CS-499

Final Reflection

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My only goal when I started this Computer Science class was to get better at writing code. I had tried to code before, but most of the time I didn't know how to make a full program or even where to start. Not only did taking classes and working on different projects teach me how to write code, they also taught me how to make programs that other people could understand and fix if they needed to. These days, it's not enough to just make something work, you have to plan ahead and make sure the structure makes sense.

Getting better at organizing my code was one of the most important changes for me. Take my Appointment Management System project as an example, I had to redo everything and break it up into pieces. It was much easier to keep track of everything after I split the part that does logic from the part that talks to the database. I also added better ways to handle errors so that the program wouldn't completely crash if something unexpected happened or a user gave the wrong input. This taught me how important it is to think about problems in the future as well as the ones I'm facing right now.

 An awful lot about algorithms and data structures was taught to me as well. I used to put things into dictionaries and lists without giving them much thought. Now that I've worked on tasks like setting priorities and finding conflicts, I ask myself, "Is this the best way to store this?" What about "will this be slow later on?" It helped me understand why people care so much about how long something takes and choosing the best structure for the job. Not only is it useful for school, but it's also very important when making apps for real life.

Getting the database to work was another important task that I completed. Before I connected everything to SQLite, most of the things I made would lose all of their data when you closed them which kind of made the app pointless if you needed that data later. It felt like a step-up to set up tables and make sure the app could save and get data more efficiently.

I got better at explaining what I was doing as the program went on. It used to be that I could figure things out on my own, but now I can explain why I did something or picked a certain method. I may need to work on some things, like improving my security, and planning larger systems, but I'm more ready for real projects now than I was when I first started.

Now that my program is over, I feel like I have a strong portfolio of the work I can do, a better understanding of how technology can be used to solve problems, and a clear idea of the job I want to pursue. Because that's what I love most, I plan to spend more time on backend development and automation work. I know I'll keep learning, but I don't have to start from scratch anymore. I have a strong base to build on.

Thanks for a great semester.