

Hailey Gorman

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Welcome Statement

Welcome Statement

Hello and thank you for viewing my eFolio account!

My name is Hailey Gorman and I am in my senior year at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I have found my passion for learning to be in science. I take a specific interest in ecology and political science, which are the subjects I chose to focus on within my environmental science major, along with a minor in chemistry.

Mission Statement

My overall mission is to fulfill goals I set for myself and to find success in situations that test my abilities. I will use the skills I have attained through the Honors Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato to reach these specific goals. The Honors Program has exemplified my ability to use leadership, research, and global citizenship to succeed. Please look through my e-folio to learn more about my experiences with these three Honors Program competencies.

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Description of the Honors Program

The Honors Program reached out to me during my senior year of high school through a letter sent in the mail. The letter described the program as something that would significantly add to my college experience if I chose MSU, and did it ever! Due to the Honors Program I was able to; interact with other students interested in taking their college education to the next level, enroll in personalized honors courses that specialized in one or more of the three competencies- leadership, research, and global citizenship- and I was given the opportunity to attend many campus events and to be a part of numerous volunteer opportunities. The honors program played a vital role in my college experience and has shaped me into the person I am today.

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My Leadership Journey

Are leaders born? Or are they created? I believe the latter. Everyone has the ability to be a leader at some point in their life. For some, leadership comes in the form of being an athletic team captain, or president of a community organization, for others it could be rising to a management position, or having children that need guidance and direction throughout life. My leadership journey began my first year of attending Minnesota State University, Mankato. My personal journey was kick-started when I was asked to critically think about my values and passions in life. I was asked to do this in a course called Honors First Year Experience. This course was designed to introduce new Honors students to the three main competencies of the program, those being; leadership, research, and global citizenship. The leadership unit was the most interesting to me because it was the most personalized of the three competencies. Through assessments, discussion, and reading I came to realize what my underlying values in life are. I value healthy relationships and relationship building which can be directly related to leadership, as I find it important for the leader to be in good standing with his or her followers. This course also allowed me to admit my strengths and weaknesses in a leadership position. At the time my weaknesses included discussion, in the sense that all voices should be heard during discussion- not just the leader's voice. I have since then worked towards improving this weakness by asking questions in class or group meetings in attempts to have other classmates or group members participate in the conversation. For example, I have worked on numerous group projects since beginning college and in each group I make sure to communicate with my peers about how they like the direction of our project and if they would like anything changed. My strengths during my first year in college have stayed as strengths throughout my schooling, those being; time management, organization, and self-discipline. The Honors First Year Experience course opened my mind to being aware of my leadership values, strengths, and weaknesses.

A second experience that enabled me to gain consciousness of my leadership values, strengths, and weaknesses was attending the annual YWCA Women's Leadership Conference in Mankato, MN the fall of 2015. During this conference I was given the opportunity to learn from multiple women who have excelled in their leadership abilities. My favorite speaker shared her personal story of hardships followed by success in finding inner-peace and health. This would be an example of leading oneself, rather than the typical leading a group of individuals through team projects. Being able to lead oneself is vital when having to make decisions and being independent in school and beyond education. After the conference I felt motivated to continue in my leadership success by creating more leadership strengths and less weaknesses. I began to gain confidence in my leadership abilities as I took on more leadership roles-which will be described later in this essay- and I became more comfortable in asking for help when I needed it, namely in my chemistry coursework and study habits. The conference also reminded me of my leadership values, and I decided to add another one to my list- health (both physical and mental). A few weeks later I completed my first half-marathon and I have since then continued to lead a healthy lifestyle for myself. I was also awarded an Emerging Leader Award in the spring of 2016, as I received the Outstanding Campus Volunteer Student Leadership Award.

I was able to further my leadership development onto understanding the technical side of leadership through taking another honors course called Honors 401: Developing your Mentorship Philosophy. In this course I was introduced to the philosophies of Plato and John Dewey with their observations and understanding of how leadership roles differ. The course specifically focused on the role of mentor vs. mentee, with the mentor being a leader, and the mentee being a follower of that leader. Through philosophy reading and in-class discussion, I was able to learn more about leadership dynamics. I now understand that a follower can learn from a leader, and that a leader can also learn from a follower, it can be a two-way street! I also began to understand what distinguishes a mentor/leader from a mentee/ follower, to me, the mind-set of each individual and their over-arching goals defines which role they will play in the relationship. Overall, the leader plays the role of giving knowledge, while the follower gains knowledge- but as I stated earlier, a leader may indirectly learn from their followers. I was able to practice the philosophy I created for myself, as being a positive resource for those who seek mentorship, in the fall of 2016 when I took on the role as a first-year honors orientation coordinator. It was my responsibility and pleasure to inform the first-year students about questions they have regarding the honors program or college in general. This opportunity made me feel good as I knew I was making a positive impact on these student's lives.

In attaining the third level of leadership, which is to critique different leadership styles and work as a group towards achieving a common goal, I was employed by the City of Saint Peter as a Volunteer in the Parks (VIP) Coordinator. In this position it was my duty to supervise children aging from ten to eighteen years old in volunteer based projects. I worked with one other person, and we were both supervised by the same higher-up. This job has been the most challenging for me because of the high communication demands. I was responsible for communicating with the children, the children's parents, my co-workers, my boss, community businesses, and community members. I needed to know when to be a leader and when to be a follower, I switched roles multiple times a day while working for VIP. Through this occupation I discovered that not everyone leads in the same fashion. My co-worker and I often disagreed on the best way to lead the children through various projects, but thankfully we had the freedom to try different leading techniques throughout the summer program as we received a new group of children each week. I am the most grateful for this leadership experience as it has taught me the most about my willingness to learn from others and try new things. Although my co-worker and I did not always see eye-to-eye, we were able to push aside our differences for giving the participating children a fun and meaningful summer experience.

It wasn't until the end of my sophomore year of college that I began to lead in a community and campus based organization. I was introduced to an organization called GROOV, short for Gardening Rural Outreach and Opportunity Volunteers, in the spring of 2015. GROOV focused on planting and maintaining community gardens that would then be harvested with the produce to be used in Campus Kitchen and for a food science class at Minnesota State University, Mankato. The organization was in its first year when I joined the small team of a president and faculty supervisor. I took the role of volunteer coordinator, as my duties included communicating between different volunteers, posting events and RSVP deadlines on the organization portal page, entering volunteer hours, and helping with the planting and maintenance of the gardens. Helping with GROOV taught me about the importance of effort when filling a leadership role. The more effort I put towards gaining volunteers, the more help I received. It can be difficult to gain the interest of individuals when there is little to no incentive, or a lack of purpose. I found GROOV to be helpful and important, but others did not, I therefore had a lack of volunteers to coordinate. I learned that it does not matter what the leader finds important, but rather what the followers think is necessary and fun in order for a team to be formed and for progressive action to be made.

Although I am still a member of GROOV (the name has since changed to Campus Kitchen Gardens), I decided to join another campus organization called Grange in hopes of working more in a team/ collaboration setting. The Grange leadership team is much larger than the GROOV team as Grange already has a president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary. Grange is in its first year of operation and I hope to see more volunteer and membership involvement that when I did with GROOV. I look forward to my future collaboration with members of the Grange organization and I hope as secretary of the organization that I am able to get people excited about helping their local community.

In four years of attending Minnesota State University, Mankato I was able to master both my leadership values and teamwork. I began my leadership journey discovering my personal values, strengths, and weaknesses through coursework. I then continued my leadership growth through attending a women in leadership conference, taking a course focused on mentorship philosophy, being employed by the City of Saint Peter, and becoming involved in community and campus based organizations. I am grateful for all of my leadership experiences and accomplishments because they have shaped me into the person I am today. I enjoy holding leadership positions and I plan to continue my involvement in leadership roles during my senior year of college and beyond.

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Exploring Research

Research may be one of the most challenging, yet fulfilling projects that a college student can accomplish while working towards an undergraduate degree. During my senior year of high school I never thought of research when thinking about my near-approaching future in college, but now that I am a senior in college, I am able to reflect upon my original research projects and smile at all of my accomplishments. Research has by far been my most favorite aspects of my college education while attending Minnesota State University, Mankato.

My research journey began my first-year of school when I was enrolled in an Honors First-Year Experience course. In the course I was introduced to the methodology and process of completing research in a university. While in this course I was also informed of how to use the library's database system and scholarly journals list in order to draw upon other researcher's work while compiling my own. Along with learning how to find other's work, I was reminded of the importance that goes along with giving credit to those who deserve it through citing my sources. Overall, this course allowed me to access information effectively, efficiently, and critically as well as reinforced my knowledge of the ethical use of information.

My research progressed the following year when I was enrolled in my first [gender and women's studies \(GWS\)](#) course which was offered through the honors program. While in this course I asked many questions and was an active participant in our classroom discussions. I found myself curious about many topics that were discussed in class, and so for my final class project, I decided to answer one of my earlier questions dealing with transnational feminist networks. I wanted to relate my major of environmental science to the world of feminism and was able to do so by researching the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO). While completing my final GWS project I was able to evaluate and incorporate selected information into my knowledge base of WEDO, as I drew information from various sources; including my classroom textbook, scholarly journals, and the WEDO webpage. This research project also allowed me to successfully organize others' ideas, and evaluate and synthesize diverse perspectives on a given topic.

Not all research processes are the same, I learned this my sophomore year as I completed a [biology lab report](#) shortly before I completed my GWS research paper. My biology report required lab observations, specific formatting, and searching for past scientific publications. From this experience I learned how to draw upon multiple sources to present a coherent and integrated hypothesis, and use information effectively and ethically to accomplish a specific research goal.

My first [original research project](#) was completed in April of 2015 when my research partner and I were able to present at MSU's annual Undergraduate Research Symposium (URS). Our research was inspired by our experience in the GWS course I previously mentioned. We were able to create our own purpose statement, receive Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, suggest future research project to stem from our findings, and reflect upon how our project led to new knowledge and understanding about the research process.

During my junior year of college I completed a [research proposal](#) in one of my environmental science courses, which looked into the chemical leaching effects from plastics towards fish reproductive health. This proposal has been the most "real-life" project I have completed in college thus far as I worked with one other partner to create a proposal budget, discuss environmental significance, and the importance of quality assurance in regards to our proposal. We relied on an extensive amount of peer-reviewed literature and were able to present our research to our classmates and professor before the end of the 2016 spring semester.

I am currently working on my [last undergraduate research project](#) that I anticipate to present at the URS this upcoming spring. In the summer of 2016 I studied abroad in Panama for one month through a program called The School for Field Studies (SFS). While in Panama I chose to do an individual research project that dealt with plastic waste management on an island system and environmental justice. I worked completely independently on this project as I conducted interviews, attained background knowledge on the issue, and directed surveys. When my research in Panama was completed I presented my findings to the local community and my fellow classmates, but I have chosen to continue my research at Minnesota State University, Mankato until I graduate this upcoming spring.

I am very proud of all my research accomplishments as there are many more than what I have chosen to share with you. I believe good research requires an interesting question, dedication, hard-work, and curiosity. I hope to continue seeking out explanations and answers as I complete my last year in Mankato, and beyond.

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Becoming Globally Competent

Upon entering college I had never heard of the term "global citizen," that is until I enrolled in my honors First Year Experience (FYEX) course. This course introduced me to global citizenship and allowed me to reflect upon myself and my actions in how they impact the larger world. While in my FYEX course I was able to participate in a self-survey that ranked my global citizenship level based on my response to questions. Through this exercise (and many more from this course and others) I was able to recognize myself as a member of a specific culture. From this realization and reinforcement, I began to ask surface questions about my own culture and others that I was not a part of, this lead me to taking an introductory anthropology course.

Anthropology 101 has been one of my most favorite courses given its unique philosophy and teaching methods. The course challenged me during my first year of college by requiring me to partake in service-learning hours, which was a completely new way of learning for me! I decided to gain my service learning hours by participating in Mankato's annual Pridefest, I volunteered my time to help in a children's activity booth during the parade and was responsible for making observations during my service learning hours which I would then reflect about in an ethnographic sketch of the event. Through this hands-on learning opportunity I was able to understand other cultures thorough brief encounters, and I began to ask questions about other cultures that lead to my deeper understanding of the complexity of important elements to members of a different culture than my own. This was my first step out of my comfort zone in regards to expanding my global citizenship while attending MSU.

The second step out of my comfort zone that allowed me to develop in my global citizenship skills was enrolling in college level Spanish courses. Although I had taken four years of Spanish during high school it had always been a challenging subject for me, but I decided to further my education in the subject in order to improve my language/ communication skills. While in a Spanish writing intensive course I was asked to write an essay comparing and contrasting the United States to another Spanish speaking country. I chose to research and present on the educational system differences between the US and Mexico. My essay was written in Spanish and I was asked to present my paper during the 2016 Spanish Undergraduate Research Conference. By having researched the same subject in how it pertains to two different countries I became more aware of my own cultures boundaries and biases, I also identified cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication

The course that has improved my global citizenship the most has been Honors 401: Social (in))justice: A Critical Analysis of Immigrant Stories in the United States. This course challenged me to perceive my personal style, prejudices, projections, and habits of mind that have ultimately led me to be aware of my lack of understanding in some instances and why understanding can be so hard. This course allowed me to ask deeper questions about other cultures and find answers to my questions, as well as develop interactions with culturally different people thorough service learning at the Lincoln Community Center. My biggest take-away was being able to research and advocate my findings on human rights denied to US citizens. I enjoyed that my research for this project was taken to the next level of advocacy as I informed my fellow peers about basic human rights in three separate presentations. Human rights are something that I believe everyone should be aware of and I think my project helped work towards that goal.

My most valued experience related to global citizenship has been studying abroad. I lived in Panama for one month during the summer of 2016 and I could not have asked for a more challenging, rewarding, and beautiful experience! While studying away I was excited to ask complex questions about the Panamanian culture, both past and present. I also was able to actively utilize my second language skills in identifying a connection between language and culture as well as draw connections between multiple experiences and issues related to language and culture. By learning a second language I have come to understand that the world is much larger than what I once thought, and that language is the key to feeling accepted and confident in a new place. I hope to continue my personal exploration of global citizenship and I am soon upon graduation and will become a member of a new culture some refer to as "the real world." I feel that through what I have learned about myself and other cultures, I will be well prepared for my next foreign adventure.

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Herbarium

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I was offered a job at MSU's herbarium at the end of 2014 fall semester. My lab instructor- from the general biology course I was enrolled in- asked if I would be interested in working for her in the herbarium and I gladly accepted the offer. While working in the herbarium I mount dried plant specimens to card stock paper. I also enter plant data such as family, genus, and species into a computer database system. By working in the herbarium I have become more familiar with local plant species.

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