

MAKENZIE REED

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MAKENZIE REED



Hello and welcome to my e-folio!

My name is Makenzie Reed and I am currently a senior at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I am earning my bachelor's degree in Biology with a Zoology emphasis and a minor in Geography. After graduation, I will be attending graduate school at Idaho State University to obtain my M.S./Ph.D.

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ABOUT ME

Here is a little bit about me!

I am from a small town just outside of Omaha, Nebraska. I loved growing up in my small town, but I was ready to see and experience a new place. I decided to come to MNSU, Mankato because it felt like a place where I could grow and set myself up for success in the future.

I have been very involved in the campus community in my time at MNSU, Mankato. In addition to being a member of the Honors Program, I am also a member of the first RISEbio cohort and give tours to prospective students through Student Ambassadors. Not only am I involved in academic programs, but I am also involved in athletic programs. Since arriving on campus, I have been a member of the Hockey Cheer Team and played the clarinet in the Maverick 'Machine' Athletic Band. Because of my involvement on campus and commitment to academic excellence, I was a member of the 2021 Minnesota State Homecoming Court.

I have several hobbies. As an aspiring marine biologist, I love to go SCUBA diving. In addition to diving, I also am taking many specialty courses to further my knowledge in aspects of diving as well as the species and communities I am diving in. I also enjoy many outdoor activities including hiking, bike riding, and camping.



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HONORS

Personal Mission Statement

While being involved in many extracurricular activities and representing Minnesota State, I devote myself to maintaining academic excellence and producing quality work. As I move forward to my graduate school education and future career, I am excited to continue to be involved in different communities as well as continue my academic excellence.



Competency Log

[Competency Log Fall 2021](#)

[Competency Log Spring 2022](#)

Why Honors?

375

475

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LEADERSHIP



SYNTHESIS ESSAY

Even though I was still trying to figure out my place on campus and how to lead in a college setting, I was given the opportunity to start my leadership development right at the beginning of my freshman year. Through developing and applying my leadership skills, I discovered how to effectively lead a group and what my specific leadership strengths and weaknesses are. I was able to learn from my mistakes and had the opportunity to make the changes that I needed to further my leadership abilities. These experiences allowed me to develop a leadership philosophy which will guide both my personal and professional future.

Through my leadership development experiences, I began to understand the different approaches to leadership and to formulate my leadership style. In the Honors 201 course, I took the [strength finders assessment](#) in which I learned what exactly my leadership qualities were. Becoming aware of my leadership traits allowed me to see where I needed to grow as a leader and what strengths I could play on as I began to look for leadership opportunities. In [HONR 401: Leadership and Interpersonal Communication](#), I was able to look at different leadership styles in group settings and analyze the effectiveness of these techniques. Specifically, I went into the community and found a leader and interviewed them about how they lead in their workplace. From this, I learned how I could be a leader in my future career through hearing their experiences in mistakes and successes. Taking these honors program courses allowed me to find my leadership style and learn how to be a successful leader before I stepped into a leadership role.

For my leadership application experiences, I focused a lot on building my group leadership skills. Most of the leadership in my future career will be in a group setting; thus, I saw it as important to build my group leadership skills here in Mankato. In the [Maverick 'Machine' Athletic Band Program](#), I had the opportunity to build my leadership skills in multiple ways. I was able to work my way through the program as a member, section leader, and band manager. This allowed me to practice many different leadership skills and learn how to effectively lead from a small group, such as my section, to a large group, such as the whole band. Further, I was elected captain of the [Hockey Cheer Team](#) during my junior and senior years. Being a leader in this setting was a lot different than what I had to do with the band. Since hockey cheer is a smaller program than the band, I feel that I led more by forming personal relationships with every member of the team. Although my roles in the cheer and band programs were similar to one another, there were differences in how I helped each group become successful. For hockey cheer, I had to create a skating program in which everyone on the team could be successful while in the band, I was focused on the success of my group within the organization (i.e., the clarinet section). Having these two different leadership experiences, I was able to improve my ability to be a leader and I was able to learn what strategies work best in different group settings.

My leadership philosophy can be described as developing relationships with members of the group and being a role model to others. I found that sometimes I am not the loudest leader in the group, but people can still look to me to see what they should be doing and how they should be doing it. Additionally, I see learning to be a leader as a two-way street. Even though I may be in a leadership position, I will still be learning how to be the best leader that I can be. So, I will want to take advice and critiques from others around me so I can continue to grow and develop. I want others to be able to learn from me and I want them to be able to be future leaders by learning from my mistakes and success. In this way, they can also continue to develop as leaders and keep the organization/group running and being the best that it could be.

As I would like my future career to be in research, it is important that as a team leader, I can successfully lead a group of peers/students. I will take what I have learned in these experiences to further my leadership skills and learn from the errors that I make in order to be successful in the workforce.

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RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY



SYNTHESIS ESSAY

Coming into college, I knew that I wanted to do work studying marine organisms, but I did not understand how I would do it as a career. I knew that conducting research on the organisms was something I could do, but I did not understand the full scope of what a researcher did. Through my experiences at Minnesota State, Mankato, I have learned in depth what it means to conduct research and have found that I have a passion for research. Specifically, I learned a lot about how to form a research question, how to ethically conduct research, and how to present my findings. Building this foundation and finding my passion for research has set me up for success as I continue down my current path of attending graduate school to pursue a career in marine sciences research.

My research experience began my freshman year when I was a part of the [RISEbio research program](#). Through this program, I took the BIOL 105 research methods lab. In this class, I learned more about the research process and how to perform essential research techniques. At the end of the semester, I participated in a research experiment where I collected data and interpreted the results. After this, I had to write a research paper to explain what I did and what my results were. Writing this paper and doing lab work in this course built the foundation for my experience in the RISEbio research streams. I completed lab work in Dr. Cohen's Brain and Behavior research stream from January 2019- December of 2019. In this research setting, I learned more research techniques and practiced my scientific writing ability. Additionally, I had the opportunity to practice presenting my partner and I's research findings multiple times. Working in this research stream was the first time I had the opportunity to run experiments and understand the goals of research. RISEbio as a whole showed me that I had a passion for research and that it was something I wanted to continue in the future.

Upon completing the RISEbio program, I decided to switch research labs to work more closely with fish. I began working with [Dr. Minicozzi](#) in January of 2020. During this spring semester, I started learning about the tail-flip jump and how to collect data for the jump. As I was getting started on the project, my time was unfortunately cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic. After returning to campus in the fall of 2020, I picked up where I left off on the project and collected new data. Additionally, this year I wrote a URC grant and presented my findings at the URS in April 2021. After gaining more experience through this year, Dr. Minicozzi and I decided to continue working on this project for the 2021-2022 school year but look at a different aspect of the fish morphology. Through this year, I learned more about the formation of a scientific question and how to determine the methodology of an experiment on my own. In this year of work, I wrote a URC grant and presented my research at the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology conference and the URS. Because of our interesting findings over the past two years, we are able to begin the process of writing a paper and publishing our findings. Overall, in my second year in Dr. Minicozzi's lab I learned to be more independent while also continuing to learn how to present results and publish a scientific work. I had multiple opportunities to present my work at conferences and learned at each one how to become a better presenter. Additionally, while writing a scientific publication, I learned a lot about taking critiques. I have always been able to take critiques and criticisms well because I have been involved in subjective sports my whole life. However, I often found myself crushed when I submitted a draft that I thought was good and it came back with a ton of red marks. I realized, though, that I was getting these edits because people cared. They wanted the grants I wrote, the presentations I made, and the paper to be the best that it could. The edits were not because I was bad at writing or presenting, they were because I was new at it and had a few things to learn. Because I was able to see and apply these edits, I feel that I have really been able to grow as a scientific presenter and writer.

During the summer of 2021, I had the opportunity to build my research skills in a different sector through my [internship at the Omaha Zoo and Aquarium](#). I was assigned to work with a visually impaired wolf eel and train him to come to the target to get his food. In this research project, I had to research, develop, and test a protocol that would be able to determine if he could see the target and work on his ability to recognize it and come to it. This research project was a lot different than the fish I worked with in Minicozzi's laboratory because it was not as "scientific." By this, I mean although I had to do the research and method testing, there was not the end goal of publishing the work. It was just a project that needed to be done in order to enhance the health and quality of life of the eel in the tank. This experience showed me how broad research can be and the choices I will have in my area of research in the future.

Throughout my experiences, I have learned about the broad range of research topics that can be studied. The skills I have gained will help me find a Ph.D. program that fits my specific goals and interests. Additionally, the wide variety of research and presentation skills I have gained will help to set me up for success in future labs. I have gained confidence in my research abilities over the past four years, and I believe this will greatly benefit me when working on a graduate degree. Once I have acquired my Ph.D., these experiences as well as future experience will allow for me to be a successful marine researcher.

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INTERCULTURAL ENGAGEMENT



SYNTHESIS ESSAY

Growing up in Omaha and then moving to a small town, I did not have huge exposure to global citizenship and global diversity. My schools in Omaha and my small town were mostly full of people who were just like me and were not from diverse backgrounds. Coming to Minnesota State University, Mankato and joining the honors program allowed for me to have more exposure to new cultures and perspectives and allowed me to grow in ways that I could not have at home. I had the opportunity to take classes and go on school trips that allowed me to grow in this area and increase my knowledge of both my own culture and cultures other than my own.

I began developing my global citizenship and intercultural engagement through taking [WLC 280W: Parallel Worlds: Exploring Cultures & Symbols](#). This class exposed me not only to one different culture, but four cultures different than my own. Through this class, I studied different literary and media works that depicted the role of water in four different societies. I had the opportunity to learn how different cultures value water and then was able to compare them to one another and then related this all to my culture, specifically my relationship and access to water. WLC 280W helped me understand how one object that is in every culture can mean so many different things to a culture depending on how they use the resource and how much they value the resource. I was truly able to understand how to compare cultures to one another and grow my understanding of these four different cultures through this class.

In addition to learning about different cultures in the classroom, I also had the opportunity to travel. Through the Maverick 'Machine' Athletic Band, I traveled to [Puerto Rico](#) and helped celebrate their holiday Three Kings Day. While on this trip, I learned how to play traditional parade marching band music with multiple different groups, learned about the Three Kings Day holiday, and learned about the history of the area through different experiences. On this trip, I got to interact with so many different people and learned a lot about their culture and holidays. I got to learn how important the community culture is to the people of Puerto Rico and how they like to spend their holidays together as a community rather than spending them with just their close family members. Through this trip, I was truly able to immerse myself in a culture that was different from my own and got to understand and live in their culture in a way that a book or a class cannot teach. From this experience, I was able to make connections between my culture and the culture in Puerto Rico and was able to grow as a global citizen.

My personal intercultural engagement framework can be described as learning to relate my experiences to new knowledges and experiences that I gain. I found that it is one thing to experience and learn about the culture, and it is another step to relate it back to your own. We live in such a diverse society and understanding other cultures is important to help you understand the importance of a diverse society. I have had the opportunity to experience a few different cultures, but there are so many cultures that I have not had exposure to. I have a lot to learn about these cultures, but I now have a framework in which I can continue to ask questions and understand the importance of the different cultures in our society.

These experiences have allowed me to increase the awareness that I have in my own culture, as well as my awareness and knowledge of other cultures. I have learned important lessons on how to be a global citizen and how to increase my understanding of cultures that are different than my own. From these experiences, I plan to continue to grow in my intercultural engagement and continue to learn more about other cultures and relate them to my own. These skills will be especially important as I further my education and enter a job in the research sector of biology where many marginalized groups are underrepresented.