Layperson Summary

During college, students such as myself work towards learning as much as they can in four years to prepare them for the “real” world. Through deciding a career path and an undergraduate field of study, students embark on learning about the world around them through their environment, life experiences, and education, all while building a foundation for the future. The diversity of my undergrad experience is seen through the various interdisciplinary courses I have taken and the extracurricular activities I involved myself in. In retrospect, these experiences have molded the diversity of interests I have acquired and even emphasize my personality.

This idea of connecting experiences with education is the basis of a theory known as constructivist learning. This theoretical framework focuses on learning as an active and social process focused on engaging in the world to better make meaning. More specifically, constructivist learning is grounded in the belief that by being an active and present participant, a more in depth understanding will remain with the individual. In my view, constructivist learning is an effective theoretical framework for exploring the nuances of my undergraduate experiences at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Interpreting my past, I now ask myself what have I learned, as well as how did I learn in order to grow from this moment in my life?

By identifying some of these key pieces of my college career, I will use constructivist learning to better explain how these opportunities of learning—represented through a selection of artifacts—come together to form my identity. The seven artifacts I will focus my Honors portfolio on are: my final reflection from my first film course, a sun movement observation project, my first reflective essay in a science fiction literature course, my apartment from Witherspoon’s International floor, my involvement with Habitat for Humanity, the badge of my membership in Chi Omega, and my 14 day final project from my Honors Topic course. I feel that my artifacts are vehicles of learning just as constructivism alludes to; they each are separate experiences that will come together to contribute to the outcome of my college career.