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CART 253
Semester Reflection

      I've always said I didn't have a 'math brain'. I've been an artist my whole life and so it always irked me that (in grade school math at least) there was always a 'right answer' or right way to do things. I love coding because it has showed me that an art brain can take on technical challenges in effective and critical ways. The use of divergent thinking in the creation of things other than paintings (no offense to painting, I love to paint) has been pivotal to the development of my own self confidence as a critical thinker. I love that you there are a hundred ways to complete a certain product and finding a new way to do it can actually be very advantageous to the final product.

      The challenging parts of programming have been learning how to make my brain understand it. I am an overwhelmingly visual learner so the text heavy part of coding can be challenging. Learning how to draw diagrams, write things out in certain ways, and create mental images of certain concepts has been super important to my understanding. This can be frustrating and feels like it slows me down, but after I have taken the time to create a mental model I can just pull it to the front of my mind whenever I need to reference it.

      I am proud of my Project 1 bathroom simulator game. Even though it wasn't the fanciest project I was able to instill my personality and sense of humor into the game play. I also spent time thinking about the design and user interaction aspect of the project, adding visual signifiers to the character selection screen. Working on that and figuring it all out felt really good.

      I don't think I will ever be a programmer by trade but the tools I've learned here are going to lend themselves really well to what ever I end up doing in the future. In my Artificial Intelligence class my partner and I are utilizing some machine learning algorithms inside of Unreal Engine. Using my basic knowledge of coding I have been able to spend time reading the code for the premade algorithms so I can adjust them to our needs. Being able to do these things gives me so much confidence in my own abilities to learn something and and follow the ideas that I have because- surprise! my ideas work sometimes! This class has helped me understand the concept of talking to a machine and that is going to be so important in so many future contexts.