

Razor's Edge Research Scholars Program: Reflective Portfolio

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Abstract

This portfolio is an ongoing reflective journal that follows my journey through the Razor's Edge Research Program at Nova Southeastern University. The contents of this portfolio include my goals, experiences, artifacts, and reflections from every semester of the program. The objective is to keep documentation of my personal growth and advancement on both personal and academic levels.

Table of Contents

	Page
Statement of Goals	
Fall 2016.....	4
Highlighted Experiences	
Fall 2016.....	6
Artifact Collection	
Fall 2016.....	9
Reflection	
Fall 2016.....	11

Statement of Goals

Fall 2016 Goals

One of my goals for this semester to have a better understanding of what type of research I would like to conduct throughout my time in the Razor's Edge Research Program. I want to explore different fields of research and find one that I would like to pursue.

Another goal I have for this semester is to get a feel for what I would like to accomplish at Nova Southeastern University. I would like to find a club or organization to be a part of, make new friends, do well in my academics, and enjoy my first semester of college. I want to find ways to make the most of my time as a first time in college student.

Winter 2017 Goals

For next semester, I am looking forward to accomplishing the following goals. First, I would like to continue learning about laboratory work in my Organic Chemistry and Biology II courses. I have really enjoyed the lab portions of my classes this semester, and I would like to continue to learn more about research methods and theories in lab.

Another goal I have is to engage in the Clinical Exploration Program. I applied for and was accepted into the program this semester, and I am looking forward to start this program in the Winter 2017 semester. I will be able to explore different fields of health-related sciences. I may have the opportunity to explore fields other than dentistry, which will allow me to learn about other fields of medicine, and I am excited to tour the health-related facilities at NSU.

Another goal I have for next semester is to successfully accomplish the university based research project. This will allow me to contribute to the NSU community, as I will be studying the effects of availability of caffeine on students' consumption and how it relates to their health. I hope that students around campus will benefit from this study.

Overall, my thoughts about next semester are very positive. I was able to transition well to NSU, and I cannot wait to see what next semester has in store. I have made so many great friends, made lots of memories, and done well academically. I will continue to make the most of my time at NSU and enjoy my time here!

Highlighted Experiences

Fall 2016 Experiences

A) Seminar in Research Design and Implementation

My involvement in the Seminar in Research Design and Implementation course this semester has exposed me to new areas of research. For example, through our class reading and discussions, I have become aware of different scientific ideas, theories, and philosophies. One specific event that stood out to me was the presentation of the University Based Research Project (UBRP). The project I will be researching is the effect of the availability of caffeine on students' consumption of caffeine and how it affects their health. Through the process of creating the presentation, I had to research different articles, and I found lots of different studies and methods of research that I found inspiring. I presented a research article titled "Caffeine Consumption Patterns and Beliefs of College Freshmen," and I presented how my UBRP relates to the study. Through a combination of reading, in class discussions, and presentations, I have learned more about the research process. Analyzing scientific arguments and theories have also helped me to understand new perspectives of science. I am excited to continue learning about research, conducting the UBRP next semester, and making an impact on NSU.

B) Razor's Edge Research Seminar

Dr. Vince Van Hasselt's presentation to the Razor's Edge Research Program was very informative and fascinating. I enjoyed the opportunity to hear about a topic that I have not explored much. His background in psychology and criminal justice, the FBI, and the police force as a crisis and hostage negotiator allowed him to make a wonderful presentation that taught me a lot. His research about the psychological reasons behind why people act inappropriately were interesting. He explained that the goal of crisis/hostage negotiation is to listen rather than speak.

This verbal strategy allows him to buy time and intervene so that the emotions of the perpetrator can decrease and rationality can increase.

Dr. Van Hasselt's explanation of the importance of patience and active listening skills are useful in many situations, not just crisis negotiations. I learned about the importance of people to properly handle their emotions to prevent dangerous situations. Paraphrasing, emotion labeling, reflecting and mirroring, and using open-ended questions are active listening skills that are beneficial for all types of communication. I was glad to have the opportunity to hear more about Dr. Van Hasselt's work and ask questions about learn about his expertise in the field. His accomplishments have reinforced in me the idea of how research is important in many different fields and can be used to positively affect the community by making it a happier, healthier, and safer place.

C) External Funding Recognition Reception

One of the highlights of my time at NSU was attending the External Funding Recognition Event held at Grande Oaks Golf Club on October 20, 2016. This event was a chance for me to get to know more about the research that is taking place at NSU and the people who were rewarded for their accomplishments. The event started with an address by President Hanbury, who talked about the groundbreaking Center for Collaborative Research and the achievements of NSU's research efforts. He explained that there is still so much to accomplish, and he talked about the next generation of researchers. He specifically called out the Razor's Edge Research students, and I felt honored to be recognized as part of this program and for the opportunity to be involved in research at NSU.

As the researchers were awarded for their work, I was very inspired. It made me envision myself in their position one day. It inspired me to continue my passion for research and

discovery. I could see myself as one day being in their position, receiving an award for my research. It was great to be surrounded by a room full of people who have devoted so much time and energy into research and who share the same vision for research. I hope to one day be able to be invited to the External Funding Recognition Event again as a recipient of a prestigious research award.

Artifact Collection

Fall 2016 Artifacts

A) Razor's Edge Research Course

My artifact from the Seminar in Research Design and Implementation course is my presentation of the University Based Research Project. Below is the link for the presentation.

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1uBf_1E6NQDR-JIzua72hflIIA8dl7ntWZWA2uzyF6vI/edit?usp=sharing

B) External Funding Recognition Reception

Below are my artifacts from the External Funding Recognition Reception, which are several pictures from the event.

Below is a picture of all the Razor's Edge Research students who volunteered at the event.



Below is a picture of me at the table at which I was passing out name cards.



Below is a picture I took of the golf course at which the event took place.



Below is a picture of a group of the Razor's Edge Research students and myself at the event.



C) Razor's Edge Research Seminar

My artifact from the Razor's Edge Research Seminar is Dr. Hasselt's presentation, which can be found through the following link.

<http://www.nova.edu/razorsedge/research/seminars.html>

Reflection

Fall 2016 Reflection

As I look back at my first semester, I am proud to say that I have accomplished my goals. I have gained a better idea of what type of research I would like to conduct at NSU. I would like to pursue research in the dental field. I have been able to better explore the field of dentistry at NSU by partaking in the Early Immersion Experience, in which I toured the dental school at NSU. I have learned that there is a lot of potential to discover new methods of treatment and care in the dental field.

I have also joined the PreDental Society and Rotaract, two organizations on campus. I have also become the secretary of Rotaract, which is a service based organization that promotes community involvement. I have made so many new friends, had lots of new experiences, and learned a lot both inside and out of the classroom. I am happy to say that I have accomplished the goals I set for myself and made the most of my first semester!

From the experiences I have had this semester combined with my involvement in the Razor's Edge Research Program, the Dual Admission Dental Program, and the Honor's College, I have learned a lot about myself and about NSU. I have had lots of experiences that have furthered my interest in research and discovery, and I know that NSU has the resources and opportunities that will allow me to accomplish my goals in research. I was in Biology I and Chemistry II this semester, and both courses had a laboratory component. I loved being able to work in a lab and learn more about research methodology and analyzation. I also visited the dental school of NSU as part of the Early Immersion Experience. I was able to meet faculty and first year students at the dental school. I observed the students working in their simulation lab, and I realized that I will be doing the same in a few years. The faculty I met talked about their procedures for treatment and improvements being made in the dental field, and it motivated me

to further the health care system through research. My first semester experiences have become more inspired to make positive, lasting impacts on society through research.