

## Professional Develop Plan

As I look toward the future, I need to formulate a plan or a path of direction from which I can use to guide my path in life. While life has many twists and curve that quite often unexpected, it is a good idea to have some sort of heading that keeps on you on target with what your goals are. In order to create a plan, you must identify where you want to head or goals that you have in life. Student teaching has strongly strengthened my desire to teach. I had a great experience while I student taught, and I know now that I can be a successful teacher that impacts the lives of my students. I was told that I will be missed by almost all of my students. It is good to know that they enjoyed having me in their classroom as their teacher. With this in mind, I do not believe that I want to become any sort of administrator. I have a longing to be a person that students can rely on as a teacher and if need be a friend. I use the term friend as being a professional who is able to empathize with them when it is necessary. The question I should be asking myself is. "At what level do I want to impact the lives of my students?" The level referring to the differences of age and grade. Will I want to stay a high school teacher or would I like to become a college professor.

Coming out of Cornell, I will have enough education to be able to those students whom are at the high school level. I will be able to facilitate their knowledge in the area of Political Science. Because this is such a narrow content area, it is necessary for me to broaden my horizons and acquire a Bachelors degree in American History. Acquiring my degree in Education at Cornell will benefit me because of its reputation as well as gaining the skills from finishing the program itself. It is just more cost effective, however, to go to the University of Minnesota at Mankato to gain a degree in American History. While it would be more desirable to get the degree through Cornell College, it is just not possible for me to continue to spend the kind of money I am here at Cornell College. I have researched the information provided upon the University's website and understand what is required for me to acquire this degree.

The next few years will be dedicated to more education. While I will have my teaching license

still in Iowa, I will be planning on attending the University of Minnesota at Mankato to acquire either a Bachelors degree or Masters degree. There are plenty of programs that correspond with either choice. Again, it would ultimately depend upon what age level I will want to teach. If I chose to seek a Masters degree in the area of History, I would require a thesis plan with 30 credits involving a set core of classes to go along with those 30 credit hours. If I go with a Masters of Science degree in Political Science, I would be required to take 34 credit hours with a core group of classes set for the Political Science focus of my choice. If I choose to put of my Masters, I would still want to acquire a Bachelors degree in the area of History. This would require a minimum of 32 credit hours. I will have to seek more endorsements as the requirements for gaining them differ from state to state.

While I would be engaged in any of the programs listed above, I would be trying to build my resume by volunteering my time to be involved in as many programs for children as possible. I am close to acquiring my coaching endorsement as well, which will help me be more applicable to different types of jobs that are opening up. I have coached many teams and would like to continue to do so. This is also a good way for me gain more experiences to put onto my resume. There are many activities that I can volunteer to work with children and young adults. I personally know that Mankato, Minnesota has two bowling alleys, each with a high school bowling team. It would be in my best interest to become a volunteer coach for one of them. There are Y-programs and things of that nature that I can involve myself in. I wouldn't also have to limit myself to just coaching, but anything I can do that involves some activity with children would be beneficial, as long as it would be in a professional setting. I enjoy working with children and young adults. That is ultimately why I want to become a teacher.

There are many ways that I can impact the lives of students with in the school, besides being a teacher. I could for example become a guidance counselor, which has crossed my mind once or twice. I would be required to go to graduate school for a Masters degree in School Counseling. I interviewed a professional who is a guidance counselor. She told me that she impacts the students' lives directly by

being an emotional support and helping students deal with certain issues they are facing. I believe that if this is the direction I chose as a career, I would make a good guidance counselor. I am able to show empathy toward students, as well as being the type of person who others feel comfortable with sharing just about anything with. Guidance counselors also help students sort out issues they are having with teachers and other students as the interviewee had stated.

I also spoke with a professional inside the building who dealt with students who were involved in a program called “Success Center.” Those students who are involved in this program have been identified as being students who have something that is conflicting with their ability to be successful at Northwest Junior High School. It is the job of the “Success Center” teacher to identify what the reason is that is inhibiting success and try to accommodate to each student's need. Most of the students with in the program are lacking the motivation to do well in school, but some are there with real needs that will be addressed. These teachers have a very direct impact on those students who have been identified as being students who are not being as successful as they could be. As it turns out, a regular ed teacher can be a “Success Center” teacher. The person I interviewed is really good at being able to relate to the students and act almost as a friend with them. The students still complete their work, but in a setting that is more one to one interaction.

After interviewing both professionals regarding their positions at Northwest Junior High School, I still strongly believe the best career choice for me is to become a classroom teacher. It is just real appealing for me. I will be able to directly influence my students and still be there as a intermediary if they had problems with another student. As being a person who cares for each of my students, I would be able to relate to problems my students are having as well as being joyful for them when they are successful. While I would not have time to help every student one on one, I would be able to help those students who come before or after school to work on something they are having difficulty with. I would be able to see my students progress throughout the year and be able to send them off knowing they have the tools they need to move on.

While student teaching at Northwest Junior High School has opened my eyes toward junior high students, I still want to teach high school students. I believe that a high school government class would be quite enjoyable to teach. There is just so much that students do not take into account when they think about the government of the United States. There are many unique ways to give them the tools they would need in order to make a difference in their world and in the world of others. It isn't just about giving them the tools directly, but also providing the scaffolding so the students could find their own tools and resources if need be.

In order for me to stay current upon issues that are affecting their lives and my own life, I would want to start by reading different newspapers that are big throughout the United States. Also staying current upon the local news report is a must. There is so much that can be encompassed into Social Studies. One good website that I have found to start as a guide is [www.refdesk.com](http://www.refdesk.com). This website has many different journals and news reports from around the world. For finding out information regarding certain candidates and issues that are fairly current I use the website [www.ontheissues.org](http://www.ontheissues.org). This website gives links and references to other websites that have more information regarding certain issues. For information regarding cases that have appeared in front of the Supreme Court I use the website <http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/index.html>, which has all of the case facts and precedences laid forth by the Supreme Court. The last two websites have been prescribed to me from professors at Cornell College and are deemed reputable for use as resources for information. As every person involved in studying the government should know that change does not come on the account of just one person but by the gathering of many. As I join into the profession of teaching, I will have to consider joining a teacher's union. I would want to look at the benefits of joining versus the costs. One of the benefits of joining a union is having the ability to lobby in the government for an issue you feel strongly about. Is it really going to be cost effective as a new teacher to join into a union? Will I be making enough of a salary to provide support for myself as well as the union? Coming newly out of college, I would hold off from joining a union until I was capable of supporting myself with a steady

salary and knew specific information regarding certain teacher's unions.

I ultimately want to become a high school teacher in a mid sized town (15,000-30,000 people) that has a soccer team that I can coach. I believe the best sort of atmosphere, of the town, would be one that is more liberal. Being a Democrat, it would be a lot easier for me to be involved in a school district which the views did not directly come into conflict with my own or at least to a degree that detracts from my teaching ability. I would always encourage students to always be open in their way of thinking to empower themselves to have an opinion. I aspire to be a soccer coach for the high school that I teach at. Not only would I enjoy this, but it would also give students another way to connect with me as a person. I would also be able to impact the lives of my students in ways that only a good coach could.