

Kate Dempsey

Dr. Hersey

Senior Seminar

Nov. 26, 2025

Reflections of a Berry College (soon to be) Graduate

As I reflect on my time in the Berry College Communications Department, I am filled with gratitude for the hands-on experiences I have received, joy for the community and relationships built, and excitement to continue using my skills post-grad. I came to Berry undeclared and unsure of what I wanted to study or even pursue career-wise after college. I knew that I was a highly relational person and very creative, enjoying opportunities to work on projects. Knowing these things about myself, I questioned whether I wanted to be an educator and build relationships with students while teaching them, or if I wanted to pursue theatre more seriously. During my second semester of freshman year, I decided to declare a Communications degree on the basis that the coursework and classes deeply interested me. Looking back, I am so grateful that I made that choice. I was scared to decide my major that way, because it seemed like I was focusing too much on the moment, on the classes I would take, rather than making a future-focused decision. But I realize now that this is how we should make our decisions. I stepped into what interested me then, which expanded and grew into future dreams and goals.

After Berry, I am looking at working in ministry, specifically doing social media or public relations for a church. When I declared my major freshman year, I never imagined that this was how I would desire to use the skills I've been learning in my classes over the past four years. I decided that ministry communications was an area I wanted to pursue after getting my job in the Berry College Chaplain's Office as the Promotions Specialist. My work in that office has really allowed me to use my learnings and giftings in graphic design, social media

management, and digital storytelling, emphasizing that I want to continue doing this kind of work post-grad. I've also found that in every class I have taken for my major, I somehow connect it to, or imagine how what I am learning can be applied to, my work in the Chaplain's Office or ministry in general.

This semester, I have been taking Social Media Management and Strategy (COM 321) with Dr. Ndwandwe. I've had the opportunity to utilize the Chaplain's Office Instagram for a User-Generated Content posting series. I have learned a lot about social media, platforms' algorithms, user interests, and understanding analytics. Through this class and the project, I have gained new abilities but also a deep interest in working with social media, especially in finding ways to build a following and reach new audiences. It has shown me that I not only have a passion for building communities but also that I am good at creating an online brand and tone for a company or organization.

Another set of classes that have really interested me are Multimedia Production and Web Design with Professor McElroy. Both classes have shown me that I have a passion for visual rhetoric and especially for communicating through effective and engaging design elements. Learning how to use Adobe Creative Cloud software such as Illustrator, Photoshop, and Dreamweaver was very interesting to me and helped me grow confident in transferring my creativity to digital media. I have found that even in my work in the Chaplain's Office, these skills have stuck with me as I plan and design various graphic elements to promote services and events.

Finally, another class that I have really enjoyed has been the photography classes I've taken with Professor Kleine. I always wanted to pursue photography but never knew how or had

the equipment to do so. But through these classes, I was able to learn the ins and outs of photography on DSLR cameras and rent high-tech equipment through the Viking Fusion office. I'm very grateful for the experiences in these classes, because I envision myself joining a social media team for a ministry, which would have a high demand for a photographer. My understanding of commercial photography has prepared me well for the kind of work I want to pursue post-grad.

Overall, I am very grateful for the experiences I have had in the Communications Department and at Berry College. I have grown in my understanding that pursuing your passions and interests will guide you toward the next steps you should take in life. As I prepare to go into the workforce, I am encouraged by my capabilities, interests, and knowledge to take me where I need to go. I will look back on my time at Berry with immense joy and gratitude for how my experiences here have shaped me.