

Josiah Neuberger  
CS430, Dr. Anewalt  
University of Mary Washington  
Experiential Learning Reflection

This document sets forth to describe my experience with Software Engineering during the while taking University of Mary Washington's computer science Software Engineering course CPSC430. I will consider what I have learned alongside how I applied my current set of skills to solve the problems that came up during the course. I will also consider the impression this course has made on me and reflect on my future plans.

The software engineering process from start to finish was exciting to learn about. I had never had to design software from the ground up without already being given the specifications. Collecting requirements from the client, negotiating bad requirements away, clarifying vague requirements, et cetera are very hard. This course showed me a consistent and viable approach to handle this problem. At the same time, I was able to pull from all my previous skills as a computer scientist that I learned over the past few years. I used my communications skills to successfully negotiate a more reasonable set of requirements with the client and to convince my fellow classmates of the best direction to take in design and implementation. I used my extensive education in computer science concepts to design and implement an effective database framework (learned in CPSC330). In CPSC350, Dr. Zacharski gave me extensive MySQL database experience, which made designing the advanced queries a breeze. The course also required extensive writing, which I was able to use my extensive education via "writing intensive" courses to help execute this area of the course. In the end, Software Engineering touches on so many different areas of expertise; I strongly feel that every aspect of my background education has been applied to solve the problems therein.

I felt this course offered a difficult learning experience in peer motivation and team management. The course involved a semester long group project with two of my fellow students. As a team, we had to supervise our own time and hold each other accountable in order to finish the product. One of my group members failed to contribute almost anything for the entire semester. This was a challenge to me. I had to remain

professional and try to motivate my remaining group member. We came together and worked hard despite this setback and delivered a working product to our client. We were able to do this in part because of our organization, for instance we used a project management tool, Trello, which we learned about in CPSC330.

I learned so much about Software Engineering and myself in this course. In reflection, I learned how easy I find taking lead and making decisions. I don't have a problem telling my fellow team members or even clients that something is a bad idea. I really try to understand the project from top-to-bottom and like to bring all involved parties into agreement. I would love to spend more time developing this skill. In the future, I may step into the role of Product Manager or Project Lead and I think these skills would be invaluable. This experience has led me to consider the possibility at some point in the future of pursuing a Graduate degree in Business Management.