

4-1-2015

## Double major does double time in Dominican journey

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### Recommended Citation

Gardner, Sarah and Albee, Dave, "Double major does double time in Dominican journey" (2015). *Press Releases*. 296.

<https://scholar.dominican.edu/news-releases/296>

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## Double major does double time in Dominican journey

Meghan Nelson was driving with a friend from her home in Seattle to San Diego on a much-anticipated 10-day college-hunting expedition four years ago when she stopped for lunch in Marin County and met a local couple who suggested she visit Dominican. It was the best advice she could have received.

After entering Dominican as a first generation college student with an undeclared major, Meghan will graduate in May as a confident and effervescent honors double major in [Business](#) and [Political Science](#), who presented at national conferences, studied abroad and represented Dominican in internships and international travel that allowed her to visit seven foreign countries in four months.

Meghan has made the most of her time, opportunities, and heavy academic load and she thanks Dominican for that.

“Dominican professors led me to jobs, scholarships, helped me on my thesis and went above and beyond their duties as teachers,” says Meghan, who also was accepted to attend Santa Clara, Pepperdine, Loyola Marymount and the University of Washington. “The most rewarding part of my four years at Dominican was how much support I received beginning with [financial aid](#). The [study abroad program](#) and its international partnerships covered airfare and provided a living stipend making it affordable and therefore possible for me to go to Austria. Dominican also purchased the political risk dataset needed for my thesis, and funded my travels to participate in the Pi Sigma Alpha conference in Washington D.C. and a trip to L.A. for the Deloitte Tax Competition that I participated in.”

Meghan, who was president of [Dominican’s Accounting and Finance Association](#), also participated in the [Service Learning program](#) where she was a student leader at both Marin County Community School and the Education Dedicated to Justice and Equity (EDJE) program.

“I’m a curious person. I always have been,” Meghan says, “After [Dominican’s Vision Quest program](#) taught me that picking a path is about finding a combination of what you like and what you are good at I realized my early financial independence had given me skills that could be transferred into a career. But when I started taking business classes I realized this is only half of the story. I wanted the other half.

“I’m in Political Science for the science part of it, not the politics. I’ve realized my passion is people and understanding the way people work which is essential for any successful business leader. That’s what Political Science gave me: the other half of the story and a way to study human behavior in a globalized world.”

That pursuit led Meghan to Dr. Gigi Gokcek, an associate professor in the Department of Political Science and International Studies in the [School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences](#). Gokcek became an important mentor for Meghan.

“In essence, Meghan is multifaceted. No matter what she decides to do in life she is going to be successful,” Gokcek says. “I have pegged her to be a future leader in the private sector. Given her passion for finance I would not be surprised if that is where she builds a career. I would not even be surprised if one day Meghan is among top female leaders in corporate finance.”

Meghan in the meantime has pursued valuable business internships with Avani Media and Marketing in Sausalito and U.S. Capital Partners in San Francisco where, at both firms, she was offered a job and even monetary compensation for her profitable contributions she made there. In 2013, Meghan received a scholarship from the Financial Women of San Francisco (FWSF). She was assigned a business mentor and used the \$5,000 scholarship to pursue her study abroad dream.

Meghan was selected to participate in [Dominican Semester Abroad](#) and went to Austria to study in the fall of 2014. She was in Austria during the ruble crisis and Russia’s intervention into Ukraine that impacted

friends and classmates at the Johannes Kepler Universitat in Linz where she studied.

No sooner did Meghan return from Austria that she had to quickly switch gears to finish up her thesis – Understanding the Relationship between Foreign Direct Investment and Political Risk – to present to the National Political Science Honor Society in Washington, D.C. last month. In addition to Dr. Gigi Gokcek, Meghan worked over several semesters with Dr. Rajeev Sooreea, a global business professor in the [Barowsky School of Business at Dominican](#) to add a business dimension to her honors thesis.

“It is always intellectually satisfying to work with Meghan because besides being a smart-worker, she is also a student who can demonstrate a high level of emotional intelligence when she is being systematically pushed to the next frontier,” Sooreea says. “Meghan’s interdisciplinary research on FDI absolutely transcends any traditional definition of undergraduate research.”

Meghan is carrying 20 units this semester and by the time she graduates she will have completed between 130-140 units in her Dominican years while achieving a 3.9 GPA. While carrying this intense honors academic load, Meghan has worked her way through school, which she believes has greatly contributed to the person she has become today. Her curiosity to learn has steered her to a wide and varied range of classes.

“I strategically selected courses on my mission to piece together what makes up this world and the part I play in it,” Meghan says. “I believe the Dominican curriculum has made me a well-rounded person. With the liberal arts general education combined with a more specialized concentration, Dominican has allowed me to develop skills in all areas.

“I am leaving Dominican as a business and political science graduate, but I have developed a good sense of the world through the lenses of ethics, religion, language, science, mathematics, etc. which is valuable no matter where I go. Dominican’s curriculum has put me in a position to have many transferable skills that I can use in any career or life circumstance, which is what college is really supposed to do.”

For someone who stumbled upon Dominican four years ago, Meghan sprinted through Dominican so fast that she says she doesn’t recall one aha moment that made a difference, but rather she refers to her experience as a journey.

“I am proof that no matter where you come from or what challenges face you – you can do anything you set your mind to,” Meghan says. “Along the way, I have realized that success is a self-determined measure and that I push myself as a way to surprise myself and to test my capacity as a human being. Dominican has made me a lifelong learner who is fueled by the fire of passion, determination and discipline. I can’t wait to see what’s next.”