

CPRE 494: Cumulative Reflection
Parker Bibus

Here at Iowa State University (ISU) I have had many great experiences that have taught me a lot about myself and about many different topics. The things I learned and gained experience in ranged from personal skills like how to lead a group to hard skills like how to learn about something you know little about. Among these experiences, the most impactful were my time as a teaching assistant, working in a large group for COM S 309, and working in a two person team for COM S 319.

One of the most impactful experiences I had here at Iowa State University was being a teaching assistant for Computer Engineering 381: Computer Organization and Assembly Level Programming. For this course, I acted as a lab instructor with one another student for multiple different lab sections. In the lab, students are tasked with building different hardware components starting from simple things like full-adders, and working up to a MIPS CPU that can run MIPS machine code. Through this, I gained a bunch of experience in leading a group in a classroom environment and how to help people of different backgrounds most efficiently. This gained experience will be extremely helpful when working with groups in the future and even came in handy when working in groups for school projects.

Another impactful experience I had was working in a large group for COM S 309. In this course, groups of 4 take on a larger semester-long project of our choosing and more or less run everything on our own when it comes to the team and team processes. Working in this large group, we came across many issues throughout the semester each with their own challenges. Because of these, I gained a lot of experience in recognizing when something isn't working and in listening to others for their thoughts. I

also went out of my comfort zone and worked on the frontend of the project giving me more experience in learning something new on my own and opening up my interest in frontend development.

The final impactful experience I will talk about here was working in a two person team on a semester project in COM S 319. This was similar to the 309 setup but with smaller teams which changes a lot of the team dynamics. Throughout the course I got better at self-management since I was working on a whole part of the project on my own and got better at my communication skills as our parts directly interacted with each other. Aside from these skills, I was able to further improve my frontend development skills, causing me to find out that there was a lot more for me to learn to get to advanced interactions which helps me remember that there is always more to learn.

Overall, throughout the many great experiences I had at Iowa State, among the best were being a teaching assistant, working in a large group, and working in a two person group. Through these experiences, I gained lots of experience in software development skills, teamwork skills, leadership skills, and self-learning skills. In addition to these skills, the experiences helped open up my eyes to the breadth of information there is to learn and to help me see that technologies are constantly changing, which in turn helped me see the importance of keeping up to date with the latest developments.