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Assignment 5

So far, things are going well for me in Introduction to Computer Programming.  I originally enrolled in this course because my current major is Computer Science.  I transferred to CU this semester, and the entry level programming classes I took at my other college were not transferrable.  Previous classes I’ve taken include C++, Visual Basic, Java, and most recently, C#.  I was also employed as the city of Monument, Colorado’s web developer for their official city webpage for a few years, so I have a bit of experience with HTML, PHP, CSS, and SQL.

The class is not entirely what I thought it would be.  I had never done anything in Python before, so I was surprised to see how user friendly the syntax is.  I dislike how the lecture is held in a massive lecture hall.  The college I came from was much smaller, so I am used to smaller groups.  That being said, I understand how there has to be a feasible way to accommodate the amount of people entry level courses contain.  I like how a virtual machine exists; everyone running code on the exact same configuration seems to eliminate a lot of problems.  I also like how many of the assignments/homework have implemented the use of real world problems.  Recitation 5, for example, required importing a dataset of values of rainfall measurements in Boulder.  Applying real world problem/data to an otherwise boring assignments make them more practical and interesting.  Also, the grading script is a good idea; knowing the score instantly takes out a lot of guesswork.

This course has not only taught me how to program in Python, but also strengthened my understanding of how other similar programming languages operate.  In C++ and C#, I have always had issues with loops, and arrays.  Learning the same concepts in a different syntax has allowed me to better understand how these functions work.  Also, I’ve only ever programmed in Windows, and never Linux, so doing everything on a new (or superior, depending on how elitist you are) operating system is a nice change of pace.

At this point, nothing is really unclear.  Python is extremely basic, and has the most gradual learning curve of any programming language I’ve used before.  I like how you don’t have to end every line with a semicolon; I hate semicolons.  I’m excited to start Java, and do some hard stuff.

My TA (Halley), is very knowledgeable, and always helpful.  One possible improvement that could be made would be to have a projector in recitation.  Right now, all the code she shows us is done on a whiteboard, so not much of it fits, and its constantly erased to make room for new lines.  With a projector setup like the one in lecture, it would be much easier to follow along without having to worry about stuff getting erased.

On the first day of class, I really couldn’t believe how many people were using Macbooks, and not Windows PCs.  I thought I stepped into a film or graphic design class at first.  I guess thats why its entry level.