

Cumulative Reflection

My name is Alec Cose and I am currently a senior studying Cyber Security Engineering here at Iowa State. Growing up not far from Ames and being a big Cyclone fan throughout my life, attending Iowa State was an easy call to make. This choice was made much simpler when they introduced their Cyber Security Engineering program, which was the area I wanted to focus on for my schooling. While being here at Iowa State I have met so many different people and learned lots of great lessons that I will carry with me and use throughout my future.

During my time here at Iowa State, I discovered that the most important lesson that I learned was the ability to learn. While a four year program cannot teach a student every lesson or how to fix every problem, the university does train its students in fostering critical thinking and problem solving skills that can be used to approach any problem they could face. The diverse set of courses that Iowa State had me take, including those in and out of my area of study, taught me how to learn in different ways and apply it to any type of situation. These transformative experiences not only equipped me with the technical skills I need in the cyber security field, but also the skills needed to continue solving problems in anything I do.

The lessons that I have acquired in my journey at Iowa State so far have already been useful in the things I do outside of the classroom. The group work incentivized in many of the classes I have taken were pivotal in how I could perform in jobs that I have worked during the past couple of years. I was able to use the leadership opportunities I have obtained while here to be promoted to a leadership role where I worked one summer. When I was participating in an internship, these same group skills allowed me to succeed in completing work with those I worked closely with and receive very positive feedback about the way I communicated. At this same internship working in a Security Operation Center, I realized that there were lots of skills and problems that I did not know about from just my work in classes, but the more important aspects of learning and problem solving that were taught was more than enough for me to overcome the issue of inexperience and complete the tasks required of me. These necessary skills that can be applied to any walk of life that I go down are what I hope to keep learning as I finish up my time here at Iowa State.

As I move closer towards graduation, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to attend Iowa State as the experiences I have had here will be some that I don't forget and the skills I have learned will be valuable as long as I live. Moving forward I hope to find a job close in Iowa

as a security analyst or security engineer where I can continue to learn more about the cyber security world and continue solving problems like I have done for all the years here in Ames. Everything that has been taught to me here at Iowa State will always be the support structure that everything else I learn and do will build upon and be supported by as I continue to do and learn more.