

**The University of Scranton
Panuska College of Professional Studies**

Celebration of Remembrance Ceremony

Nov. 17, 2017

Student Reflection

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Initially, I am going to admit that I was very apprehensive about the cadaver lab; I am a huge advocate for human dignity, and was slightly uncomfortable with the concept of it all. Little did I realize, everything that we stand for while utilizing the lab aligns with my values on dignity, respect, kindness, and ultimately, God.

My experience so far with the cadaver lab has been the opposite of what I expected. I assumed I would be afraid, overwhelmed, uneasy at times, and try to stay as removed from the situation as I could. Although I still struggle with feeling uneasy at times and am not the type of student comfortable enough to truly participate to the full extent, I find that I am getting much more out of the experience than I thought. My most comfortable role in lab is to simply observe, and to try to connect the book diagrams to reality in order to further my understanding. This is crucial to my ability to practice occupational therapy, and as a visual learner, I have found that the reinforcement of the material in real-life situations has been such a privilege to partake in.

The care and treatment of the bodies during lab encompasses the Ignatian teaching of *cura personalis*, or “care for the whole person.” What we utilize to study anatomy is not just a body, modeling the diagrams in our book; he or she is a person, who deserves privacy, respect, and care, just as I would treat a client, or any individual I encounter. Additionally, St. Ignatius and his teachings call for “finding God in all things,” and I feel as though through observing the anatomy of humans I can further understand God as the genius Creator. What else would be capable of creating such beauty, complexity, organization and uniqueness of each individual? My experience in the lab has truly opened my eyes about how God’s wisdom is reflected in His creation, and I have a deeper appreciation for Him and human life as a whole.

Overall, I have the upmost respect for the individuals who donate their bodies to science. Understanding that this was their decision not only relieved my hesitation regarding dignity, but also allowed me to truly stop and think: where would I be as a practicing occupational therapist if I did not have any real-life experience in the process of pursuing my career? The best way to study the

human body is to actually study the human body, and I would like to thank the individuals who made the decision to donate their bodies, as the impact they create is immense.

I would like to end with a short prayer by Ignatius of Loyola that I feel represents the role that the individuals who donated their bodies have fulfilled. Ignatius says:

“O my God, teach me to be generous, teach me to serve you as I should, to give without counting the cost, to fight without fear of being wounded, to work without seeking rest, to labour without expecting any reward, but the knowledge that I am doing your most holy will.”

Any individual who donates their body is acting as described in this prayer; they are generous, donating themselves not for any personal reward, but for the sake of others. The sense of purpose, respect for God and others that their actions portray is inspiring, and I am grateful to have had the experience as a means of studying.