

There are several identities that I proudly identify with. Some are seen as good, others not so much. Such as: 1 - I am a black man, 2 - I was born in Uganda (so I'm not quite African American), 3 - I'm dyslexic. Although there are many more, those are the main three I would like to focus on in the context of school.

Academically speaking, I am a Computer Science (CS) major, aiming to become a Software Engineer and maybe study AI or machine learning one day. Being a CS major, a few identities that are pushed onto me are those of hygiene, intelligence, and social aptitude. On the hygiene side, people assume that all CS majors stink. To clarify, some do, and it's a mix of bad, concerning, and distracting all at the same time. But luckily, that's not a part of my identity. Touching on intelligence, people assume that I'm really smart and that they couldn't do the class I do. Which also isn't really true. I just do my best and study. I'm not some prodigy of genius. Lastly, social aptitude, sadly, this one does apply to me pretty heavily. CS majors have a stigma of having horrible social skills, and this is, in fact, something I very heavily identify with.

Bringing my identity to CS, I don't really see many people like me. But there are a good number of people who also don't have people exactly like them, and that can bring us together in a strange way. In each of my CS classes, there's been about two or three black people, including myself. However, the largest demographics are white, Asian, and Indian (I understand that Indian is a subset of Asian). This lack of "my people" can lead to feeling alone in a lot of my classes, but it also allows me to stand out. And when I do stand out work, I feel like it's easier to remember me, my face, and my work. I have yet to meet anyone in my major who was born in Uganda. This doesn't really make me feel out of place; it's more of a conversation starter since a lot of social lines, especially here, are drawn by skin color and not so much nationality. I think you'd have to be thinking a bit more politically to draw social lines on nationality over skin color. And to most people, black is black and nothing else. Being dyslexic is the identity I'm most proud of and most ashamed of. Because it is always embarrassing to be the only dyslexic one. But also, I'm proud that I've made it further than most, regardless, and will continue to keep on going. But luckily, there's not a crazy amount of reading in CS, and the large amount that there is, is programs, and that doesn't even look like English, regardless. So, although I don't fit in well at all into my major and my desired field, in my opinion, the best way to fix that is diversity; when no one fits, we all fit.

For a person in my field with a similar identity to myself, I'm going with my boy [Sadiq Farah](#), not only is he a black man in CS, but he is also from Africa. So when I met him, it felt like a breath of fresh air to finally find someone who was like me. A person who doesn't have very many similar identities to me is actually one of my professors, [Dominic Dabish](#). He's a lot more social and outgoing than I am. Loads of fun to be around, and very confident. But personally, I'm more of a listen kind of guy.