

## **Reflection On My Information Science Major Experience**

Throughout my educational experience as an Information Science major at the University of South Florida, I have experienced a number of opportunities to increase my understanding of information science, user-interface design, and technology. Initially, I was drawn to the major due to its generalized nature with the ability to focus on its many real-world applications.

Through my studies in this major, I found that the coursework gave me a broad and practical foundation in various information-related disciplines, including web development, data statistics, UI/UX design, and information security.

One of the most valuable experiences during my undergraduate studies has been the coursework related to user interface design and the theory behind it. Classes focusing on how humans interact with information and how we can best display information such as: Interaction Design, Information Architecture, and Information Behaviors. Professionally, I am going straight into a career in Software Engineering after graduation. I strongly believe that the Information Science program has provided a great foundation for my career. Courses I've taken in web development, database management, cybersecurity, and data security in particular have prepared me by providing theoretical knowledge that can be attributed to many roles within my field. However, I also believe that adding more advanced, project-based programming classes or integrating software principles more deeply into some of the curriculum could help enhance the program. For example, I've taken a number of courses on the importance of making sure that data is secure and protected, but no curriculum on how to actually accomplish it in a practical scenario.

Regarding the program's structure, I appreciated the flexibility provided by the majority online class structure. Most of my online courses allowed me to pace myself a bit better while learning, which was fairly essential to me balancing my education while also having two part-time jobs. It was nice that these online classes also often had a group project component to them. It allowed me to interact with my peers without having to sit next to them in person in class every week.

That being said, I believe that there are some certain improvements that could help improve the Information Science curriculum. I believe that there should be more of an option to add more courses from the COP curriculum, as well as courses on the more modern practices of web development for the concentration. Additionally, I wish that opportunities for electives in other technologies such as cloud computing, machine learning, and mobile application development would help give me a more competitive advantage in the job market. Additionally, I believe that providing additional more lab-based, practical coursework rather than theoretical assignments would help better prepare me for real-world scenarios. Looking forward, I am deeply considering furthering my education by pursuing a master's degree in Computer Science at USF. While it would require a semester of prerequisite courses, this degree would allow me to deeply improve my technical knowledge and give me a leg-up for future aspirations within the job market. I believe this further education would also help me develop a specialization, potentially in software architecture, which would not only align with my degree in information science but also provide me with the more practical information I am looking for.

Ultimately, my experience in the Information Science major at USF has been largely positive and foundational for my career. With a few changes to the curriculum, particularly geared toward more practical application, the Information Science program could become even

more beneficial for future students. I look forward to applying the knowledge gained during my undergraduate studies as I continue my educational journey and professional career journey.