

Kristyn Thielbar

Minnesota State University, Mankato

[Home](#)

[Leadership](#)

[Research](#)

[Intercultural Engagement](#)

Honors Portfolio:

Welcome to my portfolio! My name is Kristyn Thielbar, and I am in the Honors Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I am a Marketing major, and I plan to graduate in the Fall of 2022.



My mission:

In the Honors Program, I want to understand the importance of each competency (Leadership, Research, and Intercultural Engagement) to maximize my understanding and gain perspective for our current world. After three semesters in the honors program, I am excited to use my application and development experiences in the business world.

[Why Honors](#)

[About Me](#)

[Leadership](#)

[Research](#)

[Intercultural Engagement](#)

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[Home](#)

[Leadership](#)

[Research](#)

[Intercultural Engagement](#)

Leadership Homepage

I would have never described myself as a leader. If anything, I found it difficult to speak up for what I believed in or my thoughts on a topic. I grew up in a small town, and it was tough to see the minimal leadership skills I had. I believe this because of the limited classes offered in my school growing up, and the only real opportunities to develop leadership were through the National Honors Society and high school sports. During my freshman year of college, I learned about the types of leadership people have. The takeaway from [Honors 201](#) was understanding that everyone, including me, had leadership strengths. These strengths may be different from everyone else around you, but that is what makes leadership so diverse and unique.

During the spring semester (2021), I had the opportunity to coach [Junior High Golf](#). The most significant part of this opportunity was being asked personally by my former Varsity Coach, Sue Bremer. Sue Bremer was my golf coach when I was in 6th grade, and I had her as a Varsity coach during my 10th and 11th-grade years. I respect Sue significantly and it meant so much to me that she asked me personally to coach junior high golf. I learned a lot about my coaching style from her and I continue to ask for her advice to learn more about how to coach effectively. During this experience, I was amazed by my first group of golfers. These athletes were eager to learn, and I found myself excited to utilize the strengths identified in HONR 201. The strengths finder showed me Relationship Building was one of my strongest leadership categories. My coaching philosophy is to explain the game of golf based on my experiences as a Varsity golfer. The most crucial part of golf is learning about the mental and physical sides of the game. As a young golfer, I was always hard on myself if I hit a bad shot. The Strengths Finder inventory helped me understand this is due to my executor category of leadership. Understanding my own strengths and weaknesses is why I found it crucial to help young athletes understand not every golf shot will be perfect. Learning how to adjust after hitting a bad shot (mental toughness) will help as they continue this sport.

A challenge I faced while coaching junior high golf was coaching during COVID-19. I struggled to have every athlete involved throughout practices, meets, and school due to sickness. I also found myself more distant from the players due to the circumstance of trying to stay safe and social distance. The last challenge that I experienced was a lack of previous coaching positions. I continuously asked questions to Sue if I did not know how to respond to a parent or if I could not decide on weather cancelations. The last thing I want to do as a leader is upset others. I want to make sure I am making the decision for the right reason with other coaches that are above me to know my plan or thought process behind my decision.

Rewarding aspects included gaining coaching experience that I would later apply to my summer clinics, meeting other golf professionals during meets, and obtaining better communication skills with athletes, parents, and other coaches.

After coaching for three months, I learned how to effectively organize, teach, and plan out the activities for practice. This experience gave me the confidence to accept a job position at Cannon Golf Club to be an instructor for [Junior Summer Clinics](#). In this experience, I learned how to delegate tasks to helpers, time-manage, become a team member, and understand how to make these sessions fun for the golfers. After graduation this fall, I hope to continue coaching in the spring and summer of 2023, because I love helping those around me and incorporating my leadership philosophy into my coaching style. I also look forward to continuously adjusting my coaching styles based on the needs of my students and parents.

Taking what I learned from my experience, I look forward to future opportunities and learning how I can incorporate my strengths in the business world. In the future, I want to continue helping others and I hope to coach for my third consecutive year as the junior high coach for Cannon Falls. These next steps depend heavily on my career path because I graduate this December. Currently, my plans are to continue working for the event center in Mankato, so I have the flexibility to coach and learn more about my philosophy as a leader.

[Honors 201](#)

[Junior High Golf Coach](#)

[Golf Clinics](#)

Kristyn Thielbar

Minnesota State University, Mankato

[Home](#)

[Leadership](#)

[Research](#)

[Intercultural Engagement](#)

Research Homepage



When first learning about research, I always thought my answers would be in books or inside articles. I thought of research as external instead of learning from those around me. Once I started my college experience, I found ways to ensure my resources or data collected were reliable and correlated to my topic. I believe the experiences in development and application will help me find a better understanding of research when working by myself and with a team. I believe the honors program has helped me shape my understanding of this competency.

When looking at my development experience, I took a class named the [Research Paper-WRIT \(ENG 1114\)](#) at Inver Hills Community College. Throughout the course, my professor taught us ways of researching and the importance of research. The skills she taught us throughout the semester were then applied to create a final paper that was on a research topic of our choice. We had criteria requirements to ensure that we cited reliable, timely, and significant sources that helped give credibility to our paper. Such requirements included where we got our sources from (which was the Inver Hills Database), how old the sources were (within the past 5 years), and the number of sources to reduce/eliminate the possibility of bias within our essay (10 or more). I found working with others (the professor and writing librarians) to proofread my paper(s) before submission was one of the most helpful things throughout this class because it gave me suggestions to improve my writing. The most important takeaway from this class was finding an objecting view of your topic and writing about the devil's advocate within your essay. I remember this is one of the most difficult things to do because it is hard to go against your own paper, to try and understand a different point of view that you may or may not agree with.

The same thing is true when working with a team. Devil's advocate is ridiculously important before you present in a loan presentation, decide on what products or services you will sell, and then determine what your market looks like. These are the kinds of questions I addressed during my application experience with [The Integrated Business Experience \(IBE Program\)](#) here in Mankato. The IBE Program allows students to sell products and/or services to real people within our market (people within the Mankato area or at MSU-Mankato). For example, last fall (2021) I was part of the Minnesota Milers. We were an event-based company that decided we wanted to try a service and sell products as well. When determining this decision, we spent the first few weeks understanding how the entire team (roughly 12 people) felt about specific products and how we thought these products would work. As a company, we almost knew instantly that the 5k was a new and interesting idea that we wanted to try. When it came to the products we sold alongside the race, it took a little longer because we were unsure about weather conditions (because it was during the fall) and if we would stay in school the entire semester (due to COVID-19). After a few weeks of in-person classes, we began to feel more confident that we would not be sent home again. We decided on multiple decisions such as products, date, price, and location based on the qualtrics survey we distributed through social media (word of mouth on our Snapchat/Instagram). The results from our survey helped us determine the products of beanies and long-sleeve shirts, as well as the date, time, and location for the race. After these results came in, my company and I sold to our market through our social media account and through printing services on campus. We also did door-to-door selling within the Mankato area which allowed us to form connections with people and grow our network. I found this extremely beneficial, and I look forward to continuing research in the future.

After graduation, I may be asked questions about marketing tactics, and it will be beneficial to have research experience from Research classes (ENG 1114) and the IBE Program (IBE Practicum). In my future job, I will continue to ask questions (incorporate devil's advocate) and find multiple, reliable sources to better understand my topic of study. I look forward to listening to new ideas to see how to problem-solve and find solutions within a business.

[ENG 114 Research Paper](#)

[Integrated Business Experience](#)

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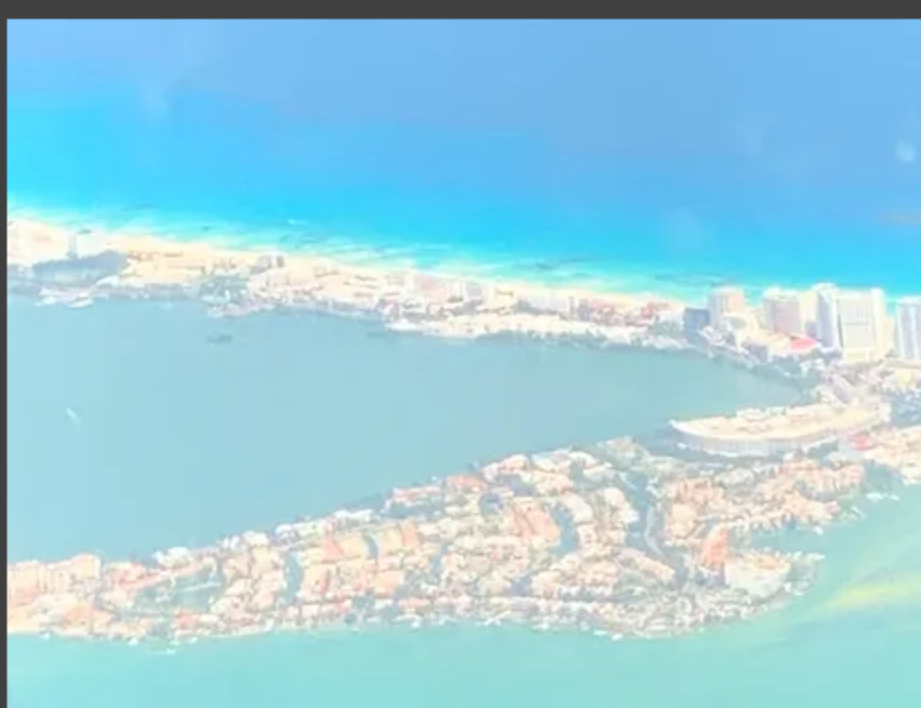
[Home](#)

[Leadership](#)

[Research](#)

[Intercultural Engagement](#)

Intercultural Engagement Homepage



I had very little knowledge regarding Intercultural Engagement before the Honors Program. The lack of knowledge is due to the small environment in which I grew up. In the small town of Randolph, MN, everyone celebrated the same holidays and traditions, and I did not get the same experience as some of my college classmates, especially when it came to engaging with other cultures and practices. Even though there are many important aspects within the competency of Intercultural Engagement, I believe there are three aspects that helped me understand the importance of Intercultural Engagement. These three aspects include religion, language, and culture (I focus on this last section in the workplace).

When I started my college experience, I met my roommate (2020), who is originally from the Gambia. The first time I talked about religion with my roommate was early in the school year (2020), and I loved how we had open conversations regarding our religions (Christianity and Islam). Our conversations included topics such as comparing our religions, what our school was like (did it have any religion classes), the traditions of our religions, and what we thought about these differences. We compared both similarities and differences between our cultures to comprehend how we believe in something bigger than ourselves. In our discussions, we also agreed that no matter what you believe in, the main takeaway of religion is the way it opens your heart to care for others and how your behaviors should be humble and kind to others. In Honors 201, I wrote a paper about these interactions, which helped me understand religion more in-depth.

When it comes to intercultural engagement, I believe language is a significant aspect of communication. This is the first way a person interacts with another culture, and it is a way to connect with other people. In elementary and high school, I took Spanish as an elective, and when I did PSEO, I took two additional years of Spanish at Inver Hills Community College. To appreciate the Spanish-speaking culture more, I attended the Day of the Dead (Día de Los Muertos) celebration in Old Town Mankato in October. I learned about this celebration in high school, where we learned about the significance of the yellow flowers (the marigolds) and how this holiday is a day of remembrance of your ancestors (just like the Disney movie Coco reminds viewers about). This experience reminds me of the importance of celebrating cultures that are different from our own. In my high school Spanish class, my teacher taught us specifically about the alters they would make and the photographs that were used for the alter. The importance to not only the adults but also the children was very unique and special. The Day of the Dead Celebration (Día De Los Muertos) celebration in Old Town Mankato was beautiful, and the event had so many people supporting the culture. This experience helps me understand the differences in language and culture in society.

Another experience I had was taking an internship course through the College of Business here at MSU-Mankato. During this experience, I learned about culture in the workplace, and I met different people, including coworkers, clients, and diverse members of the Mankato community. Intercultural interactions are essential in business due to the reliance on communication and professionalism in the workplace. During my internship at the Mayo Clinic Event Center, where I interconnect with an assortment of clients dependent on the hosted event. I talk through issues within technology and ensure the event is running smoothly. When communicating with the families or the company, it is essential to communicate professionally with them, but it is much more important to be more professional with the company representatives than a wedding reception consisting of family. I believe weddings are surrounded by family members because it is a significant moment in this young couple's life. The celebration of a new life together in marriage is a significant step toward their future family. I also think that there is some truth to businesses having more professional meetings than family wedding receptions due to the money aspect of the event. Businessmen and women are there for work and to learn information about their careers while family members are there to have a good time with their families and spend the night eating, drinking, and dancing. These experiences are similar to my experience at the golf course. For example, you talk to members a lot more casually than a new person coming to the golf course for the first time. The variety of events hosted at the event center is meaningful because I am learning how to become well-rounded with the different groups of people at each event/show attracts.

These diverse experiences have shaped me to be more knowledgeable and open to new cultures that differ from mine. After these experiences, I am now more aware while coaching, in the final years of my college experience, and throughout my professional career. I look forward to further developing intercultural engagement skills with the interactions of current and future experiences.

[Religion](#)

[Language/Traditions](#)