

Owen Randolph

## Final Narrative

ISAT 252

Spring 2009

My experience with Morgan Benton's class this semester has been unlike any other I have ever been involved in. I have never taken an academic class that does not involve ~~graded assignments~~; this has certainly changed the way I look at my work and how to approach it. The begin with, the ~~lack of~~ grading has made nearly everything less stressful, a big plus when it comes to class. As Benton said at one point, the lack of a test grade in hopes of making the test taking experience more like a puzzle, jeopardy style, seems like it has helped my percentage correct as I felt much less pressured. The assignments were often quite open ended which is more positive than negative, but sometimes my team was unsure of where to start or where to set our goals.

### Team Elite

Working with a team to complete nearly all of the major assignments, except testing, also had perks and hindrances. So it is important to address my team mates. First of all, ~~each person in our~~ group had a different way of approaching the task at hand. It seems like we normally would have a group discussion before starting in an attempt to establish a goal. We met at most of the hacking sessions in the beginning because of our need for assistance in starting programming and normally we were all there. However, Jeremy was not at the last two group meetings when we were finishing up the final semester project, because he simply forgot to come. This frustrated me ~~somewhat, not because he~~ wasn't there, but because he forgot to come. I think this reflects his disinterest in the ~~project and~~ perhaps the class as well. In fact, the only thing he did for the final semester project was figure out how to connect to the internet from visual basic using an online vb.net guide. I feel like I should have approached him about this problem but I did not because I feel like he would not take it well (I lived with him last year so I know his personality well, this is why I initially chose him as a partner). He seemed to not really be inclined to lead in putting projects together but instead do what is ~~asked of him~~ instead, which has its benefits in some cases. Its just something he had to work with. Mark and I however worked well as a team, I think because we have similar personalities and communicate quite effectively. When Mark did not come to class a few times without notifying me, I did tell him to let me know when would not be coming in so I could tell the professor. I feel like Benton ~~wanted us~~ to communicate with our teams a lot because so much of the class dealt with teamwork. In retrospect, it might have been more effective to talk to Jeremy assertively instead of Mark assertively in terms of getting work done, but I think I've learn that I need to work on that in future classes because I will be working with people in my job and that makes a big difference to have that experience under your belt; it's a part of being mature.

My primary role on our computer programming was usually researching for code both on google tutorials as well as in the reference book. I certainly found the examples online easier to understand than learning coding through a book. The tutorials in the class gave me a lot of incite into coding and programming in general as well because it was more engaging. Another thing I liked to be involved in is

designing the putting together the user interface but of course everyone liked being involved in that. I liked how Mark knew a lot about what code to use but I liked trying to piece it together too, but he was the most active on writing code, because neither Jeremy nor I knew which code was right sometimes. I also liked writing the narratives for the sake of writing. Writing is an important part of communicating when working on a class team because we all live in different areas. Logic based systems are writing which is another reason writing just makes sense as a skill to master. I wrote all of my narratives for every lab, two for the last project we completed and this is kind of a long narrative.

I really liked being a part of this class because it was easier to talk and ask questions during class because it wasn't stressful. Even though some of the programming material taught in class was not interesting to me, I still tried to find some way I could apply it to what we were doing as a team. My favorite part of the class was the feeling when you finally figure out an important part of coding to fix that problem you were having making everything work right in your program and so you know how to make it into a useable function. It's a feeling of relief like when you get a good test score back. The only thing is.. its really not a grade! I feel like analyzing and making a rubric to making rating systems for our projects was purposeful in that it helped us see what quality really is but I really don't think we used for any of our own work because we weren't concerned with grades. Maybe it would be a good idea to do that because it is something that we can apply to other classes in the future. I feel like I got something out of planning and scheduling around writing our programs. Even though our first program sucked, we made up for it with all of our other projects and we completed the open ended final project weeks ahead of schedule and actually like using it! I think it was a good idea to use the internet in our program because I had wanted to bridge this gap which was not addressed in previously assigned lab work. The internet is a revolutionary tool and computer programs that are used on the internet are sometimes very profitable.