Selflessly Investing in Others, in Myself, and in the Future

The last few years have been a whirlwind. It is as if I blinked four years ago when I stepped onto the campus of UNC Charlotte only to open my eyes today to realize that I’m now a senior preparing for graduation and awaiting my next adventure in the “real world.” There are several moments that stand out when reflecting on the choices I have made along the way: stepping into my first leadership role as the President of the Witherspoon Hall Council, taking initiative when I saw a need for volunteers at Central Piedmont Community College, and declaring a dual major in Marketing Analytics and Management Information Systems. These events, and the numerous others along the way have demanded significant investments of myself and of my time. Most of my investments have not been investments in myself, but instead have been investments in others. Choosing to make investments in others wasn’t always easy and there were several times when it limited my time to enjoy college or to focus on my academics to the extent that is necessary.

As a Marketing Analytics major, analyzing the choices and decisions made by consumers is of great interest to me because analyzing past behavior can help predict future outcomes and actions. An application of this theory to my choices and experiences throughout college will allow me to objectively analyze each of the defining events represented by my artifacts in an effort to predict what the future might have in store. In
addition to this predictive analysis, I plan to study my artifacts to determine if these investments of my time define a character of selflessness and if these investments will continue to be an integral part of who I am.

**Artifacts**

My exploratory search through the events of my college career yielded eight artifacts. In order to provide a thorough and objective analysis of these artifacts and to achieve each of the goals of my central theme, outlined above, I have decided to do a cluster analysis on my artifacts to aid in the structure of my portfolio. This analysis has yielded four clusters or sections.

The first section is the generation of a preliminary understanding of selflessness. The two artifacts that compose this section are my reflection on Plato’s *Allegory of the Cave* from Freshman Seminar and my English 1103 research paper. The exploration of Plato’s *Allegory* helped me develop my understanding of the selflessness and what a truly altruistic action is like leaving the realm of knowledge and light to return to the depths of the cave in order to aid the prisoners of darkness in their transcendence and discovery of light. The second artifact within this section is the research paper I completed for English 1103 entitled “Community Service and the 9/11 Generation.” Within this paper, I explored an essential aspect of the selflessness, giving back, through an in-depth analysis of where my passion for people and in particular my passion for community service stems from as well as how my generation, the 9/11 generation, is affected by and involved in community service.

The second section focuses on community service and volunteering, a substantial part of my journey and something that I am extraordinarily passionate about. The first
artifact included is a photoset of the portfolio I completed at the end of my Honors 2750 Community Service Practicum. The experiences within Honors 2750 helped me discover my passion for community service and helping others. Thus this experience serves as ground zero for many aspects of my college career as it allowed me to better understand myself, which led to the development of volunteer initiatives. One of these initiatives was the development of a tutoring program between the University Honors Program and Central Piedmont Community College. The second artifact is an email sent to the UHP student body about the development of the tutoring program and will serve in conjunction with artifact one to allow for the development of a more concrete definition of the selflessness as well as an exploration of my investments in others.

The third section focuses on my involvement within student organizations and in particular, student organizations with the mission of improving the living environment and experiences of on-campus residents. The first artifact in this section, is the College Survival Bag I used during my campaign for the Witherspoon Hall Council presidency. The image of the survival bag is monumental to the exploration of my central theme because it represents the beginning of my leadership journey and the moment when my passion for on-campus residents ignited. Artifact number two is my application of candidacy to serve on the Executive Council of the Resident Students Association. This application represents my continued involvement within on-campus living and my service to the on-campus resident population both locally and abroad. Artifact numbers three and four in this section are focused on the leadership conferences that I have had the opportunity to be a part of. Artifact three is the conference booklet I received at the National Association of College and University Residence Hall’s 2012 annual
conference. At this conference I expanded my horizons and added more tools to my tool belt. Over the years these tools have allowed me to better serve the on-campus resident population. Artifact four is my NACURH Silver Pin. The Silver Pin is awarded to at most nine individuals per year who have provided service and direction to the organization, its member schools, and on-campus residents. The Silver Pin was awarded to me in October of 2014 for the leadership and initiative I provided toward hosting the South Atlantic Associate of College and University Resident Hall’s 2014 annual conference. These artifacts once more represent times when I have given my all to benefiting others and will allow for me to develop understanding of the selfless actions I have made throughout my college journey.

The final section of my portfolio focuses on the conflicts, precautions, and hesitations that are the outcome of choosing to invest selflessly in others. The first artifact within this section is a screenshot of my outlook calendar. This artifact is an embodiment of my lack of free time that has resulted from being so involved in student organizations and volunteering activities. This lack of free time has led me to forego opportunities to truly enjoy my college experience such as missing football games or nights out exploring uptown with all of my friends. The second artifact in this section is my INFO 3233 group project. This artifact is important because it shows the impact of selflessness on my academics. Because I was extremely busy during this semester, it forced my group to spend countless hours in meetings in order to meet the deadlines of our project. Sometimes these meetings ran late into the next morning causing further conflicts within my academics. There have been numerous other times when my academics have suffered because of my choices.
Process

As I continue to explore the central theme for my honors portfolio, it is necessary to select members of the Honors Community who will serve as mentors to help guide me through this step in my journey. The Honors faculty members who I would like to serve as the two advisors to my portfolio are Constance Rothwell and Delbridge Narron. I have selected Professor Rothwell as my thesis advisor because I have been fortunate enough to get to know Mrs. Rothwell through serving on the University Honors Program Student Association leadership board and feel as though she will provide me with the necessary guidance I will need throughout my portfolio. I have also selected Delbridge Narron as the reader for my portfolio. I was fortunate enough to take Professor Narron’s Honors 3700 course last spring and was able to hone in on my writing techniques within this class. Mr. Narron also provides a unique perspective that will aid in the development of my portfolio immensely.

Schedule

The tentative schedule of events for the completion of my portfolio is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Event:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 8, 2015</td>
<td>First Class Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 23, 2015</td>
<td>Portfolio Draft #1 Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 26-30, 2015</td>
<td>First meeting with Advisor and Reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 13, 2015</td>
<td>Portfolio Draft #2 Completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 16-20, 2015</td>
<td>Meeting with Advisor and Reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 6, 2015</td>
<td>Portfolio Draft #3 Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 9-13, 2015</td>
<td>Meeting with Advisor and Reader</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
March 20, 2015          Portfolio Draft # 4 Completed
March 23-27, 2015       Meeting with Advisor and Reader
April 10, 2015          Final Portfolio Due
April 17, 2015          Portfolio Presentation

Sources


Jordan, David S. *Plato's Allegory of the Cave Reflection*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. PDF.


