Reflection

I had learned a great deal undertaking COMM 5961 this semester. The whole journey of programing, designing a website, problem solving, testing and debugging was precious to me. I had got to know and use multiple softwares such as Airtable, Github, Pingendo, ParseHub and etc.. Although I was unconfident to say I could handle the skill of coding very well, I was glad that I could add coding and data collecting to my sill set. Through all the topics covered by this lesson, one topic interested me the most was the topic of computational thinking. I started out the class little experience of coding and without really giving any thought to the idea of computational thinking. However, as I explored the topic of computational thinking more and more deeply, I realized computational thinking is a fundamental skill that I should use out of school. It is important to learn computational thinking before learning how to code because computational thinking lays a foundation to coding. Before using the power of computers to solve a given problem, a computational thinker is the one who collects the data, analyzes it, understand the problem, find patterns, and then build a model to simulate, test and debug the solution. Therefore, it is more about solving the problem instead of solely designing and implementing it in code. When conducting my final project, I changed my topic of the website from “fashion website” to “Los Angeles travel guide” in the middle of process due to my own mistake. I did not think thoroughly about who my target users were and how could I address their needs and visualized the content in a website. It wastes me a lot of time to restart and recollecting the data I needed. I learned that it was critical to set up a goal before head when creating a website. Another challenge I have encountered through doing my final project is I kept making small niggling mistakes and hardly noticed about it. Many contents could not show up correctly due to my lack of attention to code details. I insisted the code worked fine but got caught up with endless little errors such as unmatching title names in Airtable and Javascript files. So, it reminded me that paying attention details and all aspects of a problem is very crucial and is a very important skill.

Overall, I am excited that I have overcome my fear of coding. I sure haven’t completely conquered it, but I sure don’t fear it. This course has allowed me to learn, create and be competent in a new medium. I have to say this web developing experience has definitely shown me the tools and also provided me with confidence to continue creating websites and make further progress.