

Lessons Learned from *Foundations Of Programming: Python Course*

I have dabbled lightly in programming off and on during my life. I am old enough to have taken a BASIC class in high school (and should have stuck with it, but that's another story). I have a tech support background but now work primarily supporting database applications. I mainly use the front-end application menus to do what is needed, but there are times when scripting a solution would be beneficial. Due to some other changes at my job, I thought it would be good to look at learning how to do more scripting and automation. I've taken a UW certificate program before and when I saw this offering in the catalog, I made a quick decision to enroll. I don't regret that decision, (although I might opt to take such an intensive course during fall or winter quarter next time 😊).

In my previous programming forays, I found looping to be a concept that I have struggled with. From this course I have a better understanding of conditional logic and how to use variables to control the looping functions. I have worked a small amount with VBA and was familiar with defining variables, though hadn't worked with constants much. This course really helped with understanding that concept, even though their use seems to be a bit limited compared to the power of variables. Another concept I appreciated learning of is the Separation of Concerns principle, as it seems to be a fundamental approach to organizing code. I am vaguely familiar with unit testing, from parts of my job, so I also found the exploration of that topic to be quite helpful.

One of my main takeaways from this course, if I'm honest, is that I may not have the right mindset for programming. I struggled with the creative aspects of designing a program, as there does seem to be a significant amount of creativity involved. The examples provided in the course were quite useful, though it was still difficult at times to envision what should come next to achieve the design goals.

I found the debugging aspects of the course to be an area where I might have more aptitude. With my tech support background, troubleshooting issues with code seems like a good fit for the future.

I look forward to reviewing the rest of the modules and learning more about continuous improvement and development. Thanks for the experience.

