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Intellectual Autobiography and Plan for Concentration

I love to learn, but, in high school, I was very disappointed because I was bound by so many academic and time restraints. I applied to Gallatin because I would have more freedom to study the subjects I want to learn about while also exploring new subjects. At first, I was interested in computer science and film, more specifically, I wanted to study new technologies in visual effects and filmmaking such as the use of computer generated technologies or green screen. However, after taking Producing for Film in Tisch, my concentration changed. I still have interests in visual effects, but it is now a only a hobby. Now I have developed a curriculum centered on two sides of the film industry—the business and the creative—with the hopes of one day being a part of the producing process for film/television.

First, my concentration focuses on the business/technical aspect of film/TV. Most of the classes that I take to satisfy this requirement are through Stern business classes. Business classes I have finished include law, entrepreneurship, marketing, management, and accounting. Through these classes, I understand how business entities develop and what they need and rely on to function and succeed. I place a major emphasis on business in relation to the film industry. I think one key element to being successful is through foundational knowledge of multiple disciplines. For example, understanding accounting, finance, and marketing rather than only accounting or finance. On a film set, the producer must understand the needs of the director, actors, costume department, lawyers, executives, and the many other departments necessary to make a film.

On the other hand, I am developing my creative side. Storytelling and emotion could not be more important to the creative development in film/TV. While I don’t necessarily want to be a writer, a thorough understanding of the history of storytelling and the future of storytelling is crucial. I have always enjoyed the notion of adaptation and remix into the modern day and how our current technologies change or carry forward stories and ideas. Gallatin interdisciplinary seminars work well because I am often allowed to compare and contrast old storytelling methods with new ones. For example, last year I took Alejandro Velasco’s class *Revolucion;* I had no previous knowledge of Latin American revolutions and struggled for much of the semester to understand class discussions. Many of the students were studying revolution or Latin America or activism in some way. While it took me a while to catch up, in the end, I understood revolutionary ideas and how I could apply that to my own interests. For the final paper, I wrote about Twitter, social media, and its potential in modern day revolutionary movements using what I learned through business and other classes.

Outside of school, I am currently on my third internship. Each internship has been very different. One was at a small business where I learned commercial producing with a professional crew and cast. Another internship focused on celebrity public relations. From this internship, I learned the role of the media, publicity campaigning, and some marketing techniques. My current internship is at TruTV, the largest company so far. I have learned both creative and business techniques. When choosing these internships, I continued with the diversity requirement so as to understand the needs of each branch in the industry.

What draws me to producing is the range of subjects and knowledge that are important to its process. There is no definition to “producer” as they can all carry many different jobs. However, the producers job is always different, the project always changes, and the state of the industry is in constant flux. For these reasons, Gallatin is the perfect place to hone multiple skills rather than those only found at Tisch or Stern. Through the next year and a half, I will continue to develop my skills in storytelling strategy and business and their application to the film and television world. I am currently taking prerequisites for finance and have classes lined up in other subjects. By the end of my education, I would hope to be a valuable member to a development and production team within the industry. Each class, job, and project, I choose carefully and intentionally to develop the skills that I believe are necessary to become a well-balanced producer.