CS 499 Module 4 Journal Thompson  
Takeria Thompson   
  
Part One:

1. Have you changed your career plans?

Yes, I have changed my career path from Veterinary Medicine to Software Engineering. This shift was motivated by several factors, but primarily by my desire for a new challenge and to explore other interests that I have long had in technology and problem-solving. While Veterinary Medicine was rewarding, I found myself increasingly drawn to the opportunities in the tech industry, particularly the ability to continuously learn and evolve with innovative technologies. This change has sparked a renewed excitement for my professional future.

2. How have your thoughts about your career evolved?

My thinking has evolved significantly since making the decision to transition to Software Engineering. Initially, I was unsure about the breadth of career options within the tech field, but after researching and exploring different areas like software development, data structures, and engineering principles, I have realized how broad and versatile this career path is. I am still determining whether I should specialize in a particular area or maintain a broader tech stack, which would make me adaptable and attractive to various employers. I believe that as I improve my skills, more opportunities will arise, and I’ll have the clarity needed to decide my niche.

3. Have you completed any research about your choice of career?

Yes, I have done a fair amount of research regarding my new career in Software Engineering. The vastness of the field has made it both exciting and slightly overwhelming. Through this research, I’ve learned that while academic qualifications are valuable, real-world experience and demonstrated projects often outweigh formal degrees in many cases. I have considered pursuing an advanced degree in the future, but at this moment, gaining practical experience and building a portfolio of work seem to be more pressing priorities. This realization has helped me focus more on hands-on learning and project development to enhance my employability.

4. Which course outcomes have you achieved so far, and which ones remain?

I have made significant progress in several course outcomes, particularly in understanding industry-standard tools and applying algorithms and data structures in real-world contexts. I've studied backend services, optimizing data structures, and software engineering principles, for example, but there are still things I need to work on, including improving my security procedures and my ability to explain technical ideas to non-technical audiences. I’m confident that with continued practice, I’ll achieve these goals before the end of the program.

Part Two:

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| Checkpoint | Software Design and Engineering | Algorithms and Data Structures | Databases |
| Name of Artifact Used | 3D Modeling and Scene Design from CS 330 (Computational Graphics and Visualization) | Backend Services with Data Structures from CS 320 | Database Project from CS 340: Using MongoDB for Animal Rescue |
| Status of Initial Enhancement |  | Improvements in data structure efficiency, focusing on optimizing hash maps for quicker lookups. | Experimenting with indexing and aggregation techniques to handle larger datasets. |
| Submission Status | Work has started, but no submission has been made yet due to minor setback due to weather. | Initial improvements are underway, but not submitted yet. | Still researching and making changes, no submission yet. |
| Status of Final Enhancement | Currently, I am working on implementing more realistic textures, models, and basic animations with lighting effects. No definitive version yet. | Continuing with algorithm optimizations for runtime efficiency. | Refining the use of aggregation pipelines and improving query speed. |
| Uploaded to ePortfolio | Not yet uploaded. | Not yet uploaded. | Not yet uploaded. |
| Status of Finalized ePortfolio | Enhancements are ongoing, so the ePortfolio is not yet complete. | Not yet completed | Not yet completed |