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Health Professions at Carolina: Promoting the University of South Carolina Galen Health Fellows and Health Sciences Initiatives Using Social Media Marketing

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Thesis Summary

The moment I stepped on the University of South Carolina campus as a prospective student, I felt a powerful sense of belonging. Despite my efforts to keep an open mind and pursue several college opportunities, I could not ignore the undeniable draw I felt to USC. When I learned that I had earned a place in the South Carolina Honors College and received the Carolina Scholar Award, my indisputable feeling of belonging transformed into a deep sense of gratitude. I was truly appreciative of the opportunities USC and the Honors College had provided and continued to offer me throughout my time as a student. Because I felt so humbled and grateful for the opportunity to study at my dream school with an incredible scholarship, I made it my mission to give back to the university as much as possible during my time as a student. As an effort to attempt to repay the university for all it has given me and share my love for Carolina with others, I became a peer leader with Gamecock Connection and later began working as a Student Assistant in the Office of Admissions. Through these positions, I presented and promoted the university to prospective students and their families. This allowed me to share all that the University has to offer and help prospective students feel the same sense of belonging that drew me to Carolina four years ago.

As a peer leader and Admissions employee, I noticed that prospective students showed a strong interest in learning about the unique journeys and experiences of current students. They wanted to understand the USC student experience beyond the scope of Admissions data or university statistics and viewed current students as authentic sources of insight. When it became time to determine the subject of my Senior Thesis Project, I decided that I wanted to publicize current student stories to help prospective students better understand what it means to be a Gamecock. When I expressed my desire to highlight student stories as a resource for prospective

students, university officials informed me of USC's health science rebranding initiative and Galen Health Fellows program, set to launch in Fall 2017. As part of the new initiative, I was given the opportunity to publish stories highlighting the achievements and experiences of current health science students in order to help prospective students understand the many health science-related opportunities available to them at USC. Because this combined my desire to promote the university with my health science studies as an undergraduate student, I enthusiastically pursued the opportunity.

As part of my Senior Thesis Project, I created an online marketing campaign promoting the Galen Health Fellows program and health science rebranding initiative at USC. I created ten student profiles that showcased the opportunities available to students seeking health science-related careers and published them through the university undergraduate admissions Twitter profile, @UofSCAdmissions. Based on research that indicates that visual vividness is a strong determinant of online interest and web clickthrough behavior, I created three Twitter post styles with varying levels of visual vividness. In order to track the success and reach of the Twitter posts and inform future marketing campaigns, I monitored the traffic and engagements associated with each post style through Twitter's metrics data. The data collected during the study indicated that although online users are more likely to engage and interact with more visually vivid social media posts, they are most likely to click on the link presented by a visually simple post. The information received through this study will allow university officials to create future marketing campaigns that elicit desired interactivity and clickthrough behavior from prospective students. Through this project, I hope to promote the university's comprehensive health sciences offerings and provide online behavior information that will benefit future social media campaigns produced by the University of South Carolina Office of Admissions.

Abstract

This project sought to bring awareness to the newly developed Galen Health Fellows and health sciences programs at the University of South Carolina. In collaboration with the University of South Carolina Office of Admissions, investigators created and promoted a trackable social media marketing campaign for prospective program participants composed of online profiles of current USC health science students. These profiles aimed to promote the beyond-the-classroom experiences and advantages gained from pursuing a health sciences career at the University of South Carolina, particularly as a Galen Health Fellow. Student profiles were posted on the USC Admissions account of the blog site Medium and “shared” via clickable link on the USC Admissions Twitter page. Three Twitter post styles for each student profile were created based on research that asserts that human attention and online clickthrough behavior is drawn to vivid visual imagery. These formats included one text-only post, one post with a graphical text image, and one post with the student’s image plus text. In order to measure the success of each post format, investigators tracked each post’s online interactions in the form of Twitter clickthrough data. This enabled investigators to use the information obtained to determine the most effective social media marketing method for the Galen Health Fellows and health sciences programs at USC. Investigators hypothesized that the post style with the most vivid visual imagery would result in the highest number of online clickthroughs. Study results revealed that the hypothesis was unsupported, indicating that despite the results of research conducted, online users are less likely to click on a social media post with vivid visual characteristics. In future marketing endeavors, University of South Carolina Admissions officials will utilize the results of this study to improve the development of future social media campaigns and elicit an increased response from social media posts.

Overview

In 2016, the University of South Carolina outlined a new branding initiative that would designate the university as the premier university for students pursuing careers in the health sciences. Due to the rapidly growing demand for health care workers in the United States, health science majors and career paths have become increasingly popular at colleges and universities nationwide. In addition to increasing demand for health care employees, recent trends in the field of health care indicate a shift toward interprofessional collaboration. Advancements in health care delivery and treatment strategies have encouraged health care providers to interact and work with one another in order to facilitate improved health outcomes for patients (Bosch and Mansell, 176-179).

Because the University of South Carolina currently possesses the major resources necessary for a modern, dynamic health education in a rapidly advancing field, such as research entities, related courses, and medical programs, it has positioned itself as the destination of choice for students pursuing a career in the health sciences. As part of its rebranding efforts, the University of South Carolina aims to address advancements in the field of health care by implementing and marketing a new undergraduate health sciences initiative. This initiative, named Galen Health Fellows, is comprised of a living and learning community of undergraduate students who have demonstrated a desire to pursue a career in the field of health care. In order to qualify for this program, students must declare a major or pre-professional path related to the health sciences. According to the university, the suggested majors offered that fall under the health sciences classification include biology, chemistry/biochemistry, exercise science, public health, nursing, pharmacy, cardiovascular technology, social work, psychology, and biomedical engineering. Additionally, because the university aims to encourage students to consider careers

in the field of healthcare from a variety of majors, any undergraduate student pursuing a pre-professional track in the field of healthcare may apply to participate in the Galen Health Fellows Program, regardless of intended major. The inaugural class of Galen Health Fellows will begin the program in Fall 2017.

In order to designate the University of South Carolina as a premier location for studying the field of health sciences and provide additional benefit to the members of the program, the Galen Health Fellows program will offer many opportunities to augment the health sciences curriculum. These opportunities include the guidance of a faculty advisor, a living and learning community comprised of program participants, opportunities to participate in health science-related extracurricular activities, mentorship from upper-class healthcare students, and opportunities for enriching health care-related experiences beyond the classroom. These experiences will allow participants to use their undergraduate experiences to become competitive and well-rounded candidates for graduate school, professional training programs, and careers in the field of health care.

Although the Galen Health Fellows program provides a comprehensive interprofessional environment in which students can develop their career paths in the healthcare field, the program is new, which presents several challenges. One of the most prominent challenges involved with constructing this program is promoting it properly, particularly through social media posts. The university must communicate and promote the program as an empowering and dynamic environment for health science students, despite the fact that the program does not yet fully exist. This is a challenge because although the program has not yet enrolled participants, it must nonetheless be properly marketed to prospective students. In order to effectively market to the target population, high school students interested in pursuing health science majors, investigators

determined that the most efficient method of program promotion was online social media posts. Investigators chose to publish the social media campaign through the University of South Carolina Office of Admissions' Twitter profile, "UofSC Admissions" (@UofSCAdmissions). To determine a post style that would both draw the most attention and response in the form of web link clickthroughs, investigators created three post styles containing links to ten current student profiles which highlight the benefits of pursuing a health science degree at the University of South Carolina. Over a period of ten weeks, investigators tracked each post style to determine the most effective form of social media marketing for the Galen Health Fellows program.

With regard to social media marketing, research indicates that the brain of the Internet user is more stimulated by vivid digital imagery than text (Vries, Gensler, & Leeftang, 2012). In an effort to inform future campaigns, collaborators created three visually different post styles to test which would be more effective in marketing to the target population. These post styles include one post with text only, one graphical post with a text overlay, and one post with a single photo of the profile subject and text overlay. For the purposes of this study, investigators hypothesized that the student profile Twitter posts containing the student's image plus text overlay would result in the most clickthroughs to the student's online profile. Moving forward, collaborators will use the results of this study to determine the most visually stimulating and effective method by which the health sciences programs offered at the University of South Carolina should be promoted on social media websites.

Research

Investigators sought to determine a posting strategy that would generate online interactivity from Twitter users, particularly prospective health science students. Extensive research was performed on the human psychological and behavioral response to social media

marketing, particularly with regard to social media post formatting. For the purposes of this study, interactivity is defined as the target individual or user's interaction with a social media post by clicking on a live web link contained in the post text. In order to determine the social media post style that would elicit the greatest interactivity in the form of clickthroughs from online followers, investigators researched various social media post formatting styles and the effectiveness of these styles in generating a behavioral response from online users.

According to social media marketing research, in order to generate the desired behavior from a social media post, the "clickthrough behavior," a post must first attract the attention of the online user. In social media marketing, attention is considered to be the foundation of any further cognitive process, such as clicking on a link or interacting with a particular post (Palla & Zotos, 2017). Research indicates that attention is not a simple commodity. Rather, it is a complex entity that requires strategic social media post formatting to attract a positive cognitive response from the Internet user. The level of involvement and interactivity from an Internet user is a direct result of the social media post's ability to first gain attention from the user (Palla & Zotos, 2017). Therefore, the social media post must be designed in such a way that will draw the attention of the Internet user.

Research indicates that once a social media post attracts the attention of the user, he or she is more likely to engage in a behavioral response (Palla & Zotos, 2017). However, because behavioral response can be manipulated and increased through various visual formatting strategies, advertisers and online marketers can measurably increase the likelihood of initiating a behavioral response from the online user using specific techniques (Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012). According to studies, there are several methods of online post formatting, called determinants of brand post popularity, which aim to entice the online user to click on the link

provided in the social media post (Vries, Gensler, Leeftang, 2012). These methods include vivid brand post characteristics, repeated exposure, and post size and content (Chatterjee, Hoffman, Novak, 2003).

Research shows that the most influential factor in initiating a behavioral response from online users in the form of a link clickthrough is vividness of the social media post. According to studies, vividness is defined as the presence of design techniques which draw more attention from users than simple text posts (Coyle & Thorson, 2001). Vivid brand post characteristics such as pictures, contrasting colors, and visually appealing design positively contribute to the user's attention levels and attitude toward the marketing entity (Coyle & Thorson, 2001). Studies also indicate that increased levels of visual vividness contained in a social media post can boost click response rates (Vries, Gensler, Leeftang, 2012).

Repeated exposure to online marketing also contributes to increased clickthrough response. According to research, consistent and repeated exposure over time leads to improved brand familiarity and awareness of the promoted message (Chatterjee, Hoffman, & Novak, 2003). In addition to repeated exposure, studies show that post size and content are important components of invoking a behavioral response from Internet users. According to research, larger posts which occupy more screen space are more likely to elicit clickthrough behavior from Internet users (Dreze, 2003). Additionally, post content is an important factor in determining the desired online behavior. Although factors such as visual characteristics effectively gain attention and improve clickthrough likelihood, the message displayed by the post determines the user's desire to learn more about the post's content by clicking the link provided (Dreze, 2003). Following the desired clickthrough behavior, the message content also aids in the user's recall and recognition of the brand and its promoted message. This factor, combined with post

vividness, size, and repeated exposure to the message, contributes to an increased desired behavioral response from online marketing (Dreze, 2003).

Strategy

Using the information obtained from the research performed, investigators sought to create a social media marketing campaign that would elicit the greatest number of clickthrough responses from Internet users. To portray the comprehensive environment created by the Galen Health Fellows program and draw attention to the program through online presence, investigators determined that highlighting current student stories would present an authentic and appealing insight for prospective health science students. Because Galen Health Fellows and health sciences rebranding efforts are new and scheduled to begin Fall 2017, there are no current students enrolled in the program. Therefore, investigators determined that the most effective way to emulate the benefits of program participation and reach prospective students was to create online profiles featuring current health science students. These profiles, which feature individuals pursuing careers in the field of health care, highlight the opportunities available to future program participants within and beyond the classroom at the University of South Carolina.

To create the current student profiles, investigators interviewed ten exceptional health science students using a standard interview format (Appendix A). Students were selected based on their career-related involvement within and beyond the classroom. Selected students each took advantage of enrichment opportunities, such as community service, research, living and learning communities, and internships, which enhanced their undergraduate experiences and developed their career paths in the field of health science. Investigators sought to portray the diverse opportunities available to health science students by highlighting the unique and relevant experiences pursued by each student.

Investigators interviewed students pursuing a variety of health-related majors and career paths. Interview questions featured the student's area of study and career path, experiences at USC, and in- and out-of-classroom enrichment opportunities in the field of health care. Student answers were recorded, then transcribed to text format and edited for clarity. The students were asked to submit photos depicting their relevant college experiences and a headshot for the online profile and social media posts. Investigators created online profiles for each student using the text content and photographs submitted by the students. Upon completion, each student profile was posted through the USC Admissions account on Medium, a popular blogging site (Appendix B).

In order to draw web traffic to the online student profiles, investigators created a social media marketing campaign and implemented it through the USC Admissions account on Twitter. Using the research performed, investigators designed an experimental marketing strategy. Research indicates that online users are more attracted to vivid visual imagery, repeated post exposure, larger visual components, and impactful context. Investigators utilized these findings to produce three Twitter post formats for each student profile.



Figure 1. Twitter Post Style Examples

By creating these three unique post styles, investigators sought to determine which post style would elicit the most clickthroughs to online student profiles from the tweets. The first

style, Post A, was designed to display the least visual imagery. Post A was comprised of a 140-character tweet containing a web link to the particular student's online profile (Appendix C). Each student profile corresponded to one Post A tweet. The second style, Post B, was designed to display minimal visual imagery combined with text (Appendix D). Post B was comprised of a 140-character tweet (the same tweet as Post A for each student profile) combined with a garnet graphic box containing a quote from the particular student's interview. The third style, Post C, was designed to display the most visual imagery and vividness (Appendix E). Post C was comprised of a 140-character tweet (the same tweet as Posts A and B for each student profile) combined with a graphic box containing a photo of the student and a quote from the student's interview (the same quote as Post B for each student profile).

For the purposes of this study, investigators maintained standard post size, content, and exposure for each tweet. Each tweet promoting a student's profile was limited to the standard 140 characters provided by Twitter. Also, investigators produced Twitter post content using a template to standardize the content delivery of each student profile tweet (Appendix F). To further control for error, each student profile was published through three tweets, one per experimental post style. For each student profile, a tweet was posted to Twitter once daily at 5:00 p.m. for three consecutive days. Investigators posted Post A, followed by Post B, then Post C for each student profile (Appendix G). To further control for error, investigators attempted to maintain maximum possible consistency in the content, design, and delivery of each post style promoting the student profiles.

Execution and Evaluation

Investigators began the experimental execution phase of the health sciences marketing initiative on February 1, 2017. A post schedule was designed and implemented to ensure

consistent, organized, and consecutive Twitter posts for each student profile (Appendix G).

Following each Twitter post, investigators used Twitter's post statistics to track the reach, engagements, and clickthroughs generated by each of the thirty tweets. For the purposes of this study, investigators tracked the clickthrough data and used this information to determine the success of each post style in the online social media campaign.

The clickthrough metrics produced by the online marketing campaign revealed that Post A generated the most clickthrough from online users (Figure 2). In contrast, Twitter engagement data revealed that Post C generated the most engagements (user responses in the form of post/photo expansion, likes, replies, and retweets) (Figure 3). Based on the results of this study, although research shows that the attention of Internet users is drawn to more vivid imagery, more online clickthrough behavior resulted from the simplest form of visual social media posts. Therefore, the hypothesis is unsupported by the results of this study.

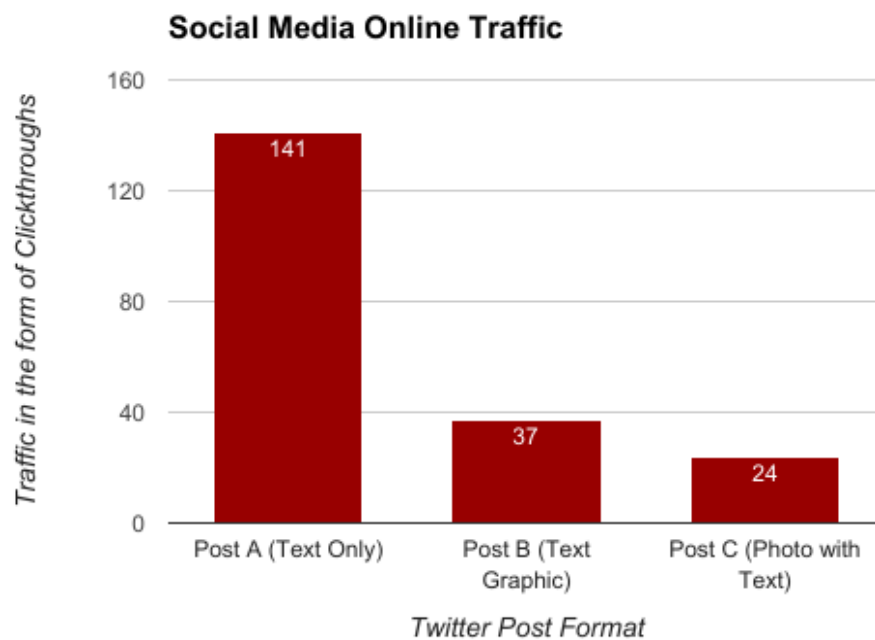


Figure 2. Social media online traffic data categorized by each Twitter post style

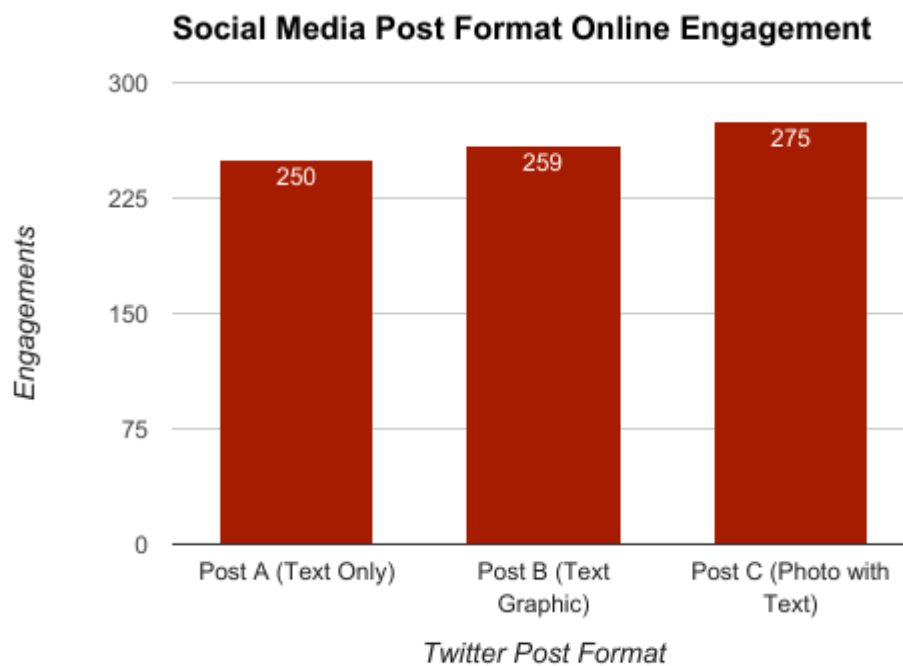


Figure 3. Social media online engagement data categorized by each Twitter post style

Analysis and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the type of post that elicits the most clickthrough responses to social media marketing efforts for the university's new health sciences rebranding initiative. Using information highlighting the features of the new Galen Health Fellows and health sciences programs at USC, investigators created a social media marketing campaign comprised of stories given by current students pursuing health professions at Carolina. To promote these stories, investigators thoroughly researched the online marketing methods and techniques that would be the most likely to initiate a behavioral response from Internet users. It was hypothesized that more clickthroughs would result from a social media post containing a maximal level of visual vividness. According to online marketing and social media studies, both the attention and behavioral qualities of Internet users can be drawn through vivid imagery, repeated ad exposure, ad size, and message content. However, according to research, visual vividness is the most prominent determinant of social media clickthrough behavior (Dreze, 2003). Investigators used this information to create three Twitter post styles, Posts A, B, and C, which tested the hypothesis by containing varying levels of vivid imagery. Investigators posted three tweets, one of each style, publishing each student profile once daily at 5:00 p.m. to control for error.

The results of the study revealed that although research indicates that internet users are more likely to engage in a social media post if it contains vivid visual imagery, users generated more clickthroughs from Post A, the least visually vivid post style. According to findings, 69.8% of online clickthroughs resulted from Post A interactions. This does not support the assertion that online users are drawn to social media posts containing colorful imagery such as photos and graphics. The clickthrough data from other post styles also revealed that the hypothesis is

unsupported, with 18.3% of online clickthroughs resulting from Post B and 11.9% of clickthroughs resulting from Post C (Figure 2). These results indicate that Internet users are most likely to clickthrough to visually simple social media posts and much less likely to click on text plus graphic and photo plus graphic posts.

These results, although inconsistent with the research conducted for the purposes of this study, may indicate that online clickthrough behavior does not directly correlate with increased visual vividness. Investigators postulate that the results may be due to an adverse response from post vividness. Although research shows that attention is drawn to visually vivid post styles, online users may have felt less inclined to click on the link accompanying a vivid post style such as Post B or C because they did not believe it was necessary to seek more information from the post link. Online users may have viewed the more visually vivid Post B and C styles and, believing they had drawn all necessary information from the message of the posts, avoided clicking on the link. In contrast, users may have viewed the text-only Post A style tweets as intriguing and, wanting to learn more from the limited information presented in the post style, clicked on the link provided. The engagement data produced in the study also supports this theory. Engagement data revealed that online users were more likely to engage with, but not click on, more visually vivid post styles (Figure 3). Online users may have chosen to engage with the visually vivid posts, then avoid clicking the provided link because they felt they had received adequate information from the post itself. In contrast, viewing the least vivid, less interactive post styles may have elicited curiosity from the online users, resulting in decreased engagements and increased clickthroughs to the link provided on the Twitter post. In this study, online users may have been more drawn to the content of the message and limited information provided by Post A style tweets than the visually vivid imagery of the Post B and C style tweets.

Several errors and limitations are present in this study. Investigators had access to no monetary funding for promotion of social media posts. Therefore, the posts created and placed on Twitter were not influenced by purchased ad space or sponsorships. Investigators also conducted the study without advertising software or access to a lab. These challenges may have limited investigators' ability to reach a large audience of online users through the Twitter posts. Additional sources of limitation and error include the inability to control for audience exposure to Twitter posts and the inability to target a particular population of desired prospective students. Although investigators practiced all measures possible to control for variation in Twitter posts through content templates, controlled timing of tweets, and consistent interview and marketing procedures, variation nonetheless existed amongst student profiles and the tweets promoting their stories. Also, because the study was conducted under a strict time constraint of ten weeks, investigators were unable to determine long-term engagement and interaction metrics or promote additional student profiles on the UofSC Admissions Twitter page.

Although errors and limitations exist in this study, they may arguably contribute to a more authentic and organic representation of how online content performs without monetary influence. Because the study did not make use of professional advertising software, ad funding, or any other source of online marketing manipulation, the posts performed based on the content of the message and the way they were organically communicated to Internet users. Because the social media posts were released without monetary promotion or paid professional strategy, Internet users were exposed to the posts without manipulation or financial influence. Although this may be a source of limitation in some regards, it also displays a true representation of how online users behave.

In future experiments and marketing endeavors, investigators will use the results of this study to determine the most effective social media post strategy for university initiatives. Potential future experiments in this subject area include an experiment which explores the influence of paid online marketing strategies and software. Future experiments which measure other characteristics of social media marketing strategies, such as post content, post size, and exposure repetition, would also be beneficial to investigators. In the future, investigators could also perform experiments which track online engagement and clickthrough data for longer periods of time or experiments that feature a wider range of student profiles. As an additional experimental measure, incorporating focus groups or surveys regarding perception of online marketing strategies may be beneficial for future marketing endeavors.

Because the use of social media marketing is a prominent and fast-growing tool for university admissions offices, it is important that admissions officials possess a well-researched understanding of the most effective online marketing methods for the programs they promote. The use of social media is a beneficial, yet complex, form of marketing which must be carefully crafted in order to produce optimal results. In future social media campaigns, the University of South Carolina's admissions practitioners will use the results of the study conducted to enhance the content and design of their marketing endeavors. By carefully combining both visually vivid and simple marketing techniques which increase online clickthroughs and engagements, the University of South Carolina Office of Admissions will create effective and successful online marketing campaigns targeting prospective students in the field of health sciences.

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Appendix A





Student Interview Question List

1. How did you decide to become a student at USC?
2. How did you choose your major?
3. What are your career goals after graduation?
4. What has been a defining moment of your undergraduate experience that has led you to this path?
5. Are there any other ways the University has shaped your career goals?
6. What's the coolest thing about your major?
7. If you could give one piece of advice to an incoming student interested in health sciences, what would it be?

Appendix B


University of South Carolina Admissions Account on Medium


Web Link: <https://medium.com/@UofSCAdmissions>

Write a story   

USC Admissions

The University of South Carolina is home to the best and brightest students from SC and beyond. Come join the Carolina community!




50 Following 120 Followers · 

Edit

Profile Latest




Featured

USC Admissions
Jan 3 · 5 min read


Creating A Global Perspective

How studying abroad helped Sarah Roof develop a better understanding of global health practices.

Read more...


 

Latest

USC Admissions
2 days ago · 5 min read

Serving Through Psychology

Learn how Anne Rohrback's interest in child psychology and passion for helping others led her to a rewarding career path.



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Mar 16 · 5 min read

HEALTH PROFESSIONS AT CAROLINA



Health Professions at Carolina

Learn how Morgan Rising discovered a career path in health policy and...

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1



USC Admissions

Feb 27 · 6 min read

HEALTH PROFESSIONS AT CAROLINA





Health Professions at Carolina

Learn how Austin Lewis took advantage of USC's connections to find his...

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 **USC Admissions**
Feb 23 · 5 min read




Health Professions at Carolina

Learn how Gabriella McClure followed an unlikely path to find her...

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 **USC Admissions**
Feb 17 · 6 min read

Taking a Chance on Research

Learn how Biology major Katherine Castleberry used her love of medicine and biological sciences to pursue research on campus and abroad.

[Read more...](#)




  


 **USC Admissions**
Feb 14 · 6 min read

Keeping an Open Mind

When Daniel Patterson changed his major to Biomedical Engineering, he was exposed to countless opportunities for growth. Learn how he used these opportunities to find success in his...

[Read more...](#)




  

 **USC Admissions**
Feb 1 · 5 min read

Leaving a Legacy of Service

Learn how Elizabeth Pettit combined veterinary service and a unique donor opportunity to leave her own legacy at USC.

[Read more...](#)

 1  

Appendix C

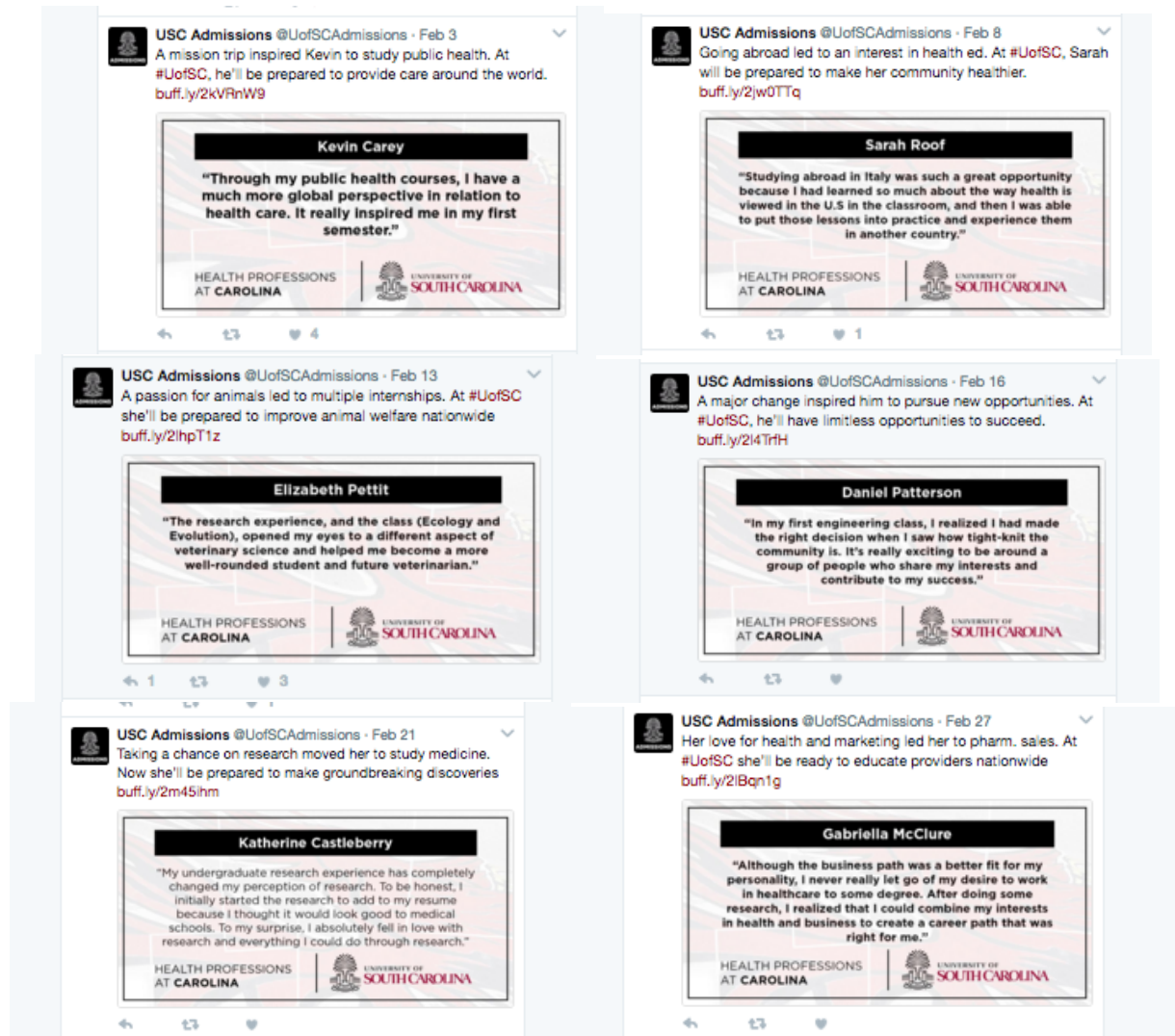
Post A- Style Tweets (Text Only)





Appendix D

Post B- Style Tweets (tweet plus text graphic)



USC Admissions @UofSCAdmissions · Mar 6

Strong connections at Carolina led him to neuroscience. At #UofSC he'll be prepared to connect with future patients buff.ly/2mMOonV

Austin Lewis

"Because I love neuroscience, I took classes on neurological disease and physiology, but every aspect of Biology is represented in the available courses at USC. It has been really cool to see how each Biology major I know has created a unique experience based on his or her passions."

HEALTH PROFESSIONS AT CAROLINA | UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

USC Admissions @UofSCAdmissions · Mar 27

Learn how #UofSC student Morgan Rising discovered a career path in health policy and administration. buff.ly/2mInf5R

Morgan Rising

"The field of public health is constantly evolving, and it's really cool to study the way government and policy influence health care in the United States. It has been fascinating to learn about the history of public health while experiencing firsthand the constant changes that take place in US."

HEALTH PROFESSIONS AT CAROLINA | UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

USC Admissions @UofSCAdmissions · 21h

How Anne Rohrbach's interest in child psychology and passion for helping others led her to a rewarding career path. buff.ly/2obYGOF

Anne Rohrbach

"Making connections with the children and the professionals at the Autism Academy has shown me that working with children in school psychology is the right path for me."

HEALTH PROFESSIONS AT CAROLINA | UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

USC Admissions @UofSCAdmissions · Apr 11

A desire to give back led to an interest in pharmacy. Now he's prepared to improve the health of his community. buff.ly/2nBukFT

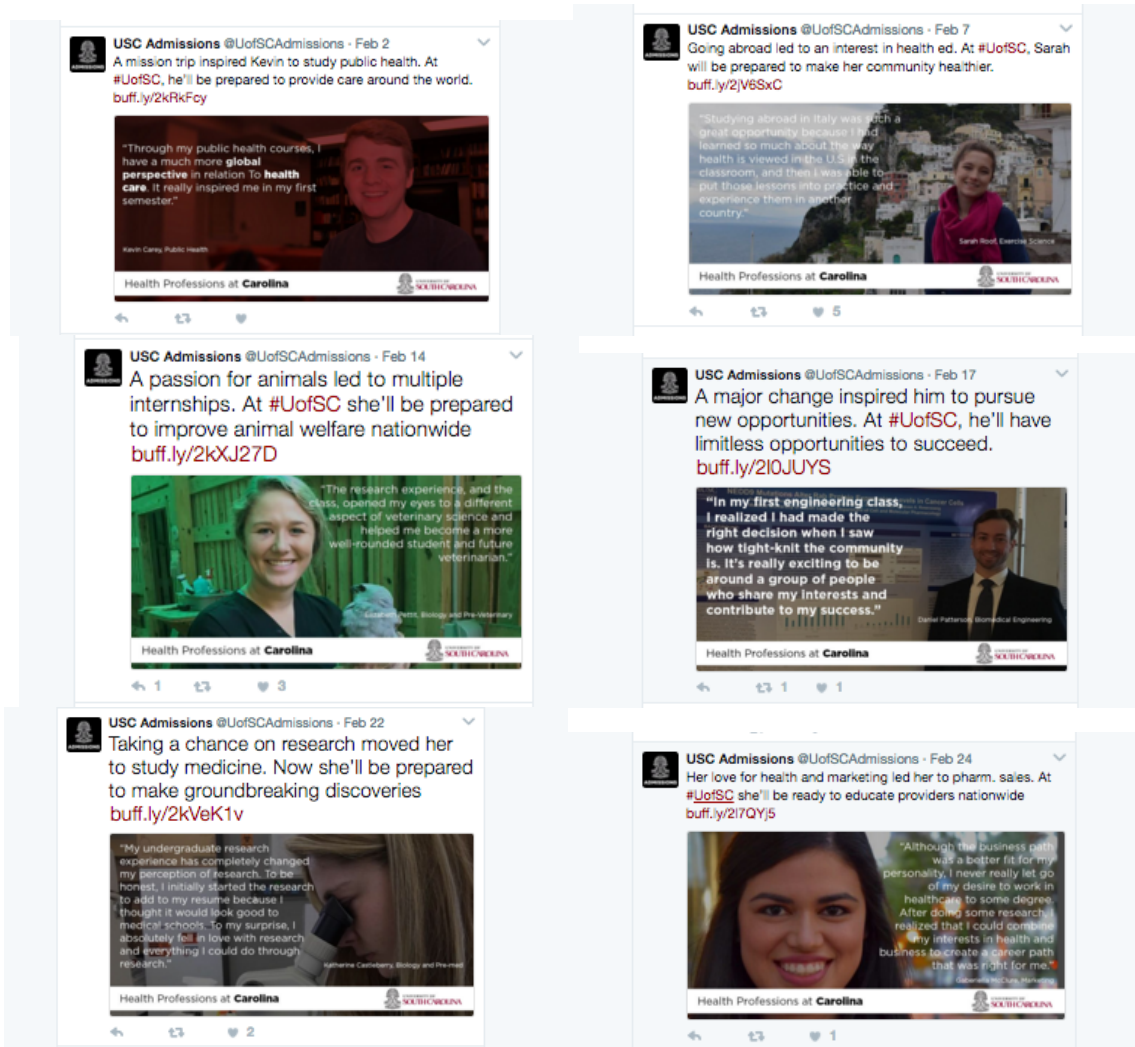
Tyler Wagner

"There are so many great programs offered to health science majors here, and I knew that this was the place I could work and study with other like-minded people in my career field."

HEALTH PROFESSIONS AT CAROLINA | UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

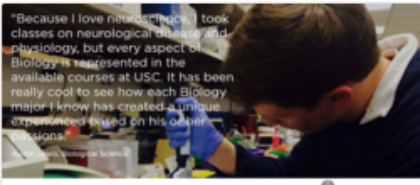
Appendix E

Post C-Style Tweets (text plus photo graphic with quote)



USC Admissions @UofSCAdmissions · Mar 1

Strong connections at Carolina led him to neuroscience. At #UofSC he'll be prepared to connect with future patients buff.ly/2IZzRnM

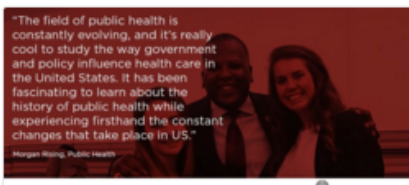


"Because I love neuroscience, I took classes on neurological disease and physiology, but every aspect of Biology is represented in the available courses at USC. It has been really cool to see how each Biology major I know has created a unique experience based on his own passions."

Health Professions at **Carolina**

USC Admissions @UofSCAdmissions · Mar 21

Learn how #UofSC student Morgan Rising discovered a career path in health policy and administration. buff.ly/2nNQHEI




"The field of public health is constantly evolving, and it's really cool to study the way government and policy influence health care in the United States. It has been fascinating to learn about the history of public health while experiencing firsthand the constant changes that take place in U.S."

Morgan Rising, Public Health

Health Professions at **Carolina**

USC Admissions @UofSCAdmissions · Apr 13

How Anne Rohrbach's interest in child psychology and passion for helping others led her to a rewarding career path. buff.ly/2obYGOF



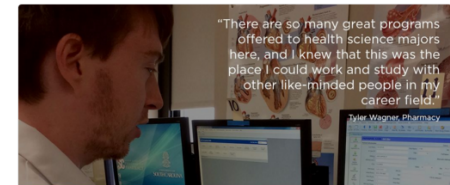
"Making connections with the children and the professionals at the Autism Academy has shown me that working with children in school psychology is the right path for me."

Ann Rohrbach, Psychology

Health Professions at **Carolina**

USC Admissions @UofSCAdmissions · Apr 12

A desire to give back led to an interest in pharmacy. Now he's prepared to improve the health of his community. buff.ly/2ojrtQL



"There are so many great programs offered to health science majors here, and I knew that this was the place I could work and study with other like-minded people in my career field."

Tyler Wagner, Pharmacy

Health Professions at **Carolina**

Appendix F

Student Profile Tweet List

Name	Post
Kevin Carey	A mission trip inspired him to study public health. As a #healthprofessionsmajor at #UofSC, he'll be prepared to provide care around the world.
Sarah Roof	A semester abroad led her to a career in health promotion. As a #healthprofessionsmajor at #UofSC, she'll be prepared to make her community a healthier place.
Elizabeth Pettit	A passion for animals led to multiple internships. At #UofSC, she'll be prepared to improve animal welfare nationwide.
Daniel Patterson	A major change inspired him to pursue new opportunities. At #UofSC, he'll have limitless opportunities to succeed.
Katherine Castleberry	Taking a chance on research inspired her to study medicine. As a #healthprofessionsmajor at #UofSC, she'll be prepared to make groundbreaking discoveries.
Gabriella McClure	Combining her passions for health and marketing led her to pharmaceutical sales. As a #healthprofessionsmajor at #UofSC, she'll be prepared to educate providers nationwide.
Anne Rohrback	A desire to help children led her to school psychology. As a #healthprofessionsmajor at #UofSC, she'll be prepared to advocate for children in her community.
Austin Lewis	Strong connections in the Carolina community led him to neuroscience. As a #healthprofessionsmajor at #UofSC, he'll be prepared to connect with future patients.
Morgan Rising	An unlikely path led her to a career in health science. As a #healthprofessionsmajor at #UofSC, she'll be prepared for a career in health policy and administration.
Tyler Wagner	A desire to give back led him to a career in clinical pharmacy. As a #healthprofessionsmajor at #UofSC, he'll be prepared to improve the health of his community.

Appendix G

Student Profile Tweet Schedule

1. Kevin Carey Post A
2. Kevin Carey Post B
3. Kevin Carey Post C
4. Sarah Roof Post A
5. Sarah Roof Post B
6. Sarah Roof Post C
7. Elizabeth Pettit Post A
8. Elizabeth Pettit Post B
9. Elizabeth Pettit Post C
10. Katherine Castleberry Post A
11. Katherine Castleberry Post B
12. Katherine Castleberry Post C
13. Daniel Patterson Post A
14. Daniel Patterson Post B
15. Daniel Patterson Post C
16. Gabriella McClure Post A
17. Gabriella McClure Post B
18. Gabriella McClure Post C
19. Austin Lewis Post A
20. Austin Lewis Post B
21. Austin Lewis Post C

22. Morgan Rising Post A

23. Morgan Rising Post B

24. Morgan Rising Post C

25. Anne Rohrback Post A

26. Anne Rohrback Post B

27. Anne Rohrback Post C

28. Tyler Wagner Post A

29. Tyler Wagner Post B

30. Tyler Wagner Post C

Appendix H

Thesis Project Defense Materials

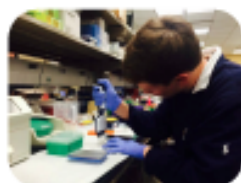
SCHC Senior Thesis Project

Sarah A. Roof

HEALTH PROFESSIONS AT CAROLINA:

PROMOTING THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA GALEN HEALTH FELLOWS AND
HEALTH SCIENCES INITIATIVES USING SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Promoting the Galen Health Fellows Program

*Designating the University of South Carolina as the premier university for students
pursuing careers in the health sciences*

This project sought to bring awareness to the newly developed Galen Health Fellows and health sciences programs at the University of South Carolina. In collaboration with the UofSC Office of Admissions, investigators created and promoted an online marketing campaign for prospective program participants composed of online profiles of current UofSC health science students. These profiles aimed to promote the beyond-the-classroom experiences and advantages gained from pursuing a health sciences career at UofSC, particularly as a Galen Health Fellow. Student profiles were posted on the USC Admissions account of the blog site Medium and "shared" via clickable link on the UofSC Admissions Twitter page. Three Twitter post styles for each student profile were created based on research that asserts that human attention and online clickthrough behavior is drawn to vivid visual imagery. These formats included one text-only post, one post with a graphical text image, and one post with

the student's image plus text. In order to measure the success of the initiative's online presence, investigators tracked each post style's online interactions in the form of clickthrough data. This also enabled investigators to track the performance of each format and use the data to determine the most effective social media marketing method for the Galen Health Fellows and health sciences programs at UofSC. Investigators hypothesized that the post style with the most vivid visual imagery would result in an optimal level of online clickthroughs. Study results revealed that the hypothesis was unsupported. Despite the results of research conducted, the study showed that online users are less likely to click on social media posts with visual vividness. In future advertising endeavors, University of South Carolina Admissions officials will utilize the results of this study to improve the development of future campaigns and elicit an increased response from social media marketing campaigns.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Galen Health Fellows Program

- Learning community
- Linked courses
- Faculty principal
- Enrichment experiences
- Post-graduate preparation

Online Marketing Campaign

- 10 student profiles
- Showcase benefits of studying health sciences at UofSC

Social Media Strategy

- Researched attention, behavior
- 3 post styles tested on Twitter
- Goal: to determine whether visual vividness affects post clickthroughs

HYPOTHESIS:

For the purposes of this study, investigators hypothesize that the student profile Twitter posts containing the student's image plus text will result in the most clickthroughs to the student's online profile.

Twitter Post Formats

Post A: Text Only



Post B: Text plus Graphic



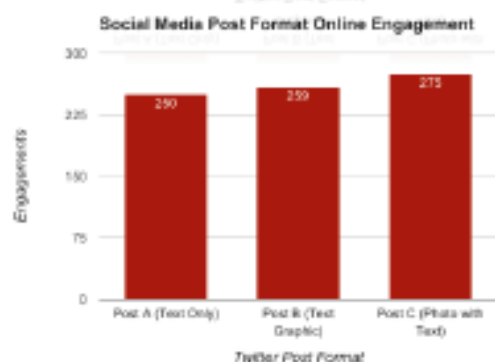
Post C: Photo plus Graphic



Research Methods

- **Human Online Attention and Behavior**
 - **Attention first, then behavior:** Studies show that human attention is the foundation of behavior. Therefore, online posts must first attract the attention of the online user in order to elicit the desired clickthrough behavior.
 - **Determinants of brand post popularity:** These are factors that affect the likelihood of the online user's attention and response to a marketing campaign.
 - **Visual vividness:** Studies show that increased visual vividness in the form of images, color, and text formatting increases attention and clickthrough behavior.
 - **Repeated exposure:** Research indicates that repetition of exposure to online marketing campaigns increases attention and likelihood of clickthrough behavior.
 - **Post size and content:** Studies show that increased post size positively correlates with attention and clickthrough behavior. Additionally, the content of the online marketing campaign improves user perception and retention of the message.
 - **Tested determinant: visual vividness**
 - Visual vividness is the strongest determinant of brand post popularity
 - Increased vividness results in increased attention and elicits an increased behavioral response from online users.

Results of Study



Analysis

- **Explanation of Results**
 - Hypothesis unsupported: Results may be due to curiosity associated with text-only posts, which include less information and invoke a desire to learn more in the user.
- **Errors and Limitations**
 - Lack of funding and software to manipulate or purchase ad space on Twitter
 - Lack of control for audience exposure to tweets
 - Time constraint of 10 weeks prevented long-term result measurement
- **Benefits of Study Structure**
 - Online content study with no manipulation of posting strategy resulted in an authentic representation of online clickthrough behavior

Future Considerations

- **Future Experiments**
 - Paid vs. unpaid online marketing campaigns
 - Track other brand determinants- post content, size, or exposure repetition
 - Track results over an extended time period
 - Conduct focus groups/surveys with online users
- **Future Considerations**
 - Use information obtained for future UofSC Admissions Office and Galen Health Fellows campaigns
 - Further develop online marketing design strategies

STUDENT PROFILE EXAMPLES

Morgan Rising: Medium Profile

USC Admissions
The University of South Carolina is home to the best and brightest students from SC and beyond.
May 2018 - 5 min read

Discovering an Unexpected Path

Learn how Morgan Rising discovered a career path in health policy and administration.

HEALTH PROFESSIONS AT
CAROLINA



As a health professions major at the University of South Carolina, you have countless opportunities to explore your interests. However, as this industry evolves, future health professions majors must understand systems of care, population health, and quality care in the United States and beyond. Where to start?

Public Health major and Political Science/Business Administration minor Morgan Rising found that exploring nontraditional careers in the health care field led her to her passion for public health policy.

Through programs like the University of South Carolina's [Galen Health Fellows](#), you can be a part of a program that intentionally facilitates your exploration of a wide spectrum of healthcare careers so that you can be confident that you've chosen the right path.

How did you decide to become a student at USC?

Because I knew that I wanted to pursue a graduate degree program after college, I searched for schools that would help me the most with [scholarships and financial aid](#). USC offered the most merit-based scholarship opportunities for me, so that was a major factor in my decision process. However, as I learned more about USC, I realized that it had so much more to offer than financial aid.

"Carolina provides so many opportunities, like the [Hogans College](#), connections in the Columbia community, and out-of-classroom experiences. These opportunities, combined with its distinguished reputation, made USC my top choice for my undergraduate experience."

How did you choose your major?

When I first started at USC, I was Pre-Med because I thought that was the best option for me. I wasn't aware of all of the different career opportunities available in the field of health care.

"In my first semester of college, I was exposed to so many career paths in Public Health that I didn't even know existed. Because I've always enjoyed studying political science and policy, I became really interested in health administration, a path I discovered during my freshman year at USC."

I decided to combine my interests in health science and policy to pursue a degree in Public Health focusing on health administration.

What are your career goals after graduation?

After graduation, I hope to pursue a career in government relations for a major hospital system. Throughout my time at USC, I've had the opportunity to speak to several health professionals and administrators who have encouraged me to continue my interests through a career in this field. This semester, I've also had the opportunity to intern at the office of the Mayor of Columbia, which has really solidified my interest in a career in health policy and administration.

What has been a defining moment of your undergraduate experience that has led you to this path?

My internship with the Mayor's Office has definitely changed the way I view health care as a whole. I work with the Mayor's Policy Advisor, and we attend meetings with different community organizations in order to help create plans and programs for how to address community health needs. After we create an action plan, we help spread awareness in the Columbia area and get people involved with new health programs and events. Since I became an intern, we've organized summer lunch programs for impoverished children, mentorship programs for teenage boys, and so many others.

"The experience has completely changed my perspective of what public health really is. When most people hear the term 'public health,' they think about hospitals and diseases. Many people don't realize the importance of the other aspects of public health, like food programs and prevention plans. This internship has shown me how comprehensive public health is and how important the role of the government is in impacting the health of communities across the nation."

Are there any other ways the University has shaped your career goals?

SCHC Senior Thesis Project

Sarah A. Roof

During my first semester of college, I met with my advisor to discuss my interest in getting more involved in the Columbia community. Immediately, my advisor handed me a list of community locations and organizations with which USC has relationships and provides student volunteers. After we discussed my interests and career goals (I was still Pre-Med at the time), I decided to volunteer at the Free Medical Clinic in Columbia.

The experience was very eye-opening because it helped me realize the importance of public health at every socioeconomic level. It also connected me with other USC students who are also pursuing careers in health care. USC was instrumental in helping me find this opportunity, and I am so thankful that the university helped connect me to a community organization that helped me pursue my passions.

What's the coolest thing about your major?

"The field of public health is constantly evolving, and it's really cool to study the way government and policy influence health care in the United States. It has been fascinating to learn about the history of public health while experiencing firsthand the constant changes that take place in US healthcare reform."

If you could give any advice to an incoming student interested in health sciences, what would it be?

Speaking from experience, I would say the best advice is to keep your mind open. I came into college very focused on Pre-Med, but by exploring other options, I found a path that interests me even more. I think it's so important for college students to keep an open mind because at USC, there are countless opportunities to pursue your passions and ultimately discover a career path that's right for you.



The University of South Carolina is leading the way in health professions education. Aside from offering one of the most diverse and comprehensive selection of health-related majors, our Golden Health Fellows program ensures our graduates are among the most qualified and highly sought professionals to enter the healthcare workforce. [Learn more about becoming a Golden Health Fellow.](#)

[Education](#) [College](#)

**To view additional student profiles on Medium, visit
<https://medium.com/@UofSCAdmissions/making-an-unlikely-impact-91aebfd97f75>**

SCHC Senior Thesis Project

Sarah A. Roof

ADDITIONAL TWITTER POST EXAMPLES

Post A	Post B	Post C

*To view additional Twitter posts, visit the UofSC Admissions Twitter page at
<https://twitter.com/uofscadmissions>*