




## How to use this guidebook

This guidebook contains the 24 student maps from our Mapping the Student Engagement Journey research project. These maps were created between October 2019 and April 2020. Students created these maps at the beginning of their interview, and we used this artifact to guide the rest of our conversation. Each page of the guidebook contains the student map, basic information on the student's year in school and major, an overview of their student's engagement journey, and one memorable quote from the interview. The guidebook is arranged alphabetically by college.

When it was time to create the map, students were asked to look at a list of student engagement types and identify any meaningful student engagement experiences they did as an undergraduate. They were asked to place stickers on their timeline that represented each opportunity. Not many instructions were given to the students beyond that; we wanted to see how students interpreted our student engagement types and created their journey. This meant that all of our maps look different and this guidebook helps you better understand these journeys.

	Engagement type
	Undergraduate research
	Professional experiences
	Study abroad and study away
	Community-based learning
	Creative accomplishments
	Courses with out-of-class components
	Organizational experiences
	Peer mentoring
	Self-directed student engagement
	Volunteerism

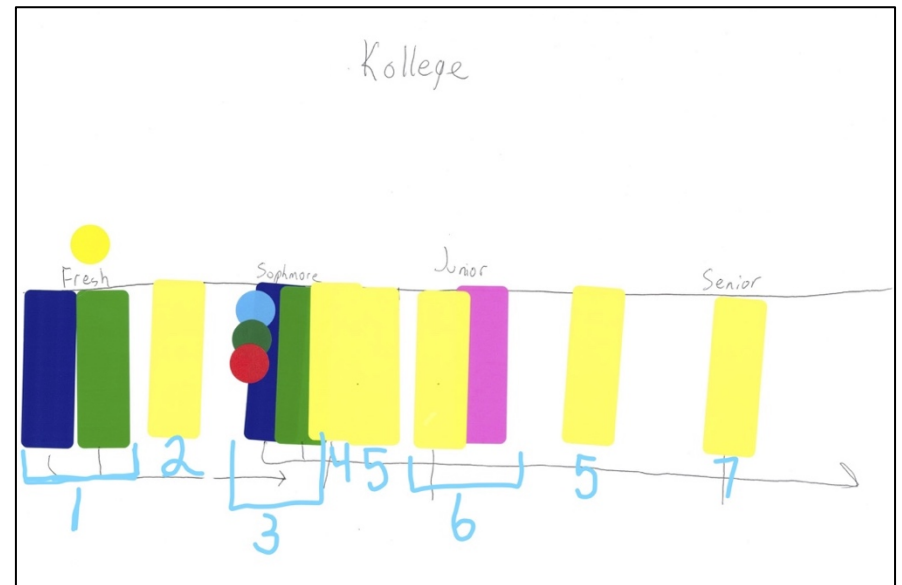
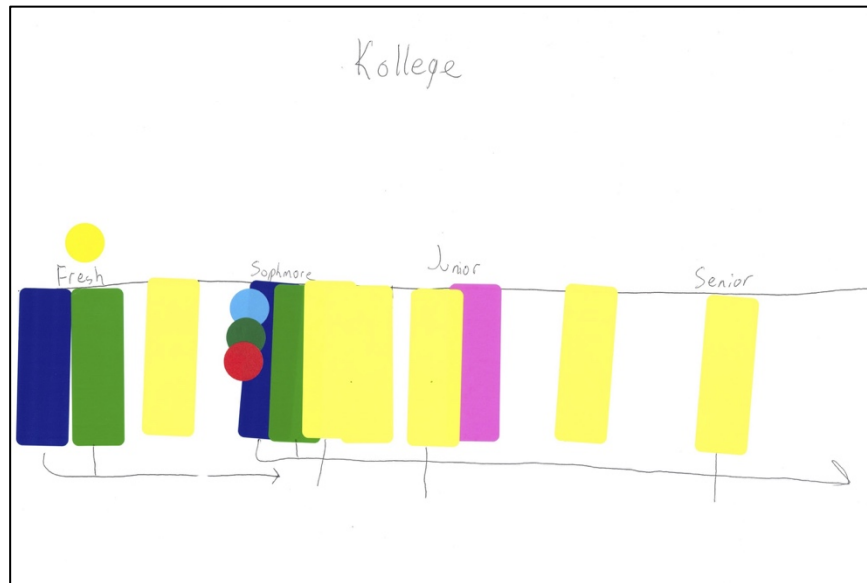
First, to read the map, you'll need to understand the colors of each sticker. To the right is the key that matches the sticker color to the student engagement experience. Due to scanning, some stickers look almost the same, so refer to the summary for additional context on the journey.

Second, there can be up to four circle stickers that also indicate information. The **green circle sticker** was used to represent the most rewarding student engagement experience and the **red circle sticker** was used to represent the most challenging student engagement experience. **Blue circle stickers** are occasionally used, to represent leadership opportunities the student mentioned in the interview. Finally, we asked each student to use a **yellow circle sticker** to mark where they declared their major.

Finally, in analyzing the maps, we realized that the stickers alone do not always accurately represent the number of experiences the student completed. Some students used a sticker for each year they were in a club, while others used one sticker to represent the start of that experience, even though it lasted over several semesters or years. Other students "nested" experiences and in the process used two stickers: for example, a student did undergraduate research while studying abroad. On each page, the map on the left-hand side is the "original" map that the student created; the map on the right is our "detailed" map where we number each experience and indicate places where the experience is duplicated/repeated.

# Jason

Agricultural Sciences
Senior, Turf management major



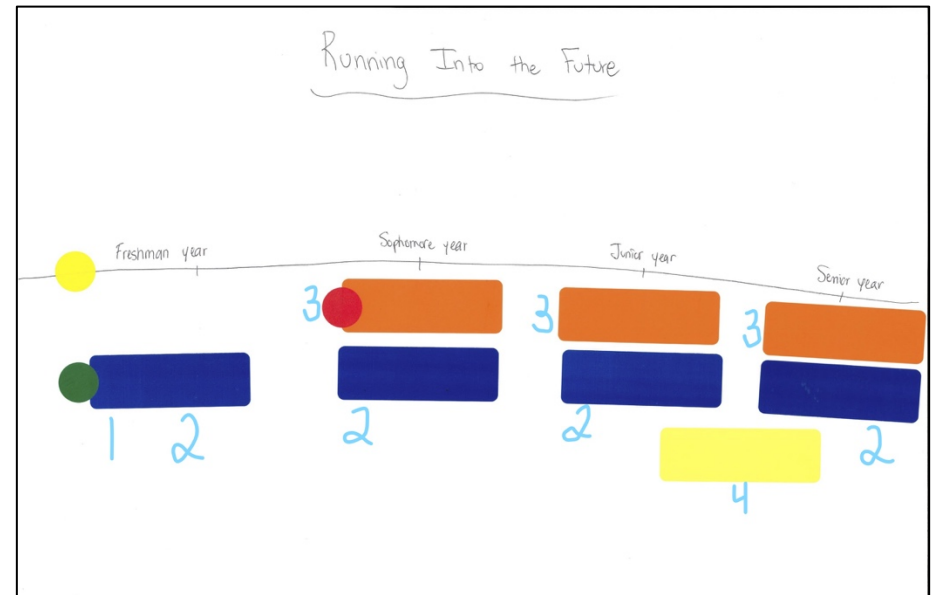
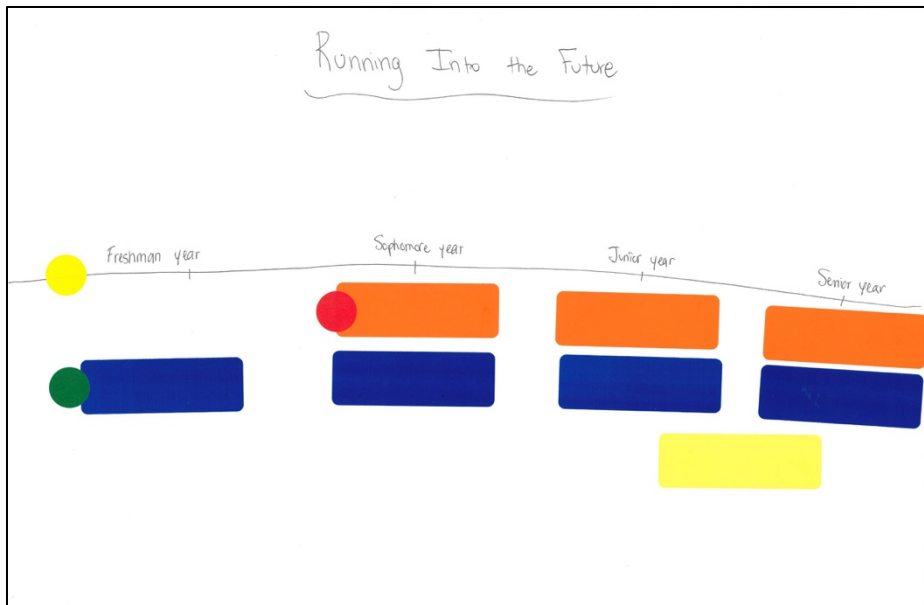
## Summary of Jason's map

Jason's map is strong in professional development. Each of his professional experiences were work opportunities on a golf course, directly tied to his turf management major. These experiences served as resume builders and networking opportunities. Throughout his college career, Jason was committed to civic responsibility as well. He gave back to the Penn State community through a service fraternity, THON organization, and peer mentoring opportunity within the turf management program. Jason recognized that the relationships formed during his volunteer experiences will not only be lasting friendships, but professional contacts as well.

*"...now these are people that I could go to for throughout my career. I know my cool group of friends that I've built from joining these organizations won't only help me as friends, but professionally as well."*

# Thomas

Agricultural Sciences
Senior, Toxicology major



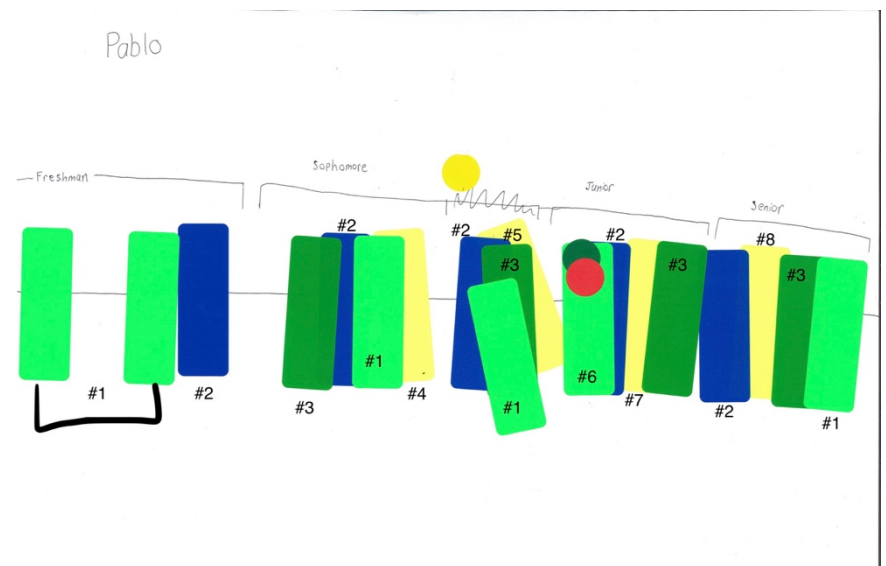
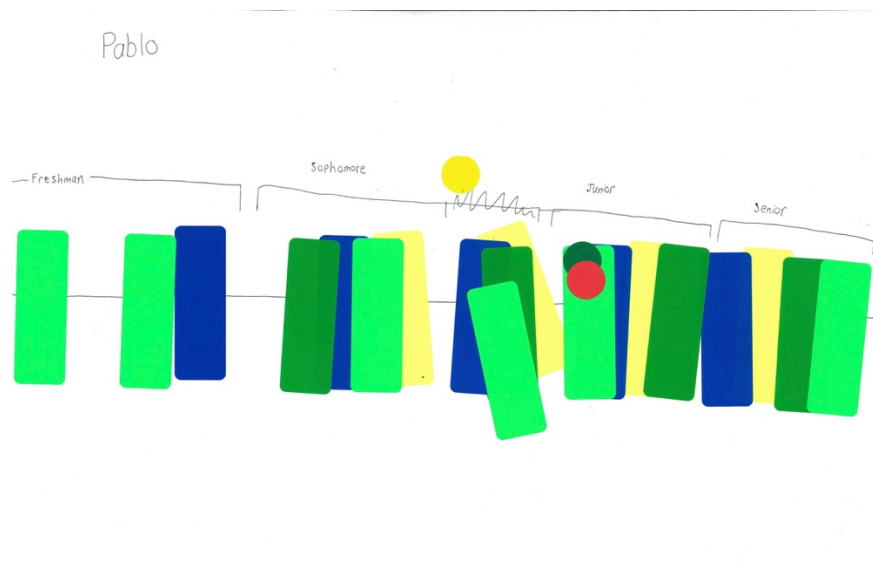
## Summary of Thomas' map

Thomas' involvement with two club sports is a good example of the Engagement Plan. Thomas tried an experience, ultimate frisbee, and in the process, learned what made a good club. This allowed him to stop frisbee and pick up cross-country, which was better suited to his "why." Thomas also pursued undergraduate research, joining a lab recommended to him by his advisor and with a professor he had a class with. This lab experience really shaped his decision of what he would like to do after graduation.

*"I was looking for a club that was like, you had opportunities to really push yourself and excel and succeed and work hard if you wanted to, but also if you weren't feeling that for a certain day, week, month, or even the whole semester or year, you didn't have to be at a super high level of the involvement."*

# Aileen

Arts & Architecture  
Senior, Music Education major



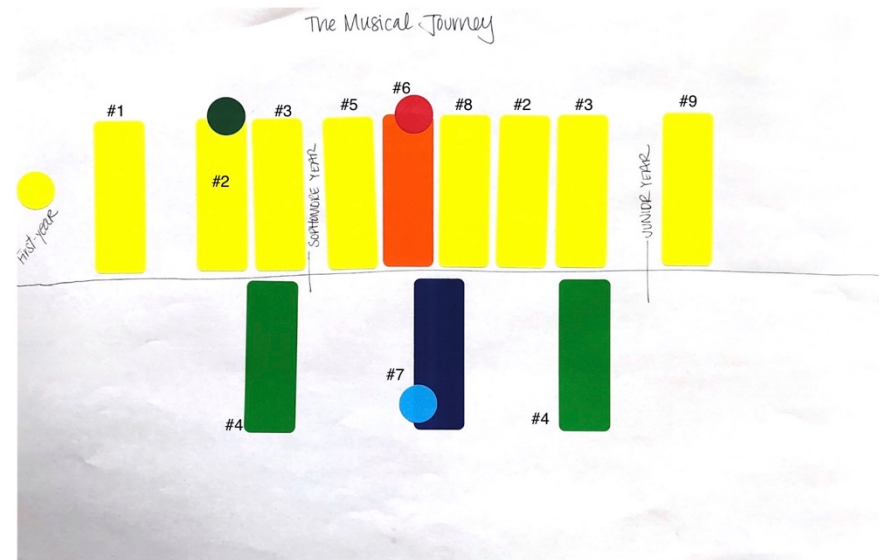
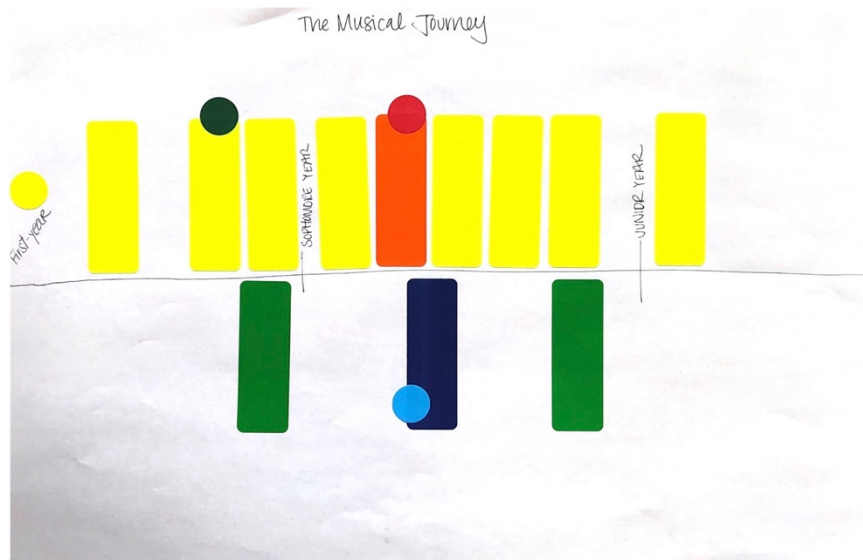
## Summary of Aileen's map

Aileen decided to attend Penn State when the woodwind professors visited her high school and she met her future professor. Building confidence as a musician and teacher was a theme of Aileen's map. Through large ensembles, coursework, and recitals, Aileen had the opportunity to grow during her four years. Aileen has moved away from music education, but due to the curriculum, did not change to a performance major. However, she still feels that teaching will be something important to know how to do, wherever her future takes her. Finally, many experiences she chose were influenced by her peers, showcasing the tight-knit connection within the School of Music.

*"...I kind of felt like I wasn't good enough to be a performance major. And I still think it's really valuable to learn how to teach people. I feel like it's also helped me become better at learning. And also I don't really know where my life is going to go, I might want to come back to teaching."*

# Declan

Arts & Architecture
Junior, Music Education major



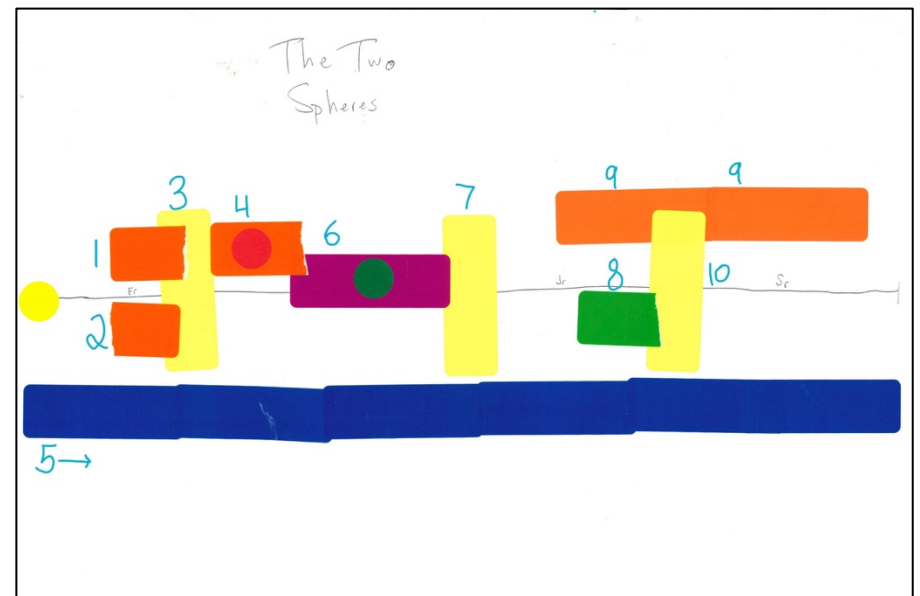
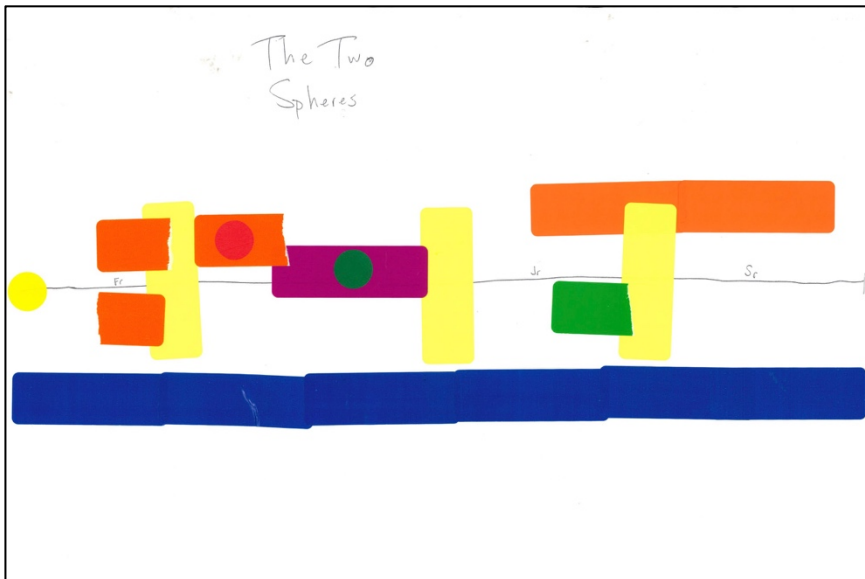
## Summary of Declan's map

Declan's student engagement journey features lots of professional development. During his observation hours and teaching experiences, Declan developed leadership and classroom management techniques. His organizational experience, volunteer work, and community-based learning were also related to music education, helping him build a professional skill set. Declan's map is also strong in structural influences, as the music education curriculum requires observation hours with different age groups in music classrooms. He discussed how the combination of music education requirements with performance requirements has impacted his engagement journey.

*"...we have all this teaching stuff that we're going to be doing. Yet we still have to meet some of the requirements that the music performance majors have. Like we have we have juries at the end of each semester. Where like we have to perform a solo piece or something like that. And we have to like put on the senior recital to graduate so...it is challenging."*

# Julian

Smeal College of Business
Senior, Actuarial Science major



## Summary of Julian's map

Julian's advice coming into Penn State was to find ways to make the big circle that is this university as small as possible. This advice resonated with Julian and he referenced this idea throughout the interview and even in naming his map. While his study abroad was life-changing, what's unique about Julian's journey is his honor classes with their out-of-course components. These courses were extremely meaningful and where he got to create work he talks about on his resume. In addition, Julian's Schreyer thesis combined many of his passions together and he has by far the best descriptions around the research process and role the library can play in these student engagement experiences.

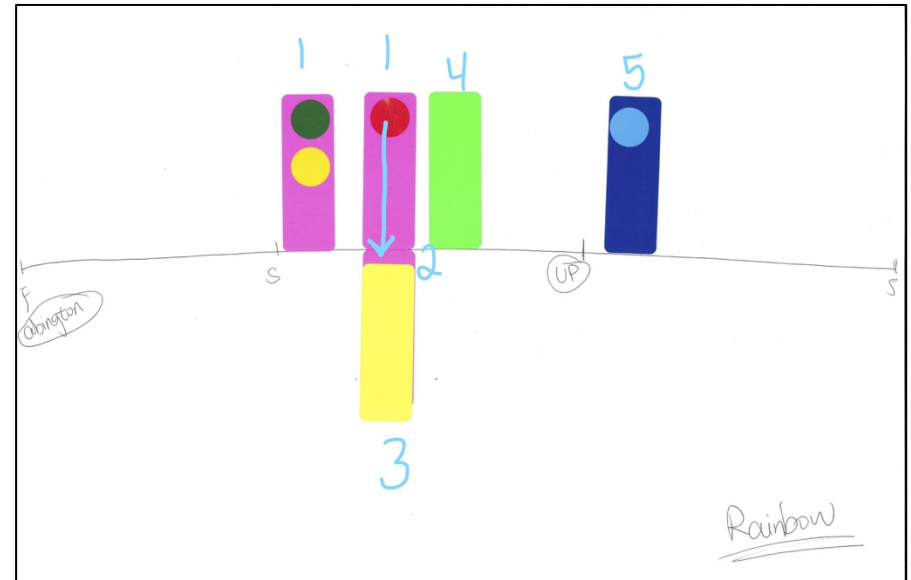
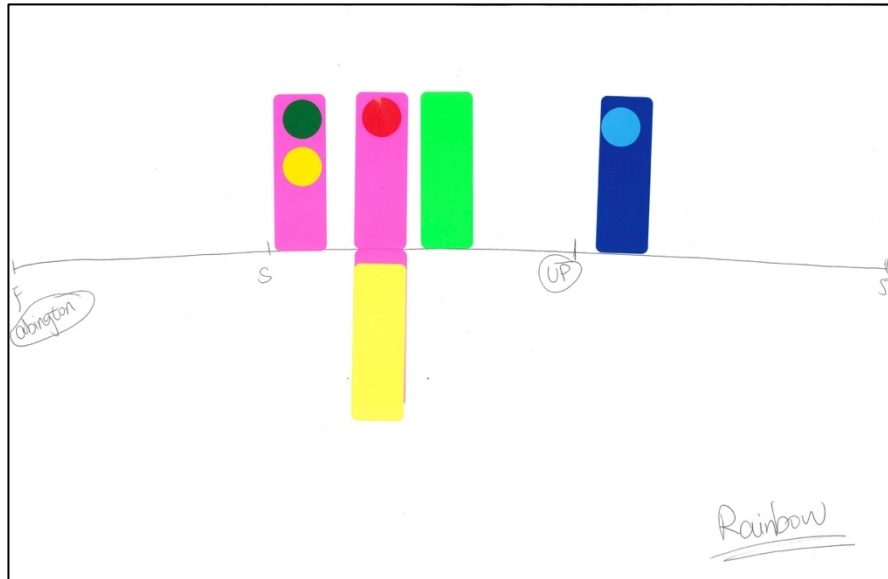
*Julian: So it's a lot of-- we were given sort of-- do you watch Great British Bake Off?*

*Hailley: Mm-hmm.*

*Julian: So you know how in whatever the middle challenge is, they're given the recipe, but really nothing except for like, "Okay. Cook it. Then you bake it. Then it's done." We were given the framework and then we kind of had to fill in the rest, which I thought was good because there wasn't much hand-holding but it wasn't like totally we're on our own.*

# Nina

Smeal College of Business
Senior, Finance major



## Summary of Nina's map

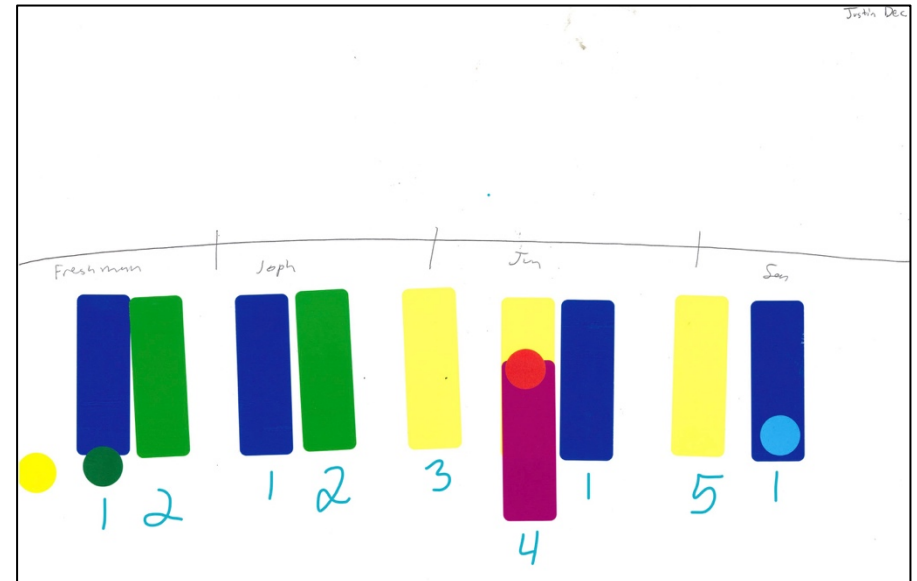
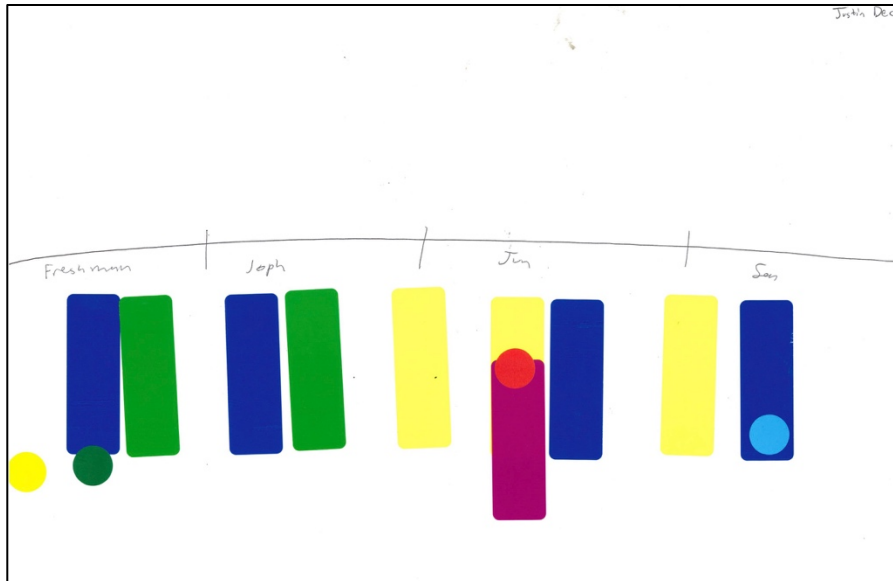
Nina brought a unique perspective to our project, as she is both an international student and change-of-campus student. During her first two years at a Commonwealth Campus, a professor recognized her potential and offered her both a TA position and conference presentation opportunity. In addition to these experiences, Nina took on an internship and peer mentoring role simultaneously, which she listed as her most challenging experience. After transferring to University Park, Nina initially struggled to navigate this bigger, busier campus. However, her organizational experience helped her connect with both University Park and her finance major.

*"...as an international student, I never expected myself to be an orientation leader or to be in a conference for other professors from here. It really just gave me the sense that I matter."*



# Brendan

Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications  
Senior, Film major



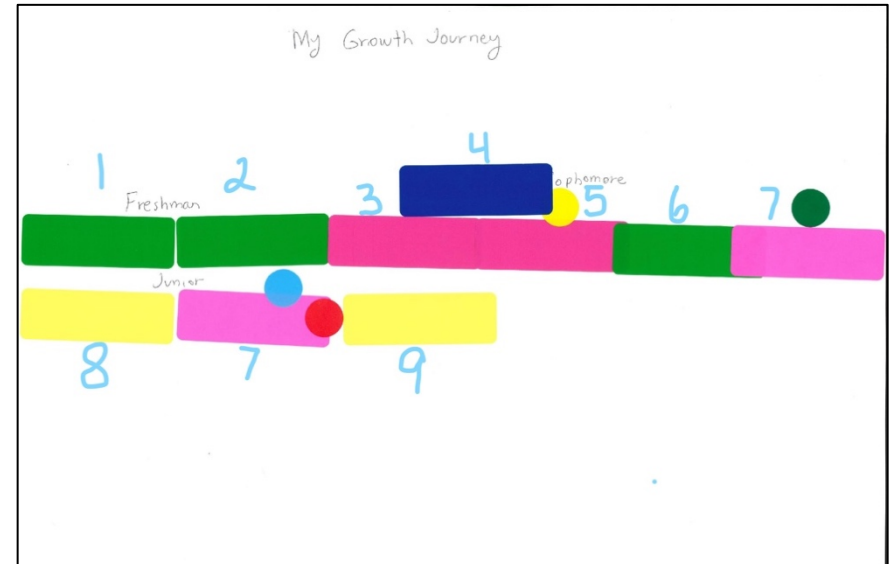
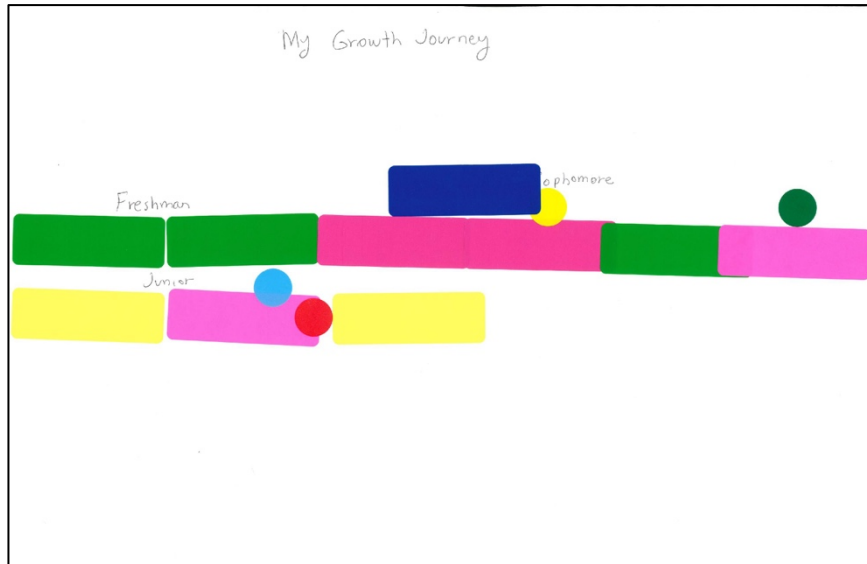
## Summary of Brendan's map

Professional development is a strong theme throughout Brendan's map, as all of his experiences are tied to building his professional film experience. The four blue stickers represent the same film organization during his Penn State career. This experience gave him the opportunity to attend a film festival, make friends in the film community, and network. The green stickers represent film involvement during THON and the yellow stickers represent internships in different areas of the film industry. These experiences helped him find his niche in film and develop his career goals further.

*"...these experiences, it was incredibly vital and important to developing some sort of better understanding of what I wanted to do."*

# Daniela

Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications  
Junior, Journalism major



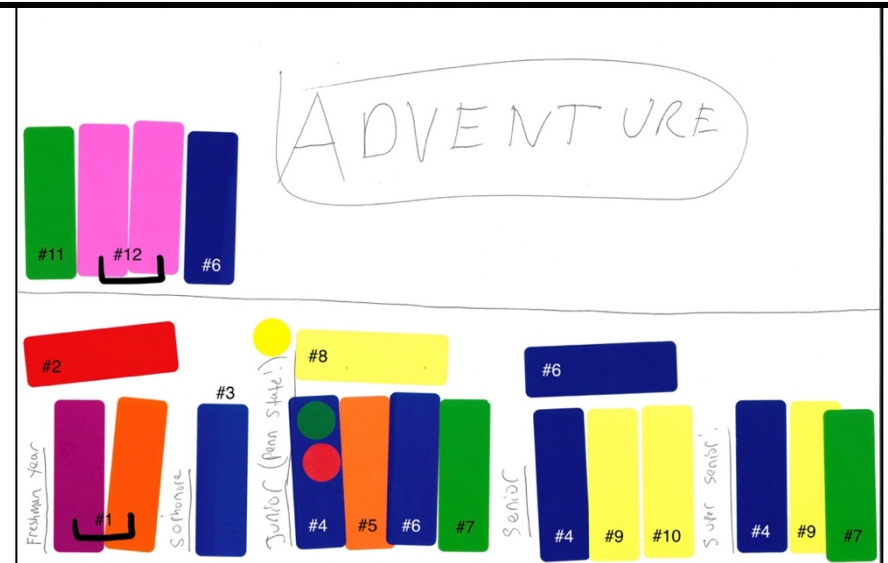
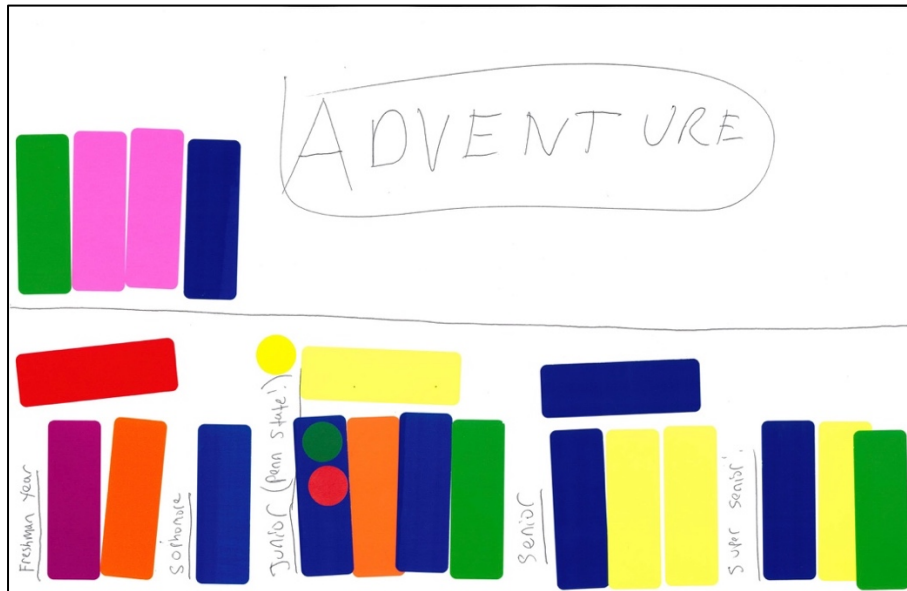
## Summary of Daniela's map

Daniela's map features multiple links between student engagement experiences. At New Student Orientation, she heard about a volunteer opportunity, which she immediately explored. This volunteer experience led her to a self-directed multicultural program, which then led to a self-directed leadership institute soon after. Community building was a theme throughout these linked experiences. Another fascinating aspect of Daniela's map is that her most rewarding and challenging experience was being a TA for a general education science course.

*"...I do really love the class and it's kind of become a big part of my life, which I was not expecting it to be. I didn't even know about the class when I first took it and now it's like something that's really important to me..."*

# David

College of Earth & Mineral Sciences  
Senior, Material Science Engineering major



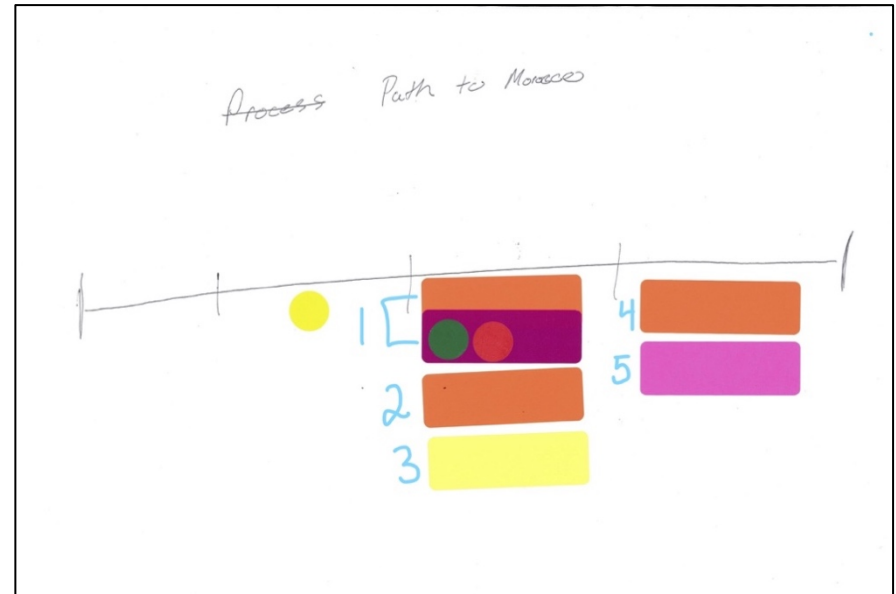
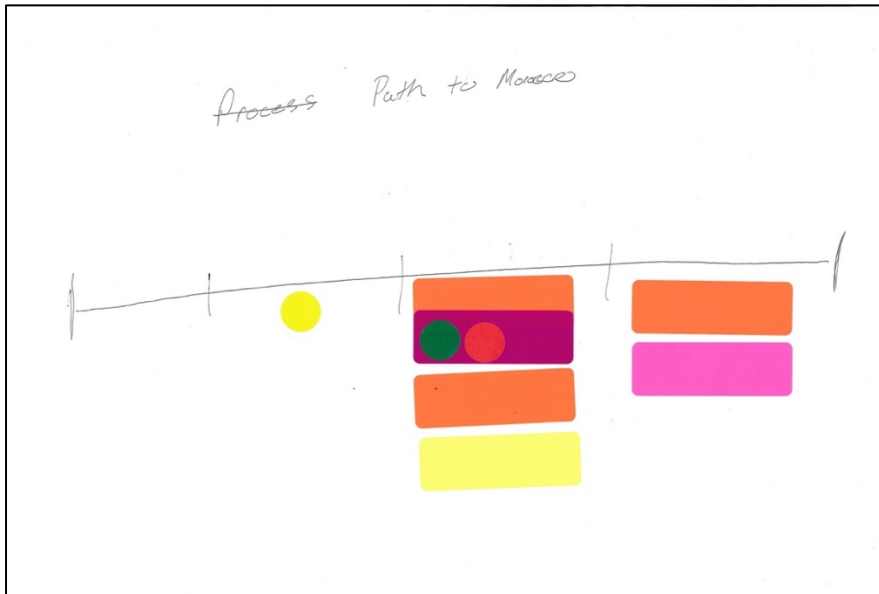
## Summary of David's map

David began college at another institution, where he studied abroad his first year. Sophomore year he realized he didn't like the school and transferred to Penn State to be closer to home. Once here, David joined Boxing Club and the MatSE Undergraduate Fellowship program. David discussed trying to get involved with research, but not having enough experience. In addition, finding opportunities where David got paid was an important factor in his participation. This led to some interesting dilemmas, such as lab where he could get paid to do busy work or get credit and be more fully mentored by the lead faculty member. However, through his experiences, he was able to learn about what type of engineering he'd like to do after graduation.

*"I applied to over 100 internships. I applied to anything and everything because it was really hard without experience. It's crazy how kids just have experience out the womb, it seems like. And it's just impossible to get interviews."*

# Harris

College of Earth & Mineral Sciences
Senior, Geography major



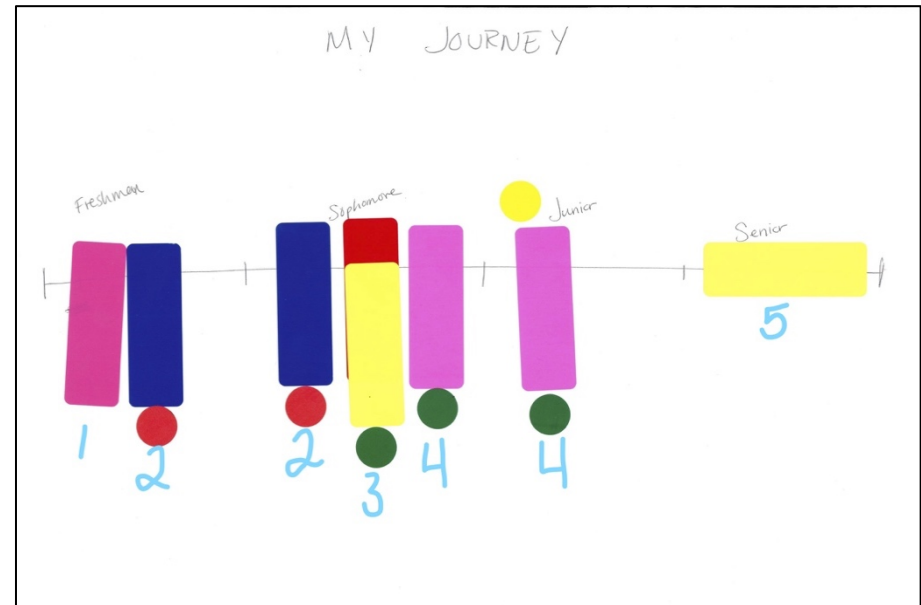
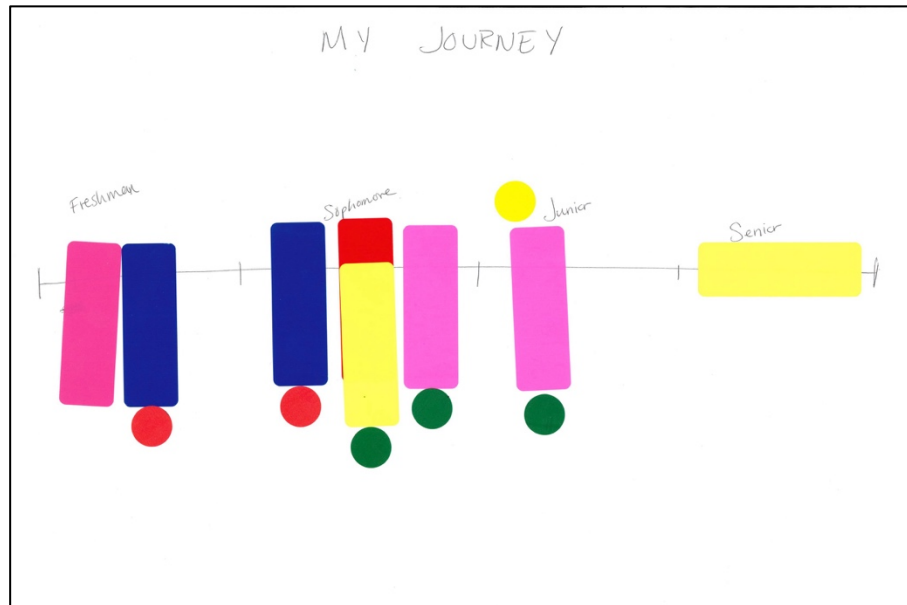
## Summary of Harris' map

Harris started in DUS as a first year before discovering the EMS College and becoming a geography major. Participation in the department's Undergraduate Research Opportunities Connection (UROC) started Harris' engagement journey. Connections in UROC led to an Erickson Discovery Grant and conducting research in Morocco. His time abroad sheds light on his multicultural awareness skills and the ways in which American politics influenced his interactions with the watermelon farmers he was interviewing. Harris takes responsibility for not getting engaged sooner and critiques heavy emphasis on joining a club, which didn't suit his preference for getting involved.

*"I was nervous because it's also weird being American in a majority Muslim country too because I think the perception is that Americans hate Muslims. Right? I'm not saying that this is a-- this is just my perception of what I think the perception kind of is. I felt like all the time trying to explain the way I am or that I was always in a position that was kind of compromised because Trump will be saying something..."*

# Kasey

College of Education
Junior, Middle Level Math Education major



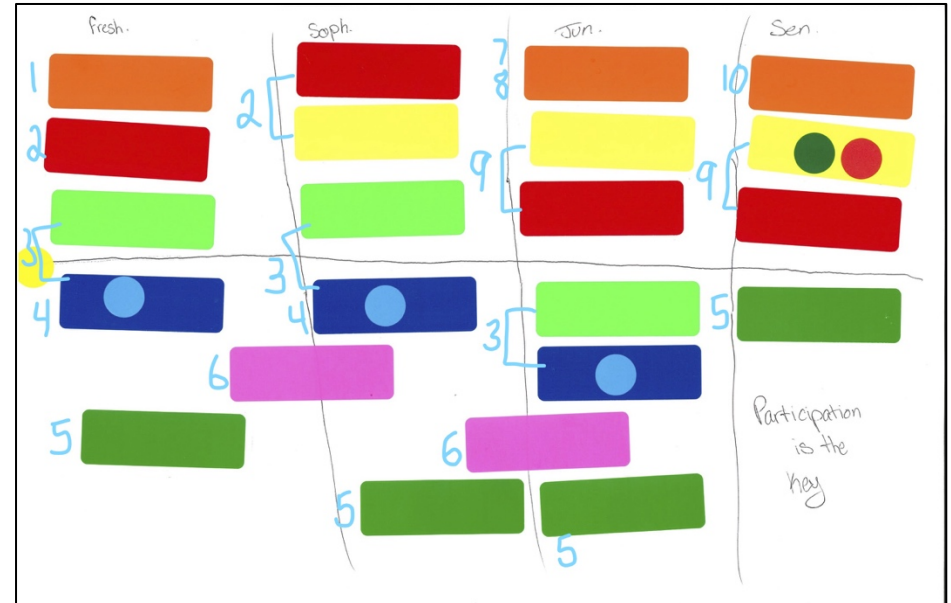
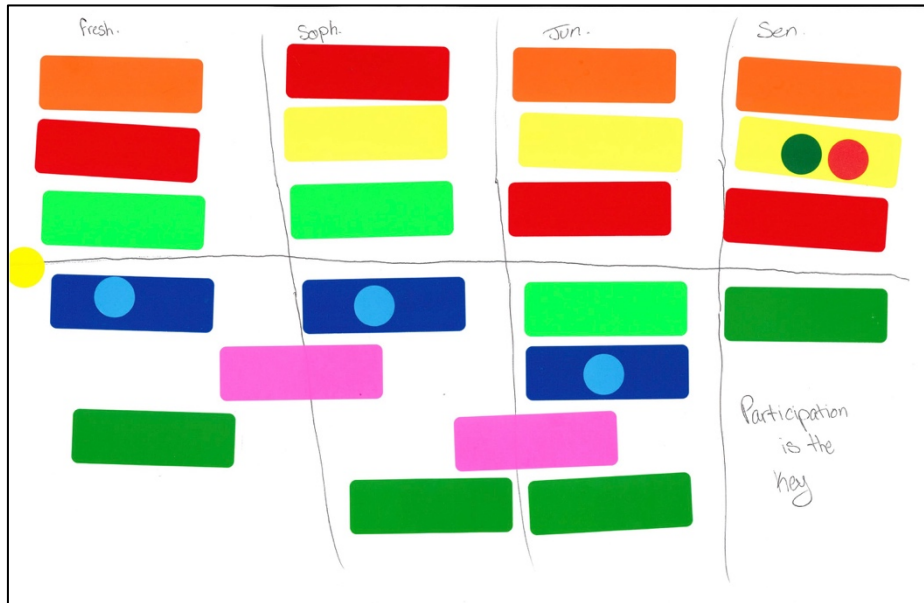
## Summary of Kasey's map

Kasey's engagement experiences have been confined to the College of Education. While not involved in high school, Kasey realized that she wanted to build a community within her college and pursued engagement in clubs, student council, and peer mentoring. Kasey appreciated the professional development required course her sophomore year, which allowed her to spend time in the classroom and confirm her decision to become an educator. While she is not student teaching yet, this pre-defined teaching experience is still an important part of her journey.

*"...the reason I applied...is because it was different and because it was a part of the college I was going to be a part of the rest of my time at Penn State. Like I was going to breathe College of Education. So it's like, I might as well understand what a student member on the council's life would be."*

# Melanie

College of Education  
Senior, Secondary Social Studies Education major



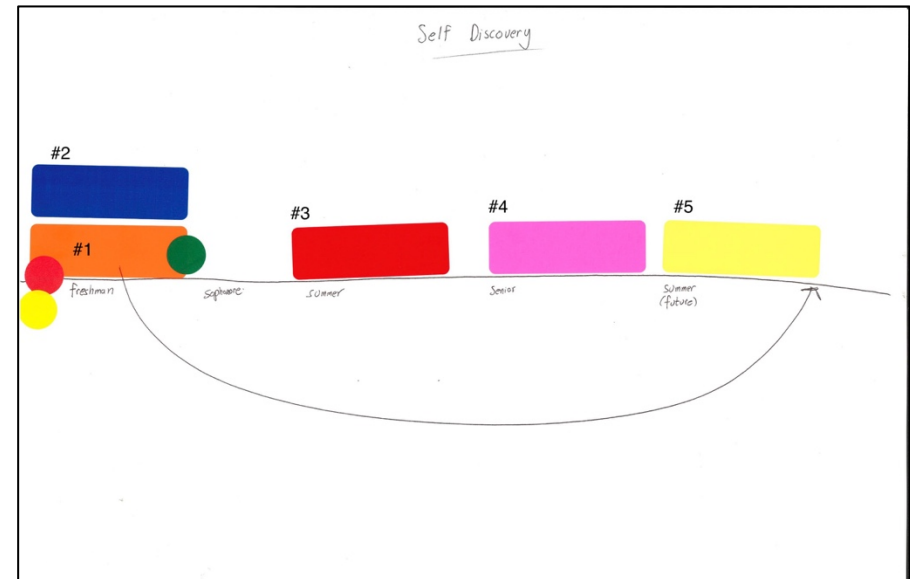
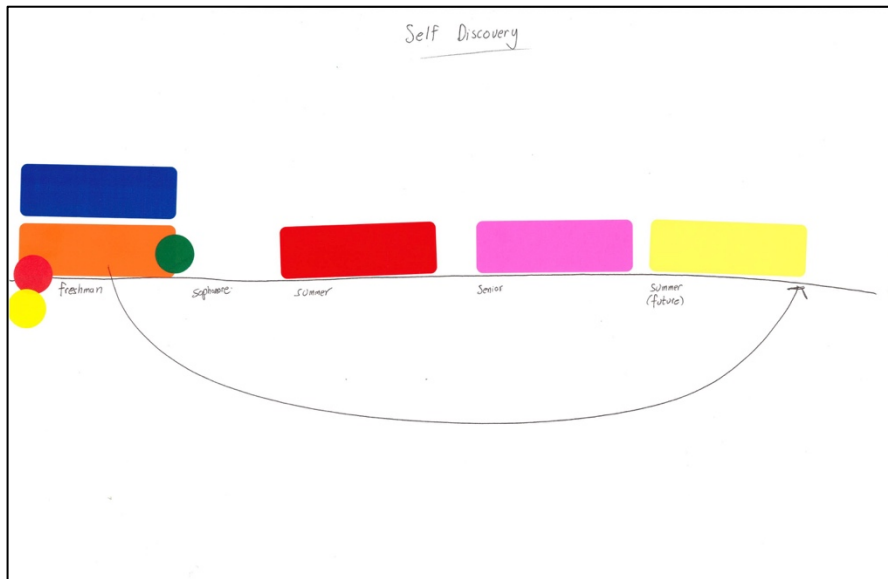
## Summary of Melanie's map

Melanie's student engagement journey features lots of structural influences. Through the Schreyer Honors College, Melanie was required to take honors courses and complete a thesis, leading to meaningful research opportunities. The College of Education requirements led to professional, student teaching experiences, allowing Melanie to develop her own teaching style. Civic responsibility is also a strong theme throughout Melanie's map. She is passionate about helping children from underrepresented backgrounds, working with children with disabilities, and giving back to the State College community.

*"I always felt like my community itself gave a lot to me, especially being of a lower SES. So, I wanted, now that I had a little more privilege, to be able to give back, maybe not to my own community, but for the community that's now supporting me."*

# Mason

College of Engineering
Senior, Chemical Engineering major



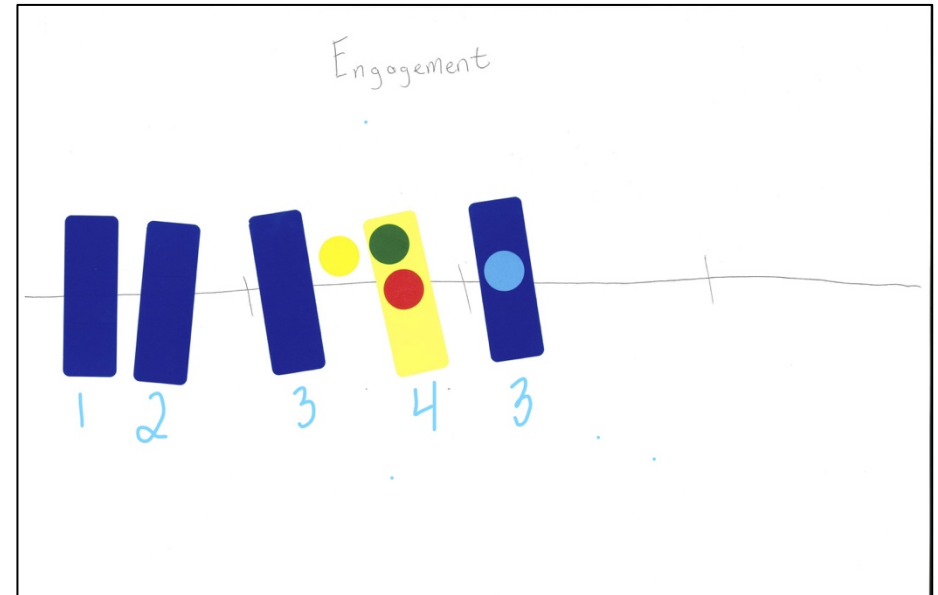
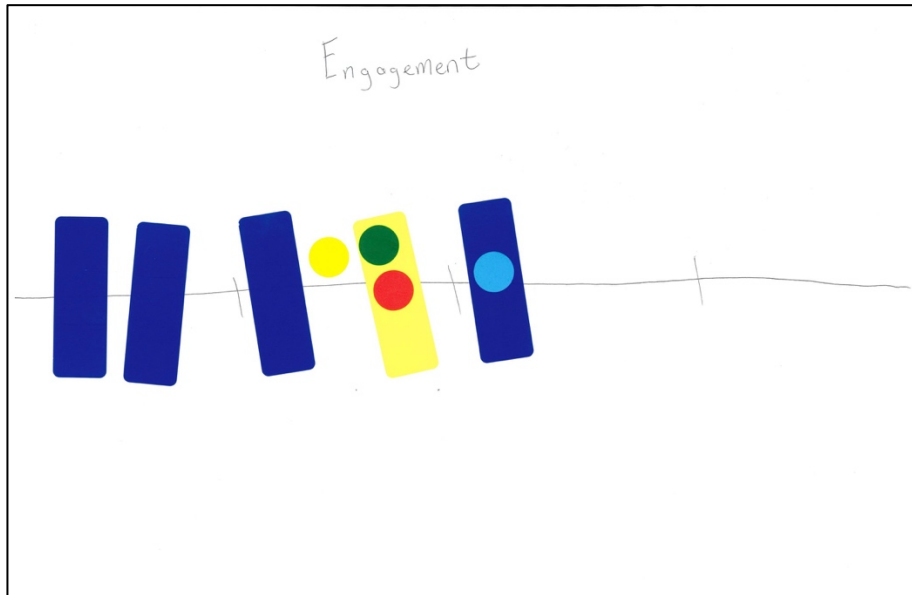
## Summary of Mason's map

As a high school student, Mason's interest in chemistry led to him doing experiments with a chemistry kit in his basement! At Penn State, Mason was underwhelmed with the classroom labs and sought out undergraduate research experiences. He joined a lab, was mentored by a graduate student, and realized he wanted to pursue a Ph.D., but in material science, not chemical engineering. Mason speaks about wanting his research to matter, and his excitement about presenting science to many audiences and hopefully a forthcoming publication. Additionally, Mason enjoyed teaching, and by being a TA, was able to see what being a professor could look like.

*"I like to be able to show people what science is. I think sometimes science gets a bad rep. For me as a kid, I was always so fascinated by it so to be able to show another kid, 'Look how cool this is.'"*

# Zachary

College of Engineering
Junior, Mechanical Engineering major



## Summary of Zachary's map

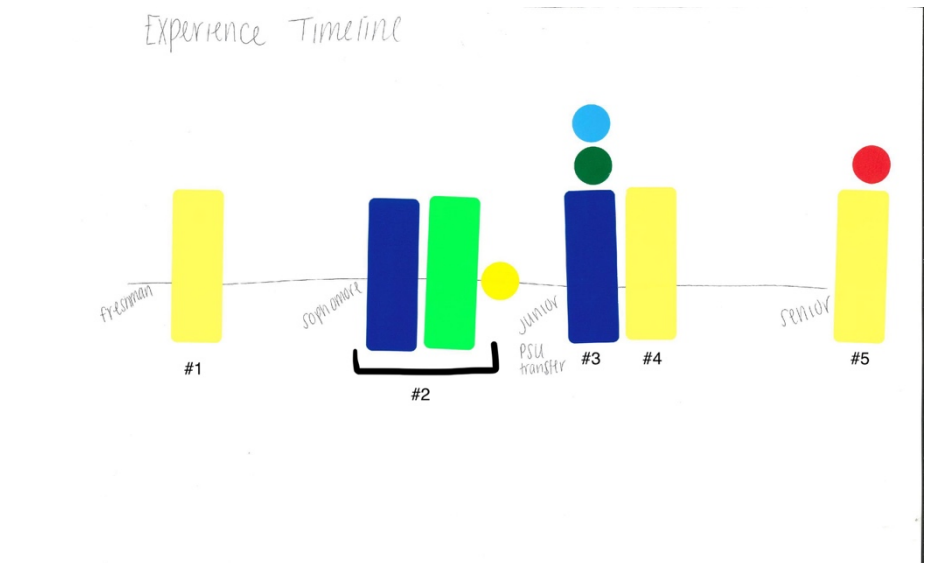
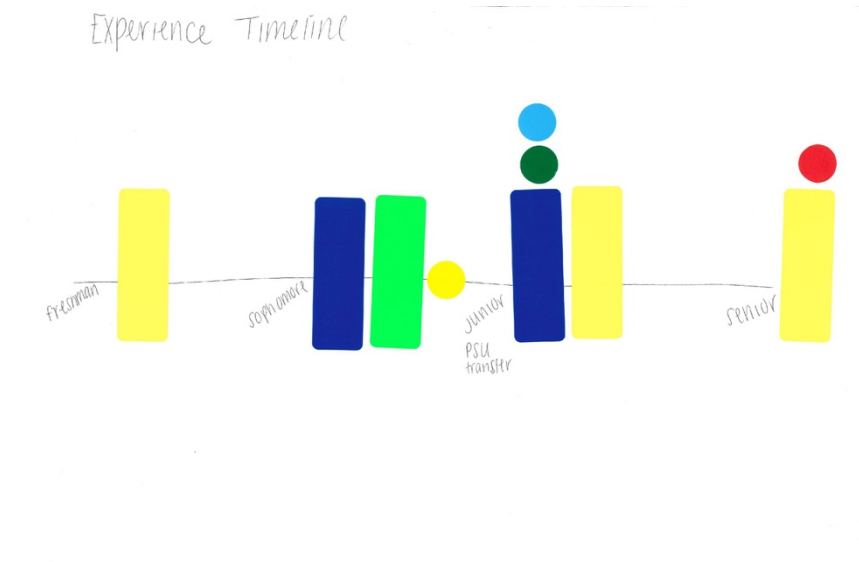
Zachary's student engagement journey is unique because of the co-op experience during his sophomore year. Zachary explained that although many undergraduates are nervous to pursue a co-op, his co-op was rewarding because of the strong professional learning experiences and the opportunity to support projects from start to finish. Zachary's journey also includes strong structural influences such as a Special Living Option and the engineering curriculum. He emphasized that joining organizations gave him the hands-on experiences that he felt were lacking in his underclassmen engineering courses.

*"...it seems that companies, once you graduate, five years from now, your GPA won't matter. They're going to talk about your work experience and leadership roles. So if you start off with leadership roles, my opinion, that's the best thing."*



# Olivia

College of Health & Human Development  
Senior, Kinesiology major



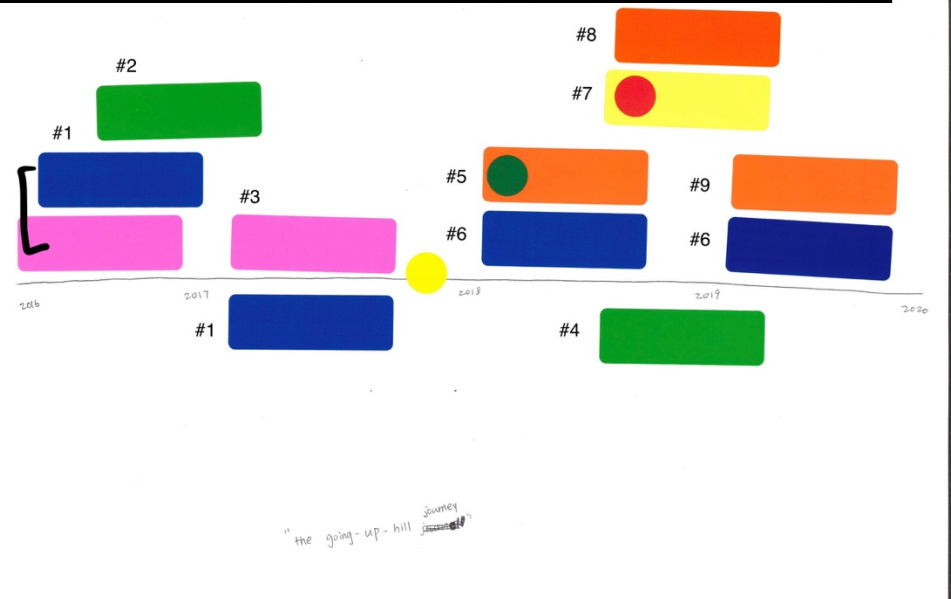
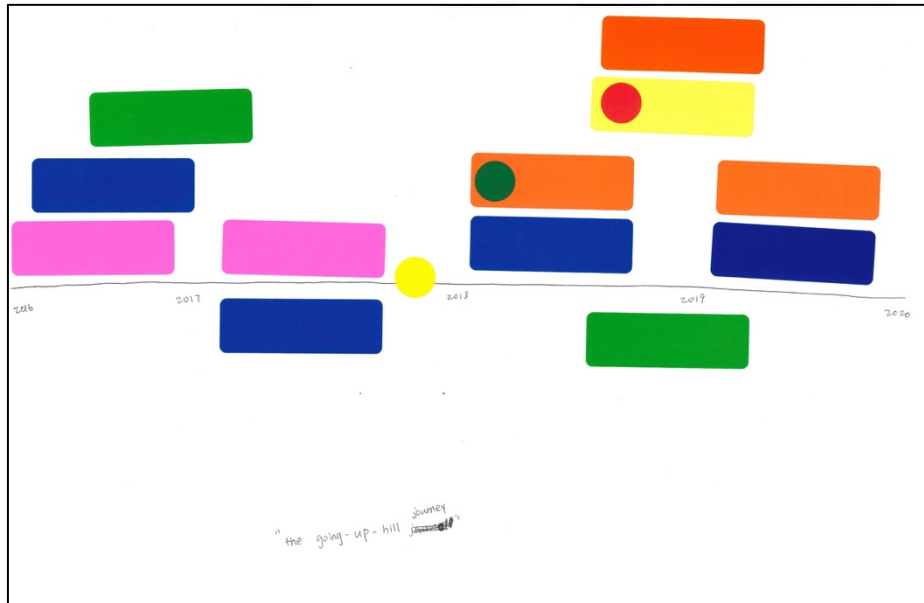
## Summary of Olivia's map

Junior year, Olivia transferred from a non-Penn State campus; the first three stickers represent engagement experiences at her previous institution. For Olivia, professional experiences were an important part of her engagement journey, mainly in the ways it helped clarify her "why." In addition, the idea of professional development was a foundational value for her. One interesting note about Olivia's map is her nested experience during her sophomore year. Olivia joined a dance club (blue sticker) and during that experience, choreographed a song (green sticker).

*"You can't really decide how many people are going to be in all your classes, but you can decide to stay in a club that you like or an organization that you enjoy."*

# Reagan

Health & Human Development  
Senior, Nutritional Sciences major



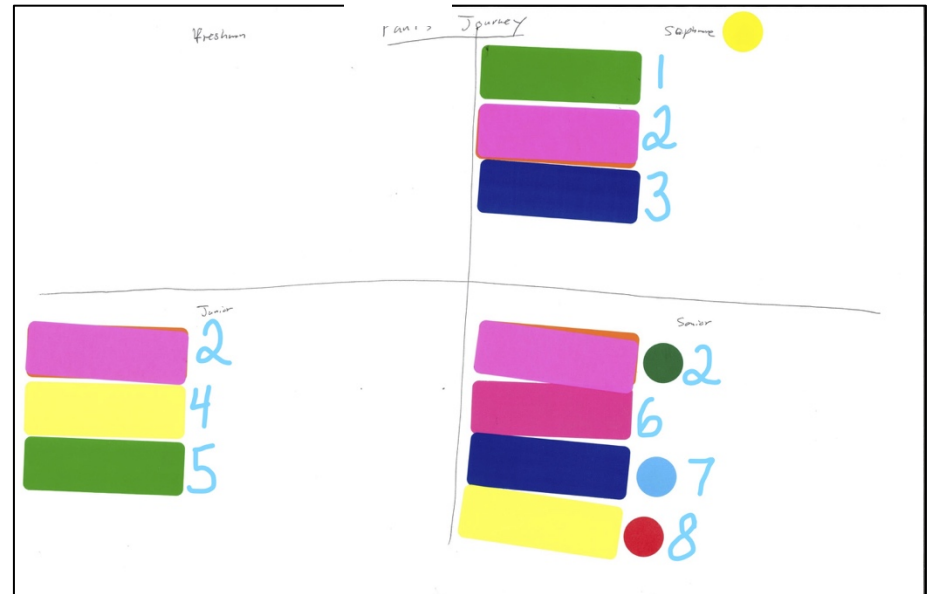
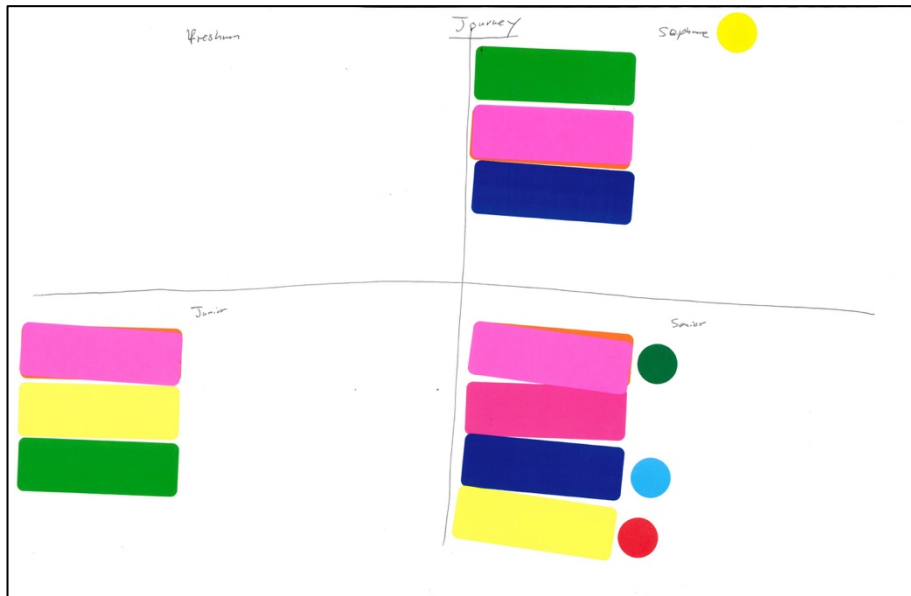
## Summary of Reagan's map

Reagan's journey began at the Harrisburg campus, where she was encouraged to get involved from the student engagement office. Reagan came to University Park her junior year to complete her nutrition major. She volunteered for the Lions Pantry, pursued a Schreyer's thesis, took a trip to the Cornell Medical Center with Schreyer, and completed a 300 hour professional experience over the summer at Hershey Medical. This internship experience, while challenging, gave Reagan a new look at her profession, and influenced her decision to pursue a PhD after graduation. Some of Reagan's motivation was around the ability to be paid for these experiences.

*"I would say the difference of me the first day and the last day I finish my field experience, I was totally different, my mindset and my feeling toward my profession, like how nutrition works and the important role of a dietitian in a hospital really impacted me"*

# Eric

Information Sciences and Technology
Senior, Security Risk Analysis major



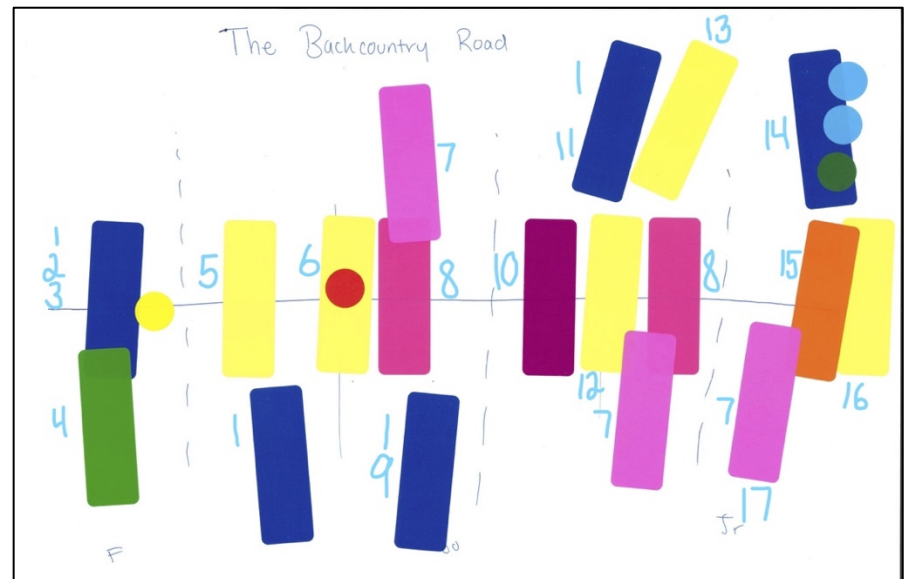
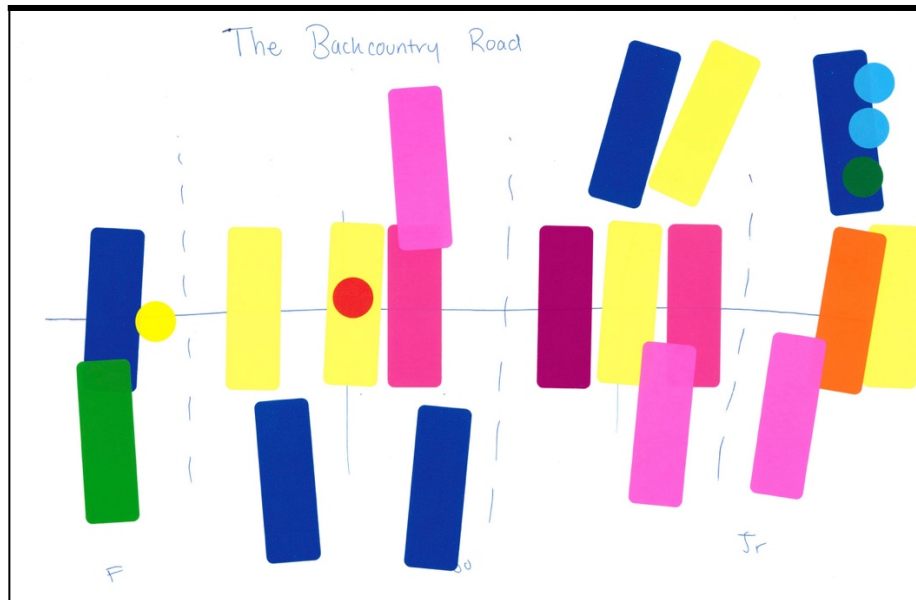
## Summary of Eric's map

Eric is a non-traditional student who started at Penn State in 2014 and took a gap year to join the National Guard. He discusses self-motivation as an important component to make the most of engagement experiences and many of his experiences were discovered through friends. Eric was able to recognize the professional skills he gained and how they helped him become a well-rounded person. As a senior, he does acknowledge the importance of giving back to younger students and making sure they have the support to learn more about the field.

*"My job in the Army, I'm Military Intelligence, but it ties in a lot to my major. So it kind of opened up a lot of job openings that I would've considered earlier. And it really showed me kind of how my classroom stuff can mix with real-life stuff. So it kind of gave me that holistic viewpoint."*

# Jessica

Information Sciences and Technology
Junior, Cybersecurity Analytics major



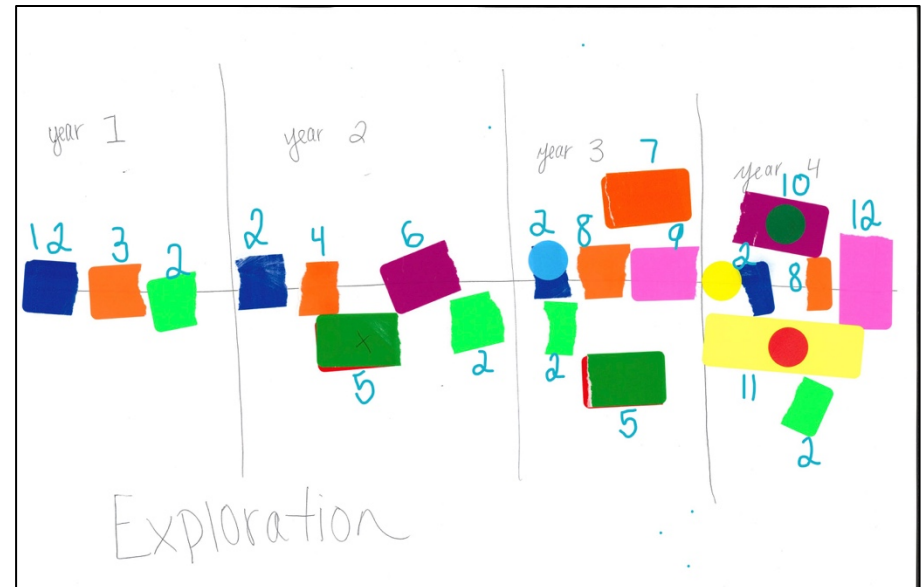
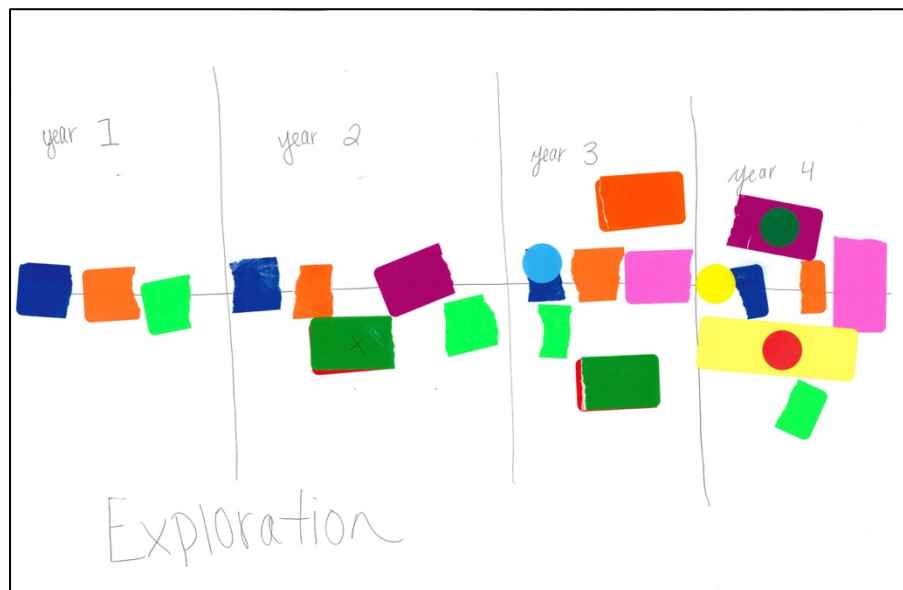
## Summary of Jessica's map

Professional development was a motivator for many of Jessica's engagement experiences. Looking back on her organizational experiences, which she joined for fun, Jessica now realizes that she gained professional skills from these experiences as well. Additionally, some of Jessica's engagement experiences are linked. For example, Jessica discovered an internship opportunity at a conference she attended through the College of Information Sciences and Technology. She named her map "The Backcountry Road" to represent the unexpected nature of her student engagement journey.

*"So, growing up around my house, a lot of the roads that I like to drive are like very back-country roads. They're very twisty...And it might not always be the fastest way to get there but it's quite fun...it's definitely far from straight...So, I'd say it didn't go the way I expected...but I also wouldn't change much."*

# Rachel

College of the Liberal Arts
Senior, CAS and French majors



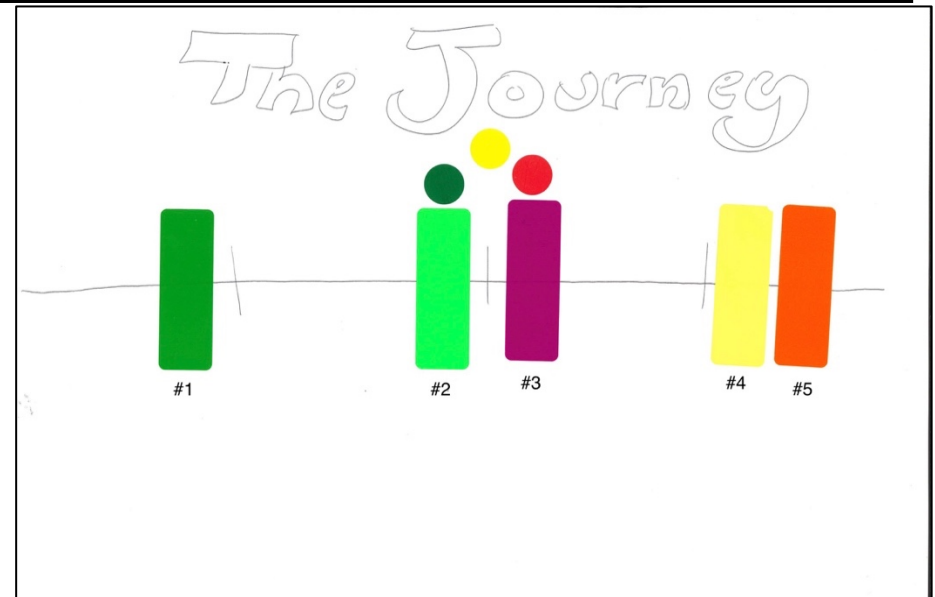
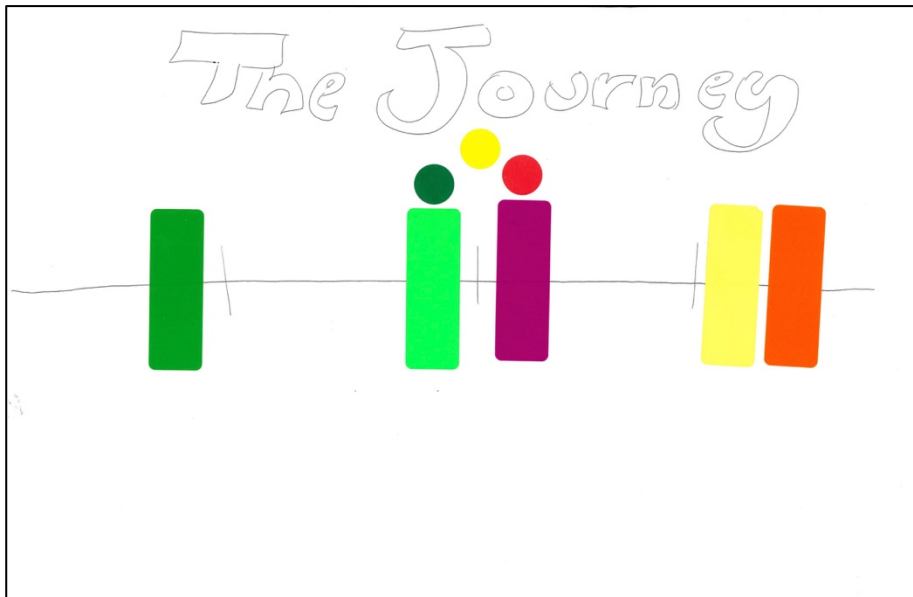
## Summary of Rachel's map

Studying abroad was a transformative aspect of Rachel's student engagement journey. After completing a summer study abroad program, Rachel took a class her junior year that included a Europe trip over spring break. Rachel studied abroad again her senior year, this time with an internship incorporated in her program. Her peer mentoring experience was also related to her experiences abroad. Overall, Rachel's journey demonstrates strong multicultural awareness that allowed her to form meaningful connections with others.

*"...people want you to succeed. When you're in a new environment, they want you to be able to talk to them...everyone wants to form relationships...Create new experiences with, like shared experiences. And I think that was something I learned, that a lot of people are rooting for you, just as you are for them. And it really gave me fresh eyes when I came back here to people from different countries..."*

# Taylor

College of the Liberal Arts
Senior, Political Science & English majors



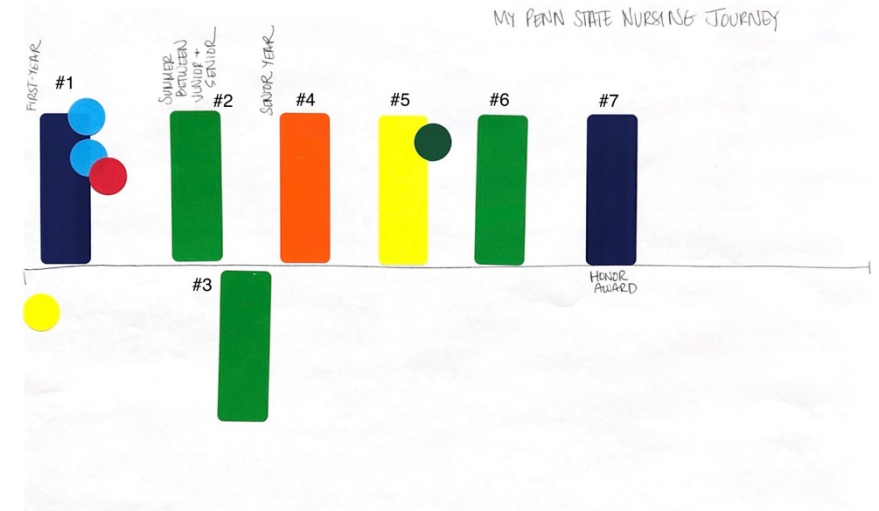
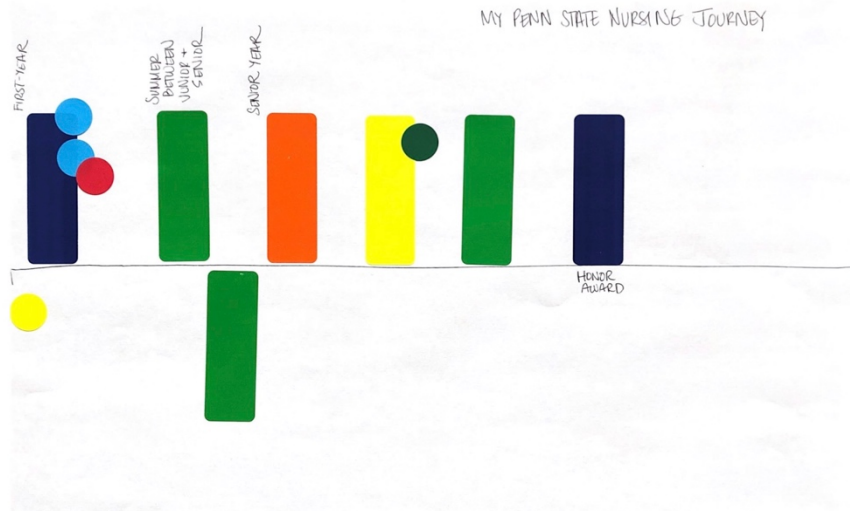
## Summary of Taylor's map

Taylor's student engagement journey has multiple structural influences, including a credit-driven internship and a graduate course with an out-of-class component. He used these opportunities within his curriculum to become a well-rounded writer, learning writing styles he was less familiar with. Taylor challenged himself outside the classroom as well. He pushed himself out of his comfort zone by studying abroad for a semester and developed a sense of independence. Taylor also challenged himself by submitting a creative writing piece for publication. The acceptance of this piece was his most rewarding experience, validating his writing skills and potential.

*"...I think the reason I wasn't going to submit in the first place was because I was like, 'Oh, it's not going to get in...' I realized that okay, I guess I am good enough at writing...it kind of reassured myself that I actually had worth as a writer."*

# Amanda

College of Nursing
Senior, Nursing major



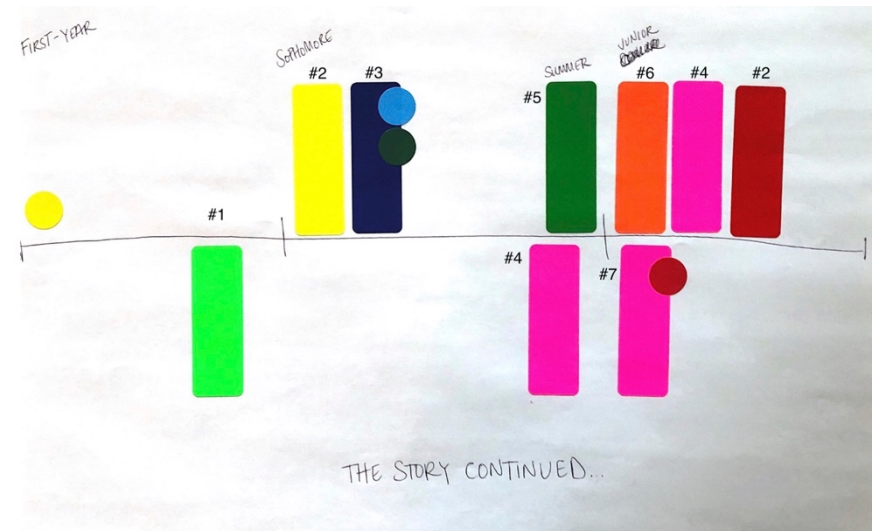
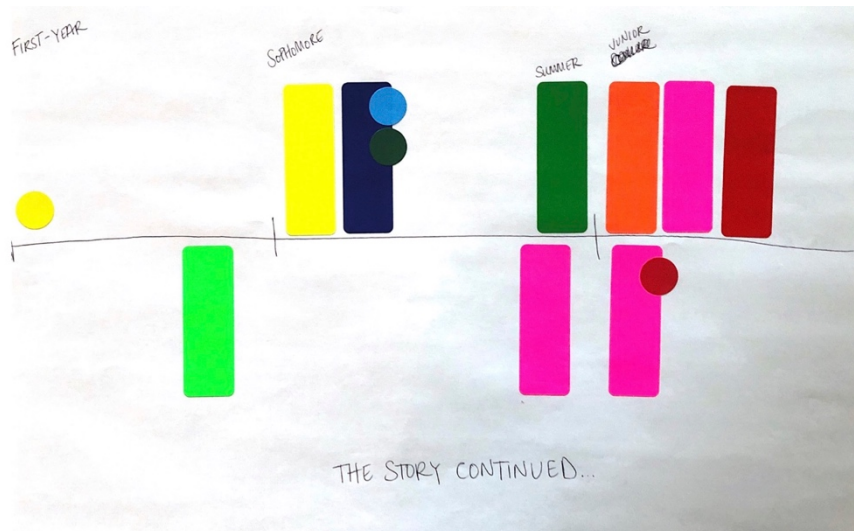
## Summary of Amanda's map

Amanda's passion for women and children's healthcare shines through in many of her student engagement experiences. Her nursing related job and volunteer work were strong in civic responsibility, as Amanda aimed to make a difference in the lives of all her patients. These experiences also led to professional development, as she consistently improved her nursing skills. Amanda was also president of her sorority, which helped her gain leadership skills and taught her how to navigate ethical challenges. At the end of her engagement journey, Amanda received an award through the College of Nursing, which validated her hard work and involvement in her college.

*"...my senior year, I just kind of realized like, wow, nursing really is my life. Like I really want to get involved more because when I'm not in the hospital or I only have clinical once or twice a week, I just find myself in one way or another, wanting to be involved with it and wanting to do more..."*

# Kendal

College of Nursing
Junior, Nursing major



## Summary of Kendal's map

In high school, Kendal was active outside the classroom; she assumed that coming to Penn State as a nursing student would mean that her involvement would stop. However, as her map is named, "The Story Continued." Through the College of Nursing, Kendal slowly became involved in SNAPS, eventually leading her to run for and win the position of secretary for next year. Kendal also has been both a mentee and a mentor, for SNAPS current student mentoring program and an alumni mentoring program. Receiving poor mentorship has motivated Kendal to want to give back as a mentor. Finally, Kendal chose to talk about SPA concerts she attended her first and second year, which she feels were awesome opportunities to experience live music.

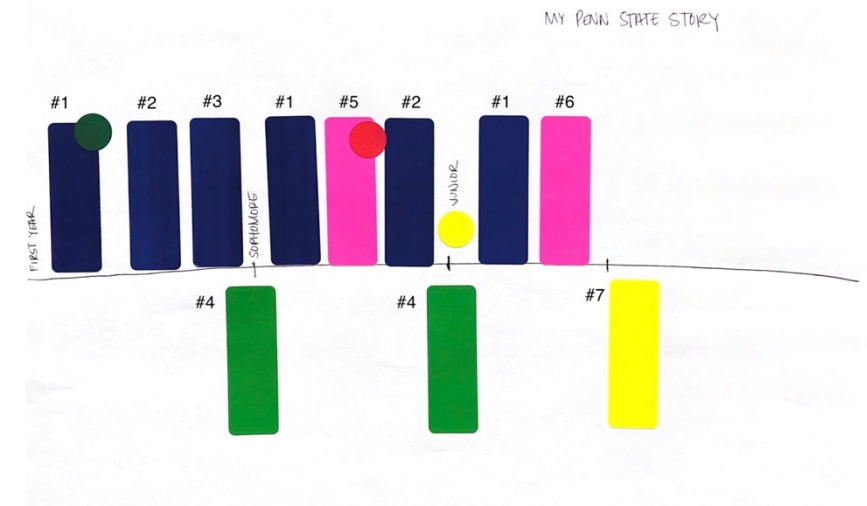
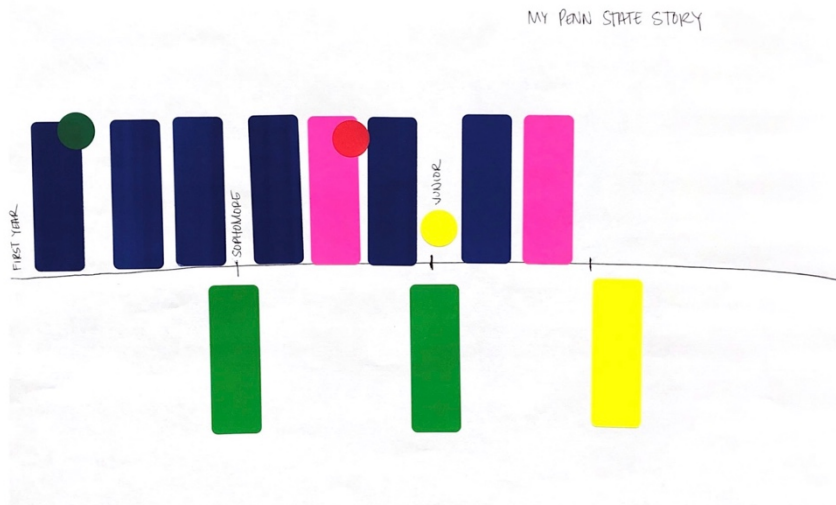
*"I was just kind of like, you know, my mentor is like did so little for me that I want to be the opposite of that. Like, I was like, I want to be like an actual good mentor for someone who needs it."*





# Hannah

Eberly College of Science
Junior, Statistics major



## Summary of Hannah's map

THON was an important part of Hannah's student engagement journey. Since starting at Penn State, Hannah has participated in three different THON committees, allowing her to understand various aspects of this event and motivating her to seek out future THON leadership opportunities her senior year. Hannah began at Penn State as a biology major and during her junior year, switched to statistics and aspires to become an actuary. While Hannah doesn't anticipate teaching in her future, she did find her two LA experiences as a way to get better at communicating difficult concepts to her peers.

*"I just wanted to be more a part of it. That's definitely changed throughout the years like freshman year I would never, I would like look at dancers and be like, That's insane. I would never do that. And then now being involved with it for so long. I'm like, my senior year, I want to dance. I want to do this. I want to be a captain and be so involved."*