



Mia Polinski

Majors: Business administration-marketing, business administration-management

Minors: Graphic design

Activities: Varsity swimming, Her Campus media, Global Engagement Team, Student Athletic Advisory Council, Delta Chi Theta sorority

Internships: Enterprise Rent-A-Car

Post-grad plans: Looking for teaching and internship opportunities in other territories and countries, including Hong Kong and Singapore. Also looking at opportunities to work in management positions in Chicago and North Carolina.

“Mia has an amazing level of passion and curiosity about the world outside her everyday life. She takes every experience and absorbs all that she can. This curiosity and the passion to understand are the trademarks of a lifelong learner.”

— Mamata Marmé, director of academic advising, business administration

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2019

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

I wanted to go to a small school and swim Division III. I originally really wanted to get out of Illinois, but my aunt who went to Augustana convinced me to give it a shot. She told me about her amazing experience at Augustana. I trusted her judgment and went for it and haven't looked back since.

Are you where you thought you'd be when you first came to campus?

Not at all! I feel so different from my freshman-year self. I had no clue what I wanted to study. I went back and forth trying to decide between different areas of study, including art, environmental studies, art history, psychology and business administration. I had such a hard time deciding what I was most passionate about and how it could transform into a realistic career path. I am about to finish my degree in business administration in marketing and management with a minor in graphic design.

Reflecting on my freshman year, I realize how much I have grown in these four years. I am not even just saying this, but all of my experiences have shaped this more confident and enlightened version of myself, and I love it. It is definitely something that you don't quite realize until you are finally a senior and think about how much impact your experiences have had on your mentality.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

The one person who has had the most impact on where I am now is my advisor Mamata Marmé. Mrs. Marmé is the most intelligent and genuine person. I think a lot of students can say that she puts them before herself always! She absolutely cares about her students' success from start to finish. She is always there to help with a sense of calmness and poise to keep me from stressing myself out too much. I am the most indecisive person ever, and she has talked with me through lots of big decisions. I can honestly say that I have no idea where I would be today without her.

Peak experience?

It is very, very difficult to choose one “peak experience.” Athletically, it was definitely my final conference meet for swimming. I swam my fastest and placed in all of my events and broke the school record in the 200 fly. It was an exciting meet with my supportive teammates, and I couldn't have asked for a better end to my swim career.

I would also have to say living and studying in Hong Kong for a semester junior year. I went there by myself, and not once did I feel like I couldn't do it. I made lasting friendships with people from all over the world. I tried all types of food that I could never have imagined...I could go on forever. I can't even put into words how incredibly grateful I am to have had this experience. I feel like I can do so many more things now without being apprehensive. By the end of the semester, I was comfortable enough to go to Seoul, South Korea, by myself where no one spoke English—and not a lot of people can do that.

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What surprised you?

I was surprised by how much you can gain by taking advantage of opportunities to work with different people and pushing out of your comfort zone as much as possible. I want to leave Augustana knowing I did everything I could to flourish, and I think I did a pretty good job! I am thankful for the people in my life who believe in me, and I will always look back at these four years with gratitude.

How did you use Augie Choice?

I used it to go to Hong Kong for a semester.

What will you miss the most?

I will miss taking in the beauty this campus has to offer and the beauty in the relationships I have developed with the people in the Augustana community.

Advice for the Class of 2023?

Take advantage of every opportunity to learn as much as you can! Whether it is going to a Symposium Day event that isn't required for class, joining an organization you could potentially be excited about, going into CORE regularly, asking your professors about themselves, finding things to do in the Quad Cities, etc., Augustana provides you with so many chances to explore so go for it because it is goes fast.