

Study Plan at Columbia University in New York

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1 Foreword

After 16 years of student life, I am going to finish my last phase of building and perfecting myself before taking a job and becoming an adult with duty. To be frank, right now I am still suffering a number of defects that slow me down from seeking the final target. Fortunately, it is so lucky of me to have the chance to continue my study advised by Professor Junfeng Yang at Columbia University, an excellent environment that allows me to think, to practise and to explore.

In this study plan, I am summarizing my thoughts of future and working on a detailed plan for live, study and work. It is about who I am, what I need, and how I can get it.

It is supposed to cost five years on my PhD program. Each year of the program comprises three semesters (≈ 3 months), a summer vacation (3 months, always spent on internship or lab-work) and two short breaks (1 week). In the first two years of the program, I will take a number of courses required the program, and then I will have to take the qualification test for getting the master degree. Besides, I also have to put an eye on my research in the first two years, since Junfeng is going to obtain his tenure at the end of the second year. In the following years, the major task is going to be research, where two or more top conference publications (equivalent to two excellent projects) will be perfect for a successful graduate.

During the five years, I will have some long-term plans other than study and research, e.g., body building. Besides, I would also possibly have some short-term plans that deviate the default schedule. For example, I will try to get myself a chance to visit another lab for a view of research area. I also plan to spend one of the summer vacation on traveling or other personal purpose.

In addition, the schedule is designed following some basic rules for flexibility and personal requirement.

- Each day, sleeping should always cost 8 hours or more.
- Each day, required working hours should never be more than 8 hours.
- Timelines are always flexible.
- Personal life should be an important piece in each day.

1.1 Semester

In a semester, I have to focus on course study and research, while long-term plans should not be left behind. Each workday starts at around 8am, and ends before 12am. The default plan is as following.

Primary **Mon Jul 18, 2011 (China Time - Beijing)**

8am	Jog, process emails & have breakfast 8am - 9:30am
9am	
10am	Take courses or stay in lab @ lab 9:30am - 12pm
11am	
12pm	Have a quick lunch 12pm - 12:30pm
	Take courses or stay in lab, including a short break at 3pm~3:30pm @ lab, including a short break 12:30pm - 5pm
5pm	Have dinner & enjoy life 5pm - 8pm
6pm	
7pm	
8pm	Reading, handle personal affairs, or go to lab if necessary 8pm - 11pm
9pm	
10pm	

Weekends are flexible.

2 What I need

What am I living for? How can I feel no regret at the last moment of my life?

Dear friends, relatives and girl friend Human beings are not alone. They live in the society. I do enjoy the time spent with my friends and relatives, by playing cards, having food, watching films and chatting. People live for themselves, but also for their friends and relatives. It is really hard to imagine that the boring life without friends, where one has no person to talk with, play with and share happiness and sorrow with.

In order to obtain sincere friends, I should never leave them behind when they are in trouble, keep them in mind in daily life, share my happiness and sorrow with them. Moreover, it only makes sense if I had the ability to handle their troubles and protect them from unhappiness.

On the other hand, it would always be critical in making friends. Not every cooperators are my friends. They are distinguished in purpose: cooperators' relation is based on profit, while friendship is not. The basic rule of making new friend should at least involve: similar interest, shared value, and selflessness.

Finding the other half of my life is also a serious business. Let me talk about it later.

Success and honor They are the original desire for human beings. I used to reach a peak of my life in 2007, in which year I won the third place in International Olympiad in Informatics. In the following four years I spent a relatively plain time at Tsinghua University, but I also learnt a lot about myself and the life. I do, have a heart for competition and victory. I am also seeking for another peak in my life to prove myself to my wife, my parents, my teachers and my friends.

There are many kinds of success and honor, such as Bill Gates' wealth, Andrew Yao's Turing Award, Chairman Mao's political leadership, and Ming Yao's unbelievable social influence. However, I will win honors in my way. I am exploring techniques that improve people's life and win their respects. In contrast to *DeMeter*, I prefer techniques like *MoDist* and *LOAN* since they have the ability to deal with practical issues. I am deeply influenced by the proud of IT "geeks", and I am not supposed to create a business in the way others do.

Significant contribution in certain area Winning a gold medal in IOI'07 makes nonsense to human beings centuries later, but I do wish to create something that *improves millions of lives* and *influences our descendants* even centuries later. My PhD direction lies in software reliability, security, distributed system and network. It is a fundamental research area, and somehow an auxiliary field for those business applications. But on the other hand, I can obtain a broad view of computer science community from my research. Then it is possible to extend my research to interesting and modern areas such like automation, cloud service, etc. I have the confidence to set up an attractive and promising research direction before the fourth year of the PhD program. At that time, opportunities and challenges will come.

Making targets into facts is always difficult. In August of 2011, I am leaving for US with a package of clothes, one thousand dollars and a personal laptop, and it is still a long journey to the goals of my life. In spite of those romantic targets, I have to set up practical ones before everything is too late.

- The most important, appropriate self-control and self-adjustment.
- Build a healthy and strong body. It is the foundation of everything.
- Proficient and solid technical skills.
- Broad and in-depth understanding of my research area.
- Earn enough money for personal purpose and emergent aid.
- Personal style and interests.

3 How I get it

3.1 File storage

Item	Storage place
Office documents	Google Docs (dragonghy@gmail.com)
PDF <i>reading</i> documents	Dropbox (dragonghy@gmail.com)
L ^A T _E X documents	Google Code (dragonghy@gmail.com)
Photos	Picasa Web Albums (dragonghy@gmail.com)
Source codes	Google Code (dragonghy@gmail.com)
Programming competition	Google Code (dragonghy@gmail.com)
Emails	Gmail (dragonghy@gmail.com)
Contacts	Google Contact (dragonghy@gmail.com)
Calendar	Google Calendar (dragonghy@gmail.com)
Chinese SNS	Renren.com
English SNS	Facebook
Personal Website	http://sites.google.com/site/thecoldor/
Private Website	http://coldor.wordpress.com/
Projects and large files	External drives
Private and protected files	External drives
Time-control reports	RescueTime.com (dragonghy@gmail.com)