"A Part of the Main: Building and Relying on Community in My College Experience"

John Donne, a famous metaphysical poet from the sixteenth century once stated that, "no man is an island...[and] every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main" (Donne). This idea that humans can neither survive nor thrive when isolated from others is also supported by scientific research on friendships which has found that social relationships "are essential for maintaining [proper] mental health" and that a disruption within these bonds is related to psychiatric disorders, such as depression (Lim and Young 506). For my Honors Senior portfolio, I will analyze how the connections I have made with other people through organizations, classes, and/or other social events have played an integral role in my personal and academic development at UNC Charlotte.

I will examine these relationships through an interdisciplinary lens, utilizing critical analysis skills obtained from my English major and my identity as a feminist acquired from my Women's and Gender Studies minor. I will also support my theme by using artifacts collected throughout my college career—such as influential texts from previous courses, keepsakes from memorable experiences/events, and other objects of value to me. These artifacts highlight defining experiences and/or important people in my life which explain the motives, influences, and themes that have encouraged my academic and personal growth. Therefore, these artifacts will display how much my academic studies have influenced my self-perception and relationships with others.
I chose this theme because without these bonds, I would not be the person that I am today. My anxiety and depression would still be in control of my life, my self-esteem and self-confidence would continue to be at an all time low, and my perfectionism would still hinder me from following my passions were it not for the influence and support from these special people in my life. Hence, I feel that this portfolio will allow to me reflect on how I have become myself while also providing an opportunity to build a new community with my thesis advisor, Shannon Bauerle of the Women's and Gender Studies Department, and my first reader, Celia Sinclair of the Religious Studies Department.
Works Cited
