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Module Eight:

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) Graphic Design Portfolio: Personal Reflection

SNHU Graphic Design Portfolio – Personal Reflection

I have had a wonderful experience throughout my Graphic Design and Media Arts degree program at SNHU. I was given the chance to study in the program for free through Disney's Aspire Program. I began in the summer of 2020 and have worked hard the past two years to make sure I kept a 4.0 GPA and learn as much information as I can for the next step of my life. I believe I have learned the true fundamentals of graphic design through each design class. Each class in this degree program has helped me build confidence through the discipline of learning how to use design technology and creating projects that have challenged me to think outside of the box. I am confident the creative work I have learned to produce will help me succeed into my professional future.

This capstone course truly opened my eyes to how I can be a great graphic designer if I want to be. The process and timing of this capstone project opened my eyes to truly seeing how long your work can take to produce the best possible content. I have truly found a lot of grace throughout this capstone course. I felt completely ready to get through this course smoothly with the skills I have gained throughout my program, and I was correct. The confidence I have gained as an artist the last two years at SNHU truly made this capstone course enjoyable. The obstacles I faced throughout were simply giving myself enough to time to work on each project. It was a bit overwhelming to create five new pieces that would be professional enough to be put in my portfolio in the span of two weeks. It hit me this term that I am capable of being a professional designer. It has taken me a long time as an artist to build up the confidence I needed to become the best professional I can be. After realizing I am worth it as a professional designer, everything in this capstone course made sense and flowed smoothly. This capstone project will help me gain the experience I need to become a professional designer.

I was given ample feedback throughout my coursework at SNHU to make my portfolio design work the best it can be. Each week brought a different critique depending on the work I was revising or creating from scratch to put into my portfolio. In week three of this capstone course, I was given

feedback to change a few aspects of the revised pieces I chose to keep in my portfolio. These critiques included changing the color palettes, fixing the alignment of my design pieces, changing the depth (bold) of a specific font, and making sure the resolutions are up to par for the photographs I have chosen to include in my work. I took this feedback in week three and applied it to each piece which ended up making my work better overall. In week five, I was given good feedback to help finalize the new and original pieces I have created to finalize my portfolio. I enjoyed this critique process because it felt like the process that could potentially happen in a professional setting. I was given design suggestions for my Ocean City, New Jersey advertisement and where to place the photograph as well as using one quote in my overall design (instead of two quotes). I originally had a bus advertisement idea, so the ad was dividing on to two sides with a photograph in the middle. I chose to change it to a poster design, making it more cohesive. The final design included adding one quote to make sure the consumers attention was focused on properly. A similar critique was given for my Philadelphia Zoo billboard design. I was told to change the size of my font and to shorten the quote to make sure the consumer can read the billboard in its entirety when passing it on the road. These critiques helped me perfect my portfolio work that can be seen on my portfolio website and my print portfolio. The collaboration aspect of creating my portfolio was extremely important to gain a sense of how the consumer world views my work. Without collaboration, you cannot work on a team properly, especially in the design world. Overall, I know that without critique and collaboration, the creative process would not be successful in any environment.

I have learned a great deal of important knowledge and skills to help me produce professional content in the future. These skills are already being proven true with the ability to apply for new jobs and receiving job interviews in that process. Not only will I be prepared for the next step of my professional life, but it also gives me the overall ability to repeat the portfolio design process in the future when I produce and update my work to continue with my professional career. Each class I have taken has given my ample knowledge and skills I can build upon in the future to grow as a professional. I

feel like I have the basic set of skills I need to move forward into a new job and career. I believe that professional designers need to continuously develop themselves as professionals. Designers should be willing to always learn more technologically and professionally with each step they take in their careers. It also is evident that each class taken in our degree program was a step closer to this portfolio course. We have been given skills to create design pieces that can professionally make you stand out in the crowd. In the future, I plan to use the skills I have learned and move forwards in hopes to continue my education and professional life by learning as much as I can to become the best graphic designer I can be.

I am only beginning to understand what I may want to do in my professional career as a graphic designer. For starters, I want to gain experience as a graphic designer in the hospitality industry. With my two bachelor's degrees, my first being in Tourism and Hospitality Management and now my second in Graphic Design and Media Arts, I believe I would be a great asset to any hospitality business as a graphic designer. I have hopes to use my design skills to help a non-profit in my future. I would like to continue doing work for a non-profit in the performing arts, as well as minority coalitions. I have done work recently for non-profits in performing arts and minority coalitions where I find that the most passion in my work comes out when I am creating for a cause I truly care about. The work I do has to be meaningful. In this next stage of my life, I plan to find a job that I truly care about and feel as if I am making a difference. In the future, I hope to continue up the designer scale and eventually become an Art Director. I have always loved "the big idea" when it comes to the design process and I think as a kindhearted and hardworking individual, I would be a great candidate for an Art Director position. I know that as I move through my career my aspirations will change and I may have thoughts on a different path in the future. One thing I have always known about myself as an artist, is that I have always wanted to illustrate a children's book. In the next decade, I hope to illustrate and write a

children's book and get it published. Overall, I hope to continue my life journey as the artist I have always been and continue to learn new skills and experiences along the way.

I have built skills through the Adobe Creative Suite, learning to code and design a website, create design pieces, and produce photography with knowledge of the overall design process to create the best professional design work possible. Throughout my degree program, I have self-taught myself to be proficient in Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, Adobe Lightroom, Adobe Photoshop, and Adobe Premiere Rush. I have also worked on website coding skills through Visual Studio code.

I understand that in the future as a professional graphic designer, there are many skills I will need to be successful. The first skill I believe every graphic designer must have, is patience. I have found that this is one of the most important skills I have gained in the hospitality industry. While working for Disney, I have found that patience now comes naturally to me when working with endless amounts of guests each day. With this patience, automatically comes kindness. I have always taken pride in my ability to be kind in every chapter of my life. I believe every person you encounter deserves patience and kindness if they are willing to work with others professionally. Another important skill you must have as a graphic designer, is collaboration. Without collaboration skills, you will not get any work done. I can already see throughout my process to apply for internships and job opportunities is that you must be willing to collaborate kindly with your coworkers and clients. With these skills, I know I must be willing to develop the technological skills I have built over the last two years, otherwise a graphic design degree would be pointless. I know there are going to be projects I work on that I will have to do more research on how to get them done, and that is okay. The design world always progressing forward with new skills and technological advances. Without technological advances, the graphic design field would not exist. I think that aspect is exciting and will make for an interesting career. You must be willing to develop professionally for yourself, your coworkers, and your clients to create the best possible content.

Overall, this capstone course and Graphic Design and Media Arts degree program with SNHU

has changed my life for the better. I truly believe I have found my calling and a step closer to working in

a field that I can see myself thriving in. I have been an artist of all kinds my entire life and I know that as

a professional creative, there will be hard work, patience, kindness, and heart in everything I work on in

the future. With each technological set of skills, I have learned the importance of patience and kind

collaboration to be the best professional designer I can be. I am looking forward to an exciting future

with each success and obstacle I will face as a professional graphic designer.