Nathaly Espinosa Terán
Dec. 11, 2020
CMS 450

Challenge Project 4

1. Think back to how you felt at the beginning of the course. What were your expectations?

I remember feeling overwhelmed after going over the syllabus for the course. It was going to be different in various ways: the grading, going fully virtual, the sprints, etc. I expected it to be hard, and I also expected to be learning a lot of coding This course was, in fact, challenging for me. We briefly went over coding examples in class, but the majority of the classes were theoretical. The sprints went totally different than I expected as well. In the past, I had to work with my group to complete assignments for each sprint, but this time, I barely interacted with my group. It was more of independent work for me.

2. Tell a story about a topic, problem, or assignment from the class that challenged you. How did you respond?

I had a lot of trouble understanding the structure of networks, and how switches, routers, bridges, etc. interacted with it. I couldn't really visualize it, even though I did have some drawings I copied from the notes in class. I knew what each did, I just didn't understand when a router, bridge, or switch would be involved in a network. As we kept progressing in class, I became more familiarized with the structure, but I still was not very sure of how it worked. I didn't feel ready for the quiz, so the thing that helped me the most was looking it up. I looked up "what is the general structure of networks, routers, switches" and went to images. The images there showed me different examples of when one device is used. Also, all images were very clear, unlike the ones in my notes. I also looked in the book, and it helped as well.

3. Tell a story about an interaction you had with another person because of this class.

This is a hard prompt for me since I went fully virtual this semester, and my sprint group didn't work together throughout the semester. I also changed majors to CS recently, so I don't really know a lot of people in my classes. However, I did have one unique interaction because of this class. One of my roommate's friend was over at my house once, and after talking for a couple of minutes, I found out he also was a CS major and that he was in this class as well. We talked about the class, and what has been hard/easy for us. It made me feel less overwhelmed because I was hearing from someone else in the class and how they were experiencing it.

4. Other than programming, what have you learned from this class that you can take forward into your other classes or post-Rollins work?

One very interesting topic we briefly learned about was Bitcoin. Bitcoin has been around for so many years now, and I still didn't know how it worked. It was very intriguing learning how bitcoin is used along with blockchain. I think it will be very useful to me if I ever decide I want to invest in a type of cryptocurrency. I will be investing in something I have knowledge in, and I know how it works. In addition, if I end up working in a field related to cryptocurrencies, I won't be going in knowing nothing.

5. What has been your experience on learning during the pandemic, whether that was in-person or remote? What did you find most challenging? What (if anything) worked well for you during this time?

Personally, going virtual was a very abrupt transition for me. It made it harder to communicate with people, especially with people I didn't know. The most challenging aspect of this class for me were the deliverables. I felt very overwhelmed with them. I felt I wasn't understanding anything in the class because I had no idea how to even begin each deliverable. There were no tutors available for this class, and I didn't really know anyone, so it was hard to get help. I had to look everything up and it was very hard for me to still understand. However, when I took the quizzes, I felt confident with each. This showed me that my weakness for this class was coding, but I understood all of the concepts we were learning about. Something that worked well for me this semester was taking notes of everything in class, not only what Dr. Myers was writing down, but also what he said.

6. What are your thoughts on online vs. in-person education? Do you think there are positive aspects of online teaching that we should incorporate into our regular classes?

I have gotten used to online classes now, and I have learned to enjoy them. As you mentioned at the beginning of the semester, doing everything virtual is a skill, and it will be something we'll be doing for a while, so it is a very important skill to acquire. There are a lot of positive aspects of online learning. For example, I have more time, it is safer, it is easier to accommodate my other responsibilities in my schedule, etc. I definitely struggled at the beginning with everything being online, but I now know what works for me and what doesn't as a virtual student.

7. *Metacognition* is the act of thinking about your own thinking. **The single most important skill you can develop in college is self-awareness about your own learning process**. What have learned about your own learning as a result of being in this class?

Nathaly Espinosa Terán
Dec. 11, 2020
CMS 450

I have learned a couple of things. I learned that maybe coding is not my strength, and I need to practice more. I learned that coding is something I learned by doing it myself and not just looking at examples in class or online. I also learned that it is not so easy for me to put in practice the concepts I learn in class. Finally, I learned that I can be a successful virtual student ☺.