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Science Leadership Academy

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Section 1: Introduction

For my Capstone Project, I wanted to do something that would leave a lasting impression on SLA beyond my graduation. It took me multiple weeks of brainstorming, meeting with trusted mentors, and reflection to decide what project I could do to meet this goal. I had to choose something that wouldn't only meet the requirements for my Capstone but also something that I wouldn't mind doing and really felt passionate about. It was after taking into account all of these factors that I finally came to the decision to teach a Mini-Course on Career Exploration as my Capstone project.

I felt that this project did everything that I was originally looking for in my Capstone. It allowed me to help the SLA community by giving valuable information that I have attained to freshmen. I was currently dealing with how hard the college admissions process was and I wanted to do the best I could to potentially prevent someone else from going through the same thing that I was going through. It also allowed me to explore something I am passionate about, educating people on issues that they may not be the most informed about. One problem that SLA has in its core curriculum is that we don't really talk much about post-secondary planning soon enough. If I could alleviate this for some students then I would be doing a good job.

SLA's Core Values are Inquiry, Research, Collaboration, Presentation, and Reflection. In every facet of my capstone, I had to use these values. I INQUIRED within myself to see how I could meet all of my goals. I REFLECTED on what I didn't learn in regard to Post-Secondary education before 12th grade. I RESEARCHED certain teaching methods to best teach 9th graders. I COLLABORATED with my mentor, advisor, and Braskem to discuss how I could improve my curriculum. After all of these steps, I eventually PRESENTED my capstone to the students and began my teaching journey.

Section 2: Process

First, I started off by looking at Career Exploration curriculums that I saw on the internet. I needed to see what educators thought was important enough to include in their curriculum and see if there was room for me to teach or even improve upon it. Then, I had to come up with a timeline for me to complete everything. This was really helpful because at first I wanted to teach my mini-course in Q4 but eventually I realized that I would probably be wasting valuable time so I decided to start in Q3. Finally, putting everything together and completing my course curriculum took me a very long time and there were definitely times when I considered doing another Capstone. However, I persevered and eventually finished in time to have my mini-course approved by Jeremy.

Going into this mini-course I knew that teaching Freshmen would be a challenge. However, I was able to somewhat make their behavior less troublesome by giving them more

activities than just busy work. I thought that it would be better for them to do more interactive things to kind of get them thinking about the material.

To complete my capstone project I found myself using the people around me as resources to bounce ideas off of. Whether it was my advisor Mr. Ames, my Capstone Mentor Mr. T, or Mr. Lehmann I received so much help from other people. They gave me the blueprint to finish my capstone and kept me on track while answering any questions I had. Doing a capstone at a certain point starts to feel very, very tedious and you start to get lazy. It is because of the people who helped me that I am pushing myself to help others and give back to the community that has given me so much to me.

Section 3: Reflection

I am most proud of what I was able to do for the SLA community. I told myself at the beginning of my mini-course that if even one student took something useful away from this course then I would've done my job. I witnessed one of my students get started applying to an internship that she was interested in and another student came up to me and asked me to send her a link for an internship opportunity that I discussed while teaching. These two encounters alone showed me that while teaching may be something that I never do again (trust me your jobs are safe) it was something that helped me meet one of my goals and that is what I am proud of.