

Naomi Kinney

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Hello, thanks for visiting!

My name is Naomi Kinney, and I am a fourth year Honors student at Minnesota State Mankato. I am currently a General Biology major with minors in Anthropology and Criminal Justice. My expected graduation date is May of 2024.

Mission Statement

Through leadership, research, and intercultural communication, I plan to inspire others to be themselves while finding out who I am myself.



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About Me



Family

I grew up as an only child in a town called Le Mars, Iowa, with my mother, father, and our three pets.

Free Time

In my free time, I enjoy reading fiction, studying the reigns of former kings and queens, and watching my favorite television shows like Bones.



Extracurriculars

Throughout high school, I was involved in speech, theatre, band, choir, show choir, games club, calculus club, college English club, and art club.



In August of 2021, I joined the Maverick Machine, Minnesota State University, Mankato's marching and pep band, as a flute and piccolo.

Passions Outside School and Music



Outside of school and music I absolutely love watching hockey. I cheer loud and proud for the university's division one hockey team. Outside of the university, I cheer for the USHL team the Sioux City Musketeers. I have been a fan of the team since birth, and I am glad that in 2022 I finally got to see them bring home the Clark Cup! I also have two NHL teams that I cheer for the Pittsburgh Penguins and the Minnesota Wild.



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Honors Program



"Honors students are committed to developing in several competency areas such as leadership, research, and intercultural engagement. The program provides class experiences designed to support competency development and a variety of co-curricular activities to enrich their growth. Students demonstrate their emerging competencies through electronic portfolios in which they document their activities and engage in meaningful reflection about their learning. The Honors Program challenges students to move outside of their comfort zones and to think critically about the world and their personal contributions to the communities in which they live."

Why Honors?

Below is a short essay of why I chose to participate in the Honors program

[Why Honors Essay](#)

Honors Synthesis Essay

Below is a short essay of what I did in the Honors program and what I took away from it

[Honors Synthesis Essay](#)

The Competencies

LEADERSHIP

RESEARCH

Intercultural Engagement



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Leadership

**The Honors
Learning
Community**

[What is the Learning Community?](#)

**The Maverick
Machine**

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My Jobs

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Research

Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program

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RAP Ambassador

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Intercultural Engagement

Introduction to Honors

[Honors Reflection](#)

**Intro to American Sign
Language**

[What Did I Learn?](#)

Intercultural Communications

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Study Abroad to London and Scotland

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Honors Synthesis Essay

When I started the **honors program**, I did not know what I was getting myself into. I figured eventually I would figure out what it was all about. Through the Honors 201 class, I learned a little bit about how Honors defined the different competencies. Honestly, leadership was the one competency I felt confident about going into college because I was in so many clubs in high school that leadership came naturally to me. However, I never knew how many different leadership styles there were. Through Honors 201, I learned the different leadership styles, and I even learned my own leadership strengths through the Clifton Strengths Finder test. Then I proceeded to use my strengths finder results to help me reflect on my participation in the school's athletic band the **Maverick Machine**. I was able to recognize my leadership and use it as I took charge when underclassmen needed rides to different off campus events including but not limited to hockey games at the Mayo Clinic Event Center and various exhibition performances in New Prague and Waseca, Minnesota. It was a joy to be able to help these students. Finally, I put my leadership styles into use as I handled many different types of jobs over my four years in college. I have had **jobs everywhere** including (but not limited to): summer production in the factory for Wells Blue Bunny Inc, wellness/COVID screener at Blue Bunny, convenience store clerk for Hy-Vee, deli clerk for Hy-Vee, seasonal associate at Kohls, summer qualitative analysis technician for Blue Bunny, micro lab intern for Blue Bunny, and tour guide in the admissions office at MNSU, Mankato. It was interesting to see all the different leadership styles my supervisors all had in action as well as learning what aspects of certain leadership styles worked together, with my fellow coworkers and I, and which styles didn't. It all depended on the type of job on which leadership style worked the best, but I found great leaders often exhibit more than one style to appeal to the various personalities that the people below them have.

Coming into college, I believed that research was working in a laboratory with chemicals and discovering new methods to do things or the groundbreaking experiments we read about in class. However, through Honors 201, I learned that research could be that definition, but it could also be many different things. Research can take place in many different disciplines other than the hard sciences. After learning about the definition for research through the Honors lens, I participated in MSU's Research Apprenticeship Program (RAP) twice. Each time, I did a research project that was not in a lab. The first project I worked with a faculty mentor as **a member of RAP**. Together, we worked through the steps of a research project on how class format affected student motivation, and we put together a poster. My mentor had already written the survey and decided who the survey was going to be distributed to, but I offered feedback. For my second project, a group of other undergraduates and I worked together as part of the **RAP Ambassador program** to build a survey to determine why undergraduate students were not participating in undergraduate research and distribute the survey. Ironically, although I have a hard science major, I have not stepped into the lab at MNSU in a research capacity. However, through my experience in the micro lab as an intern at Blue Bunny, I worked in a lab that did have some research components. One such research experience during that job was when a floor swab came back positive for Listeria, and we were able to figure out that it was the wheels of our trashcans that spread the listeria from the pathogen room to the rest of the lab. To stop this from happening again, we created new measures for cleaning the wheels of the trashcans. Altogether, my experiences have taught me that research is a much broader field than I originally thought.

I grew up in a small town in Iowa and was not exposed to many intercultural aspects as a child, so I had no clue what intercultural engagement was when I came to college. I just thought it was some language requirement because how else would I communicate intercultural? Through my experiences, I learned that intercultural engagement is not just communication, it's about learning about other cultures and learning to put your own inherent biases away. I took an **American sign language class** where I was able to learn tons about deaf culture and how it is not just my own culture without hearing. Deaf culture is a completely different culture. It has its own intricacies and beauties that I would not have understood if I didn't put my own thoughts aside. I also took an **intercultural communication class** where I learned many things about the different cultures in the United States and how one simple aspect in one culture can be seen as offensive in another. This bled into my time in London and Scotland during my **study abroad program**. The experience was amazing and full of many interactions that helped me realize how I see the world and what I need to be cautious of as I explore new cultures in the future.

Without the honors program, my college experience would probably be very different from the one I had. I honestly do not believe I would have done half of my experiences without being in the honors program. I never would have touched the research because it scared me, and I definitely would not have touched the intercultural communication class. These experiences help shape how I see the world, so without them, my experience would have been very different. I am very thankful for my time as an honors program student, and I am excited to see what the future has in store for me as I continue to grow in the competencies outside of college.



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