

EMU Aviation Student Profile - Gavin Comber

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Gavin Comber, of New Freedom, Pa, envisioned an aviation career where no two days are the same.

Gavin developed a keen interest in aviation at the age of 12 when he took control of an airplane for the first time during a summer camp under the guidance of a local flight instructor. Since then, he has been flying regularly to explore new destinations and create new memories.

Gavin is a student in EMU Lancaster's [leadership and organizational management \(LOM\) program with a concentration in aviation](#). By the completion of the four-year program, graduates earn a Bachelor's degree and the FAA credentials they need to begin a professional pilot career.

Comber shares more about his experiences in the program below:

What interests you about aviation? What led you to pursue this career path?

Aviation has always fascinated me because of the excitement and sense of challenge it offers. I always knew I wanted a career where I could do something different every day, and aviation is precisely that. Whether it be different weather conditions, a new airport, or a different airplane, there is always a new challenge and more to learn and experience. I pursued this path after attending a camp run by a now-local DPE (Designated Pilot Examiner) named Heskell Burnstein when I was 12. After that first time taking the controls of an airplane, I would take every opportunity I could to get in the air.

Tell us about the friendships you've made with your classmates.

Since the first week of class, I knew we had a special group of students in my cohort. I have made so many deep and meaningful friendships with all of them. We are all working towards the same goal, so we naturally want to help each other succeed. We not only enjoy learning about aviation but also spending time together outside of class; whether it's grabbing snacks at Costco or just hanging out, we're always up for some fun! The relationships I have built with my fellow classmates, faculty members, and instructors at EMU have been the most rewarding aspect of my time here. Through these connections, I have gained invaluable knowledge and skills that have helped me grow personally and professionally.

What was it like to pass your Private Pilot Checkride?

Passing my Private Pilot Checkride was the best feeling I have ever experienced. I could not wipe the smile off my face the entire rest of the day. It is a huge relief knowing that the hundreds of hours of hard work studying and flying have paid off and that you are now a licensed pilot.

We heard that the Instrument Rating is the most challenging; what makes that so challenging?

Instrument is a challenge because it can be less about the stick and rudder skills of flying and more about learning how to program and be ahead of the airplane, as well as making good decisions and managing your environment. I feel that private training was learning how to fly an airplane, but instrument is learning how to be a pilot and building a skillset that will allow you to effectively manage your aircraft while flying.

Why did you choose EMU?

I chose EMU because of the people and the community. When I went to the open house, I saw the excitement of the staff and the smiles on the student's faces and knew that EMU was where I wanted to be. I knew that I would get guaranteed flight time and would be able to create great relationships with my instructors and teachers because of the community feel at [Aero-Tech Services \(ATS\)](#), our flight partner, and EMU.

What have you most enjoyed about the program so far?

It is hard to pick what I have enjoyed most because everything has been enjoyable. I have most enjoyed the relationships that I have made and the lifelong friendships that have started at EMU. I have enjoyed flying to new destinations and making new memories on a weekly basis. It is fantastic waking up excited to fly an airplane or see my classmates at school every morning.

What are your professional goals after graduation?

My professional goal is to become an airline pilot, but I am open to other paths. I can't wait to see where my aviation adventure takes me.