CS 373 Spring 2024: Neha Desaraju

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I always thought I would be a liberal arts major. I wasn't quite sure, at the time — I did a lot of journalism in high school, loved to write, I enjoyed telling stories and doing puzzles and solving problems with math. I wanted an education that could give me that.

Soon, though, I realized what I really loved most was to solve hard problems. Computer science was a way to do that; everything became a puzzle of engineering or software architecture or piecing functions together. I hope this class can teach me more about approaching hard problems with an eye for the bigger picture!

I come into this class with a lot of knowledge about individual programming languages, but not as much with how to start to solve hard engineering problems from scratch. I typically don't have a justification for design decisions, for example, ahead of time.

Something I have been playing a lot with recently is the idea of "config compilers." Languages and tools like Terraform really made complex architecture for configuration for tools like Kubernetes easier to work with. I worked a bit with [BAML](#) (a language to abstract some of the paradigms of working with language models) over the break and found that it's an interesting way to solve architectural problems.

See you next week!