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End of Course Reflection

When I began this course I had already had some experience with programming. Between high school and online courses, I had learned several languages, though none in depth. I always struggled to wrap my head around object oriented programming, which prevented me from taking my programming to the next level. I would just code little sequential programs for my own use, and that was pretty much it.

What stood out the most to me about this class was that it really helped me grasp the concept of OOP. I had heard the words encapsulation, inheritance, polymorphism, and abstraction plenty of times before. I never fully understood those until now. After taking this course I have a much better understanding of how OOP works and why we use it. This is important because object oriented programming is the way programs are built today. It is fundamental that a computer science student have a firm understanding of object oriented programming and its principles, and this course has given me that much-needed foundation.

One topic that still confuses me a bit is pointers. I was confused by the many new terms and why we would ever need to use those. Writing the code for the Store assignment helped me understand pointers a lot better. To further understand pointers I just have to keep using them in my code!

I learned that online courses are all about your effort and time management. I have procrastinated on school work since the day we took home our first arithmetic homework. Before this class I would have

waited until Tuesday night to begin every weekly assignment. But now that I work full-time I need to manage my time better and work on school early in the week. With work every day I don't want to be up late stressing about getting an assignment turned in. During my first undergraduate degree I coasted and *literally* never did any readings. Maybe a few chapters my first quarter. That's it. That kind of effort and attitude won't cut it for these kind of programs. For this class I did most of the readings early in the week because I knew that I would not be able to rely on lectures and friends to get me by. That helped me take it a lot more seriously. The fact that I am paying for my education out-of-pocket while also working full-time to cover living expenses has made me value my time and money a lot more, which has contributed to me putting more effort into my education.

One thing I can continue to improve on is procrastination. Even though I procrastinated less, I still found myself lagging it a bit on the readings at times. Old habits die hard, I guess. Knowing that this program is only going to get harder from here on out, I have to stay committed to doing the reading and assignments on time. Just because I still have 3 days to turn it in doesn't mean I need to do it in three days!

This course has made me enjoy programming a lot more now that I am significantly better at it. I am now able to code projects that are much more powerful than I was able to before, which has made me excited to pursue a career in development. I already work at a software company, however I currently do technical support. Obviously I would like to move to a higher position in the company, and this class has put me in a much better position to do so. I had thought about maybe pursuing product design, or project management, or software automation, but I think I truly enjoy computer programming more.