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COME 427
May 2023

Capstone Reflection

I pride myself on being a good storyteller. I love sharing different experiences with other people and learning more about them. In high school, I was quite nervous making my transition to college because I did not know what I was going to major in. I was overall good in most subjects, so it was challenging because I didn't feel like I was extremely skilled in one area. Honestly, I majored in Communications because I liked talking to people and I was fascinated with relationships. As I graduate from the Communications program, it is very eye-opening to reflect on my academic and learning journey.

One of the biggest takeaways I have received from being a student of Communication and Media Studies is the quality of interconnectedness. I have seen that quality in my classes of Family Communication and Political Communication. Many of the concepts Communication majors discuss may seem simple, but once you realize how relevant the information is, it takes a whole new perspective. I strive to always be a better communicator and it seems like one of the main concerns in the professional world is the lack of communication. Learning more about relationships and the way people interact has been extremely impactful in my own life. I can reflect on my behaviors and see how I can improve them to be a better communicator.

At St. Norbert, I had a concentration in Communication studies. I wanted to focus more on communication instead of media studies because as I mentioned before, I am passionate about relationships. I was able to take some classes relating to media studies which have been very helpful as I am also interested in social media marketing. The first communication class I took at St. Norbert was Interpersonal Communication and from that point on I was hooked with learning more about intimate relationships. I think I talked about Knapp's Relational Development model

to my friends about fifteen times. I found it so interesting to apply a model to my friendships and relationships in real life. That focus of interpersonal communication led me to study classes like Business and Professional Speaking, Family Communication, and Intimate Relationships and Media. I have engaged with both critical scholarly perspectives and social scientific perspectives. In some of my classes I have analyzed different pieces of media that have had a more critical lens. Additionally, I have researched multiple qualitative and quantitative scholarly articles to assist in my larger projects. Both of these perspectives have helped me gain a larger view of the major.

I have also had multiple job opportunities that allowed me to get actual experience to prepare me for my professional career. I managed St. Norbert ROTC's Instagram and Facebook pages for two years, and I also managed the Instagram page for Ignite, a programming group through St. Norbert Parish. Both of these positions have assisted me in learning more about social media marketing and management. Most recently, I have worked at a social media internship with a local women's fashion boutique, Azure. That experience has been absolutely amazing in terms of learning more information about how a small business runs their marketing, and I will definitely be taking all the skills I have learned to my future career.

Much like my struggle in high school, as college graduation loomed closer and closer, I started having more stress about what post-graduation would look like for me. I had all these passions, food, romantic relationships, storytelling, etc., but I just didn't know how to turn those passions into an actual career. After a lot of reflection and discerning what I would find the most fulfillment in, I have taken a job offer with Ivory Rose Bridal Boutique in Appleton, WI. I dreamed of being a bridal stylist since sixth grade when I first watched "Say Yes to the Dress," and I thought why not fulfill my dream job. When I was interviewing with Ivory Rose, I was

drawn to their small business and community feel. This position will allow me to be a bridal stylist, manage their social media, and also perform various marketing and ecommerce tasks. I am extremely excited to start something I am passionate about and there is definitely a lot of room for growth in this field.

Overall, it has been beyond fulfilling to end my Communication degree. It has helped me apply theories and strategies I have learned in my classes and also gain valuable skills that I can use in the future. It has been rewarding to witness my growth from freshman year to now. Now I'm on track to start a dream job that I only imagined myself doing when I was in middle school. The opportunities that have presented themselves have helped me adapt and be open to new challenges. My love for talking and storytelling continues to be a burning passion which I definitely will not be stopping anytime soon.