

Reflection Essay

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HUDK 4050 – Core Methods in Educational Data Mining

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Being a student in the Learning Analytics program, the course HUDK 4050 is actually one of the core courses that I have to take. This is the main reason why I am in this course this semester. Before taking this course, my expectations of taking this course are that I will be able to improve my coding skills and the skills of solving problems both in theory and in practice using codes. I was hoping to gain some systematic knowledge about coding so that my basis for coding would be more concrete. I learned how to use Python, Java, R, and STATA during college, however, I do not really remember any of them mainly because I never used them again after I finished the course. The job I am doing right now also has nothing to do with coding, so all my coding skills basically fade away before I enter graduate school. Since I am working as a math teacher right now, frankly speaking, I do not expect to use my coding skills in the near future. As a result, my personal learning goals and objectives in this course are more on the side of refreshing my knowledge about coding and making sure I work hard, do my best, and meet the standard that the professor set in the course.

During this semester, we learned many different ways of working with data under different circumstances. We practiced all these methods through ICEs and ACAs. We also learned to come up with plans to solve real-world questions, and we practiced that through the creative EDM project. I gradually understand that real-world problems are usually a lot more complicated than we would imagine, and there might be many different ways and approaches in order to solve the problem. I think working together with my group was a very good experience during this semester because it is sort of simulating a teamwork experience in the workforce where each of the members in the team could take on different roles and help each other. While working together with my team members, we all learned a lot from

each other, and that is definitely a better experience than having to figure out everything on our own. I think the assignments in the course are all pretty challenging since I do not remember anything about coding at all before taking this class. I usually email the professor and set up office hour appointments to ask questions about the assignment. The professor has always been very helpful and patient, however, I feel restrained to ask too many questions because I am worried that I am occupying too much of the professor's time.

Since my learning goals and objectives are not very complicated for this course, I think I have achieved them during this semester. I think I worked hard on the contents, the homework, and the teamwork, and I refreshed much of my knowledge from college, and gained a lot of new insights from the class. Through working with my teammates, I found out that each of us is good at different things and is used to thinking of things from different perspectives. I actually found it very beneficial because our solutions to problems always complement one another. My job right now is not really related to coding or data at this point, but my career goal in college was very related to coding and data, and that is why I took so many coding courses in college. I might change my career goal in the future since I am acquiring many new skills in my master's program, and due to the fact that the teaching industry in China is very unstable right now.

To draw a conclusion, it was a very nice experience taking this course this semester. The content was very useful, the professor was really nice, and my teammates were very collaborative. I gained much new knowledge about methods and models that we can use in order to solve problems related to data. I also built a small portfolio in this class that contains

different types of problems and codes that I worked on this semester, which I am able to refer back to in the future. I am looking forward to taking HUDK 4051 next semester!