

Kristen Paulsen

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Welcome!

Hello! My name is Kristen Paulsen and I am a Senior at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I am a double major in Psychology and French, and I will be graduating in the Spring of 2015. I aim to get my Master's Degree in Social Psychology with an emphasis in culture, which would then help me work as a consultant for international businesses promoting cross-cultural acceptance and engaged interactions. My eventual goal is to work for the United Nations on one of their varying social councils. I would like to invite you to browse around and explore all of the things I have worked hard on. If you have any questions just let me know. Thank you for taking the time to look at my page! Enjoy!



My personal mission is to become a productive, scholarly member of society. I wish to do this through educational and social situations in which I will use my strengths to achieve success and gain knowledge that will benefit me for years to come. I do not know what my future holds, but I do believe that whatever I am involved in, I will feel passionate about and yearn to learn more in order to benefit society as a whole.

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Career Portfolio

I am a caring, responsible, trustworthy, and hardworking individual with a strong passion for culture and education, seeking a position in international consulting and cultural training. I seek to benefit the lives of others through the use of my love for cultural interactions, understandings, and accommodations. As a soon to be double bachelor's degree holder, I am looking to have substantial experience working abroad following my graduation, then return domestically and begin my education in cultural psychology.

I have found that the mission of intercultural consultants that consists of efficiency, quality, and ease align wonderfully with my personal career goals. Not only do I strive to quickly produce quality work, but I also do everything in my power to produce easier lives for those I encounter through extensive, first-hand help. Through a position in international consulting, I am confident that I can fulfill this mission to the fullest extent.

Please feel free to browse the remainder of my portfolio to learn more about my experiences, education, skills, competencies, and many other aspects to my professional preparation. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach me through my [contact information!](#)

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The Honors Program

[The Honors Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato](#) is a selective program formed for students that have a passion for learning and who strive for success in all that they do. This program focuses on three competencies, which are leadership, research, and global citizenship. These competencies are viewed as key components in becoming a productive scholar in society. To help students develop these competencies, the Honors Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato provides many courses and activities that relate to leadership, research, and global citizenship.

I decided to join this program in order to help accomplish my mission statement, in which I stated that I strive to become a productive, scholarly member of society. Early on I realized that the Honors Program at MSU is the perfect fit for me because it helps mold my character and gives me the means to achieve my goals and beyond. After being very involved with Honors throughout my four years at MSU, I definitely feel very connected to the program. Honors has shaped my college career and it is very evident that the program is dedicated to my success. I have received so much support and encouragement from the Honors Program and for that I am forever grateful.

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Leadership

Over the course of my undergraduate career, my leadership philosophy has developed as multiple experiences provide me with a foundation of leadership. I have found that my philosophy on leadership is deeply rooted in the importance of self-awareness, the acknowledgement of cultural differences, and how these differences influence group communication and the attainment of goals.

I began my philosophy development by discovering leadership styles. Through the [intercultural conflict style inventory](#), I recognized my personal conflict style of "accommodation" and how it relates to other conflict styles in the context of leadership. As an accommodator, I have a conflict avoidance approach to leadership and attempt to accommodate to all perspectives. I learned how to effectively utilize this conflict style in leadership and how to pair it with leaders of differing styles. This formed my knowledge of how leadership styles interact and helped me be more self-aware of my personal leadership style, which has been essential in the foundation of my leadership experiences.

The next step in forming my leadership philosophy was building knowledge of successful communication styles. Through experiences, such as my involvement on the [HSC Faculty Council](#), I developed the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of differing communication techniques and how they work together. At the meetings I examined a successful avenue of communication among an organization. As the faculty interacted, I observed a group of individuals with diverse leadership styles effectively working together towards a common goal. This stressed the importance of communication and community when working among leaders of various disciplines.

I further developed my philosophy through experiences that gave me the opportunity to test out leadership strategies, such as being a [Student Support Services Tutor](#) or the [Student Activities Director](#) in the Honors Office. Through these positions, I learned effective leadership strategies such as problem solving, interpersonal communication, and other managerial skills. I also gained experiences that shaped my approach to leadership. For example, I discovered when my hands-off leadership is beneficial, such as letting students talk through material to reach the point of comprehension on their own. But, I also realized when it is important to adjust my leadership styles in contexts that require a direct leadership approach, specifically in situations of event planning where individuals need clear direction. It is essential for leaders to be flexible and knowledgeable of all leadership strategies. Additionally, these positions taught me that leaders must present themselves with expertise while having the drive to answer the things they do not know. Humility and hard work are very positive characteristics and I strive for these in my leadership positions.

Overall, forming a leadership philosophy is a continual process that changes as one encounters experiences. I believe that an influential leader has knowledge of cultural differences among leadership styles, knows how to effectively communicate across these differences to reach a common goal, and practices effective leadership strategies. As a growing leader, I will further develop this philosophy in order to positively direct my leadership actions.

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Research

Research is an intimidating concept that can initially deter individuals from exploring it further. Personally, this was incredibly true during my first year. But as I grew to understand the scientific process and started to accumulate research experiences, I realized that research is more than looking up information and compiling it together. I believe that research is a cumulative group enterprise which aims to identify a problem, develops a way to solve said problem, and disseminates the results in order to further societal knowledge within a community of scholars. In order for this act to occur, I believe a researcher needs to have a solid foundation in research practices, a passion for the process, and teamwork abilities.

Through my [FYEX](#) and [Research Methods](#) courses, I found that proper researchers are those with a familiarity of the scientific process and who implement this process for the discovery of knowledge. Researchers have the ability to collect and analyze data, and effectively disseminate results. Effective researchers implement honest research practices. Since research is meant to contribute to worldly knowledge, a researcher needs to take proper care to ensure the accuracy of research results. After learning how to conduct research so that it is a powerful agent for change in society, I felt empowered to become a member of the community of research scholars.

As I took my foundation of research practices, I began formulating original work. From individual projects (such as my [World Dance paper](#) or my research on [criminal activity](#)) I practiced the basics of research. From there, I learned to appreciate the research process and even started to enjoy it! I realized that research isn't as tasking if the researcher has passion about the project. Because the topics of my original works were ones that I took great interest in, I looked forward to collecting data in hopes of gaining answers to my questions. With interest in a topic comes the drive to provide positive information for change in the world, which is why researchers must be passionate about what they are working on.

With a foundation of knowledge in the research process and clear passions, I completed research on teams, such as my work with [SMIF](#) or the [school psychology doctoral department](#). By working with individuals who were dependable and had similar passions, I learned how to trust others and work as a team in the research process. I also realized that multiple perspectives and previous scholarly work build research, which is why research is a team concept. Ultimately, the evolution of research results would not be possible without a team of scholars working together for the greater good.

As an accumulation of my undergraduate career, I know that research is a process in which a community of scholars identify questions, attempt to solve the questions, and disseminate the results of their work to add to a continual web of knowledge. Through an understanding of the research process, passions, and teamwork, I believe that as a researcher, I can emerge and change the world.



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Global Citizenship

As groups around the world become increasingly interconnected, the ability to understand and acknowledge cultural differences arises as a prominent component in successful interactions. Culture is a distinctive system of information that is shared by a group of people and passed on through generations. The presence of culture allows people to meet fundamental needs, pursue happiness, and develop a sense of importance to life. In order to become a productive global citizen, one needs to acquire positive dispositions towards cultural diversity, have the ability to effectively communicate in a foreign language, and be able to understand a culture through its unique perspective.

In a global mindset, individuals must recognize the presence of cultural commonalities and differences as a unique and advantageous aspect of group cooperation. Seeking out and appreciating cultural differences can implement a level of acceptance of cultural diversity that is necessary for effective interactions. Additionally, it is important to identify one's own culture in order to fully appreciate the differences. Through numerous life experiences and educational opportunities, I have gained the ability to view cultural differences in a positive light. In classes such as [Honors World Dance in Cultural Perspective](#) and [Honors Social Problems](#), I became familiar with not only my personal culture and various cultures around the globe, but also subcultures that are present within our own culture (such as prison culture). Additionally, I developed an orientation of acceptance towards cultural differences by learning about the benefits of cultural traditions, values, gestures, communication, etc, and how they can work together. As a global citizen, it is pertinent that one has a solid foundation of a general positivity towards cultures differences.

Another important aspect of being a global citizen is having the ability to effectively communicate in a foreign language. Learning a foreign language teaches strategies in maneuvering ambiguous communication situations. It also provides an appreciation of varying modes of communication used across cultures. In order to build my communication with other cultures, I have extensive experience in [second language development](#). By taking French language courses for nine years, studying abroad, and tutoring French, I have reached a conversational level in the French language. To date, nothing has given me more pleasure than being able to effectively learn and communicate in a foreign language - a skill that all global citizens should have.

Finally, I believe that a global citizen should attempt to understand another culture through its unique perspective. While on my [summer study abroad](#) in France, I developed the ability to view the world through another perspective. By spending an extended period of time living the life of someone in the French culture, I gained an appreciation and understanding of the culture like I was never able to before. Through deep experiences within a culture, I believe it is possible to adapt to the culture, which is the ultimate skill that global citizens should possess.

Overall, I aspire to become a productive global citizen who has the ability to identify and positively view cultural diversity, effectively communicates in a second language, and views the world from various perspectives. I will continue to hone these skills as my

experiences broaden in this culturally diverse world.

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Please feel free to contact me at the above email address if you have any questions or comments. I look forward to hearing from you!

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