

Jessica Heide Publications Coordinator



David: What do you do? How does your role serve students?

Jessica: As the publications coordinator I help with communication between Student Life and students. I maintain and update the Student Life social media pages, Canvas course, webpages, create event flyers, as well as put together our quarterly newsletter and student handbook. My role helps share events and programs happening in Student Life.

David: How long have you been an Otter?

Jessica: I have been an Otter on and off since 2017

David: What do you love about South?

Jessica: Definitely the people, I have had the pleasure of working with or getting know many amazing people at South. The list of folks is long but I have been lucky enough to work with folks who have supported and challenged me, and watched students learn and grow.

I also love our mascot! Otters are one of my favorite animals, so I am pretty excited to be an otter.

David: What is something that you are enjoying doing right now?

Jessica: I recently moved into a new home, so I am enjoying getting everything put together and spend time in the new space.

David: Could you share something you learned that you wish you knew sooner in your academic career?

Jessica: When I was pursuing my undergraduate degree I struggled with the decision of what to major in. I originally went to college thinking I wanted to become a doctor and when I realized this wasn't for me, I was a bit lost. I eventually found my footing in Biology. You may notice this is quite different from my current position as Publications Coordinator and you would be correct. I wish I knew that the decision of a major does not have to determine where you end up. This has been true for a number of friends of mine – a firefighter who graduated with a construction management degree or a first year programs advisor with a history degree. Having a degree is important, especially these days in getting hired, but the actual degree matters less than you would think. If you have the knowledge, skills, and desire that is what matters most.

Know also that it is ok to change your mind. We are all human and part of going to college and even beyond, is learning about ourselves, what we want, and what we are good at. Try things and if they don't work out, that is ok. Just check it off the list and move onto the next.

David: Could you share a bit about your academic/career journey?

Jessica: As I mentioned I got my BS in Biology. After graduation I went onto work in a lab doing cancer research. I did this for several years and found myself looking for more. I have always loved to draw and found myself missing being creative. I was considering what I might want to transition to and remembered a conversation I had with a college advisor about career paths. She mentioned scientific illustration as an option. At the time I dismissed it, but found myself considering it again. UW had a certification course which I took and began working as a Freelance Illustrator. Working in freelance can be challenging as work can ebb and flow, so over the years I have also taken on other part-time work. These have included working in art galleries, teaching, and Publications Coordinator.

David: Anything else you would like to share about yourself?

Jessica: You know already that I am an artist, but I am also an avid climber and enjoy crocheting. Beyond that I love sharing knowledge and helping to support others in their goals. I hope that if you have questions during your time here at South, that you reach out to myself or the Student Life team.