

**Progressive Journal**

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Lower Columbia College

OLTM 495: Capstone

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### **Journal Introduction**

- I. Career & Technical Scholar Lead/Mentor
- II. Washington State Opportunity Scholarship (WSOS)
- III. I am a Scholar Lead (peer mentor) working with over 200 students to help them navigate their college experience.
- IV. Point of Contact: Jessica Vilai  
Email: [jvilai@washingtonopportunitiescholarship.org](mailto:jvilai@washingtonopportunitiescholarship.org)  
Phone: (206)800-8025
- V. I selected this organization because it will give me the opportunity to practice my leadership competencies.
- VI. My expertise/leadership skills will help support this organization by ensuring students stay connected, organized, and encouraged as they pursue their education.

## Progressive Journal - Week 8

Dates/Times and Location of service time:

- 5/28/2026; Virtual; 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm
- 5/29/2026; Virtual; 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Summary of Activities:

- All Hands Scholar Lead Meeting
- 1:1 meetings with Scholars
- Responded to Scholar emails
- Filled out Scholar Lead interaction forms

Leadership Application:

- Leadership competencies I practiced and observed this week include collaboration and influence, relationship building, and problem solving.
- These actions align with *The Leadership Challenge* because collaboration and relationship building connect to “Enable Others to Act. By engaging with other Scholar Leads and building rapport, I contributed to a more supportive and cooperative environment. Influence and problem solving relate to “Inspire a Shared Vision” through encouraging others, sharing ideas, and being open to new approaches.

Technical & Management Integration:

- Technical management principles I applied this week include communication and collaboration.
- These principles influenced the outcome of my work by helping to create clearer understanding and stronger connections with other Scholar Leads. I was able to

share ideas, listen to other's perspectives, and build mutual understanding. This made the environment more supportive and productive, and gave me the confidence to contribute more confidently.

#### Ethics & Social Impact:

- An ethical consideration I faced this week was making sure I was inclusive and respectful when engaging with the other Scholar Leads, even though I felt uncomfortable at first.
- To address this issue, I made a conscious effort to be more open with my communication. I focused on actively listening and made an effort to include others in the conversation.

#### Personal Growth & Career Readiness:

- As a leader, this week I learned that building relationships and networking are essential practices for effective leadership. Although I often feel awkward speaking up, I challenged myself during our All Hands meeting to engage with other Scholar Leads and initiate conversations. By stepping out of my comfort zone, I was able to connect with others, exchange contact information, and begin building a supportive network. This experience showed me that leadership is also about creating meaningful relationships with others.
- This experience prepares me for my future career by helping me develop confidence in overcoming discomfort and anxiety in social settings. By pushing myself to engage with others, I am practicing skills that will be necessary in my future career. Learning to overcome anxiety in uncomfortable situations and to build relationships will help me collaborate more effectively and grow as a leader.

### Challenges & Solutions:

- A challenge I faced this week was managing my anxiety and fear of stepping out of my comfort zone, especially when it comes to speaking and engaging with others in group settings. I tend to hold back in these situations because I worry about how I will be perceived. This connects to "*Challenge the Process*," because it involves taking risks and trying new behaviors, even in uncertain situations.
- Strategies I will use moving forward include intentionally putting myself in situations that encourage engagement. I will intentionally speak up and initiate conversations, as well as look at my anxiety as an opportunity for growth.

## Progressive Journal - Week 7

Dates/Times and Location of service time:

- 5/22/2026; Virtual; 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Summary of Activities:

- Sent bi-weekly email out to Scholars
- 1:1 meetings with my advisor
- 1:1 meetings with Scholars
- Responded to Scholar emails
- Filled out Scholar Lead interaction forms

Leadership Application:

- Leadership competencies I practiced and observed this week include communication, relationship building, and decision making.
- These actions align with *The Leadership Challenge* because they reflect 'Enable Others to Act,' which means fostering trust, collaboration, and shared ownership.

Technical & Management Integration:

- Technical management principles I applied this week include reporting, scheduling, and risk management.
- These principles influenced the outcome of my work by keeping expectations clear and improving engagement.

Ethics & Social Impact:

- An ethical consideration I faced this week was ensuring equitable access to scholarship resources for a Scholar who needed information about attending a different college while still maintaining their scholarship.

- To address this issue, I made time in my schedule to be available to support the Scholar and help her find the resources she needed to ensure her scholarship would transfer to another college without issues. This upholds the ethical principle of fairness by making support inclusive and aligns with ‘Challenge the Process’ through innovating for diverse backgrounds.

#### Personal Growth & Career Readiness:

- As a leader, this week I learned that effective leadership requires patience, empathy, and consistent communication. I also learned that mentoring others means being adaptable and responsive to individual needs while staying focused on the larger goal.
- This experience prepares me for my future career by strengthening my communication and relationship-building skills. By engaging with Scholars and applying the skills I have learned throughout this term, I am now equipped to communicate effectively and build relationships.

#### Challenges & Solutions:

- A challenge I faced this week was not knowing how to transfer a scholarship to another college for the next year.
- Strategies I will use moving forward include using the time I meet with my advisor to ask more questions about the scholarship program, ensuring I am equipped to provide the best support to Scholars. From now on, when I meet with my advisor, I will prepare questions in advance.

## Progressive Journal - Week 6

Dates/Times and Location of service time:

- 5/15/2026; Virtual; 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Summary of Activities:

- Researched content for the monthly newsletter
- 1:1 meetings with Scholars
- Responded to Scholar emails
- Filled out Scholar Lead interaction forms

Leadership Application:

- Leadership competencies I practiced and observed this week include communication, problem-solving, and relationship building.
- These actions align with *The Leadership Challenge* because relationship-building builds trust, which aligns with “Enable Others to Act.” During my meetings with the Scholars, I was able to build relationships and empower them by providing them with resources and encouragement.

Technical & Management Integration:

- Technical management principles I applied this week include risk management. I sent out reminder emails to Scholars to complete their scholarship renewals so they did not miss the deadline.
- These principles influenced the outcome of my work by helping me to develop the competence and confidence of Scholars.

Ethics & Social Impact:

- An ethical consideration I faced this week was balancing my commitments with Scholars for their one-on-one meetings. I had two Scholars who wanted to meet with me outside my normal office hours, even though I had a full week.
- To address this issue, I made time in my schedule to be there to support the Scholars. I'm glad I did because it was nice to be able to support the Scholars and build our relationships.

#### Personal Growth & Career Readiness:

- As a leader, this week I learned that I really enjoy finding resources for the Scholars that will help them in developing their competence and confidence. I also learned that providing Scholars with the resources they need empowers them and increases their self-determination.
- This experience prepares me for my future career because I realize that I do not need to solve everyone's problem, but provide them with the tools they may need to solve the problem themselves. If I take everything into my own hands, I am letting them down and, in the end, not being an effective leader. Ethical leaders use their role to support others.

#### Challenges & Solutions:

- A challenge I faced this week was scheduling additional meetings with Scholars while already having a full schedule and a sick child.
- Strategies I will use moving forward include expanding my office hours to accommodate students who may need other times to meet with me.

## Progressive Journal - Week 5

Dates/Times and Location of service time:

- 5/8/2026; Virtual; 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Summary of Activities:

- Sent out bi-weekly email
- 1:1 meetings with Scholars
- 1:1 meeting with my advisor
- Responded to Scholar emails
- Filled out Scholar Lead interaction forms
- Worked with a teammate to put together a hosted virtual event for scholars on organization tips & time management

Leadership Application:

- Leadership competencies I practiced and observed this week include relationship building with my advisor during our one-on-one and with Scholars during one-on-ones, communication, decision-making, problem-solving, and collaboration. Relationship-building with Scholars during our one-on-ones helps me provide more personalized guidance and navigate problems.
- These actions align with *The Leadership Challenge* because relationship-building builds trust, which aligns with “Enable Others to Act.” During my meetings with Scholars, I am able to build relationships that empower them to grow by providing them with resources and encouragement to help them develop their confidence.

Technical & Management Integration:

- Technical management principles I applied this week include reporting and scheduling, as well as communication and collaboration.
- These principles influenced the outcome of my work by helping me balance my responsibilities as a Scholar Lead while remaining engaged with Scholars during one-on-ones.

#### Ethics & Social Impact:

- An ethical consideration I faced this week was balancing my responsibility to mentor Scholars with my obligation to stay on top of my academic and personal commitments.
- To address this issue, I prioritized my tasks based on urgency and communicated with my Scholars more intentionally about my availability to ensure I could provide them with meaningful support without spreading myself too thin.

#### Personal Growth & Career Readiness:

- As a leader, this week I learned that using active listening with Scholars, letting them talk and not interrupting, gave me the knowledge needed to provide them with the tools they need to achieve their goals.
- This experience prepares me for my future career by reminding me that I need to just listen sometimes and ask questions to further build my relationships with the Scholars.

#### Challenges & Solutions:

- A challenge I faced this week was staying confident while speaking with my advisor. I am still getting used to being on camera during virtual encounters, and I tend to overthink and feel uncomfortable.

- Strategies I will use moving forward include reminding myself that my advisor is there to support me and focusing more on the conversation and her supportive role, rather than what I look like on camera. I will also practice deep breathing before meetings to calm my nerves and hide my self-view, so I can be more present.

### Progressive Journal - Week 4

Dates/Times and Location of service time:

- 4/30/2026; Virtual; 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
- 5/1/2026; Virtual; 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Summary of Activities:

- Attended WSOS Scholarship renewal information session
- 1:1 meetings with Scholars
- Responded to Scholar emails
- Filled out Scholar Lead interaction forms
- Working with my teammate Emily, putting together a hosted virtual event for scholars on organization tips & time management

Leadership Application:

- Leadership competencies I practiced and observed this week include relationship building, collaboration, and communication. During the Scholarship renewal meeting with Scholar Leads, Scholars, and WSOS staff, I engaged with others in a way that fostered trust and open communication. I observed how effective communication helped to clarify expectations, while collaboration allowed different perspectives of the renewal process, which helped to create a shared understanding.
- These actions align with *The Leadership Challenge* because they reflect key practices like “Enable Others to Act” and “Model the Way.” Observing how my peers communicated expectations reinforced the importance of clarity and

consistency in leadership. Strong communication and collaboration are essential for building trust and supporting others in achieving shared goals.

#### Technical & Management Integration:

- Technical management principles I applied this week include planning, prioritization, communication, and supporting effective teamwork
- These principles influenced the outcome of my work by helping me balance my responsibilities as a Scholar Lead while staying engaged in the scholarship renewal meeting with other Scholar Leads, Scholars, and WSOS Staff. By staying organized and clearly communicating, I was able to contribute more effectively and remain focused on the goals of the meeting.

#### Ethics & Social Impact:

- An ethical consideration I faced this week was balancing my responsibility to mentor Scholars with my obligation of staying on top of my academic and personal commitments.
- To address this issue, I prioritized my tasks based on urgency and communicated with my Scholars more intentionally about my availability to ensure I could provide them with meaningful support without spreading myself too thin.

#### Personal Growth & Career Readiness:

- As a leader, this week I learned that it is normal to get overwhelmed at times. What matters is the actions we take to navigate these challenging times.
- This experience prepares me for my future career by reminding me that leaders are not always perfect, and that it is through the mistakes that we often learn. A great quote I came across this week is: “Setbacks are just temporary obstacles.”

### Challenges & Solutions:

- A challenge I faced this week was managing my time and feeling overwhelmed.
- Strategies I will use moving forward include sticking to my schedule and avoiding distractions. Additionally, I will incorporate meditation, as this practice has proven extremely beneficial.

### Progressive Journal - Week 3

Dates/Times and Location of service time:

- 4/22/2026; Virtual; 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm
- 4/24/2026; Virtual; 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Summary of Activities:

- 1:1 with advisor
- 1:1 meetings with four Scholars
- Responded to Scholar emails
- Filled out Scholar Lead interaction forms
- Helped a Scholar confirm his enrollment confirmation
- Aided a Scholar in completing the scholarship renewal form
- Drafted and sent out a bi-weekly email to Scholars

Leadership Application:

- Leadership competencies I practiced and observed this week include model the way by responding to emails and sending bi-weekly updates to keep Scholars informed and engaged. As well as enabling others to act through personalized support in 1:1 meetings and scholarship assistance.
- These actions align with *The Leadership Challenge* because 'Model the Way' is shown through my reliable communication, which sets a standard for accountability and accessibility in mentorship. 'Enable Others to Act' is demonstrated by empowering Scholars to complete renewal forms, fostering collaboration and strengthening their ability to succeed.

Technical & Management Integration:

- Technical management principles I applied this week include task prioritization and time management to handle several 1:1's, email responses, bi-weekly email, and managing other Scholar issues.
- These principles influenced the outcome of my work by ensuring timely solutions for Scholars, such as confirming enrollment and completing renewals, which prevents delays in their scholarship funding, while the bi-weekly email helps to keep over 200 Scholars engaged and aligned with their mentor.

#### Ethics & Social Impact:

- An ethical consideration I faced this week was ensuring equitable access to scholarship resources for a Scholar who faces language barriers, as miscommunication could have led to losing the scholarship and unnecessary frustration.
- To address this issue, I adapted my communication by using simple language, numbered steps, and clarifying questions. This upholds the ethical principle of fairness by making support inclusive and aligns with 'Challenge the Process' through innovating for diverse backgrounds.

#### Personal Growth & Career Readiness:

- As a leader, this week I learned that understanding how to communicate with individuals whose native language is not English is an important skill.
- This experience prepares me for my future career by helping me create an inclusive workplace where diverse voices, including those of non-native English speakers, are valued, understood, and empowered to contribute fully to the team's shared goals.

### Challenges & Solutions:

- A challenge I faced this week was working with a Scholar to figure out why he had not received his scholarship for this term. During our email communication, I noticed that English was not his first language, which caused some communication barriers.
- Strategies I will use moving forward include using adaptive communication to ensure clarity and maintain trust. By using simpler language and numbering steps, I can minimize confusion. I will also confirm understanding by asking questions and remaining patient with responses.

## Progressive Journal - Week 2

Dates/Times and Location of service time:

- 4/17/2026; Virtual; 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Summary of Activities:

- Responding to emails from Scholars
- 1:1 meetings with three Scholars
- Working with my teammate Emily, putting together a hosted virtual event for scholars on organization tips & time management
- Worked with a scholar on solving an issue regarding the amount of her scholarship disbursement
- Filled out Scholar Lead interaction forms

Leadership Application:

- Leadership competencies I practiced and observed this week include decision-making, communication, problem-solving, and relationship building.
- These actions align with *The Leadership Challenge* because they reflect 'Enable Others to Act,' which means fostering trust, collaboration, and shared ownership. The event planning also supports 'Model the Way' and 'Encourage the Heart' through consistent follow-through, clear expectations, and celebrating the values and victories by creating a spirit of community.

Technical & Management Integration:

- Technical management principles I applied this week include reporting and scheduling.

- These principles influenced the outcome of my work by improving its organization, visibility, and efficiency. Reporting strengthened accountability and communication with my advisor, and scheduling helped me manage the demands of keeping our hosted event on track, leading to a more focused and productive outcome.

#### Ethics & Social Impact:

- An ethical consideration I faced this week was ensuring equitable access and responsiveness for all Scholars while managing my time and energy.
- To address this issue, I kept commitments to scheduled meetings and communicated clearly, while maintaining respect, confidentiality, and professionalism. I also took notes after each encounter, so Scholar's concerns do not get overlooked or mixed up.

#### Personal Growth & Career Readiness:

- As a leader, this week I learned that active listening is even more important than I realized. When I lost my voice for a few days, I had to rely completely on listening, observing nonverbal cues, and responding thoughtfully through writing. Without a voice, I became more aware of how much I talk, how much I tend to interrupt, and how little I pause to think about what I am going to say before responding.
- This experience prepares me for my future career by strengthening my self-awareness and accountability. I recognize now that leadership is not just about speaking. It is about being present and intentional in how I receive and

respond to others. Going forward, I will deliberately pause, ask questions, and check in after email conversations to ensure I understand correctly.

#### Challenges & Solutions:

- A challenge I faced this week was helping a Scholar who was not receiving their full scholarship. I was able to overcome this challenge by reaching out to my advisor, who provided the information I needed for the Scholar.
- Strategies I will use moving forward include checking in with the scholar to ensure she understands why her scholarship was reduced. Additionally, I will ask more questions about scholarship reductions during my 1:1 meeting with my advisor this coming week.

## Progressive Journal - Week 1

Dates/Times and Location of service time:

- 4/17/2026; Virtual; 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Summary of Activities:

- Responding to emails from Scholars
- 1:1 meeting with my advisor Jessica Vilai
- 1:1 meetings with three Scholars
- Worked on the virtual event I will be hosting
- Helped a Scholar figure out why she was not receiving her full scholarship

Leadership Application:

- Leadership competencies I practiced and observed this week include communication, problem-solving, and relationship building.
- These actions align with *The Leadership Challenge* because they reflect 'Enable Others to Act,' which means fostering trust, collaboration, and shared ownership. The event planning also supports 'Model the Way' through consistent follow-through and clear expectations.

Technical & Management Integration:

- Technical management principles I applied include event planning and risk management.
- Continuous improvement influenced the outcome of my work because organizing the virtual event gave me a chance to solve problems early and use lessons learned to improve the final outcome. Stakeholder communication planning

influenced the outcome of my work because it helped keep expectations clear and improved engagement.

#### Ethics & Social Impact:

- Ethical considerations or social impact issues I encountered were balancing timely support for over 200 Scholars while still respecting privacy and professionalism in one-on-one meetings.
- To address this issue, I keep responses confidential, maintain respect in all of my communications, and make sure each Scholar feels supported and heard.

#### Personal Growth & Career Readiness:

- As a leader, this week I learned that effective leadership requires patience, empathy, and consistent communication. I also learned that mentoring others means being adaptable and responsive to individual needs while staying focused on the larger goal.
- This experience prepares me for my future career by strengthening my communication, problem-solving, and relationship-building skills. It also helps me practice professional responsibility, teamwork, and organizing tasks.

#### Challenges & Solutions:

- A challenge I faced this week was helping a Scholar who needed to renew her scholarship but was unsure how to complete the application. I overcame this by scheduling a one-on-one meeting and having her share her screen so I could guide her step by step through the process.
- Strategies I will use moving forward include providing clearer instructions up front and offering more one-on-one support when needed. I will also continue to

use active listening and patience so I can better support Scholars while helping them to build their confidence in completing applications on their own.