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CMS 450 reflection

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

I was very excited about this class since networks and web development are something that I was always interested in but did not have a chance to really dig into before. Through my job at the help desk, I had to troubleshoot many different connectivity and security issues, so I was eager to learn more about those topics. I expected more focus on web development, but I am also glad that we covered a wide arrange of topics and more theoretical aspects of networks.

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

I would have to say that I was challenged the most by the first assignment, where we had to create the startup company website. The assignment itself was not very difficult, but I had no prior experience with web development. Additionally, I am not the most creative person, so it took some time to come up with a company and the content I wanted to put on the website. Since I was not familiar with the syntax or anything else related to bootstrap, I searched the web for libraries and examples. After some time, I got a lot more comfortable with the syntax, and this is when the fun really started. For me, this was the most enjoyable project that we did this semester.

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

The only people I really interacted with within this class were the ones in my group. I am in the same group as Eric, Jaysa, and Kyle for almost two years now. I didn’t know them personally when we started, but now many classes later, I am glad I can call them friends. And even though this class did not have such a big focus on teamwork, we still helped each other when one of us got stuck on a project.

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

As I mentioned before, I work at the IT help desk, and because of that, I had to deal with a lot of issues that were related to our Rollins network. I learned how to deal with those issues through the job, but I still didn’t completely understand some of the network’s basic aspects. So it was really nice to know what a DNS is finally, and why a particular IP might not be able to access that website from our network. I believe that I am better at my job because of the topics we covered in this class. The same goes for the security topics we covered in class. Additionally, I had previous experience with crypto and bitcoin, but more on the financial side. I was familiar with the term blockchain, but I didn’t really understand it until we covered it in class. Crypto is something that I would like to keep investing in after I graduate, so it was nice to get more familiar with it.

1. What has been your experience of 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?

I was an in-person student this semester, but I could still feel that things were a lot different from what we were used to before, and not in a good way. The first thing that comes to my mind would be teamwork. This is a scrum class, so I came in with an expectation of the same level of teamwork that we did in our previous scrummage classes. But that was just not the case. I am not sure if that was the nature of the material or how you, as the professor, wanted to structure the course, but I wish we had more of a team environment again. Another big reason for the lack of teamwork is the inability to work in person as a group, which I really miss. I work my best when I can bounce my ideas with my group members in person. Also, not related to this class, but I really miss the studying spaces in Bush. Bush atrium was my favorite spot to work and study. One thing that went right this semester is that I had no issues with the topics that were introduced in class, and I think that the textbook we used was quite useful.

1. 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?

In my opinion, in-person classes are a lot more effective than online. I find it hard to concentrate during online classes, and that is something I heard from a lot of other students too. Additionally, it is a lot easier to follow while a professor is writing on a whiteboard in person than watching it through the computer screen or watching something on the doc cam. Technical problems have also been an issue. My classes would constantly lose precious time getting the technology to work or making sure that virtual students can hear the classroom or pay attention. Group projects and presentations are also something that works a lot better in an in-person environment. One benefit of online education would be flexibility. If you can’t attend the class for some reason, you could at least watch virtually or go back to the recording of the class. I think that getting classes recorded and posting the recordings online to go back to them would be something to keep even after the pandemic is over.

1. *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 you learned about your own learning as a result of being in this class?

This class showed me how crucial previous computer science topics are when trying to branch into a new field. I had no experience with web development, but I could pick up most of the basics with a few hours of surfing the web and looking at the notes. Previously we would spend an entire semester to get to a functional level in a language. I think that previous scrum classes also helped. We had to do most of our learning outside of the classroom, and because of that, I think I can learn new things way faster than before. I still struggle with starting projects on time, which is something I need to work on.