

A Choice to Follow:

A Post-Graduation Path One Woman Can Call Her Own

You have two options.

They're quite different, but one is the correct choice for you. You probably wish that you didn't have to pick right now, but you're out of time. Oh, and this decision will also determine the entirety of your future success and happiness.

So, have you made a choice yet? Have you decided how you want to live the rest of your life? For some, this is how it feels when choosing where to live or deciding to end a relationship. But for Juliana Scheiderer, this is how it felt when choosing her major at Ohio University.

Interested in communications, Scheiderer knew she wanted to leave college with the ability to write. But after speaking with relevant advisors and professors, they explained to Scheiderer that she had two options: the marketing path or the journalism path.

Wanting to follow both paths, Scheiderer chose marketing in hopes of it being more practical for finding a job. It wasn't until her second year that she learned more about OU's journalism courses and discovered a fondness for them. Confident in her decision, Scheiderer remained in journalism until her graduation from OU in 2016.

Out of the Gate

It wasn't long after earning her degree that the decision she once faced began to pay off. Scoring what felt like a dream job, 22-year-old Scheiderer put her degree to use at a small tourism PR firm in Columbus.

Quick to craft creative content, Scheiderer also quickly learned what you do at work is just as important as who you do it with. Often working alone or with just her boss, Scheiderer found that she enjoyed what she wrote about, but did not enjoy working alone.

"It's just really hard to know what kind of (work) environment you're going to like unless you've been in it before," said Scheiderer. "But at the same time, you can at least try to imagine yourself working there."

Connecting the Dots

Maintaining connections from undergrad through Facebook, Scheiderer stumbled across a job posting for the College of Arts and Sciences Marketing Department at The Ohio State University. With the position aligning with her career goals, Scheiderer was quick to take the opportunity and began working there in 2018.

Employing journalistic skills developed over the years, Scheiderer felt confident in her ability to write stories and articles for the college. Scheiderer's Eyebrows rose though when asked to create content promoting the college and its brand. Thinking back to her now distant decision, she started to question just how different marketing and journalism really were.

With Scheiderer lacking formal marketing education or experience, her first big project covered the arrival of a life-sized dinosaur to Orton Hall. Responsible for promotional stories for the college's magazine and website, she also created strategic plans for social media postings and coordinated coverage from media outlets.

With experience in journalism and marketing under her belt, Scheiderer began to let go of her previous notions and started to see the two fields as one.

"It's sort of like a double-edged sword," said Scheiderer. "People who are good at writing have that eye for the story and the most interesting way to tell it. This is what the journalist in me wants to draw out. But you also have to make sure it furthers the goal of the story and follows the strategy behind it."

A New Decision

Having a new perspective, Scheiderer understood what all she was capable of. She was no longer just a journalist who questioned whether she made the right choice. She was now a professional communicator with experience in journalism, PR and marketing.

After a year with the College, an opportunity arose for Scheiderer to continue her professional development from the comfort of Ohio State. Now working for the Office of Distance Education and eLearning at Ohio State, Scheiderer employs everything she's learned over the past seven years to make an impact through her promotional writing.

"As somebody who still holds that romantic idea of journalism and storytelling, I like the idea that if I'm talking to somebody and letting them tell their story, that it can help give somebody else the inspiration."

Julianna Scheiderer is not doing the work she does today, is not making the impact she does today because of a choice she made in college; she is making a difference today because she put herself out there and listened. Instead of deciding on journalism or marketing, she decided between following a path or following herself.

"As long as you're not stuck to a this-or-that mentality, you're not thinking about it in a super-segmented way, but instead in how you can apply your skills of writing and interviewing and whatever to any number of jobs, you'll be okay."

So, have you made a choice yet?