Madison Niederer

Dr. Soma

Honor’s Project

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Honor’s Project Reflection:

Building a [Portfolio Website](https://www.madisonniederer.com/) Using HTML/CSS

This semester I had the opportunity to complete my final honor’s project with Dr. Soma for the Illinois College Scholar’s Program. The goal of this honor’s project was learning Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) and Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) independently through online resources then using the knowledge to build a website using HTML and styling the site with CSS. Web Development is currently outside of the Computer Science curriculum at Illinois College, but it is an important skill to have in the job market. Through this honor’s project I was able to learn both HTML and CSS to use in my future career, and I was also able to create a portfolio website to showcase this skill and my work in both of my majors. The process of learning a language, building a website, and getting it online can be tedious, so I will discuss my process and takeaways from the experience.

The major tasks of this project included learning the web development programming languages through an online course with practice exercises on the site Free Code Camp(FCC), revising my resume and acquiring all the materials for my portfolio, drawing the markup designs for each page of the site, writing the HTML and CSS for the index and secondary pages, deploying to the web through GitHub and Netlify, doing a final debug of the website, and writing a reflection of the project. For the project, I divided all the necessary components into five two-week stages, and at the end of each stage I met with Dr. Soma to discuss my progress and get feedback for my work.

For the first stage, I focused on revising my resume, drawing a mock-up of the index page of my website, and completing the last third of the 300 hour FCC Web Development Certification that I had started working on over the summer. In this stage, I was able to complete the certification and the resume revision, but I was not able to the complete the mockup with the time commitment of the certification. I caught up the next week by completing the mockup of the index, and the scheduled mockup of the other pages, the list of materials for the pages, and the preliminary implementation of the index page. In the third stage, I was able to finish the HTML and CSS for both the index and secondary pages as planned. And in the fourth stage, I uploaded the files to my GitHub repository, completed the setup of the Netlify deployment page, bought my domain, and deployed the website as planned, and I was also able to complete the debug and reflection ahead of schedule.

As with most independent projects, I ran into challenges in areas of my development especially with using new platforms like GitHub command lines to upload to my repository and complete my deployment, but through watching videos, finding online resources, and using a trial-and-error process I was able to get much more comfortable with the platform. GitHub is used a lot in the industry, but it is not taught in the school, so the project helped me learn to use the software. At a base level, through completing the website I can showcase the skills on my resume to prospective employers and showcase the web development skills I used to build the website. At a higher level through my independent study of the web dev languages HTML and CSS, I was also able to open the door to more independent learning that is required in the field of Software Development. In the future, I will not only be able to use the web development skills like HTML and CSS and the general Software Development use of GitHub repositories for projects, but I will also be more comfortable learning languages independently and will start learning JavaScript using the FCC course to build my portfolio further.