my leadership competency by using my leadership philosophy in my career working with people in psychology. Being able to listen to others and have a more collaborative approach is extremely beneficial. I will continue to hone my leadership by fine tuning my approaches to leadership as well as setting boundaries for collaboration especially with clients and peers.

Research

Upon graduation, honors students will have demonstrated the ability to exhibit information literacy skills, synthesize and integrate ideas, produce original research or creative works, and contribute to knowledge.

Before college, I did not have much experience in research. This competency was new experience for me. I did a few different projects and learned essential skills through these experiences. Throughout my undergraduate career, I have had the opportunity to participate in a few different informal research projects, write some research papers, as well as being a part of a research team during my final year.

I started off with my [forensic psychology research](#). I became interested in this field after coming into college as an undecided major. I had a friend recommend to me this field as I was interested in law, psychology, and the criminal justice system. Upon hearing about that I decided to do more digging into it. I used books in the library as well as online sources to see what this job would entail and if I would be interested in it. Throughout this experience I was better able to evaluate sources, especially online sources. I built upon this experience during my [fingerprinting research paper](#). I used this opportunity to use more scholarly articles. I learned how to better use online sources through MavScholar as well as through peer reviewed articles. I also was able to question my professor for this class as she was very knowledgeable in this area.

I then furthered my research by conducting a very informal survey in my [research methods and design class](#). I was able to use my ability to search for resources to create a hypothesis and test it in a very informal way. I also was able to dip my toe into disseminating my findings as we had to present our results to the class. This became increasingly difficult as I had a harder time working with a group to get a common topic and critically evaluate resources as a group.

Lastly, I had the opportunity to be a part of a [research team](#) senior year. I had the opportunity to gain information from my faculty mentor leading the project to choose a topic, work with a team to create the project focus, evaluate the results, and disseminate to others. This was a challenging, yet rewarding project as I had the opportunity to use critical analysis to evaluate different articles to narrow down a topic and use that to also create a hypothesis. This allowed us to create an original research idea that added to the existing literature as we were looking at how kids' play has been affected by COVID. We also are looking at how this might affect them in the future. We worked with "More Recess Minnesota" to potentially get legislation passed in Minnesota to mandate recess across the state. We also got the opportunity to present at two different conferences to exceed the criteria for dissemination of knowledge. This project seemed slow in the beginning, but once we got going it became more rewarding. There was a lot of work that went into it but ultimately, I was proud to be a part of that team.

I will continue to grow in this experience throughout my career. I hope to complete a bigger research study as a part of my PsyD program and this will definitely aid in completing that. I also hope to continue to be involved in evaluating research as I hope to do that as a career one day. I also will continue practicing dissemination as it will help me in various presenting scenarios.

Global Citizenship

Upon graduation, honors students will have demonstrated the ability to exhibit second language and communication competencies and exhibit cultural competency and awareness.

Throughout my honors career, I participated in a broad array of opportunities that have expanded my skill regarding global citizenship. These skills include communication, self-awareness, knowledge and understanding.

In communication, I have been able to achieve all four levels due to my completion of [French classes](#). I have been able to complete French 101 to French 201 at MNSU. At one point I also got to travel to France on a personal trip and utilize this knowledge. The French classes at MNSU set a base for my language learning and I felt really accomplished utilizing my skills in France. The French classes also allowed me to also utilize the basics to learn more when I took the optional French class while I was studying abroad. I also thought it was interesting to be in a second language in a place that I was not born in. I saw more international students and adults in this class. This helped me dig deeper into how communication and language affects those who use it and how to better relate to people from other cultures.

I also demonstrated all four levels of knowledge and understanding. I did this through a combination of [studying abroad](#) and [volunteering](#). I first started by volunteering in different capacities. This was the starting point because I knew that I wanted to work with a diverse population, as I planned to go into psychology and corrections. I thought that getting to know people that were in the US as international students or people that even had different backgrounds than me could be very beneficial. I learned through these volunteering experiences that everyone has their own aspects of their identity and that we are more similar than people think. I also learned that getting to know each person on a personal level by understanding where they are coming from is extremely beneficial. Everyone acts a certain way and this was a great way to understand why.

I then wanted to take this further and dive into another culture different than my own. While England is pretty comparable to the US, there are also a great amount of nuances one had to get used to while there. There was a whole different set of norms and slang. I experienced a lack of familiarity abroad that I have never had before. This was a big hurdle to overcome. Having a lack of a support system in a whole new place can be extremely challenging, and through this experience I believe I got to experience a taste of how international people feel in the US and may be better able to relate to that feeling of not knowing how to integrate culture and lacking familiarity.

Throughout my undergraduate honors experience, I also got to exercise skills in self-awareness. This skill has been exercised by studying abroad and attending the [Pan African conference](#). I started my career in attending the Pan African conference. I became more aware of African culture and how much history is there as well as cultural identity people feel. As a result, I became aware of how I have had the benefit of not thinking about how I identify culturally. This is because I had not had any reason to up until this point since I am in the perceived majority culturally most of the time. I also was able to identify how it felt to be in the minority. I realized that I had never been one of few white people and what kind of privilege that holds. I wanted to dig deeper into this history and I have through multiple cultural competency courses as well as personal experience with different cultures and attending cultural events on campus.

I took this to the next level by studying abroad. I got to further identify how other norms affected my opinion of my own. I was able to see how my upbringing affected how I view other cultures. I also was able to reflect on my own identity due to being with people who did not share the same identity. This experience taught me to be more cognizant of this.

I plan on furthering this skill by continuing to volunteer when things open again. I also plan on continuing my education in different backgrounds by continuing to attend cultural events in my area. Lastly, I plan on applying what I learn and analyze my interactions that I have with my clients. I interact with patients that live with severe and persistent mental illness and substance misuse. This will benefit me as I wish to work in the legal/ corrections field.

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