

Reflection Ethan Merrill

First of all, I am excited to be taking this course as my humanities Practicum because on its face it seems to be the intersection of many things I am interested in and hope to build skills in. I did depth in writing because I value good communication skills highly, and hope wanted to improve my technical writing abilities. The web aspect of this course is also of interest because I've always wanted to be capable of building a website from the ground up for myself and others. This ability aligns well with my long term goal of working entirely remote (Novel Coronavirus made this a reality in the short term as well!). Working remotely is another reason I am focused on writing for the web. I plan for working on the web to be a big portion of my life.

I'm hopeful that I can use this class to build the personal portfolio I have been envisioning for myself for years now. Although I have big dreams, like many others, I often struggle to realize them and this personal website has been a perfect example of this. In fact, it has gotten to the point where I am not starting new projects because I want to document them on a new site--which I do not have. This project will involve learning to use technology beyond simple markup. However because I am quite comfortable with markup, I would like to push for an additional challenge. The new technologies I plan to use are React which is a Javascript Framework, Firebase to manage the data, and D3 to visualize the site map. I consider myself a self-directed learner and am genuinely looking forward to building a working knowledge of these tools.

Something I am still not comfortable with nor confident in is my grammatical abilities. Although I used to think I was a fairly proficient writer, I had some peer-review experiences while writing my MQP paper which shook my confidence. Just now I put this document through Grammarly. The other writing classes I've taken at WPI (Technical Writing, Writing for business) were more focused on the technical aspect of writing in specific contexts that didn't give me much opportunity to improve my grammar skills. I think that this practicum will be a good opportunity to brush up on my understanding of grammar, and perhaps regain some lost confidence.