The Evergreen State College - Olympia, Washington 98505

THE STUDENT'S OWN EVALUATION OF PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Bolton	Jay	R	A00212467
Student's Last Name	First	Middle	ID Number

Computer Science Foundations

Program or Contract Title

04-JAN-2010	11-JUN-2010
Date Began	Date Ended

Computer Science Foundations has been one of the most satisfying academic experiences I've ever had. I really enjoyed working with the different levels of abstract thinking involved, whether it was math, programming, or design. I came into the course with only a little math and technical experience, but left with a very solid foundation of knowledge about computation, discrete math, and their implications in society.

Discrete Math: I had never been exposed to anything like discrete math before, and I took a great liking to it. I got a lot of satisfaction out of all the different ways to think about organizing and examining different sets of information. I especially liked number theory, proofs, and inductive reasoning. I am very happy with my performance on the tests and had no difficulties turning in all of the homework.

Computer Architecture: Learning how computers work on the most fundamental level has been very interesting. My favorite part of this class was using Logisim to create various logic circuits and ultimately my own simple computer that could add and subtract. I extended this computer to include conditional jump statements to make it Turing complete. I then made another version of the design which uses a memory stack to hold its working data rather than a series of registers, modeled on the Java Virtual Machine. I also learned to program in Jasmin, the Java assembly language, which allowed me to intimately understand the basic procedure of instructions that all higher-level programs can be reduced down to.

Programming: Learning to program in Haskell has forced my brain to think in many new ways. I really enjoyed the problem solving aspect of writing programs and the logical elegance of Haskell. I implemented working versions of many things that I had studied in math, including the Fibonacci sequence, factorials, the sieve of Eratosthenes, and many other recursive algorithms. Learning Java offered a nice shift in perspective, and I really liked the object-oriented approach to organizing sets of data. I looked forward to all the homework assignments and tests and was happy with my academic performance. I enjoyed trying to use the concise elegance of Haskell in making Java programs.

Seminar: I've enjoyed the seminar discussions and have had no difficulty participating in the conversations. I found all of the readings to be interesting, which have covered such topics as the history and origins of computing, craftsmanship, open source software, quality, education, legal issues, and the ethics of technology. I wrote essays on a wide range of ethical and philosophical topics. I worked very hard on my final essay about the ethics of patenting and copyrighting in the digital age.

Conclusion: I didn't come to Evergreen planning on doing computer science, but I've gotten so much out of this subject that I may not want to do anything else. I've been happy with my own overall academic performance during this program, and I need to concentrate on staying consistent.

Student's Signature	Faculty Member's Signature (optional)
09-JUN-2010	
Date	Date