

Prompt: How would you assist future students attempting a similar capstone project?

Audience: Health Science Peer

If I were to assist future students attempting a similar capstone project as me, I would foremost tell them to start early, to think big, to use the University of Minnesota Rochester (UMR) resources, and to not limit themselves. I personally did not know what I wanted to do or accomplish during my capstone experience, but I had an idea and an interest to build off of. At the beginning of CLI 3712, I felt confused and lost; I did not think that my interest in art and its effects on healing was substantial. Then, I began to explore more into the subject, and I learned that there were many people linking these two things (art and healing) together, and it became my passion. Students should try to find their passion early, explore new things and life outside of UMR because finding that passion early will help them to complete a meaningful capstone experience. I was lucky to find my passion by participating on an early study abroad trip, and it shaped how I developed my capstone. I would tell other students to find their passion or interest and base their capstones upon so that they can begin to think big like I did.

Everyone, at the end of their capstone experience, wants to show that they did something significant with their time: gained knowledge, learned a skill, helped many through community service, or made an impact in some other way through their work. My capstone activities included internships, coursework, and a study abroad experience. To make my big ideas a reality, I had to use the resources that were available to me. I talked to Brett Schieve who helped me find my study abroad internship program and my student success coach, Anna, who pointed me to the Center for Spirituality and Healing at the Twin Cities campus. These meetings took time and reflection, but they ultimately helped a lot in searching for capstone activities that were of interest to me.

Although, my resources as UMR were invaluable when planning my capstone, my capstone evolved as time went on. I dropped a course that I felt did not suit my theme any longer, added a second internship, and enrolled in an independent study and one other capstone-related course. These changes were substantial and happened as opportunities came to light and my thoughts on my capstone changed. It seemed to me that my capstone never stopped evolving. My choice not to limit myself, and the subsequent flexibility it allowed, enabled me to make a more meaningful capstone. I was able to try and learn new things in the area I was interested in and found my passion for the arts and nature in combination with the healing process. I do not think that I could stress to other students enough that they should not feel horrible if something in their capstone does not go as planned. People change during the capstone experience and their capstone will change with them. If students find their passion or an area of interest, use their resources accordingly, and allow themselves to change their thoughts, feelings, and capstone activities, they should be able to accomplish as fulfilling capstone experience as I have.