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CprE 4940
Cumulative Reflection

My Gen Eds Experience at ISU

Through my years at ISU, I have taken general education classes from various areas. Specifically, I have taken Russia Today (RUS 375), Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies (WGS 201), Legal Environment of Business (ACCT 215), Entrepreneurship and Innovation (MGMT 310), and Managing Organizations (MGMT 370).

The Russia Today course and the Women's Gender Studies course both helped me widen my knowledge and understanding of aspects that I likely would have never learned otherwise. On the other hand, the three general education business courses that I took directly align with my future goals, as I want to be an entrepreneur, so these courses helped me get an earlier understanding of necessary business knowledge than I otherwise would have.

Through these general education courses, I have better learned how to solve engineering problems, despite these courses not being engineering related. The reason these classes have aided in my ability to solve engineering problems is because they help with the non-technical aspects such as considering environmental affects that RUS 375 introduced and considering the feelings and thoughts of those that this decision may affect that WGS 201 introduced. As for the financial aspect, my business courses, ACCT 215, MGMT 310, and MGMT 370, have all helped me consider the financial impact, the organization impact, and the management impact that any given engineering decision could have. In general, these general education courses have allowed me to consider aspects of engineering problems that I never considered before. Prior to taking these courses, I, generally, considered engineering problems to only, or at least primarily, have a technical side, however, that is far from the truth. Due to what I have learned through these

courses, I am now able to make better overall decisions by considering wider impacts/implications, even for engineering problems.

To get more into the specifics, it is quite easy to go into an engineering problem and consider the technical aspects, solve the problem at hand, and call it good. However, there is much more to solving such a problem as there are other aspects to consider. For example, as RUS 375 taught me, environmental impacts can be very severe and have large affects on the world and can sometimes stem from what seemed to be a very simple and straightforward engineering problem. Similarly, as I learned from WGS 201, small, simple decisions can have significant impact on people as well, such as their feelings. This allows me to consider the thoughts and feelings of others when solving engineering problems, when I likely otherwise would not have, given that I thought my decision would not affect others' thoughts and feelings.

As for the business specifics, it is easy to consider an engineering problem and ignore all non-technical aspects, such as financials and how the decision may affect the public image of the organization. These aspects are very important aspects to consider when making decisions, even smaller decisions, because these decisions can have much larger impacts than they are originally thought to have. When it comes to solving engineering problems, the financial impact that a seemingly simple decision can have can be astronomical and this, clearly, would be one of the most important aspects to a business. Specifically, if a decision were to cost a business an absurd amount of money, even if it is the best technical solution, it may be better to take the second best technical solution, given it costs significantly less. Similar can be said for how a decision will impact an organization's public image. This can indirectly affect financials significantly and is, generally, something that should be of high importance in decision making.

Overall, my experiences in general education courses and my knowledge gained from these courses is invaluable to me for considering the other, still largely important, aspects of an otherwise technical engineering problem.