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MIS 320

Prof Jones

Week 14 Meet Session

This week the meet session was very short. Professor Jones went over the week 14 hands on assignment, which required us to write a 750-page (minimum) white paper on a IT related topic of our choosing. I tend to struggle with selecting my own topic, as I tend to fall into choice paralysis, but I felt with IT I should have no problem.

I was wrong

I had a hard time deciding whether I wanted to look into a topic I was familiar with, but only vaguely, versus doing something I have much more experience in. I decided to go for the less familiar topic, as I had been meaning to look into more anyways. That topic was the Elixir programming language. My buddy who mentored me while learning programming recently picked up this new language, so I have been intrigued by it. It is a functional programming language, a departure from the imperative language I’m used to, such as Ruby. It is built to run on the Erlang virtual machine. When I sat down to do my research, I found information on the language scarce. There is plenty of information on how to write Elixir, but not much in the way of information about it. So I decided to bump up to the more abstract topic Functional Programming. I learned some cool facts about the different aspects of functional programming, but due to time constraints, I changed my topic to something more familiar. In the end, I wrote my white paper on Test Driven Development. This is something I know very well, but still learned new things, such as the attribution to Kent Beck for bringing the concept to modern development, or how the concept originated back in the 1960’s when programmers would calculate their expected values before feeding punch cards into mainframes. This allowed the programmers to know as soon as possible if their code was working properly. This was important, as programmers couldn’t spend as much time with the mainframe as they’d like.