The Evergreen State College - Olympia, WA 98505

THE STUDENT'S OWN EVALUATION OF PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Medley	Kurt	D	A00208986
Student's Last Name	First	Middle	ID Number

Computing Practice and Theory
Program or Contract Title

01-APR-2013	14-JUN-2013
Date Began	Date Ended

Kurt Medley
Self Evaluation
Computing Practice and Theory
Spring 2013

What did I expect from the program?

The program was a project driven extension to my computer science studies following Computer Science Foundations (CSF) and Computability and the Study of Formal Languages (CNC). I had a general idea of how the program might progress as the main themes were historically common computations in the field of statistics coupled with algorithmic applications in machine learning. I was uncertain of how my self-motivated project might intertwine with any of these subjects.

What sorts of things did I learn from the program?
Week one of statistics the class got an opportunity to model a system using the STELLA software while the Machine Learning branch focused on familiarizing us with the elementary properties associated with the field plus an opportunity to experiment with Weka, a machine learning software. I began formulating an idea on how to structure a project related not necessarily to stats and ML, but to computer science in general. I kept a project portfolio on my website where I documented some work I had been doing. The project was called "Cross-paradigm Modelling Analysis" and focused on comparing programming language features as I programmed several formal language algorithms and and a graph theoretic algorithm in the functional Haskell; by which I then translated my representation in the object-oriented Java.
Throughout the course of the quarter, we read three books in seminar that seemed to follow a coherent progression; "Thinking In Systems", "The Lady Tasting Tea", and "You Are Not A Gadget". Concepts from each book were applicable to each other and were relevant to the rest of the coursework we were assigned. In stats we used other modeling software including JMP, R and Excel to perform re-sampling on large pools of data, run ANOVA, Shapiro-Wilk, and Levenes tests on these pools. We learned about linear regressions and how to appropriately compare categorical and numerical data through weekly assigned labs. In Machine Learning we learned about different classifying algorithms including ZeroR, OneR, and J48. We had a lab that implemented a K-means algorithm using Java that we were assigned to complete. Through homeworks, lectures and weekly labs we learned about instances/ attributes, rule lists, trees, linear models, training machine learning systems, cleaning and transforming data, Bayesian networks, clustering, neural networks, and regressions.
What aspects of the program did I find enjoyable/difficult?

The entire program was interconnected which I thought was great. Concepts I learned in statistics were applicable in machine learning and vise versa. The weekly quizzes motivated me to be in class on time every week to complete labs and homework with my fellow classmates. The project and its presentation were a great way to solidify the knowledge I had gained from the previous year and last two quarters. Because of the free nature of the project, I was able to dedicate a lot of time working with specific code. This was a crucial component for learning. I found the workload to be sufficiently challenging as I was always busy in class working on labs for statistics or machine learning or at home working on my project.

Student's Signature

11-JUN-2013
Date

Faculty Member's Signature (optional)

Date

Cushing, Judith B. - Lab I

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Concerning my future, where do I see myself going with this program?

Seeing as this is my last quarter here at Evergreen and I have an internship lined up with Costco Wholesale Corporation, I can say with confidence that the evaluation strategies I learned throughout the quarter on large pools of data will be invaluable at my new place of work. I'm no longer intimidated by "big data" and can effectively implement solutions that require knowledge related to their analyses.

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