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August Extra Credit Panel Takeaways

Today’s session was a very insightful and beneficial discussion. The panelists all had different majors and started off by saying how APCSP leads to a vast variety of majors. Essentially, the skills that we are currently learning will help make our future classes easier. After this class, AP CSA is also a good class to take and teaches us more advanced coding techniques. We can use the coding that we learn in a variety of majors. One of the alumni spoke about how he’s currently studying mechanical engineering, and how the skills he learned in this class helped streamline some of the projects he had in college. The panelists really emphasized how despite the class seeming difficult at the start, it’s only going to get easier from here. Several of the speakers really emphasized how in any coding project, having the motivation to start is always one of the hardest parts. But after that, you just have to make a plan for yourself and keep pushing yourself to maintain your plan. Having a plan really helps when doing a large-scale project, as it helps to keep everything organized, so you don’t dive in without figuring out a proper approach. At times, coding is going to be hard. That’s just how it is. But with sheer determination, you can make it through. You have to be willing to spend time and effort on your task at hand, and only then will the results come. One of the panelists mentioned how you shouldn’t cut corners while coding. You need to properly understand the code that you are working with, and try to expand more off of that. It’s also important to note that when you get stuck during coding, you should never be afraid to reach out and ask for help. Take advantage of the resources around you. If the people around you can’t figure it out, then you can always count on google. As we progress through this year, my understanding of coding will increase massively, and that’s when I should start making my own personal projects. These projects are a good way to build a solid portfolio, and come in handy when you are looking for an internship. Internships are really important, as they help you develop your coding skills more, and teach you effective strategies for how to approach certain projects/scenarios. However during your coding endeavors, one of the biggest things that you need to remember is to only focus on your journey. A lot of the panelists all agreed that there is always going to be someone way better than you at coding. But you shouldn’t let this affect you. As one of the panelists said, just focus on yourself and don’t get worried about how the ‘Steve Jobs’ of the world are doing. In short, this CS journey isn’t a short one and definitely isn’t an easy one. But if you have the motivation, and willingness to keep pushing, then you can do it.