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**Course:** Introduction to Programming with Python

## TASK 5: "what did I learn in this course that will help me going forward?"

My goal for this class was to get more comfortable reading and understanding code and learn how to write some basic code to help me expand the scope of my current role at my job. My background is in Linguistics and currently work as a Linguistic Engineer building Voice AI systems. I did not choose to go the Computational Linguistics/NLP route during my MA or PhD, because I never thought I'd end up working at a tech company, but I was obviously wrong. So, here I am, many years later, trying to fill in this knowledge gap.

In my day-to-day job, I see a lot of NLP code across many Jupyter notebooks that, before taking this class, I could barely understand. I knew what variables, conditionals and functions were, but that's about it. Now, I feel more comfortable with those concepts and my general understanding of the syntax in the code. Fun fact: just very recently, I was able to debug some basic code to extract data from a file.

As far as writing my own code from scratch, I don't feel as comfortable with that yet. For most assignments, I had to use the Demos and LabAnswers to create my own script. I was never sure how to proceed as far as writing the actual syntax (the order of functions and variables, when to use a period, indentation, etc.), but I'm hoping more practice and exposure to code overtime will help with that (now it's just a matter of making the time to practice!). While I may not be ready to write my own code yet, I do at least understand when to use loops, functions, and classes. ChatGPT has been a great tool for me, not so much to write the actual code (I did not want to rely on chatGPT to do that for me), but to explain code to me. It does a very nice job breaking down the code and explaining it in small units (it really felt like a nice version of 'Python explained for dummies'). The class materials (notes, videos, demos, LabAnswers, additional resources) are really helpful, but I definitely appreciated the in-person lecture time on Tuesdays to go over these in more detail and ask questions.

This class has certainly sparked my genuine interest in continuing to learn more about Python and coding. I do plan on continuing to take more classes, but perhaps slightly more geared towards NLP and ML since those topics would align closer with my career and personal interest. If anyone has any good leads or knows of any good courses that specifically touch on these areas, I'm all ears. Overall, I really enjoyed taking this class and learnt a lot from everyone.