

*MNSU Honors Student Portfolio*

# LOGAN KUSKIE

. MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO . CLASS OF 2023 .



Leadership

Research

Global Citizenship

## WELCOME!

Welcome to my portfolio! My name is Logan Kuskie and I am an honors student at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I am a Cognitive Science major with an emphasis in Biology and a minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders and Psychology. I am estimated to graduate in the spring of 2023.



My mission as an MSU Honors Student is to develop my initiative, integrity, and compassion through the demonstration of the three competencies. I will be dedicated to using my education and experiences to educate others and professionally impact the healthcare field.





# ABOUT ME

*. MNSU Honor Student . Athlete .*

I call Longmont Colorado my home and am fully enthused by all types of mountainous adventures. Other hobbies of mine include baking and reading. I love spending time with my family and will always be a homebody. After graduating from Lyons High School, I decided to take my adventures to a new state to continue my academic and athletic careers. I am majoring in Cognitive Science with a Biology emphasis and minors in Psychology and Communication Science and Disorders at Minnesota State University, Mankato with intentions of post-undergraduate schooling. I plan to attend Creighton University to earn my Doctorate in Occupational Therapy. My goal is to serve others in the healthcare field and spread my knowledge. I chose to join MNSU's honors program to help my growth as a well-rounded student and citizen. I am always looking for a challenge and this program is designed to provoke us beyond our education. In addition to being a hard-working student, I am a dedicated track and field athlete. I will always be grateful for the numerous valuable life lessons this sport has taught me. My goal is to satisfy my sense of duty to serve through both my work and faith and foster a lasting feeling of support and loyalty within my community.



## *Let's Talk*

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Leadership

Research

Global Citizenship

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# HONORS PROGRAM

## Honors Program Mission Statement

The mission of the Honors Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato is to create future leaders, researchers, and global citizens by providing high-ability and motivated students with exceptional learning opportunities, mentoring relationships, and a community of scholars that fosters their development as future leaders in a global society.



Honors students are required to show that they have fulfilled all goal areas within the three competencies of the program - leadership, research, and global citizenship. Select any of the following buttons for a preview of my development in all three competencies.

Leadership

## Leadership

Upon graduation, honors students will have demonstrated the ability to utilize personal leadership values and guide groups toward a common goal.

Research

## Research

Upon graduation, honors students will have demonstrated the ability to exhibit information literacy skills, synthesize and integrate ideas, produce original research or creative works, and contribute to knowledge.

Global Citizenship

## Global Citizenship

Upon graduation, honors students will have demonstrated the ability to exhibit second language and communication competencies and exhibit cultural competency and awareness.

## Learning Plans



2019-2020



2020-2021



2021-2022



2022-2023

What is a Learning Plan?  
Learning plans outline my intentions for the year about what activities I will engage in or reflect upon to meet the competency requirements



# LEADERSHIP

## Leadership Competency Synthesis

The idea of leadership has always been intimidating to me because I held misconceptions about the qualities of different types of leaders, and since I do not have a very confidently loud personality, the idea of leadership made me uncomfortable. I grew up more as the person to suggest an idea to a friend who was brave enough to share my thoughts out loud. The leadership competency of the Honors Program forced me outside of my comfort zone to grow into my unique leadership style that illuminates my personal values. I learned that leaders depend on peers because even leaders can be wrong. Effective leaders are aware of their leadership strengths and utilize them, and I learned that it does not take an authoritative title to be a leader.

Some of the most important and valuable leadership lessons I encountered occurred during some of my least expected experiences. I participated in a couple of group settings that illustrated different team roles that were all equally important. I learned that greater experience does not qualify for greater authority but can provide one the ability to give higher quality advice for peers. Leadership can be derived from experiential development; more time in a role or environment allows for growth into a mentor. This is a leadership quality that I deeply engaged with while participating in the [Honors Peer Mentor Program](#). My growth in leadership began as I utilized this program my first year as a mentee. I then took the opportunity to provide leadership to my fellow students because I remembered how beneficial the structure and input from my mentor was. My status as a student was equivalent to that of my mentees, with our only difference being level of experience. Similarly, I viewed my classmates with whom I collaborated throughout my education as equally valuable even though everyone shared a different perspective. When it came to teamwork in my labs, my peers and I were equals in the same class trying to accomplish the same goal. With completely uniform qualifications, I learned that teamwork, especially in my labs, required different team roles that developed based on individual strengths. My [Genetic Disorder Research Presentation](#) taught me that all team roles are necessary for efficient success. Individual strengths and weaknesses are all equally important to the success of a group.

A critical step to my development as a leader was dependent on identifying my personal leadership strengths and weaknesses. My first [reflective experience](#) about my leadership qualities revealed positive traits that I built into my leadership style. I learned my strengths pull from my personal values which helped me realize the purpose of different leaders is to influence with different sets of belief perspectives. Individual's unique attributes create varying leadership styles. As a member of the [Track Team](#), I observed leadership styles that differed in effectiveness. Among the styles I witnessed, I realized that communication was a key factor to a successful leader. Efficient teamwork was only achievable if we were all on the same page which required one reliable common communicator. I continued to learn about the importance of communication with my coworkers in my [CNA Practicum Experience](#). The position I held allowed me to practice my leadership skills among my care team and observe the leadership dynamics of other shift groups. I found a style that felt comfortable to me and created a dynamic that made sure my peers felt valued. My efficient leadership philosophy utilizes teamwork with strong and open communication. Through my [Peer Mentor Experience](#), I realized my unique perspective was the strength that I utilized to guide my peers. Naming my strengths and weaknesses and intentionally practicing them throughout my competency experiences enabled me to develop them further into my leadership philosophy.

My experiences taught me to rely on my peers and team members in leadership settings because they can be assets in areas I consider my weaknesses. Leadership is much more selfless than the title implies. Working in healthcare, I learned that effective leaders need to rely on the entire [Care Team](#) rather than only valuing those with tenure for information or input. In the same setting, taking advantage of the strengths of group members makes for more cohesive work. Delegation is a leadership trait I learned to like while completing my [CNA Practicum Experience](#). I was also able to practice this concept in an academic setting to divide team roles efficiently in a lab setting for my [Biology Genetics Project](#). This team project required a lot of individual work initially, but the entire process of putting it together relied on collaboration of our different roles. Through different leadership settings, I observed and practiced delegation as an effective leadership tool to help supplement my weaknesses.

The reflective process of my leadership has been valuable to my growth by helping me identify my leadership values and strengths and develop my own philosophy to use in my future. I have already been able to apply my values in other leadership experiences this year not reflected in my portfolio. I took on a board member position of our Cognitive Science Club to ensure the club members felt valued and included. I also contributed as a member of the SAAC committee using my experiences and perspectives to represent my track team cohort. These experiences as a leader have given me confidence to continue to have a leadership voice as I enter my post-graduate career, and I see these experiences as a foundation for further development of my leadership among my doctorate cohort and professional peers.

# EXPERIENCES

Honors Peer Mentor

CNA Practicum

Track Team

Care Team

Genetics Project

Leadership Reflection

# RESEARCH

## Research Competency Synthesis

There is a stigma linked to original research that makes most young scholars believe a researcher strictly belongs in a prestigious lab. Naturally influenced by this stigma, the proposed idea of creating original research for the Honors Program was incredibly daunting. After an initial investigation into the basics of research and its necessary skills, I quickly learned that I have already practiced numerous research skills and could actively complete original research through less sophisticated assignments and settings. I describe these qualities and research skills in my reflection essay for my [Intro to Honors course](#). Throughout my education as an Honors Student, I learned that research does not have qualifying levels of sophistication, more narrow research questions are typically easiest to work with, and that sharing the information learned is just as important as the research itself.

After I learned there are many basic steps to the development of research, I started to notice more areas where I utilized these skills. Simple tasks such as reading a composition of literature and comparing different thoughts on the same topic qualify as types of research activity. As I completed a [Research Paper](#) for one of my Communication Science and Disorder courses, I learned about the importance of a literature review when researching a question. A literature review allows for exposure to different perspectives and enhances background knowledge. Relying on multiple sources requires looking at similarities and differences while synthesizing an evaluation. My work becomes original when I explain my perspectives on the topic I am arguing or researching. This is a more basic step of research but is still research, nonetheless. All research questions begin with a foundation of educational literature before moving into a phase of experimental design.

Although they all seemed incredibly sophisticated with highly detailed methods of data collection, I became very familiar with academic articles throughout my undergraduate career. I was always more caught up in the process of data collection in these articles that it never occurred to me to think more about the importance of selecting a research question. When I was tasked with writing my own [Academic Paper](#) I was immediately halted by the wide range of possible questions I could research. I quickly learned the importance of having a narrow research question in order to accomplish this assignment. I did not have access to a lot of materials, so my data collection relied on a survey which provided me with sufficient data to develop an entire article with the addition of my literature review. I had to reflect on the information I collected and use my new knowledge to draw conclusions about the significance of my experiment. This was great initial exposure to composing original research. I gained insight about the entire process of research, from the question to the dissemination. I learned how to develop a suitable research question and chose an appropriate form of data collection for the project.

Up to the end of my undergraduate career, all my dissemination locations were decided for me; all were either a classroom or a fairly simple research project. My project associated with my completion of the original work competency requirement was not limited in any manner and completely up to us to decide what place we wanted to present our work. Ultimately, with numerous options, we decided to present our [Memory Book Project](#) at three different research conventions. We presented two posters in person, and the other was a prerecorded video presentation. The process of compiling the results of our research into a presentation that the average crowd would be able to comprehend proved to be just as challenging as the research itself. I learned the same lesson while completing a [Teach a Topic](#) assignment for one of my CIS courses. This project was heavily based in researching and learning new information, however, just as importantly we had to present the information to our class sufficiently enough that they felt educated on the topic. The dissemination of this small project required me to practice and prepare a thoughtful presentation, which is something I learned to reserve time for with future research projects.

The Honors Program pushed me to go outside my comfort zone to expand on questions I developed through my education. I was challenged with practicing the fundamental skills of research and reflecting on their importance, as well as moving forward in my maturity as a scholar through original research and meaningful dissemination. Research is a very important tool for the advancement of knowledge and being able to share content I have learned will be crucial to the development of my field. I will be able to take the lessons I learned from this program with me into my professional career to help advance the field of medicine for the betterment of my patients.

# EXPERIENCES

Memory Book Project

Teach a Topic

Academic Paper

Research Paper

Research Reflection



# GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

## Global Citizenship Competency Synthesis

Global citizenship demands self-awareness as a member of a community and individual, develops respect for other individuals, and shows critical thinking from a magnitude of perspectives. These guidelines inspired my educational journey as a member of a community rather than an individual student. The Honors Program pushed me to explore my personal beliefs as well as identify and build meaningful connections with individuals who hold different beliefs and perspectives. This program helped me define my personal perspectives and biases, engage with others from multiple perspectives, and communicate with a culture outside of my own.

Growing up, my culture seemed to be defined for me, but once I arrived at college, I learned that there is endless freedom pertaining to personal beliefs. The awareness of my story and how I fit into the world came about during a [Reflection](#) for my Introduction to Honors course. We completed exercises that helped us determine our values and find the roots of our personalities. I moved my cultural observation from the classroom to a practical setting during my [CNA Practicum](#). I worried that most of my residents would not remember anything about their early lives, but I was wrong because it turns out that the residents love to talk about their culture and family traditions. Being able to understand independent culture allows the creativity of the care team to support residents by recreating culture for independent resident benefits. I was able to share some of my personal perspectives during my [CNA Practicum](#) in exchange for personal stories from individuals of different cultures. From these explorations into cultural self-awareness, I also found a desire to have people ask questions about me and have been more interested in learning about their cultural differences in return. Being able to understand my culture better allowed me to connect with others on a more personal level.

My educational involvement taught me that communication is not the only link between different global perspectives. Exposure to other cultural practices, or traditions, are helpful in understanding the different perspectives of community members. Through my studies of American Sign Language, I was restricted from my usual communication patterns and forced to observe other norms for members of the deaf cultures. I examined the significance of facial expressions in Deaf Culture through a [Presentation on Expression](#). I learned that physical language, such as body language and facial expressions, can be universal; it exceeds the boundaries of cultural perspectives and unites all people as equal.

Although culture far exceeds verbal communication, it is language that connects global citizens to their personal culture. Learning a different language gave me the opportunity to immerse myself into the lives of individuals who belong to different cultures. Biases are expressed through communication as well as desires, beliefs, and community. My [Hard of Hearing Professors](#) taught me about Deaf Culture values and how individuals like to be approached and treated. These ASL courses taught me how to communicate in both a classroom setting and prepared me for real-world exposure. I used this knowledge to practice communicating with one of my [Hard of Hearing Residents](#). This forced me to reevaluate how I would do my job since I could not communicate and perform actions simultaneously. This experience in a different culture than mine was challenging and eye-opening to the biases I did not know I had. Furthermore, I completed a virtual [Children's Book Reading](#) in ASL that forced me to alter the way I would normally read for entertainment. These experiences gave me the awareness of being a member of a separate culture which allowed me to widen my own perspective.

This program has taught me that Global citizenship is multifaceted regarding involvement in more than just the culture of your choice. Being in the shoes of other individuals teaches about biases, respect, communication, and tradition. I plan to encourage more cultural exposure in my personal and professional career to continue to broaden my awareness of myself, my culture, and the culture of those I encounter.

## EXPERIENCES

Hard of Hearing Professors

Hard of Hearing Residents

CNA Practicum

Children's Book Reading

Expression Presentation

GC Reflection