

Alejandra De Osma

## Challenge project

### Reflective writing :

1. **Think back to how you felt at the beginning of the course. What were your expectations?**

At the beginning of this course, I felt confident in my programming skills with the knowledge that I had acquired through my previous computer science classes. Yet, I still felt unprepared to apply to any internship or job within the tech world. When I decided to enroll in this class, I was excited to learn about how we can apply our coding knowledge and develop programs to simulate real life events. One of the classes I took in the math department, ODE (ordinary differential equations) did just that, I fell in love with the idea of mathematically deriving a formula that predicts the natural behavior of events in this world. Therefore, having the opportunity to now use the power of computers and generate such simulations at a more powerful level was very exciting. I was slightly nervous about learning a new programming language, python, but I knew that by having a background in java I was going to be able to pick it up quickly.

2. **Tell a story about a topic, problem, or assignment from the class that challenged you. How did you respond?**

One of the challenges I faced this semester, was coding in multiple languages. In my previous Rollins years I was only coding in java, this semester, I had the great opportunity to learn python, c, assembly language, and linux terminal commands. However, this became a challenge. For one of the initial deliverable projects, I completed the entire program and for hours I tried running it through the terminal. Moments later I realized I had coded the entire program in c instead of python. I laughed for a while, and proceeded to recode the entire program in python. Through this experience, I realized that I have to be fully concentrated in what I am coding and from that day on I set a schedule and programmed my week assignment so that there wasn't too much work overlaps in the same day.

**1. Tell a story about an interaction you had with another person because of this class.**

Before this class I truly didn't know many students in the CMS department at Rollins. I became friends with Fritz and Noah since we also take other classes together. Sometimes taking time to review and talk to peers helps understand the material.

**3. Other than programming, what have you learned from this class that you can take forward into your other classes or post-Rollins work?**

I believe that I have learned so much in this class apart from coding, as a matter of fact I think this class has provided a new perspective on how I see the world. I had never truly thought about the randomness of events and how to approach them in a statistical manner. For example, before this class, if I was walking through the streets and found \$10, I felt lucky. Now it is hard not to think about the number of \$10 dollar bills I've probably missed throughout my life. I believe that understanding probabilities and the nature of events is critical for problem solving in any situation.

**4. What has been your experience on learning during the pandemic, whether that was in-person or remote? What did you find most challenging? What (if anything) worked well for you during this time?**

I enjoyed being able to attend class in person since I am less prone to getting distracted. However, I think that having the option to go virtual was also very efficient. As a student that had COVID, and had to be out of campus for two weeks, having the online platform to attend class and not miss valuable content was key. It was sometimes hard to work on a computer for over 13 hours, accounting for both virtual classes and assignments, nonetheless I felt that Rollins did a good job planning this system.

5. **What are your thoughts on online vs. in-person education? Do you think there are positive aspects of online teaching that we should incorporate into our regular classes?**

I am a very active and visual learner, therefore, attending online classes was a challenge. I believe that both methods of teaching have both positive and negative aspects. Based on the current situation, accounting for the global pandemic, online classes have provided a platform for students to attend classes in any situation, no matter if they were situated in a different country or if they were in quarantine. I believe that Rollins should consider offering online school even after the pandemic. Giving students the option to receive great education from across the globe. It will also be useful for students that have to leave for an emergency and not feel the pressure of missing class.

6. **Metacognition is the act of thinking about your own thinking. The single most important skill you can develop in college is self-awareness about your own learning process. What have you learned about your own learning as a result of being in this class?**

I consider myself an active and visual learner. This semester has been a challenge, but to some extent, I believe it has been a challenge for everyone. One of the most important skills I developed this semester was structure and self control. I am a very energetic person therefore I am highly prone to getting distracted with anything that surrounds me. At first online classes were difficult, usually in (in person) class I am focused and paying attention since I can see the professor and what they are writing or explaining. Therefore, online classes were hard, once I realized this, I made sure that I was fully engaged in class no matter what. I brought structure to my day, it could be easy for me to lay in bed and try to listen, however, I knew that would not work for me so I made sure I completed my morning routine like if I was attending class at Rollins.