One of the major differences between a technical degree and a bachelor's degree is requirement that students must take additional classes outside of their degree focus to become a more well-rounded person. At Iowa State University, students in Electrical and Computer Engineering are required to take 15 credits of general education classes, which are classes that cannot be technically related to engineering. I chose my general education classes based on things that I was interested in, as well as topics that I thought may be useful for me in the future.

The reason I decided to major in Computer Engineering is because I've always enjoyed working on projects related to computer programming and electrical circuits, and I've always had a passion to learn as much as I can about those fields. Because of this, my short term plans after graduation include staying at Iowa State University to receive my Master's degree. After graduate school, I would like to get a job in the embedded systems field. My ideal job is one where I can work on challenging, low-level programming and design projects with a reasonable degree of autonomy.

General education classes can be very beneficial for engineers. One of the gen ed classes that I'm taking, The Aesthetics of the Consumer Experience, can be very applicable to engineering. In that class, we investigate how consumers respond to different aesthetic properties, and in a group project design our own restaurant experience. It's easy to see how principles of aesthetics can be very useful in fields such as UX design. I also took an economics course, as economics are obviously very important to all fields. Understanding supply and demand is crucial to being a thrifty engineer.

Not all problems can be solved with computer engineering. General education classes can equip engineering students with additional tools that they can use in their jobs, as well as everyday lives, to better themselves and their communities. For example, I took a global history class at community college that discussed current and historical events around the world. Having knowledge of history and current events allows us to better relate to one another, and prevent our society from making the same mistakes as the previous ones.