



LEFT: Troy Fort, psychology major, sits on the 77 steps.
 ABOVE: Troy plays cello in the orchestra and golf at Southwestern.

Tessa Castor/ Staff photographer

Honor student impresses outside of classroom

By Tanner Carlson
 Staff reporter

The decision to commit to Southwestern College to gain an education was not something that randomly happened for Troy Fort, senior psychology major and biology and criminal justice double minor. Both of his parents and older sisters are Southwestern alums, so for Fort it was a family tradition.

Fort was recruited to play for the Southwestern golf team. He plays the cello for the symphony. He also decided not to follow in his family's footsteps, choosing a psychology major instead of a biology major like his father and sisters.

"I grew up with that biology lab background, but I knew that wasn't for sure what I wanted to do," Fort said. "I knew I didn't want to follow that exact career path."

Fort initially came to Southwestern with the intent to pursue a criminal justice career, but he then realized that reality isn't like the "Criminal

Minds" television show. His sister fell into this career path and he did not want to work in the same field as her.

Even though he has gone in a different direction than his family, he still has their full support.

"My mom-it's kind of funny- she still proofreads every single one of my essays that I write," Fort said, "I should honestly be better at grammar than I am, but I still don't know a whole lot about it."

Fort's versatility, from his knowledge, athleticism, artistic ability to play both cello and piano and wanting to improve in all of those talents has taken away any of Fort's free time. When he manages to find free time, he just likes to relax and watch Netflix.

"People perceive Troy as always being studious," Jacob Negley, assistant professor of psychology and Fort's advisor, said. "But he's actually a really funny person, and we will just talk about the last season of 'House of Cards,' or something like that."

Fort started playing golf

in high school, and once he found out that his family's alma mater was interested in recruiting him, he knew golf was another passion of his he could continue at Southwestern.

"I think Troy and I have a unique relationship, because I actually played with him for two years," Justin Churchill, head men's and women's golf coach, said. "He has a determination to do well in everything - whether it's golf, whether it's school, or whatever he's doing on campus - because Southwestern allows him to do that. I think he is the epitome of what Southwestern wants in a student."

When Fort isn't having his mother proofread his essays or setting a tee time on the golf course, he is working on his craft as a musician. Troy plays cello for the symphony orchestra, and he also plays the piano. He has been playing for as long as he can remember.

"Golf is too stressful, because it's one of the few sports that your pay directly

indexed directly on how well your performance is - there are no contracts," Fort explains, "So I always thought being a professional musician would be fun. You get to, like, travel the world, but in hindsight I should've practiced harder."

The music program is more of a fun hobby for Fort - it has nothing to do with his major or minors. It is a passion of his, and his involvement is as committed as if he were a music major. Fort has principle leadership roles as the first chair cellist in the group for the past four years.

"He has a lot of natural talent that runs through his family," said Amber Peterson, Kilmner strings chair. "It seems to be a part of him, even though psychology is his major."

As involved in the school as he is, Fort does like to keep to himself and it may take some time to get to know him on a personal level. He is quiet, serious, and can sometimes seem emotionless.

"He is like going through

the layers of the onion," Tamara McEwen, associate professor of biology, said. "You just have to peel back a little at a time."

There is no doubt that Troy Fort is a smart, mature, successful young man, but the overwhelming consensus from his psychology professor, Dr. Negley, to his former-teammate-now-coach, Justin Churchill, is the most surprising attribute to his personality is his dry and sometimes monotone sense of humor.

"He has a really dry sense of humor, and it comes out when you least expect it," McEwen said. "He's kind of quiet, and can almost be dispassionate, with no facial expressions, and then he comes out with a zinger."

Fort's plan after graduation is to pursue a master's degree in neuropsychology, because he "chose a degree you can't do anything with after only four years of education."

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