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Stats 419
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August 29, 2020

Hello Friend Writing Assignment

My name is Jailee Foster and I grew up in North Idaho, but am currently living in Vancouver, Washington. I feel that the picture below reflects who I truly am. I spend much of my free time outside with my boyfriend, Chris, and our puppy, Ari. A few of our favorite things to do are to go hiking, fishing, and take trips to the beach.



I am majoring in data analytics, studying the actuary track, at WSU Vancouver. I chose WSU because I was impressed by the amount of programming that was included in the degree to become an actuary. Many of the other schools that I looked at were comprised mainly of high-level math courses, which seemed relevant for passing the professional exams, but not so much for the demands of the job itself. My goals for this course are to continue developing my skills as a data analyst and to refine my skills in R and Latex.

One of the biggest strengths that I have noticed throughout my college career, and specifically in my math and statistics courses, is my ability to catch on to new concepts quickly. I believe that this has helped me succeed in college, and I also think that it will be extremely helpful as I enter into the workforce and am required to learn new things on a daily basis. Additionally, while this is not necessarily a strength, I also think that the fact that I possess enjoyment for data analysis has benefited me thus far and is sure to continue into my career.

I am on track to graduate in May 2021 and from there plan to relocate to the San Antonio area. Ideally, my first job would be as an actuary for a life or health insurance company. In order to get there, my main priority is to pass the first two actuary exams. It also seems that employers in that area prefer experience in SQL and SAS, which are two programs that I do not have exposure to. Consequently, the ability to navigate those languages are skills that I need to develop.

Another skill that I am looking to improve over the next year that will help me land my first job is the ability to interview confidently.

Below is the table of results from my search on indeed.com. The specific location that I included in this search was Texas.

Rank	Job Demand	My Preferences
1	Excel	Actuary Analyst
2	Business Analyst	Data analysis
3	Database	Insurance analysis
4	Data Engineer	Python
5	Database Management	Business Analyst

From the research that I did on Indeed, I found that the market demands are much higher for business analysts and data-science related careers than for actuaries. I would imagine that this is because the actuary career is a very specific niche of data analytics, thus fewer jobs. It was not surprising to me that Excel was the top job demand, as it seems that many job postings require this, even if they are not data-science related. Although I was already aware through my own research, doing this activity reinforced the importance of SAS and SQL in the state of Texas. The number of results for those two keywords was much higher than the number of results for R and R Studio.

I do think that my ideals are appropriately aligned. I am aware that the actuary profession is relatively competitive, but it is also very exclusive due to the professional exams that are required. This activity did help me to realize that even if I don't land my "dream job" right out of college, the degree that I am pursuing is very versatile as far as which career path I choose and will allow me many career opportunities.