My name is Tristan Fish, and recently I switched majors from Cybersecurity to Information Studies with a concentration in Web Development Technologies. I made this change because I feel like I found what I would like to do as a career, and this path would better suit the needs of that career path. There are many avenues I’d like to explore, so my career path is more so one of entrepreneurship through technology. Over the past few months, I have taken what I have learned in my previous courses and applied it by creating two online businesses. One business is designed to sell Polyester Golf Polos via a website known as ChasingGreens.com. My other online business is setup through a platform called Etsy, and I design and sell a variety of items from Coffee Mugs, T-Shirts, Ornaments, and even Digital Downloads. I chose this path because I want more freedom than working for a corporate company. While building websites and selling products virtually, I will not be locked down, and will be able to work from anywhere in the world (Ideally).

While I have only began to dip my feet into the waters of digital entrepreneurship, I feel like I have learned a large amount of information, quickly. I have experimented with different websites and website builders; I have conducted over $1,500 in sales in the first two months of the shop being open and have experienced the many “ups and downs” that come with this career path. I have visited the USF Career Services Website prior to this, have applied to numerous internships, and haven’t exactly had success via those routes. What really lead me to this career path was life experience. I have worked numerous jobs including cooking at 6 different restaurants over the course of 5 years, being a Valet Driver at the Hard Rock Casino for 2 years and Serving at a fine dining restaurant in Tampa for the last 2 years. These jobs can sometimes be slow, and bills always must be paid. So, I conducted months of research of how to make money online, or online side hustles you may call them. I found success can come for those who put in the effort, and my entire life has been based around technology, information studies, and cybersecurity practices, so ultimately, I know I have what it takes. I feel as this is a safe career path with consideration of the fact that the world is moving into a technological era and is only advancing every single day. There will always be opportunity, and by taking the knowledge learned in these courses, hopefully I can apply it to these online avenues I have created and find success.

A large part of the research conducted over the course of several months was on motivation. While many disregard this aspect, it is highly important to the career path to be successful. Currently I create designs for T-Shirts, and other products previously listed. Then, I send the design to a supplier who has the blank T-Shirts, and a T-Shirt press. I Create a listing of the product with all of the information about the shirt, sizing, pricing, shipping times, and upload it to my website. When a customer orders the shirt from my website for $40, it automatically sends the order to my supplier with the blank shirts and the design on hand, and they print the shirt and ship it directly to the customer. While the shirt supplier will print your design on a blank shirt for only $9-$12 dollars, I then collect the difference. In this case, customer paid $40 while the shirt cost me $12 and maybe $5 to ship for a total cost for me of $17. The difference of $40 and $17 is $23 profit. Motivation is a key factor in this process. You must be heavily motivated to create new shirt designs every single day. You cannot take a day off or you will lose traction in your store. Motivation is not an issue for me because I have a need to be successful. I have been on my own since I was 17 years old, and am now 25 years old. I have no help in life with expenses such as school, or car payments, or phone bills, it is all on me. Therefor I do not have the choice but to meet my expenses one way or another. This leads me to be highly motivated when it comes to this career path. I have used various resources such as Blogs, Short Videos, YouTube Videos, Internet downloadable guides, Search Engine Optimization Articles, Design Trend Research tools, Keyword Trend tools, Podcasts on Entrepreneurship, Advertising tools, and other various useful resources. I have learned so much, that it would take an entire separate essay written to describe it all. A few things learned is how to conduct business online, retain customers, how to reach new audiences, and how to deal with financial lows when conducting business virtually. A few things learned from the courses I have taken have been how to structure information in a useful and effective manner, how to build website interfaces, and even how to apply coding practices to my online businesses.

My career aspirations include many avenues of online business through website development and website interfaces. I have struggled my entire life financially being that my mom was addicted to pills, and also abusive while my dad was out of the picture. My aspirations also include wanting a better life then what was provided for me, and I truly believe this career path will help me achieve this. I also believe these courses are vital to my career path because it gives me insight on a whole new area of information itself. Working for a tech company making $100,000 a year sounds amazing, don’t get me wrong. But I’ve seen sellers on Etsy younger than me making millions of dollars every year simply selling Digital Art, or Dog Collars, or even T-Shirts, and this is the avenue I want to try. My career aspirations revolve around reaching financial freedom, and although it won’t be easy, this degree is a start.

REFERENCES:

My website: ChasingGreens.com

My Etsy Store: TMansTees.etsy.com

No outside resources used in the essay, just previous experiences via my chosen career path.