**The Skills Necessary**

As a senior graduating this spring, I have spent a lot of time this semester debating my future career options. I applied for graduation today. My degree is in Information Science, which is a new degree within the college. With that I feel a lack of direction. Many of my teachers have been too focused on the qualitative analysis of problems, without first developing a technical understanding through hard skills that are employable. I believe I still need to acquire more skills depending on which direction I want my career to go, which is what I want to explore within this paper.

First, I could go into UX design or research. As stated much of my degree focus has been around qualitative analysis (personas, contextual interviews, etc.), and I have done my fair share of research papers, which would lend itself well to UX research. But I still need to hone these skills and develop a better framework for research than I currently have. If I become a designer, I will need to polish my portfolio, but it is difficult to know what employers want here. Some look for proficiency with the Adobe Suite, but I am most skilled in Photoshop when most want technical skill in After Effects, Illustrator, or XD. My photoshop knowledge has helped me learn Figma a lot more intuitively, but Figma can only take me so far. If I want to be a designer, I should have a better understanding of tools like XD, Sketch and Figma and a portfolio to showcase what I am capable of. It would also be useful here to know some CAD software as I’ve seen that on a few job postings.

I could also become a front-end web developer. I know HTML and CSS pretty well from some courses I’ve taken, as well as some other basic coding experience with Python and Java. But, I would need to understand Javascript fully to develop on my own. Knowing Xcode or some other iOS dev software would be useful too. I would also like to have at least a basic understanding of how back-end works so I can write code that fits the framework. Developing this general knowledge will allow me to break the boundaries and conventions of web development.

Another career option is becoming an IT professional and this thought really scares me! I don’t want to be a server monkey in a corporate office and this is what motivates me to get a cool career!

Lastly, the career that would require the most work, but might also be the most lucrative, is if I become a big data analyst. I don’t see this as a very possible future, because these careers often require degrees in statistics and mathematics, the thought of which even sounds appalling. But the implications are fascinating. Especially with AI, which is the only field I could see myself getting into with big data and deep learning. But that is an even harder field to start in and quite probably involves a lot more complex math.

My “dream” with information science would be to build a fully-capable smart home with AI build in, like in the movies I’d watch as a kid, or like re-inventing the American home in the Disney Carousel of Progress. I see myself becoming an entrepreneur at some point in my life, after I have a career and learn the skills which I need to launch my own product, software, brand or company. Who knows if my goal of changing the American home will ever be realized. Maybe along my path I will stumble on a new goal which I deem more worthy of my time. In the end, I just hope to make an impact in people’s lives, even if that is as small as making their UI simpler in an age of ever-increasing technology.

**Editors Note:** I know you said one page max but hear me out.

I’d really like some solid critiques on my writing in your feedback. If you could also take the time to review my resume and/or portfolio I have linked them down below.

**Resume:**

<https://justinzmich.myportfolio.com/resume-2>

**Portfolio:**

<https://justinzmich.myportfolio.com/>

I also just want to say thanks for teaching this class and giving us some real skills and insight on how to work in UX/Web development!