



Marjie Gerke

Major: Secondary education (English language arts)

Activities: Sigma Alpha Iota music fraternity, Augustana Symphonic Band, Reading/Writing Center tutor, Mortar Board

Internship: Student teacher at Pleasant Valley High School in Bettendorf, Iowa, this past winter term

Post-grad plans: Teach English

“I love that Marjie embraces her nerdiness. I don’t view her that way, but that self-assessment is indicative of her fun sense of humor. That will come in handy in her future classroom. She will also bring her varied liberal arts coursework, her hours of experience tutoring in the Reading/Writing Center and her newly ignited passion for travel, inspired by her band trip to Spain—all of which will enhance and enrich her classroom teaching.”

— Katie Hanson, assistant professor, education and English

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2017

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

I liked both the small class sizes because I would be given an opportunity to participate, and that I could do band and not be a music major.

Are you where you thought you’d be four years ago?

Definitely not. Not only am I not the same person who moved into Augustana, but I had no idea how involved I’d become with my major and my extracurriculars.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

My advisor, Katie Hanson, has definitely helped me a great deal, as have Lucas Street, Virginia Johnson and Jake Romaniello. All have been a pretty steady force in my entire academic career here at Augustana, and all have definitely shaped my philosophy on teaching (and life in general). On a different note, Dr. Lambrecht also helped instill in me a drive to strive for excellence in everything I do, not just music-related endeavors.

A peak experience?

A peak experience for me was student teaching. While the experience was certainly challenging in many aspects, it ultimately helped me to grow more into the teacher I know I am. I had a wonderful experience functioning both as student and fledgling teacher. What was more, I felt the full support of the education department through their plentiful advice as I was trying my hand at real-world teaching.

What surprised you?

To put it bluntly, I learned that I’m an unabashed nerd when it comes to particular topics. I always knew that I was able to be ‘nerdily’ passionate about particular topics, but being here allowed me to truly grow into my own (i.e., let my freak flag fly, especially where the topics of English, education and social issues are concerned).

How did you use Augie Choice?

I used Augie Choice to travel with the Augustana Symphonic Band to Spain over spring break this year.

What will you miss the most?

I will miss the stimulating discussions that I’ve had with professors and other students over the most random topics.

Advice for the Class of 2021?

Talk to people! Talk to your professors, your peers both inside and outside of your major. Yeah, maybe the people you talk to aren’t going to be your forever friends, but you might just learn an entirely new way of perceiving the world through their eyes, which is ultimately what going to a liberal arts school is all about.