

InterMission Winter 2024 Student Testimonials - SUMMARY

“MO330 is without a doubt the most valuable, transformative, and lastingly impactful academic experience I have ever had. Both in the classroom and beyond, the lessons I have learned from the course material, from my peers, from my mentorship, and from the experience of traveling to Utah, have directly and lastingly impacted my life perspective.” – **Emily Sedewitz, International Studies and Environmental Science, Class of 2024**

“I can confidently say that this course has been the most impactful class I have taken at the University of Michigan.” – **Deeya Shetty, Ross BBA Class of 2025**

“I can say with confidence that InterMission has been the most engaging and personally significant class I have taken throughout my four years at U of M. – **John Henry Slonieski, Ross BBA Class of 2024**

“This class was absolutely one of the most impactful and meaningful classes of my college experience.” – **Ryan Carlson, Ross BBA Class of 2024**

“As an international exchange student even more, it was an incredible opportunity. My most original, memorable and true US experience of my time here. I can’t express how grateful I am.” – **Clement Fromonteil, Ross BBA Exchange Student, France**

“Taking MO 330: Intermission was a transformative experience that I will cherish forever..” – **Vishnu Jaisim, Ross BBA Class of 2024**

“...Intermission was by far the most memorable and influential class I took at Michigan.” – **Samuel Goldman, BSE Industrial and Operations Engineering, Class of 2024**

“Intermission is exactly the experience I had been seeking at Michigan... The value of this course is truly beyond measure.” – **Samuel Hausman-Weiss, LSA Political Science Class of 2024**

“It’s hard to put into words what this course has taught me.” – **Anabelle Phillips, School of Information Class of 2024**

““InterMission was arguably one of the most important classes I had the privilege of taking at the University of Michigan...I believe it reinforces the idea of the Michigan difference and provides the students here with a newfound perspective on life – **Bailey Jackson, Neuroscience Class of 2024**

“Intermission has been one of the most impactful classes I have taken in my life... Ultimately, this class led me to start a new journey, one that does not focus on my career success, but on something more important, living a life that is worth living.” – **Marek Smrcka, Ross BBA Exchange Student from the Czech Republic**

InterMission Winter 2024 Student Testimonials - FULL LENGTH

“This class was absolutely one of the most impactful and meaningful classes of my college experience. I truly have not had a class where I formed such strong relationships with the other students in the course. From the engaging lectures, discussions, and guest speakers to the Canyons of Southeast Utah, I can firmly say I am a more well-rounded and thoughtful leader. I recommend that anyone taking this class seek an awe-inspiring experience in nature and find their way as they navigate life beyond college in the coming years. Kevin, as well as the NOLS instructors, were invaluable resources in my self-leadership journey and people I would now call my friends.”

– Ryan Carlson, Ross BBA Class of 2024

“It’s hard to summarize everything this course has brought to an international, semester exchange student from France like I am in a few sentences.

InterMission is a fantastic journey into knowing yourself and developing your personality as a leader and as a human. It has been a few days since the end of the Utah trip experience for me, yet I already see how it has changed me and how it will impact my life. And this trip would not have been the same without all the theoretical/practical classes in Ross before.

As an international exchange student even more, it was an incredible opportunity. My most original, memorable and true US experience of my time here.

I can’t express how grateful I am to have been able to participate, despite a lot of administrative/financial issues.

Kevin helped a lot with these.

The amount to pay is very important, and he helped by taking a lot of my fees in charge with the scholarship. Still, I had to pay a consequent amount, and the scholarship given by the school to this class is limited.

But if you ask me, if you can afford it, then definitely go for it. It’s 1000 times worth the amount.

This week probably felt like one of the happiest moments, and is also amongst the most impactful moments of my life.

This course will not teach you how to be a great marketer, financial analyst or whatever. It will rather help you understand how to become a great person. These type of classes are essential to universities and students.”

– Clement Fromonteil, Ross BBA Exchange Student from France

“I just wanted to say thank you again for such an unforgettable experience. I know you hear this a lot, but Intermission was by far the most memorable and influential class I took at Michigan, and I appreciate your work in making this experience happen for us.”

– **Samuel Goldman, BSE Industrial and Operations Engineering, Class of 2024**

“Intermission is exactly the experience I had been seeking at Michigan. Although not a Ross student, my time at UM was heavily invested in the competitive club culture and recruiting process. Intermission provided a crucial space for me to pause, and reflect on where I was at, and where I wanted to go. Each lecture in the course builds on the last, equipping Intermission students with a toolkit that not only prepares us for the week-long wilderness expedition but also for approaching our futures with deep purpose and intention.

Intermission is structured in a way that the effort you put in correlates with what you get out of it, and I cannot recommend diving in wholeheartedly enough. The course content, coupled with enriching discussions with classmates and Professor Thompson, creates a rare space dedicated to reflecting on our purpose and values. I have never finished a course with such a profound sense of fulfillment.

Especially after graduation, it is an extraordinary experience to see all the lessons from Intermission come together during the expedition in nature, completely off the grid. No phones, no technology, and no connection to the outside world— just time and space to reflect and tackle physical and mental challenges alongside a new community of Michigan students who become close friends within days. In what often feels like a constant race to the top, Intermission offers a much-needed pause to contemplate who you are and who you aspire to be. The value of this course is truly beyond measure.”

– **Samuel Hausman-Weiss, LSA Political Science Class of 2024**

“InterMission was arguably one of the most important classes I had the privilege of taking at the University of Michigan. With both a classroom and field component, I, as well as the other students in the course, were able to implement the skills we learned in class and put them into practical application out in the canyons. The discussions in class regarding finding your purpose allowed me to take a step back in the midst of a crazy semester and focus on what kinds of work truly bring me joy—a skill that I think is crucial for college students to understand before graduating, but not many have the opportunity to experience. The course is centered around you, focusing on your values, ambitions, and passions and learning how to incorporate these integral aspects of yourself into your work. You get out of this class what you put in, and I find myself going back to the course materials and re-reading what we went over in order to ensure that I have taken every ounce of information that was given to us because I find it so pertinent to my daily life, especially after graduating.

The NOLS course component of this class was truly life-changing for me—an opportunity to disconnect from the world, focus on building lasting relationships with classmates, and learn

your leadership style, specifically focusing on how to ensure efficiency and success in the specific way you lead—is an opportunity I am incredibly privileged and grateful to have had. One thing in particular that stood out to me during this trip was that each of the NOLS instructors utilized different leadership styles. Discussing applicable leadership styles in class is one thing; seeing them in action in the canyonlands allowed me to observe the differences between each style and understand how they are all effective but implement different strategies to induce cooperation and trust between group members. This was the most eye-opening aspect of the trip for me, as I am not a business student, and prior to this trip, I would have said that I do not have the strong leadership skills that the other students in the class demonstrated in class, which is what will make them successful in the business world. I soon realized after my day of leadership that I had a less directive style and focused more on building team morale and input from others, which I believe may be because I am going into the medical field, where collaboration and consensus are of utmost importance. I cannot emphasize enough how important this trip has been to me and how often I utilize the skills from it in my daily life and plan to incorporate them into my future career.

This trip allowed me to understand the importance of disconnecting and truly being present in the moment. Being out in the canyons for seven days, I thought I would get bored throughout the duration of the trip. I quickly found out that that would not be the case. Our days were filled with cooking meals, playing games, taking classes, finding our next campsite, and talking with friends. I was able to be present in every moment, every conversation, and every classroom lesson. I had no distractions and was so interested in everything we did that I almost never thought about my phone or the outside world. I hope that this course will be taught at Michigan for many years to come, as it integrates the responsibility, leadership, and academic skills that we have learned at Michigan and provides us with a way to put them into practice in the real world. I have already recommended this course to many of my friends, and I hope that they will have the opportunity to take it as well, as I believe it reinforces the idea of the Michigan difference and provides the students here with a newfound perspective on life.” – **Bailey Jackson, Neuroscience Class of 2024**

“Taking MO 330: Intermission was a transformative experience that I will cherish forever. The in-class component taught me how to shape my life with purpose, surround myself with people who truly matter, and find work environments that energize and motivate me.

The highlight of the course was the out-of-class component – a seven-day wilderness expedition in the breathtaking canyons of Utah. This part of the course took us away from daily life and placed us in a serene landscape, isolated from the outside world. This journey inspired us to appreciate the beauty of nature and to understand how simple and fulfilling life can be without modern distractions. The vast canyons served as a stunning backdrop for self-reflection and growth.

During this expedition, I formed lifelong friendships and created memories that will last a lifetime. The bonds we made while navigating the challenging terrain and sharing stories were incredibly special. Each day brought new adventures and discoveries.

Professor Thompson made Intermission an enriching experience. His passion for teaching and genuine care for each student's personal growth were evident from the start. Kevin's insightful guidance during the in-class sessions helped us explore our purpose and build meaningful connections. By the end of the course, Kevin had become more than just a teacher; he became a mentor and a friend, offering support and wisdom that extended far beyond the classroom.

MO 330: Intermission is more than just a class; it's an adventure. If you're looking for an experience that will challenge you, inspire you, and leave you with unforgettable memories, this is it." – **Vishnu Jaisim, Ross BBA Class of 2024**

"It's hard to put into words what this course has taught me. The lessons learned in the Canyons are not ones that could ever be learned in just a typical classroom setting, but only learned by people who truly seek an opportunity to get deep, take a risk, form community and care for the environment. All of these things are crucial to becoming an effective leader for other people and organizations, but more importantly yourself. Values, purpose, and true friendship can only be learned by taking a leap of faith. If you want to have a life changing experience to look back on forever and forces you to truly learn who you are and what you are capable of, I highly urge you to take this giant leap of faith and trust it will have a bigger impact on you than you ever knew was possible. You will not regret it." – **Anabelle Phillips, School of Information Class of 2024**

"MO330 is without a doubt the most valuable, transformative, and lastingly impactful academic experience I have ever had. Both in the classroom and beyond, the lessons I have learned from the course material, from my peers, from my mentorship, and from the experience of traveling to Utah, have directly and lastingly impacted my life perspective. I sincerely encourage the continuation of this course so others can experience the same.

To speak to the course material, our in-classroom lessons were intentional and engaging. One that comes to mind is our lesson on values and their connection to purpose. This was something I have never put into words before, but has been something I have thought about every day since. I am so thankful to now have these ideas at top-of-mind, and am more grateful to have had the space and time to internalize how I want to prioritize them in my life moving forward.

Throughout this semester, Professor Thompson went out of his way to be a supportive and available resource for students. It is rare to have a Professor as engaged in mentorship, and I am grateful to have benefited from his experience and advice. It is not an exaggeration to say that the relationships I made during this course, both with my mentors and peer, will last far beyond the end of the semester.

Following graduation, our course material went from theory to practice during our time in Utah. Completely isolated and without the distractions of everyday life, we were given the opportunity and space to reflect on our path, present circumstances, and choice driven futures. I feel strongly that this is something uniquely offered by the environment and experience of taking this

trip. The space of solitude and quiet I experienced during our week in Utah was restorative and centering, allowing myself - and my classmates - the opportunity to vulnerably reflect and work together to ground ourselves in our reminded values. I have never had an opportunity like this and I didn't know I needed to experience it until I did. It is something impossible to manufacture or replicate anywhere else. I am beyond thankful to have had this experience, and I feel incredibly strongly that others will - and should - benefit from this opportunity in the same ways that I did - especially if they did not know they needed to, like I did.

Through navigating a challenging and new environment as a team, we were able to let go of distractions and lean into each other. In cookgroups, hikers groups, water collection groups, etc, we were given the time and space to connect with new people in new ways. We learned to rely on each other, lean on each other, and learn from each other as we each discovered what the time away from our every day lives meant to us. I feel incredibly lucky to have had the opportunity to be a part of my RBL Team. Most of us did not know each other going into this class, and coming from all backgrounds and all future paths, I sincerely benefited from the diversity of perspective my team offered. In my opinion, the team dynamic and personal growth it fostered was the most valuable - and uniquely irreplaceable - element of this experience. It was both grounding and empowering to learn from, explore with, and work to lead such a diverse and open-minded group of people. Working through challenges - like learning to pass packs, scramble up rocks, cook a meal, or attempt to navigate - as a collective was profound opportunity for self-discovery and a powerful lesson in perspective. As a recent college graduate, the reduction to necessity within such a supportive and team-oriented group helped me to work through this difficult period of change and re-centered my perspective as I begin to think about my career and my life.

In final reflection, the material covered in this course is thoughtfully curated, intentionally debated, and patiently introduced. Professor Thompon's mentorship is sincerely and invaluable offered. His perspective and life experience is a wealth of knowledge, emotional intelligence, and commanding leadership that is equally inspiring and accessible. In important counterpart, the solitude of the wilderness offered a rare opportunity for introspection and reflection. The community dynamic of our team offered a space for personal growth and support - both during our time in Utah and beyond.

I can attest to the profound impact this experience has had on my own personal growth and leadership abilities. The lessons learned and insights gained throughout this course have influenced the way I will approach challenges and opportunities in both my personal and professional life. I cannot express enough the value of this course for students as emerging professionals and developing people.

I would like to sincerely thank Professor Thompson and the Ross School of Business for making this experience a possibility. I truly believe this experience has grounded me in a deeper understanding of myself. Thank you! Please feel free to reach me at any time."

– Emily Sedewitz, International Studies and Environmental Science, Class of 2024

"In Fall of 2021, I started my freshman year at the University of Michigan in Ross. Having no prior experience in business classes and no family members in this path, I was incredibly nervous about starting this major; in fact, I was quite confident I would transfer out my first year to LSA to study Data Science and follow in my older brother's footsteps. My doubts were compounded by the fear that business would offer few opportunities that fit my passion for the environment.

After joining clubs and finding mentors within Ross, I began to warm up to the major. I found strategy projects thought provoking and upperclassmen's internships intriguing. By my sophomore year, I fully committed to the major and began preparing for my career by recruiting consulting.

First semester junior year, I signed for a consulting internship in the exact city I wanted to work in. At this point, my trajectory in Ross followed much of what I had hoped for. Despite feeling prepared to perform my best in my internship and the demands of my post-grad job, I was still unsure of how my long term goals around sustainability fit into my corporate career. As I spoke to upperclassmen, old friends at other schools, and people in my grade, I found many students shared this uncertainty.

At this time, second semester junior year started, and I enrolled into MO 330. Having completed the class and Utah expedition, I can confidently say that this course has been the most impactful class I have taken at the University of Michigan. Each class uniquely covered topics ranging from values, to connections, to energy management and more. I have developed tools to navigate entering consulting while staying true to the values I believe in. Furthermore, I feel more at ease about the questions that are still unanswered – this class didn't just offer a skillset, but a mindset that I intend to carry forward as I learn more about what I do and do not want in my professional life.

Outside of the class material, our professor, Kevin, was incredibly present. Kevin met with me outside of class to discuss the endless questions I had about pursuing sustainability in business. He helped me honestly weigh the importance between short and long term professional choices. Additionally, much of his advice bridged the gap between my PitE and Ross classes. This discussion transpired because of the topics covered in class, but was able to further develop because of the commitment Kevin has for his students.

Going into my senior year, I believe this school has truly offered me a well rounded curriculum that has developed me professionally, but moreso, empowered me to be a proactive and grounded individual in whatever spaces I enter. I feel I have quelled every doubt my freshman year self had about being in this school. This is a result of a culmination of experiences over the years, but I believe it was MO 330 that helped me reflect on everything I have completed thus far and look forward with confidence and purpose. I would recommend every Ross student to take this class if they are able to. Thank you Kevin and the Ross Administration for this opportunity!"

– Deeya Shetty, Ross BBA Class of 2025

"I can say with confidence that InterMission has been the most engaging and personally significant class I have taken throughout my four years at U of M. The course material and structure required me to think intentionally and meaningfully about myself and my professional pursuits; all while simultaneously providing space for me to then step back and evaluate myself deeply. In doing so, I have been challenged to think critically about who I am and what I want out of my career after graduation.

The week-long NOLS trip following the conclusion of the in-class portion of the course was particularly impactful. The week I spent in Utah learning about myself and my leadership capabilities was incredible. So much so that it made for one of the most meaningful times of my life. There has been no other course at U of M that has been as beneficial to my learning and professional goals, and I will recommend the course to anyone who will listen."

– John Henry Slonieski, Ross BBA Class of 2024

"Intermission has been one of the most impactful classes I have taken in my life. As an international student, it had been a challenge to pick which classes I wanted to enrol in. This class caught my attention immediately due to the trip to Utah. What surprised me the most is how much I enjoyed the in class exercises. They forced me to develop a completely different skillset, instead of constantly move forward, this class taught me to look within myself and reflect on who I am.

The wilderness expedition put all that I have learned into practice. I found myself in an unknown environment with people I did not know too well and without the certainty of my phone. At the end of the week, I left the canyons not only with deeper knowledge of wilderness and leadership skills, but also with a better understanding of who I am.

Ultimately, this class led me to start a new journey, one that does not focus on my career success, but on something more important, living a life that is worth living."

– Marek Smrcka, Ross BBA Exchange Student from the Czech Republic