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### General Education Reflection

In my time at Iowa State, I have taken three general education courses that allowed me to broaden my understanding of people and the cultures they are a part of. This understanding is, in my opinion, critical to many aspects of Engineering ranging from client interaction, team relations, and proper communication. The courses that have allowed me to understand have been RELIG 205 – World Religions, RELIG 210 – US Religions, and HIST 207 – Chinese Civilization. Each of these courses have allowed me to take a deeper dive into cultures and histories that I previously either didn't understand or was ignorant to.

In my world religions course, I took the first step into discovering what other unfamiliar cultures and religions look like. Many countries around the world have some form of religion while others may have no dominant belief system. There are many stories of professionals and world leaders finding themselves in uncomfortable situations by not knowing other countries' traditions and norms, each of which could have been avoided by digging deeper in other cultures than their own. In addition, understanding the culture of someone else may allow for an engineer to better relate to someone within their team. This class allowed me to realize this and open the doorway into discovering that each culture is different.

As for my United States religions course, I was able to apply everything I learned about the world's religions and see how they are represented here. The US is a giant melting pot for many different cultures who come from many different backgrounds. Studying these various aspects allowed

me to start to see how to best approach different people. After taking both of my religion courses, I feel better equipped to handle new interactions with people, both socially and professionally, who come from differing backgrounds than my own.

Finally, in my Chinese Civilization I am learning about the history of how China became to be and how deeply rooted their culture really is. Before this course, I didn't know very much about China nor the people of China. Even though I am only halfway through the course, I already have a much better understanding on the origins of Chinese Culture. I learned that much of their history is still making an impact in their modern functions. Similarly with learning about various religions, learning about one of the largest countries in the world allows me to gain a better grasp of another diverse group I would have otherwise been ignorant of.

In my general education at Iowa State I knew that I needed to work on my people to people skills. Because of this, I wanted to allow myself to take classes that would benefit me by giving me a better understanding of other cultures. This knowledge has allowed me to improve my people to people skills since starting at ISU in 2016. After taking these classes, I believe that I have come along way from being unknowledgeable about any culture outside of my own and can better communicate with the diverse groups that are common in the engineering world.