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CSC210-08

5/21/2020

Part Two of Final Exam: Reflection Essay

What design/ coding decisions you made while working on your project. There are decisions you had to take because it was not explicitly mentioned in the requirements of the project. Justify your decisions?

As soon as I received this project and reviewed the UML diagram I had many ideas as to how I was going to handle certain things. One of the first things I came across was the starting date in fulltime employee. In the instructions we were told to calculate full time salary as follows: "Number of years * 1.05 + basic salary". I decided to calculate salary as the designated amount you would receive from your job throughout the span of 1 year. In order to get this "number of years" I had to take the starting date of the user inputted employee and subtract the current year, which I set to "2020". So as an example, if someone had been working at the foodbank for 20 years, they would input their starting year as 2000, the month/day wouldn't matter. That value of 20 would be multiplied by 1.05 and added to the basic salary. This however would not yield results that I expected. So in order to get the appropriate answer, the user must enter a BASIC salary that does not take into account the income based on year, but on an hourly basis. This would then calculate the correct amount to be received based on your hourly earnings. At first I did not know how to handle this but after thinking about it logically and picturing a real life scenario it made more sense to do it this way. If I was to calculate the yearly salary based on my previous method, I would need to incorporate an extra step of arithmetic that would take the hourly salary and calculate it over the span of 1 year. This would then yield the "raised" salary over the yearly span. The only reason I calculated the salary this way was because the instructions restrained us by calling the term multiplied by 1.05 "basic salary", which to me means that we are calculating the hourly earnings of that employee despite it being a "salary". I hope this explanation shows my thought process and explains how I came to this conclusion when I was calculating the employee salary over time. None of the datatypes were specified either, in which regard I feel like I made the best possible choices for each of my variables and datatype decisions.

Where did you encounter struggles? what did you do to deal with it? What did you learn?

To be honest, the majority of my time was not spent on any one section of code. It was spent on trying to understand IntelliJ file pathing and naming conventions. I completed a large amount of this project on my laptop, and when I tried to zip-file transfer my work over to my PC, I was not able to do it smoothly. I even tried to recreate my entire project from scratch by copying my code through email and creating new files on my PC to replicate what I did on my laptop. But when I would try to run the main method IntelliJ would not be able to read my other classes. At the time I had packaged my files together through the title "corona" so I started to add "corona.*class/method*" in front of each term to get the IDE to understand that these are all part of the same package, but it ended up being a complete waste of time. My resolution to this was to go inside the idea project folders and manually find the files that I needed. I did not think about this before, but because we heavily relied on zybooks in this course, I feel

like I lacked a lot of attention on the actual usage of the IDE. We only got to use the IDE for one homework assignment, a Midterm, and the Final Exam. To which I could say I didn't get enough exposure to the IDE. Although I absolutely love zybooks, perhaps through lecture we could have gone more in depth as to how IntelliJ actually works. I accredit this lack due to the online learning structure because when we were in class we would be face to face and working side by side on projects in IntelliJ. But since we went online things have been much harder to communicate for some reason. I take blame for that because I should reach out as the student and ask for help when confused, I just did not expose myself to the IDE as much as I had wanted throughout the semester. Hopefully these next 2 weeks before the summer classes will do me justice in that aspect with my research.

Did you give your best effort? If not, why?

Absolutely, this class made me struggle a lot but I used that struggle to push myself to figure out why I was struggling and move past it. After all, I took C++ and was faced with the same issues, though I did not try as hard back then I just blamed it on the material being difficult. This time I knew better, and knew what areas I struggled with because the relationships between C++ and java can be compared very similarly. For example, I struggled a lot with arrays when I first encountered them in C++, but when I faced them in java I correlated my struggles to back when I was faced with the same issues in C++ and was able to overcome them much more easily than I had in the past. I knew exactly what I had to do and this helped me get ahead.

What are things you did really well? What are things that you think can be improved?

I began the course doing well because everything was almost the same as other coding language conventions. However, when we started moving past arrays, I began to struggle a lot, and draw blanks often. Especially around the time of the midterm, I can confidently say I was not prepared because I was not able to finish the exam. I knew what I was doing for the most part, but I was not in the right mindset or confident as I am now to have handled that exam very well. From the moment I received this final exam project I began working on it for 12 hours until 4 am with appropriate breaks. I was on fire, going through each class knowing exactly what I needed to write for each part. This might have been unhealthy, but my quarantine sleep schedule permitted it. If I could redo this semester, I would have put more effort in the middle of the term, in order to not fall behind like I did this semester. I feel as though because I was overburdened with so many curricular courses, I struggled to manage my time well especially amidst the struggles of converting to all online courses.

Do you think remote-teaching affected your learning (negative or positive)? If so, how ?

I think remote-teaching had its own pros and cons. One of the main benefits of remote-teaching is the comfort that it allows both student and professor to be in while learning. It takes away from the professional scene of the classroom, but this also negatively impacts learning in some ways because you can find yourself being distracted a lot more often than if you were in a class. I think the actual teaching methods in lecture were ok, it was a lot less interactive but overall still did the job well. Maybe not as well as what could have happened in class, but with what we were given in that amount of time I think was handled well and despite missing a whole week of class, we still managed to finish the course successfully. Overall I would say remote-teaching negatively affected my learning but only slightly, this is

because people were unprepared for these circumstances. If I had signed up for remote learning from the beginning, I think everyone would be better prepared for the entire course.