The Research University & a Liberal Education

THE PROBLEM I WANT TO SOLVE

The problem I want to solve still remains the same as last week. As I have mentioned before, I am aspiring to become a broadcast journalist. The news industry no longer holds the morals, values, and codes of the business to the standard they once did years ago when journalism was much simpler before major technological advances. Many journalists in today’s society write stories that will target what the audience wants to know rather than what it needs to know. As a result, news stories sometimes consist of bias information or trivial stories relating to the entertainment industry or pop culture. In the early years of journalism, a reporter’s duty entailed presenting the truth in a factual, unbiased manner. Their main objective was to inform the reader rather than to entertain the reader unless the piece called for that style of writing. I hope to become a broadcast journalist that can bring back integrity to the news industry and correctly report on what really matters in the world.

PURPOSE OF A COLLEGE EDUCATION

Put simply, a college education is much more than just learning knew knowledge. A college education implores you to take that newly learned knowledge and apply it to the type of person you hope to become as an adult. A college education challenges you to critically think about the information you learn and to let it have influence over your character—that is, to let it shape your personal beliefs, morals, and values. As presented in lecture, a liberal arts education is a type of college education that encourages broad learning in hopes to develop self-awareness and an array of transferable skills “that will serve for a lifetime both professionally and in civic engagement.” I believe that this type of education is essential to both a successful career and social living because with a broad education, one is able to make connections between it and the area he or she pursues and to have a better understanding of what the people in the surrounding society pursue. I think that higher education should be structured this way because the broad education that comes with a liberal arts degree paves the way for a society that is able to flow and work cohesively together. It builds a society that is well rounded and aware of the world around them. I believe that this type of education is one step in the direction of unraveling the problem I want to solve. I believe that the reason much of society rather read or listen to news stories that satisfies what they want to know rather than what they need is because they are naïve to the real issues in the world because they do not fully understand. A liberal arts education would help solve this because as stated in lecture, “it helps to grow the power of the mind.”

EMMA MURPHY

Emma Murphy was someone who was conflicted with choosing what looks good to others and what betters herself as a person. She felt that she stood between “two worlds.” She felt stuck between the pressure that drove her toward “a concern for strategic considerations” and the call to understand big issues, life’s purpose, and to value personal development. I connected
with this story because I too felt like this at times in high school. I sometimes felt that I had to choose between earning good grades and getting ahead and becoming a well-rounded individual with character and insight. From this story, I learned that the two could intertwine.

MAJOR PLAYERS AT IU & RANKING OF CONTRIBUTION

The IU board of trustees consists of 9 men and women. Their duties include appointing the president, approving all other faculty appointments, and having the final decision in all university investments. The president of IU, Michael McRobbie, has the main duty of raising money through the university, which is often done through the relationships he forms with alumni. The president focuses on working with large donors. Under Michael McRobbie, IU has seen the largest transformation in the creation of schools. Provost Lauren Robel is responsible for, according to Bader, “the direction and leadership of the entire academic enterprise: research labs, libraries, the development and recruitment of faculty, and the relationship between the various academic departments and the curriculum generally.” The Deans of various schools often report back to the provost. Deans also have the duty of supervising “all of the various administrative and academic divisions at a University.” Deans are the individuals that have the most impact on your daily experiences in the classroom and with faculty pertaining to your major. The Dean of the IU media school is currently James Shanahan. Professors are scholars rather than teachers, and in their work, their main objective is to conduct extensive, meaningful research. Undergraduates are merely “invited into their world.” Although it may be difficult to form solid relationships with professors since undergraduate students are not the center of attention in their work, it is important to try to do so. Professors in the media school at IU include Laura Meadows. I had the privilege of learning the fundamentals of media in her Media 101 class last semester. Graduate students are those who are in the midst of being trained to conduct research. They work close with faculty members and mentors. Graduate students are often involved in the life of an undergrad by working as TAs. They belong to certain departments such as English or Mathematics. Undergrad students simply “belong to the whole college or school” and are in pursuit of a bachelor’s degree. The rank for which each position would help in solving my problem can be listed in this order: Professors, Provost, Dean, Graduate student, Undergraduate student, President, Board of Trustees.

RELEVANT SPECIFICS

1. “We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character--that is the goal of true education. The complete education gives one not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate” (King, The Purpose of Education).
2. “A life is not important except in the impact it has on others’ lives” (Jackie Robinson, from lecture). This quote made me understood why it is necessary to know what problem you want to solve with your career.
3. “As a new student, get to know the purpose of those around you and how you fit in” (Bader 52). I found this quote important because at such a large University, it is easy to feel lost.
You must know the reason that you are here receiving a higher education and what you can bring to the IU community.

Motivation

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CONTRASTING PERSPECTIVES IN CARLSON (2013)

Two contrasting perspectives in particular caught my attention more than others in Carlson’s article, "How to assess the real payoff of a college degree".

The first perspective is that of Mr. Booth’s which reads, "I believe in a broad educational program, things that make you a good citizen, but I am not sure that it is necessary to rack up $50,000 or $100,000 in debt to get that—and then not to be able to get employment. I have told my children that one of Daddy's goals is to get you off my payroll" (Carlson). In other words, when it comes to the discussion regarding return on investment, Mr. Booth sides with those who think that a liberal arts education is not worth the money because it is “impracticable” and has “tenuous connections” in the working society.

Another passage from the article, however, claims something different. The article states, “As rising college costs have loaded more and more debt onto the backs of Americans, the return-on-investment conversation seems inevitable…But a single-minded focus on money pays little heed to one of the best aspects of the American higher-education system: its skill at developing curious, critical-thinking, culturally aware people. Those qualities may have greater financial rewards than critics realize.” Carlson backs up this statement by providing an example from Frances Bronet. When Bronet asked alumni from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute who were 10 to 20 years into their careers what they felt was missing from their education, many replied with cultural literacy. They wanted that cultural literacy that a broad liberal arts education gives because they were “travelling all over the world” and working with unfamiliar cultures.

I agree with Mr. Booth’s perspective. Although I do agree that “developing curious, critical-thinking, culturally aware” people through a higher liberal-arts education is crucially important to the betterment of society, I believe that a person should not have to drown oneself (or their parents) in debt in order to do so. I feel that skills such as curiosity, critical-thinking, and cultural awareness are ones that should be more easily accessible. Those who cannot afford a
liberal arts education should not be denied of those skills that I have the opportunity to receive. Everyone should have an equal opportunity to better themselves and prepare themselves in the best way possible to contribute to society in the future. Furthermore, after graduating, one should not have to be worried about such a substantial amount of debt or relying on their parents to pay that off. After graduating, one should be ready to be fully independent from parents and ready to take the skills a liberal arts education has given them and use them in their careers.

**MY SUCCESSFUL COLLEGE CAREER WOULD LOOK LIKE…**

In my opinion, a successful college career means giving the best effort possible to achieve good grades, however you may define “good grades” for yourself. Although last section we learned that grades are not the most important factor, I believe that good grades stem from one thing in particular: doing what you love or moreover, having a passion for what you do. I believe that in order to be successful in anything, you must have a passion for it. If you emerge yourself in courses that you love and can connect with, good grades are bound to naturally follow. If they don’t, however, that is entirely okay because you will still gain something valuable if you are able to learn from and enjoy your classes.

I came to believe this idea through my mother. She has taught me this ideal in watching her succeed in her career. My mother has been cutting hair in the beauty industry for more than 20 years. Although she has definitely encountered some low points in her career, she was still able to move forward due to the passion she has for what she does in life. She finds purpose in helping others to feel their best through giving them a look they are confident in. She always tells me, “Whatever you do with your life, make sure you are passionate about it and it can benefit someone besides you. After that, success will follow.”

**MOTIVATERS FOR COLLEGE SUCCESS**

1. My parents: My Mom and Dad have always been my greatest teachers in life. They became adults much quicker than most. In 1989 at the age of 16 they had their first child, my older brother. Their transition into adulthood, and furthermore, parenthood was one filled with much adversity. For years they struggled to raise a child as young parents and to make ends meet to provide for a family. Despite their hardships, they are now two of the most successful, passionate people I have ever met. My Dad owns a large number of apartment complexes and high-rises throughout Chicago. My Mom owns an upscale salon in Lincoln Park in Chicago and gets to travel the world doing hair for shows such as New York Fashion Week and Paris Fashion Week. My parents have taught me that no matter what you are faced with in life, success is always attainable. I knew that college would not be an easy task to undertake, but I chose to do so anyway because they have instilled in me the confidence and ambition to take on anything. My parents did not have the opportunity to receive a higher education, but they did everything in their power to ensure that I had the chance to receive mine. My ambition to do well in college comes from them. I feel the need to take all that they have given me to make me the most of myself in life to make them proud.

2. Heritage: My Hispanic heritage has always been something I take great pride in. My sophomore year of high school I took a Latino studies course in which I learned the low number of Hispanics that receive a college education and earn a degree. The startling percentage further
ignited my drive to receive a higher education. I recognized my need to defy that statistic to prove that Hispanics, or any minority for that matter, are just as capable of succeeding in college as any other student. I feel the need to strive for success in college so that I do not fall into the numbers or the stereotype. I must set a positive example.

3. Study abroad: With such a strong tie to my Latin culture, I decided to take part in a school-sponsored trip to Spain my summer leading into my senior year. I went with a group of 12 friends from my Spanish class and 2 of my favorite teachers from the Spanish department. We travelled through the towns and cities of Madrid, Toledo, Seville, Cordoba, and Granada experiencing the food, people, and culture. The 10-day trip through Spain sparked my desire to study abroad in college. The study abroad program here at IU served as one of the main reasons I chose this university. I want to travel the world and immerse myself in different cultures in order to make myself a more knowledgeable person. I want to connect what I learn in my liberal arts education to my experience abroad.

DISSECTING TORENBEEK, JANSEN, & SUHRE (2013)

- What is the purpose of the study?
  *The purpose of this study sought to answer the following question: Is the impact of curriculum organization on student learning of enough significance to be included in progression rate policy?

- Who were the participants and how were they selected?
  *Bachelor degree students from 4 different fields (pedagogy, biology, industrial engineering and management, environment and infrastructure planning) were asked by phone to participate in the study. 284 students agreed to participate, but 26 students changed their minds before the study began and 58 students decided to drop out during the process, leaving 200 students.

- Briefly list the major finding(s) for each study.
  *Greater number of lectures and practicals = students directly obtain more credits.
  *Scheduled lectures = negative effect on obtained credits mediated by lecture attendance.
  *More scheduled lectures = the percentage of attended lectures decreases, leading to fewer credits.
  *More scheduled practicals = students attend relatively fewer lectures and practicals, leading to fewer credits and a lower GPA in the second semester.
  *Greater self-discipline and motivation = higher semester GPA.
  * Greater motivation = higher practical attendance, which leads to better grades.

- List at least two limitations for the study.
  * “The time students report they spend on studying in logs may not reflect the absolute study time” (Tornbeek, Jansen, Suhre 9).
  * While studying, [students] may be listening to music or be distracted by other sources…thus being less effective than may be expected based on the time they report” (Tornbeek, Jansen, Suhre 9).

- In your opinion, what are your thoughts about reading this academic article? Did you encounter any difficulties in reading it? If so, what were they and why were they difficult? Did you enjoy reading this article? Why or why not?
I did not encounter too many difficulties when reading this article because I became quite accustomed to it last semester. I took a course in which we read articles such as these at least once a week. However, I did not enjoy reading it. I much prefer reading articles that are in a narrative style because I often find them more relatable, interesting, and engaging.

RELEVANT SPECIFICS

1. Motivation for Academic Success Lecture – the video that was shown in the talk
2. "Our goal is for our students to become the best at their professions, and also the best public citizens and the best people." - Michael V. Drake
3. "With the goal of envisioning a just and sustainable world, an education for the 21st century must speak to all dimensions of a human being." - Charles G. Lief

Teaching & Learning

THE PROBLEM I WANT TO SOLVE

The initial problem I hoped to solve remains the same; however, I have now included two other points after reading the problems my peers wish to solve. In addition to becoming a broadcast journalist that can bring integrity to the news industry and correctly report on what really matters in the world, I also hope to represent and inspire women to strive for careers that are male-dominated. My goal is to become a sports reporter or commentator for ESPN. Sports broadcasting is a field especially lacking in female employment. The field is gradually seeing more and more successful women, and I hope to continue that progress. I want to let young women know that you can strive for any career and defy stereotypical gender roles.

MARSHMALLOW EXPERIMENT

In the marshmallow experiment, Walter Mischel, a psychologist from Stanford, gave four-year-olds two options. Each child could either receive only one marshmallow immediately, or receive two marshmallows after waiting for Mischel to “return from an errand”. If a child wanted a marshmallow immediately, he or she was instructed to ring a bell. All adults then left the room and left the children with a plate of treats. Once the adults left, the children reacted in 3 different ways. Some children just immediately “gorged” themselves on the treats; others rang the bell to signal that they wanted a marshmallow right away; and others “resisted” and waited for Mischel to return to receive the greater amount of treats as promised. Mischel and his colleagues kept track of those four-year-olds as they aged. Their findings concluded that the “children who could wait the longest generally grew up to become more productive and successful students and adults while those who [did not wait] often had behavioral problems in school, did less well academically, had trouble keeping their friends, and on average compiled SAT scores that were two hundred and ten points lower than those who could wait” (Bain, 2012, p. 224). They also discovered a number of tricks to teach the impatient children how to wait and avoid temptations and distractions.

Procrastination has always been a major issue that I have always struggled with throughout school. I am easily distracted and find it hard to motivate myself to complete
assignments that I do not particularly like. I have always found myself putting off those assignments by filling the time with trivial tasks or something more enjoyable. This has become an increasing problem now that I am writing real articles for my Reporting, Writing, and Editing class. I have encountered writer’s block numerous times, leading me to leave the assignment for the last minute where I am forced to work under pressure. I have convinced myself that my best work is done under pressure, but I am realizing that may not be the case. “Once you realize…that will power is just a matter of learning how to control your attention and thoughts, you can really begin to increase it,” said Michel. Reading that quote from Mischel gave me a new sense of hope and motivation. I had also convinced myself that procrastination was simply a part of who I was as a person, and therefore, an unfixable characteristic. In reading the marshmallow experiment, however, I now realize that I can better my habits and increase my chances of becoming a successful broadcast journalist.

BEST OF BAIN’S ADVICE FOR LEARNING

-What teachers should you choose?
  “Does the instructor clearly believe in the students’ abilities to grow, to develop the dynamic powers of their minds, or does the teacher assume that abilities come prepackaged, with little or no chance to improve” (Bain, 2012, p. 232)? I chose this piece of advice because I think it is important to establish a relationship of respect between a student and a teacher. That respect cannot merely be one-sided (from student to teacher). I believe that a teacher should respect a student by being non-judgmental and have confidence in as student’s ability to succeed. If a teacher cannot believe in his or her own student, how can that student be expected to fully believe in themselves or to put forth their best effort in that class?

-How will you read?
  “They read as if they planned to teach…These Russian literature students lost sight of the grade and experienced…a focus on understanding deeply…As they prepared not just to explain something to someone else but to stimulate in that person a deep consideration of some important idea…”(Bain, 2012, p. 238-239). I found this piece of advice to be the most profound because it gave more meaning to reading. Reading not only serves to benefit the betterment of your knowledge, but it can also give you the opportunity to take that new knowledge and teach it to someone else. Anyone can read a text, but reading to teach others challenges you to use a deeper thought process.

-How will you study?
  “If you study in different places, that helps create variety, and that rich experience can reinforce what you are learning” (Bain, 2012, p. 247). This piece of advice was both surprising and helpful. The stacks of wells library had become my go-to study spot since the beginning of first semester. Over time, however, I found myself becoming distracted in that space. I thought the library was the only ideal place to successfully study, but I realize now that is not the case. I plan to take Bain’s advice and find new spaces to allow for creativity.

-How will you write?
  “Like any wise novice, the best students pay attention to the tiniest devices of the masters of the language, recognizing good prose when they see it. Over time, they learn to emulate it” (Bain, 2012, p. 251). I know this piece of advice to be true from experience. In my Reporting, Writing, and Editing class, my professor has us read articles from major publications and
professional journalists. The more I read articles of successful journalists, the easier I find it to write my own articles as I hone in on their tactics.

- Are you going to join the club?

  “Sherry Kafka wisely observed, ‘that all schools are cultures, and my job was to go into that school and understand how that culture works’” (Bain, 2012, p. 252). I am a big believer in the concept that everyone has a purpose in life. It is our job, however, to find that purpose and execute it. When entering college, we all have a purpose, and college allows us the change to find that purpose amidst a new and diverse culture. Everyone has a place. Go find it and use it.

**Failure**

**THE PROBLEM I WANT TO SOLVE**

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**THE MINDSETS**

After conducting a study, Carol Dweck and other psychologists concluded that two types of mindsets exist when it comes to facing failure: “helpless” or “mastery/growth”.

*Helpless mindsets*

- Tend to believe “intelligence is something that is fixed at birth” (Bain, 2012, p. 109)
- Attribute their incapacities to not being smart enough or simply not having the ability to achieve something.
- Believe that “life depends on your level of intelligence, not on how you work on something” (Bain, 2012, p. 110)
- Benefit: Those with helpless mindsets often stick to what he or she knows they can succeed in so that they can be perceived as “one of the bright ones”, which ultimately make that person seem very intelligent (Bain, 2012, p. 109).
- Pitfall: Those who stick only to what he or she knows to ensure success are “afraid to try something new for fear that failure” will define them forever. People who are afraid to try something new never branch out, and therefore will never know the full extent of their capabilities.

*Mastery/growth mindsets*

- Believe they can “master something and grow in their abilities if they try” (Bain, 2012, p. 109)
- If at first they do not succeed, the look for new strategies and approaches to try again.
- Believe intelligence can expand
Benefit: Rather than only playing to their strengths, those with this kind of mindset also try to develop new talents and capabilities. They have the goal in mind to learn deeply rather than just performing well. This allows him or her to grow as a person.

Pitfall: This type of person is often faced with failure as they try and try again. However, they find “reward in failure” and learn to “embrace the bomb” (Bain, 2012, p. 111) In other words, although they make mistakes, they learn from them.

These two mindsets “stem from conditioning, not from some inborn character trait” (Bain, 2012, p. 110). This conditioning can often come from how your parents raise you and how those around you influence you to perceive yourself. My parents have raised me with a mastery/growth mindset and have taught me to ignore anyone who doubts my capabilities. My freshman year, for example, I had decided to move on from gymnastics after 11 years in the sport because the increasing time commitment would not have allowed me to adjust and successfully transition into a demanding college prep high school. I was hesitant to dedicate myself to a new sport since gymnastics was all I had known for most of my life. With the encouragement and guidance of my Dad, however, I decided to try out for track & field. Although I made the team, learning to become a track athlete was difficult because it was completely new to me. I faced failure time and time again and could not seem to earn myself a spot in the high-level meets, but I did not let that discourage me. Rather, it fed my desire to become the best I could be. I took new approaches and took every possible extra step I could to get ahead. Doing so allowed me to become one of few freshmen on the team to qualify for state. The following three years, I made the All-State team each season and ranked in the top 9 in Illinois for my event. In this experience, I not only pushed myself to try something new, but also discovered that I had a passion for it. I challenged myself to grow and expand my abilities.

This type of mindset will serve me well both in college and in solving my problem. I will continue to push myself to take challenging and unfamiliar courses so that I can become a well-rounded member of society. Sports broadcasting is a tough field for women to get into, and even when they do, they have to work to earn respect. I know that I will most likely face failure at some point in my career, but I hope that my mastery/growth mindset will never discourage me and never allow me to give up. My mindset will tell me to keep working towards my goal even when others try to put me down.

THE FAILURE

High school was definitely not a breeze for me. I had to work hard and struggle from time to time. This especially applied to my junior year of high school when I took what for me was the hardest course I would take in high school: Algebra 2. Math had never been my strong suit. I often struggled to pass with a low “B” in grade school and even more so once I began high school. Although it was not easy, I worked hard to understand and achieve what I thought was a sufficient grade. Algebra 2, however, was an entirely different story. Class after class I became more lost and received lower test grades each time. I knew this was not the teacher’s fault. She did her job well and had an enthusiastic and caring attitude towards the class. This was even more alarming for me because I had to put the blame all on myself. All the students around me seemed to be having an easier time, and I began to compare myself to my peers and question why I was not doing as well. I decided to take action to improve my grade.
Bader lists three possibilities when it comes to struggling: “that you are not prepared, that you lack understanding, or that you may not have the talent (Bader, 2011, p. 211). I set out to find the root of my problem. I first checked if I was adequately prepared. I knew that my understanding and passing grades in my grade school math courses, freshman year Algebra 1 class, and sophomore year geometry/trig class had given me all the skills necessary for Algebra 2, so I decided to simply study more. Despite a substantial amount of time spent on studying Algebra 2, I still failed most of my quizzes and tests. I then moved to the next possibility to see if I lacked understanding. I sought the help of a tutor two times a week, and although my test grades improved to a “D”, I was still not satisfied. I continued to study and meet with my tutor to see if I would improve, but I did not succeed. As the semester drew to a close and chances to improve my grade became fewer, I realized I would most likely receive a “D” as a final grade. I could not stand the thought. Never in my life had I received a D. I could not believe the transcript of my most important year of high school—the one universities look at—would have a D on it. I became extremely stressed and started to let it affect my other classes. Bader says in order to move on to success, you “need the support of family, friends, mentors, counselors, and others” for inspiration (Bader, 20122, p. 202). I decided to get that support to lift myself out of the slump I was stuck in. With the help of my family, guidance counselor, and track coach, I realized Bader’s third possibility: not having the talent. Sometimes, a student’s lack of success can be attributed to “not having talent for the subject that gives [he or she] the most difficulty (Bader, 2011, p. 218). Although it was not the realization I had hoped to come to, I learned to be okay with it. I realized that it was nearly impossible to excel in everything. Everyone has certain strengths and talents, and you can only work so hard to try to expand those strengths and talents. Instead of focusing on weaknesses, you must appreciate and focus on your skills and what you are capable of and put it to good use. At the end of that semester, I looked at my report card and saw all “As” and one “D+.” I knew, however, that the D+ did not lower my chances of going to a good university. More importantly, however, I knew that the D+ did not define me.

RISK-TAKING

The decision to add Spanish as a second major is one risk I am considering. Although it seems as more of a challenge than a risk, time management is something I have always greatly struggled with. I am not too sure how I would handle being a double major. Although I have always loved studying Spanish and know it could help me in becoming a better broadcast journalist, I am a bit reluctant to finalize this decision because I am not 100 percent sure how it will affect my academic life. In other words, I do not know if I will be able to balance a double major along with everything else in life. I do know, however, that earning a degree in both broadcast journalism and Spanish will expand my opportunities and allow me to better achieve my goal of inspiring Latinos to achieve success.

RELEVANT SPECIFICS

1. Debra Goldson from chapter 4 of Bain.
2. “You must find a major, minor, and other academic programs that really excite you intellectually, and set aside all other considerations, particularly those judgments about the ‘usefulness,’ ‘marketability,’ or popularity of a particular field of study” (Bader, 2011, p. 203-204)
3. Tom Springer from chapter 4 of Bain.

Self-compassion

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DEFINING SELF-COMPASSION

Self-compassion described most simply is the practice of loving yourself. Self-compassion is approached in the same way one would have compassion for another. Self-compassion is recognizing your own faults in a non-demeaning manner and allowing yourself to respond constructively, wholeheartedly, comfortably, and understandingly in order to improve more than just your image, but rather your own well-being.

I practice, try to practice, or would like to practice self-compassion in the following ways:
1. In high school, I learned to never compare myself to others. Another’s beauty is not the absence of my own; another’s intelligence is not the absence of my own; another’s accomplishments are not the absence of my own; another’s possessions are not the absence of my own. It is important to recognize, love, and appreciate what is already a part of you because if you constantly seek what others have and what you don’t, you will never be fully content with who you are, or in this case self-compassionate.
2. I have learned not to harshly criticize myself when I have made a bad or wrong decision that lead to negative outcomes. Rather than beating myself over the decision, I remind myself that life experiences happen for a reason to let you grow as a person, which can result in better decision-making in the future.
3. When I make a mistake that emotionally hurts others, it is easy to immediately think of myself as a bad person. More recently, when situations like these occur, I try to tell myself that it is impossible to be a perfect human that never hurts others. In these instances, I try to use self-compassion to reassure myself that I can learn from my mistakes in avoid similar ones in the future.
4. In situations where others have emotionally hurt me, I try not to ask myself the question, “Why aren’t you over it already?” if it is taking longer than expected to forgive. Instead, I remind myself that I have the power to forgive and recognize the good in people.
5. I often use self-criticism to motivate myself to do better after I have failed. I would like to change this because I know it only leads to stress, frustration, and sadness. From Neff’s video, I learned using self-criticism to seek motivation only leads to attacking yourself because the body taps into its self-defense system as a result of feeling threatened by imperfections. Instead, I would like to learn how to motivate myself with self-compassion.

THREE WAYS TO BUILD SELF-COMPASSION

1. Self-kindness
*Self-kindness is the ability and intention of being encouraging, understanding, empathetic, patient, and gentle “toward yourself when you are going through a difficult moment, whether it be a failure or some loss or pain” (Bain, 2012, p. 172).
*I practice self-kindness by never comparing myself to others. I do not focus on others who have what I don’t or can do what I struggle to achieve. Instead, I remind myself to be thankful for who I am and remember that I have the ability to grow and learn if I ever feel inadequate over something.

2. Common Humanity
*Common humanity asks, “How am I the same as others?” rather than “How am I better than others?” Bain describes this as the “the recognition that whatever pain or failure you may face, others have gone through something similar” (2012, p. 172). People often tend to isolate and belittle themselves in their failures and struggles, which is very self-damaging. It is those failures and struggles that actually connect us all together.
*In our discussion section, we are sometimes asked to share personal struggles or shortcomings. Hearing these stories from my peers have allowed me to be more self-compassionate as I recognize that I am not alone in my failures. I hope to talk more with my friends and peers in order to gain insight and comfort.

3. Mindfulness
*Mindfulness is the “habit of acknowledging ‘painful thoughts and feelings’ but not over-identifying with them” (Bain, 2012, p. 172).
*To practice mindfulness, I would like to learn how to stop motivating myself with self-criticism from past failures as I mentioned earlier. Doing so would allow me to recognize my abilities and talents rather than just my disappointments and pitfalls. In being mindful, I would be willing to recognize my problems, but not to a point that allows me to think negatively of myself.

RECOGNIZING SELF-COMPASSION

Meixi Ng was raised in a family that valued cultural acceptance and diversity. As a child, she learned many languages, traveled the world, and was taught the importance of fellowship. Ng, however, struggled a bit academically throughout high school as she found herself “in the middle of the pack academically”. Once she started school at Northwestern University, however, she began making the Dean’s list for her excellent grades once she found a greater purpose for her studies. At Northwestern, she started a number of organizations and coalitions that sought to recognize, embrace, celebrate, and integrate “the rich diversity on campus” and “a sense of
community and commitment into the curriculum (Bain, 2012, p. 190). Ng majored in international studies, with a minor in communication sciences and disorders. Throughout her life, Ng practiced self-compassion by embracing Neff’s concept of a common humanity in her efforts to celebrate diversity, using self-kindness to encourage herself to find a field she was passionate about, and not letting “average-ness” throughout high school affect her self-esteem. Ng’s story resonated with me the most because I found it very applicable to one of my college motivators: My desire to become a cultured person.

REVISITING COLLEGE MOTIVATORS

1. My parents: My parents had a rocky start to adulthood as teenage parents. They were able to defeat adversity, however, and become two very successful small business owners. They have given me everything they never had, including the opportunity to receive a college education. I feel the need to take all they have given me in order to become the best person I can be, and I see a college education forming me into that person.

*I do not believe that this motivator is fueled my self-esteem, nor is it narcissistic. Self-esteem is contingent upon success, and rather than focusing on success, I focus on becoming a better person. Furthermore, instead of only focusing on how I can improve myself, I also make a point to use the opportunities given to me made possible by my parents in order to give back to them. This, however, might hurt my self-esteem if I decide to focus on succeeding just like my parents rather than becoming the best person I can be. I have to remind myself that success does not determine your worth.

2. My Heritage: The gap in the number of Whites and Hispanics (and other minorities) ignites my desire to receive a higher education. I want to defy the statistics to prove that Hispanics, and any minority group for that matter, are just as capable of succeeding in college as any other student. I hope to inspire and encourage minorities to receive a higher education.

*I do not believe this motivator stems from self-esteem because rather than proving minorities are above average or “better”, I aim to show that we are equal just as Neff’s concept of common humanity calls us to do. This motivator, however, might seem narcissistic because it includes bettering the image of minorities. But I argue that bettering that image is necessary in order to accomplish my goal of encouraging and inspiring other minority groups.

3. My desire to be a cultured person: The liberal arts education and excellent study abroad programs IU offers played a major factor in my decision to attend this university. I want to travel the world and immerse myself in different cultures in order to make myself a more knowledgeable, understanding, and well-rounded person. I hope to connect what I learn in my liberal arts education to my experience abroad.

*This motivator is not driven by self-esteem or narcissism because it does not try to put others down. Rather, it aims to make myself a more cultured person that can connect with and relate to others from all around the world.

RELEVANT SPECIFICS
1. Neff's explanation of the Mammalian care-giving system really put into perspective why it is scientifically essential for your well being to be self-compassionate. You must strive to bring yourself up in trying to accomplish anything rather than putting yourself down.

2. “Realize how unusual you are and use those uncommon pieces to create something no one else could have imagined” (Bain, 2012, p. 187).

3. Meixi Ng from chapter 6 of Bain allowed me to see how becoming a cultured person who embraces diversity is essential in today's society.

Privilege & Diversity

THE PROBLEM I WANT TO SOLVE

The initial problem I hope to solve remains the same. I have, however, also adopted another point after reading the problems my peers hope to solve. In addition to becoming a broadcast journalist that can bring integrity into what and how I report, I also hope to represent and inspire women, especially Latinas, to strive for careers that are male-dominated. My goal is to become a sports reporter or commentator for ESPN. Sports broadcasting is a field especially lacking in female employment. The field is gradually seeing more and more successful women, and I hope to continue that progress. I want to let young women know that you can strive for any career and defy stereotypical gender roles. I hope that I can particularly motivate and encourage Latina women to pursue a career in this field to prove success is more than possible.

MODELING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Diversity and inclusion are crucial when it comes to solving my problem. Fortunately, broadcast journalism and sports media are fields in which women are seeing more leverage. There are still, however, a number of challenges that exist for a female Latina in the news world. One of the biggest challenges is overcoming the tenet of framing prejudice. Bain says that framing prejudice has a “powerful influence” that can cause “other people to shape your own thinking” and “lead us to pay attention to the negative frames other people create for us” (2012, p. 81). Women in broadcasting are often put down with the stereotype that they only have their career due physical appearance. This leads to women in broadcasting not always being taken seriously, especially in sports media. It is easy to let those notions sink into your head and question whether or not you have your career due to qualifications and talent. In order to overcome this, I must do the following: carry myself confidently and firmly, never take short cuts to achieve a goal, and stimulate my passion for what I do in my career to help others.

KARINA’S CREED

I believe a person who truly embraces diversity is open to growth. He or she seeks opportunities to stretch the mind and imagination to extents that may even be unfamiliar or uncomfortable.

I believe a person who truly embraces diversity is intellectually competent. He or she possesses the ability to think mindfully—that is “thinking deeply” in a way that drives curiosity and allows for new “ways of understanding both the object or situation in mind and the way he or she interacts with it” (Bain, 2012, 73).
I believe a person who truly embraces diversity is **loving**. He or she is able to move beyond self-interest, self-centeredness, and differences while forging relationships with others. Through compassion and self-compassion, he or she can establish a network of diverse relationships that may even challenge or exceed social norms.

I believe a person who truly embraces diversity **knows his or her own identity**. He or she has a good understanding of his or her own persona and role. He or she is able to recognize similarities and differences in relation to other identities, especially in instances of privilege that stems from certain identities.

I believe a person who truly embraces diversity is **committed to doing justice**. He or she recognizes the potential within himself for doing injustice, as well as the injustices in some of the surrounding social structures. He or she is preparing himself to become a competent, concerned, and responsible member of the society on communal, local, national, and worldly levels. He or she realizes that diversity not only calls for a recognition of individual conscience, but also each person working actively in society to positively promote social justice.

**COMPONENTS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE**

My strongest component out of the five is **skills to interact effectively with a diversity of people in different contexts**. This means having the ability to adapt to and work collaboratively with diverse people in a range of situations. Since my childhood, I have been raised in both diverse environments and exclusive environments and know the experiences that come with each. I have moved around throughout my life to both racially diverse neighborhoods and neighborhoods that have a predominant race population such as White or Latino. I have attended schools were I, a Latina, have been part of the majority population and other schools were I was in the minority population. I have been blessed with the opportunity to travel different parts of the world such as Mexico, Greece, and Spain. All of these factors have taught me to integrate and adapt to different cultural styles, deal with conflict due to cultural differences and inequality, engage in dialogue about social identities, and work towards respect and love between those different identities.

Although I would not necessarily call **Knowledge of societal inequities** a component that I am weak in, I would so it is one that allows for more improvement and better understanding. This component means grasp of different forms of privilege and oppression and how they affect people’s experiences, opportunities, and access to social power. The world is a huge place. Even if you do have a good grasp on social inequities that exist, there always room to further educate yourself. I hope to keep working at this by continuing to select classes that raise questions of social injustices. I also plan to study abroad and completely immerse myself in another culture.

**A STORY ABOUT PRIVILEGE FOR AN IMMIGRANT PUERTO RICAN MALE**

Jesse Soto does not know what anyone around him is saying. He tries to listen carefully to pick out similar-sounding words, but it just sounds like gibberish. Jesse does not know English like all the other 7-year-olds in his class. Kids laugh at his accent as he gradually learns, which
causes him to just not want to speak up anymore. Jesse becomes silent and starts to do poorly in school. Rather than the teacher offering understanding and patience to this immigrant child, she is annoyed by the communication barrier and “recommends” him to an “all-Spanish speakers” class that helps kids like him learn English. Wouldn’t Jesse be able to better learn English if he is surrounded by kids who already speak it? Although he feels more comfortable surrounded by other Latino kids, he still feels different—different from the class he was kicked out of. “Were the kids in the other class smarter because they knew English?” he thought. Seven-year-old Jesse began to feel dumb. He eventually learns English, and in fact receives the best grades in English class than in any other class throughout grade school.

Jesse is in high school now. He is an exceptional student that works hard. He knows he definitely wants a college education, and he knows he has the grades to do so. His white friend, however, tells him that he should try to build up his extra-curricular activates resume because colleges like well-rounded students. “Hey you’re black. I bet you’re good at basketball. Why don’t you try out for the team?” his friend says to him. “I’m Puerto Rican,” replies Jesse. “Oh, yeah that’s right. Then what about baseball?” his friend says. Jesse has never even played baseball, but he is annoyed with the unintentional ignorance of his friend, so he just shrugs and nods his head. Instead of taking the time and consideration to really figure out what activities Jesse would excel in, he assumes based upon skin color and race.

Jesse gets into the college of his choice. He is the first in the family with the opportunity to receive higher education. He is so proud of himself and so is his mother and father. He is a little nervous if he’ll feel comfortable there, but he assures himself that he will be able to find other Latino students he can relate to make him feel more at home. Jesse starts attending his classes, but struggles to wake up in the morning to arrive on time. He arrives late to class for the 6th time and as he sits down in his chair, he hears a fellow student say, “Typical Mexican. Always late.” This is the first of many racist instances Jesse would experience. His university claims to promote diversity, but Jesse realizes his school does not do anything to educate their students on what it means to respect diversity, nor does the university have many organizations that work to build up the importance of diversity. He is just a part of compositional diversity.

Jesse eventually makes it through college successfully and with many accomplishments to his name. Luckily, he finds a job immediately after graduating. It is his first day on the job. He introduces himself to a white colleague in the break room. “So how’d you get this job? It takes connections to get in here,” says his colleague. “Well, I’ve always been—,” replies Jesse as his colleague begins to interrupt. “Oh yeah! The boss did say he felt a need for more Hispanics on the staff. That affirmative action is a good thing, isn’t it? Congrats man,” says his colleague as he begins to walk out the door. His colleague discredits all of Jesse’s accomplishments that factor into why he received the job and treats him as someone who is just there to fill a number goal.

**RELEVANT SPECIFICS**

1. “Once you know that you have the inner capacity to enjoy, you can look for the switches to turn it on, and you will discover that they reside within you” (Bain, 2012, p. 82). This quote from Bain reminded me that you must love what you do. I learned, however, that the power to enjoy comes from within us. We have control over it. This is crucial for me to practice as I study here at IU. Looking for all aspects of joy in what I do will help me to become the best journalist I can be.
2. “The silences and denials surrounding privilege are the key political took here. They keep the thinking about equity incomplete, protecting unearned advantage and conferred dominance by making these taboo subjects” (McIntosh, 1989, p. 4). This quote from Invisible Knapsack reminded me that if I want to see more successful women in the news industry, it is imperative to acknowledge the privilege men have in this field to work against it.

3. “Highly creative people will explore life from a variety of disciplines and begin to see the interconnections that exist among them” (Bain, 2012, 81). Gaining insight from different people, cultures, and experiences will allow me to be a journalist that reports with a wide range of perspectives and outlooks rather than just my own bias.

Affirmative Action

THE PROBLEM I WANT TO SOLVE

In addition to becoming a broadcast journalist that can bring integrity, multiple perspectives, and cultural importance and diversity into what and how I report, I also hope to represent and inspire women, especially Latinas, to strive for careers that are male-dominated. My goal is to become a sports reporter or commentator for ESPN. Sports broadcasting is a field especially lacking in female employment. The field is gradually seeing more and more successful women, and I hope to continue that progress. I want to let young women know that you can strive for any career and defy stereotypical gender roles. I hope that I can particularly motivate and encourage Latina women to pursue a career in this field to prove success is more than possible.

DEFINITION OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Affirmative action works to broaden opportunities for typically oppressed minority groups by letting employers and higher education institutions consider factors such as race when hiring or admitting applicants in order to ensure a fair and equal process. Other minority groups can also benefit from affirmative action based on factors such as gender, skin color, and disabilities. Today, much debate encompasses the notion of affirmative action.

Arguments for affirmative action:
1. A large number of those who constitute part of racial minority groups come from backgrounds in which they are economically oppressed and, therefore, do not have the resources and opportunities needed to prepare for, pay for, and succeed in a higher education institution. Affirmative action plans, however, offer both financial aid programs and support programs to said students to level the playing field.
2. Affirmative action policies increase the number of minorities in colleges and universities, creating a diverse environment that is more representative of the surrounding demographic and laying a foundation for a society that can work together cohesively in a multicultural environment.

Arguments against affirmative action:
1. Affirmative action policies lower standards for minorities and therefore, admit minorities based on racial preference or other related factors rather than academic achievement, aptitude, or merit.
2. Affirmative action constitutes a system of reverse discrimination, making it more difficult for non-minorities to apply for a job or for higher education.

**DISCUSSION WITH SOPHIA MOORE ABOUT DIVERSITY**

As defined in Bain (2012), ill-structured problems are those with “no clear solutions” (p. 135). I discussed the following question with Briscoe CUE Sophia Moore: Is affirmative action allowing women to enter careers that are typically thought to be male-dominated? What changes, if need be, would improve this situation?

Sophia and I had a meaningful conversation while discussing this ill-structured problem. We came to the conclusion that although affirmative action may be allowing women enter whatever careers they so desire, there is another issue at hand: respect. We need to work on fostering a respectful environment because despite the fact that women are entering male-dominated fields, some are still not earning the treatment they deserve.

Meeting with a CUE like Sophia was very enlightening. It was refreshing to talk with someone so passionate about social justice issues. It also inspired me to possibly take on a position like hers. I believe that CUEs play an important and useful role. They take on the responsibility to educate our student body in efforts to foster a diverse and respectful environment here on campus. What they do is CRUCIAL.

**VEDA NICASIO & AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

Dear Dad,

It is becoming increasingly difficult to deal with all the backlash from inconsiderate people. I know I work hard. I know I’m good at what I do. I know I have EARNED this. But that’s not what some of the men around me see. They get pissed when I receive a bigger story to cover. They get agitated when I get even the slightest promotion or hear about my raise. When we’re out for a press event, they think its okay to talk over me or take my questions or interviews because apparently, “I don’t know what the heck I’m talking about. But I grew up around this. I’m more passionate about sports media than anyone here. I know this for a fact based on what I’ve endured to get here. Sure, affirmative action is probably a factor into why I’m a successful sports media reporter, but that is by no means the only key that has gotten me into this position. I can’t have the slightest amount of success without some of my male coworkers thinking I got here because I’m a woman, because of my “physical attractiveness” (as they seem to think), or because I’m “Daddy’s little girl”. You’re the greatest sports commentator this network has ever had, and I’m so proud of that, but each little mistake I make is amplified and compared to you. They don’t get it yet. They look down on affirmative action and think women don’t have the ability to succeed here. But affirmative action is helping women show just how talented they can be as sports reporters. These brilliantly skilled women are creating a more diverse environment here. We’ve made ratings skyrocket. We’re pulling in new audiences because now both men and
women viewers can connect with us. Most importantly, however, we’re inspiring little girls and teaching them that diversity can exist anywhere. We’re proving that this field isn’t only for men. Girls can have a passion for this too, and they can be amazing at it. It’s hard at times, but I wouldn’t wish for anything else. I know that what I’m doing is breaking down barriers, and that’s so important. My hope is that affirmative action programs will inspire young aspiring women to do what we’re doing as female sports reporters. I wish you were still here to see this amazing experience!

RELEVANT SPECIFICS

1. “You cannot understand what it means to be an American until you see how the rest of the world lives” (Brown, 2016). This part of Kevin Brown’s lecture resonated with me the most because it reminded me that in order to be truly knowledgeable you cannot view life from your own perspective. This is especially important in regards to my problem because in journalism, you must avoid bias at all costs. It is crucial to report from a standpoint that takes multiple viewpoints that arise from different cultures into consideration.

2. I know the fact that you are here means you’ve made a certain cut already…You are on the road to success, but it is not guaranteed…You got to make the commitment to yourself to be great” (Brown, 2016). When Kevin Brown said this, it made me realize that college does not automatically mean I will have success in whatever career path I choose. Although I did make it to college, it is my responsibility to take control of all that college has to offer in order to become a successful broadcast journalist, especially when it is such a competitive field to get into.

3. “Yet people face problems every day that defy answers” (Bain, 2012, p. 133). This quote from Bain is crucial to remember in reaching for my goal in becoming a broadcast journalist. As I mentioned, it is a tough and competitive field. If I want to aim to be successful, I must remember that each challenge I have to overcome will not come with an easily visible solution. I need to use mindfulness and intuitiveness to seek resolutions, keys, and answers that may have deeper meanings and that are therefore, harder to find and overcome.

Diversifying Education

Not yet created