

Narrative Essay

My expectations coming into this class was simply to have a computer science course to take that didn't have to do with the technical side of things. I wanted a class that promoted the notion of forming your own personal opinions about whatever topic was being talked about, instead of the usual intake of concrete knowledge that usually defines a computer science class. I wanted a class that got me thinking instead of a class that told me what to think. I also wanted a class that would not add to much difficulty to my course load and force me to regret taking it in the first place since it was an elective.

My goals for this class were simply to pay attention and show up when possible. I wanted to do what I had to do to get a good grade in the class as well. Wanted to come out of the class with my own opinions on issues brought up in the class. Over the semester I realized that not much had to be done technically to perform well in the class. I even would say nothing at all had to be done really. My goal simply became to show up sometimes and listen actively to the discussion. I felt like I was successful in forming my own thoughts on issues pertaining to the computer science field. I will definitely question things more in the future when creating some new technology or program. Really think how the product can affect how people interact with each other. I definitely paid attention whenever I was in class and followed along with the discussion being held. I feel like I failed to show up as much as I would have liked to. My class after this class became an online class and so whenever I did not have to show up for my earlier class I would tend to skip this one as well. I am already terrible at waking up in the morning to go to class, so not needing to go to my other classes meant I did not feel the motivation to go to this class. I also never really spoke up and participated in the class discussion. I wish I had some instead of none really. I also never fully did the readings assigned; I would usually skim them and not fully read and engage in the reading. Because of this I felt like I had less to say than I would have if I had done the reading fully. I did however do all the assigned work, which wasn't much but I did it. In the future I will make more of an effort to show up to class more regularly and not let my morning self just sleep in as I want to almost every day. In the future I will do the readings more diligently, not just skim or skip them. I feel like doing more reading is always one of my areas I can improve upon. Like I mentioned I have motivation issues so having work I don't really have to do really makes it hard for me to do it. I also tend to not give myself enough time to fully complete work I have to do, so this is another area of improvement.

I do feel more educated after taking this class. I feel like a more whole person who just isn't good at the technical part of computer science. I feel like I can have discussions pertaining to societal issues of computer science better than I could have before taking this class. It was definitely useful in getting me to think about how technology affects

people. I have seen what technology can do to people and how it can detract from interaction from one another. I have always been a proponent of face-to-face interaction and less interaction through technology, which is definitely less genuine. I know I'm in the minority of people my age because sometimes I prefer to call and talk to my friends about their life/day instead of doing it through texting. This class furthered my opinion of this especially because of the TV show we watched in class, which showed a grim future where everything is centered on technology and people hardly interact. I feel like with my knowledge gained I can tell people how to act to not forget how to treat one another. I feel like a lot of what's wrong with our culture is you become so used to dealing with great technology that you forget how to deal with a real human being. Technology will not become mad at you or decide to do something other than what you instruct it to do, but people have feelings and free will so they will do so. I have always lived my life tied to a computer. Which is why I became a computer science major in the first place. But especially now more than ever I want to be a part of the side of technology that connects people meaningfully, not distance people from one another. I will do what I can in the future to have a job where I feel like I'm helping the human race, not alienating it from itself. And this may be hard because a particularly good piece of technology has the power to consume people's time and thoughts. This course has shown me even better who I am and who I want to be in the future. I am also very strongly in favor of people forming their own thoughts. People nowadays have a tendency to let others do their thinking for them, mostly because it's easy and convenient. Why download and make playlists of music when a computer program will do it for you, no effort needed on your part? I always like to do things myself even when I don't have to because I can't stand the idea of letting someone/something else do my thinking for me. I want to form my own opinions on everything, not let someone else's dictate mine. And since technology will do the work for you, sometimes it will also do the thinking for you as well. I think this is not good for people because it makes you even lazier and makes you do less thinking. I want to work on technology that empowers your thoughts and opinions, not mitigate them. I want people to be the master's of this world, not the technology we are creating.

The way this course was taught was great. I really loved the daily discussions and freedom you gave us as students. We could basically take the conversation wherever we pleased and you would ask us the questions that got us thinking. Like I said earlier your own thoughts and opinions are very powerful and you should definitely form them on your own and I think you did a good job of making us do so. You also made it kind of easy with having little to no work to do outside of the classroom. I was grateful of this because it meant I could focus my attention on my harder more rigorous courses I am taking. Though it came with the backlash of me not putting in much effort to this class. One recommendation I might have for this class is more small papers on your thoughts on a topic. That way you get everyone's opinions even from those who may not speak up in class. Also if you write a paper on a topic you will have a stronger opinion on the

topic since you had been forced to think about it and reflect on it.

I would like to ask for an A for this class. Though I did miss class many times I felt like I got what I needed out of the class and learned what needed to be learned in the process. I feel like what I learned and thought about during this class will be fully applicable in my future career. I also put my full effort into the 1 assignment we had, with the no technology for 3 days. Along with that I worked on our draft of our final paper. I gave a full amount of effort and if we had more work I would have also put in full effort on other assignments we may have had.

CS 330 Reflection Paper

Coming into this course I was expecting a lot of reading and probably some analytical writing about topics relating to modern day computing. With a course title of *Societal and Ethical Issues in Computing* I was pretty sure this was not going to be a programming class. I had the feeling it was going to be more like a philosophy or sociology course, which it in some aspects. My goals at the beginning of the semester were similar to what I expect from myself in any other class. I planned to show up to class, do the homework, and get the best grade possible. When I discovered that the class was mainly going to be discussion based, I altered my plan a little bit. Specifically, I wanted to make sure I participated more during discussions and to get my opinions out there.

Being successful in this course is a much different topic than in other courses I have taken. Where normally there are various homework, quiz, or test grades to serve as markers for success, this course has none. I suppose that my regular attendance could be marked as a success, as I did not fail to show up and be in the discussions. My completion of the three day electronic holiday is also a success in my mind, because it was a challenging yet enlightening experience. I believe my biggest success is my overall attitude towards the topics the class went over. In other courses I more so go through the motions just trying to get by, but I was genuinely interested in what CS 330 had to offer. The Eisenstein readings brought new perspectives about the faults of how the modern world is run, and the contrasts between the dystopian futures we watched and the ideal

human social evolution Eisenstein discussed peaked my interest. I was never not excited to attend class, and I believe that is how education should feel. The material should prompt the student's interest as well as the student personally desiring to know more.

The most obvious failures for me is that I did not complete all the readings. I would tend to get partially through them before I would get distracted, or move on to other course work. This lack of reading would lead to my other shortcomings in the class. Most notably, if I had read everything I would have been able to offer better input into the discussions. This would have led to more pensive thoughts about the topics and would have improved the learning of not only myself, but of my fellow classmates. The main thing I take from this is that being prepared is the most important thing for education as well as anything else in life. While it is not normally the easiest thing to do, completing prep-work allows for a better understanding of the material later, and also avoids the awkwardness of not knowing things you were supposed to go over on your own time. Since I will remain in school for the next few years, what I can take from this failure is to make sure I will do all my readings and homework for my other classes, no matter how long or difficult they are.

Thinking about this course from the point of JMU's mission statement "educated and enlightened citizens who lead meaningful and productive lives", I feel this class somewhat met this goal. The word educated is a broad adjective that I do not believe can be summed up in one course. Yes, I did learn new things in CS 330, but my personal understanding of an educated

person is someone who has good general knowledge in many subjects as well as expertise in one or more specific topics. Considering this is the entire University's mission statement, I would say this course definitely contributed in transforming myself and other students into educated citizens. It will be the culmination of all our years of college that will help make us into the alumni JMU desires. Enlightening is a perfect word to describe this courses impact on me.

While other classes focus on facts, data, real world or career based knowledge, this course was not worried about memorization of concrete topics. Yes, these are important things to know in order to be successful in the future, but what I liked about CS 330 is how we thought about life beyond the realm of traditional thinking. By breaking down how our lives are run now, we could think about what possible things the future holds. But it is not like any particular outcome is set in stone, the sheer action of realizing something is terribly wrong or will go wrong can allow us to shape the future in a more promising manner. The premise of the future and what it contains has always been a favorite topic of mine. I would like to participate in making a better world, which I suppose is JMU's goal to instill all its students with the desire to improve the world around them.

A problem I still have that has not been solved this semester is what exactly I want to do with my life. It is no easy subject to handle and I have never really been able to come up with a solid answer. I have a few ideas, obviously something with computers, maybe military, and I just picked up Justice Studies as a major so that can open up other opportunities in law enforcement or government. Some say that college is the place where you find out who you truly are, I

assume through the courses you take as well as the social relationships formed. For me, I just feel like I am taking classes to fulfill the requirements, and nothing has truly engaged me yet. It is challenging to be motivated and engaged in the present when there is no clear goal in sight. Hopefully I am just one year close to figuring out where I want to go with my life.

This course style was really a refreshing and enjoyable change up from all the other courses I have taken so far. It was laid back but thought-provoking, and did not contain the regular stressors of constant graded assignments. I wish more classes could be set up like this, not only for the lack of grades and the option to choose your own grade, but because it shifts the goal of the class from grades of test to a personal drive to learn. You get out what you put in, and it encourages the student to make their own experiences. I have realized over the years how our educationally system makes students more focused on getting the grade rather than getting the knowledge. That is why cheating is such a widespread problem, because students will risk everything just to get good marks, because that is the be-all end-all. This course embraces the alternate form of education that so many others are pushing for. The only recommendation I have would be for some of the longer readings, recommend specific sections to pay attention to. I know this will probably encourage people to read less but it could improve discussions if everyone has a better understanding of some of the crucial points.

The grade I would like for this class not surprisingly, is an A. This has been one of my favorite classes I have taken so far in college, not because of its relaxed set up. The focus on the

what-if, as well as the why questions really intrigued me. The fact that I would spend my own time googling concepts we talked about in class, or researching new technologies that will impact our future, means the class had the right impact on me. I can say this course has had the biggest influence on me so far in putting the future in perspective and possibly help me find how I am going to shape it.

CS 330

Tim Roth

I signed up for CS 330 completely on a whim. I was looking for a class to add to fill my schedule and got an email from the department advertising a new section of 330 had opened up. I had no clue what this class was or what to expect when I walked in on the first day. I was just hoping for an interesting class that made more sense than my philosophy class I took freshman year.

Overall I was very happy with the class style. I actually enjoy reading sections of a book and reflecting on it in class. I tried to contribute anytime I had a unique point and by the end of our time focused on Sacred Economics I felt I had gained confidence in public speaking, something I struggle with in an academic setting. The addition of the journal project shifted the focus of the class and I regrettably put less effort into the class instead of more. At the beginning of the year I had set forth the goal to complete all of the assignments and miss no more than 2 classes. I was successful throughout the year, as I attended almost every class and was prepared for discussion. I also participated fully in the technology break. I believe the lack of effort on the journal stemmed from the group. It was disappointing when my group would set forth goals for the next class and then never see any progress. I wish I had been more proactive in working on the paper. Most days if I attempted to work on it, I saw little to no progress being made by others and would use that as an excuse for me not to work on it either. I realize I should have held myself accountable in to the group project like I had with the individual assignments. I am still hopeful that we will finish our paper this summer. We all have expressed interest in completing it after we leave JMU. Another thing I picked up on this semester is my need for a specific work area. This semester I let my workspace become cluttered and so I moved my work from my desk to my bed. I think this affected my focus and ability to stay on task, as it is the one change I had that affected my work habits. When I'm sitting in my bed work is the last thing on my mind. I found I'm more likely to watch Netflix and browse reddit, if I'm in my bed than if I am at a workspace. One of my goals for next year and a reason I'm excited for next year is I am looking at getting a desktop that I can sit and do work on and having my laptop for all my fun distracting uses of a computer. I know it isn't that simple but I believe is I can keep the two realms separate it will improve my work habit.

I am really thankful for having taken this class as a sophomore, as I was able to see where upper-class Computer Science majors were headed. I am almost terrified of entering the workforce because I don't know what my career path is. I know Computer Science is a desired major but until you actually meet people who are getting offers for jobs it still seems foreign. I still don't know exactly what I want to do, but I think because of this class and seeing where others were with already having jobs and interns I will give a real effort into looking at what I want to pursue this summer. I did recently accept a small job for a local company, which I don't believe I would have taken if I didn't take this class. I saw my classmates were applying their skills and so I put myself out there. Unfortunately it didn't work out because of reasons beyond

my control but it was definitely a learning experience and I feel better about stepping out of my comfort zone. And looking forward I have reached out to a coworker at my summer job and looking to help him with his side job. He is a naturalist and trail-cam hobbyist and he has over 3 million pictures. So if I can somehow meld my passion for nature and computers I think it is a great opportunity.

To be honest I do not feel more educated after this class. I read the syllabus and I don't remember any real facts about any of the topics. I can remember the discussions we had on ownership of software or privacy on the web, but no actually facts on software ownership or any laws regarding privacy. While I don't see this class as the best for educating it was extremely enlightening. I would never have thought about negative interest economy or how ownership came about. This class has made me more aware that the solution maybe in the opposite direction. While our lives are always advancing we shouldn't just be focused on what is directly in front of us. Rather I hope I can be more aware and look around and see the other options available. Again I don't know what this means for my life but I know my viewpoint has changed.

I would take this class again in a heartbeat and do recommend it to my friends. I think you have a great talent at leading discussions with young minds and I am almost jealous of the students you will have next semester as I think the class will only get better. If I can give one recommendation is for you to assign more than one reading text. I think the class got too wrapped up in Sacred Economics and would benefit from having different topics and multiple viewpoints. Having articles from journals about issues would help with discussion of topics and what the future could hold.

Lastly I believe I deserve an A- in the class. I believe I excelled in class and was a contributor during discussions. I am still hopeful for our journal paper and while it was not completed on time, I think it shows progress for all of us.

Christian Gray

CS330 Reflection

Professor Benton

5/2/14

CS330 has been one of the best experiences at James Madison University by far. It was such an eye opening experience in so many different ways. The overall feel of the class is so different than any other class that I have ever experienced. The class is so laid back which creates a comfortable environment where people are not scared to voice their opinions. You would think that having such a laid back class would result in people not caring about the class. However, this is not the case at all and in fact it was the exact opposite. You would also think that nobody would ever show up to the class especially when the class is not mandatory. To my surprise though, everybody usually comes to class on time everyday.

I used to wonder what it was about the class that made people care regardless of the laid back nature. The answer to that question came to me as the year progressed. Another key difference in the class is the grading system. In all of my years of being in school I have never gotten the privilege of choosing my own grade in a class before. Anybody not in the class would immediately question this method and assume that being guaranteed an A no questions asked would result in a class full of students who do not care at all about the class and students that would put in little to no effort. In reality, I was putting just as much effort if not more effort in this class compared to my other ones.

What this class taught me is that having an actual grading scale doesn't necessarily mean that you will try harder. You could also go through a class, get an A, and come away with nothing. You could also go through a class, get a C, and come away with more than you did in a class that you received an A in. In a sense grades have nothing to do with what you actually learned in a class. You are basically just a slave to the teacher and will do whatever it takes to earn a good grade. People are more caught up in their GPA's then actually learning these day. Removing the GPA all together eliminates this problem. When we are not worried about what grade we are going to get in a class we can focus on things that actually matter like learning. Instead of being forced to participate because there is a participation grade, we actually want to participate and to voice our opinions.

Out of all of the computer science that I have taken at James Madison University, this was by far my favorite of them all. It is mainly because this class did not feel like a computer science class at all and I am not just saying that because there was no coding. In every other computer science course I have taken, I always feel like I am under so much pressure and I am always so stressed. However, in CS330, I am in an environment where I feel like I can relax and learn without feeling all the pressure. The book that we read in the class was also a great tool to keep everybody engaged. Even though we did not have quizzes or homework assignments everybody always read and kept up anyways.

The book was a great read and was an eye opening experience as well. I say this because there were a lot of things about money and the economy that I had no idea about prior to reading this book. Eisenstein came up with so many different

ideas on how we could improve upon our current ways of doing things. His different scenarios are a great way to spark up in depth discussions. I liked how we could spend a whole class just discussing one scenario and the different effects that would occur from these scenarios. The discussions in the class were definitely one of my favorite aspects of the course. I loved hearing all of the different opinions of all of my peers.

I thought the paper for the magazine was another great way to get the class involved. It was nice getting to work in groups with some of our peers in the class. I thought that it was nice that the class had a common goal in getting the articles published. You were very helpful with this process as well as Professor Radizwell. I am sure that the majority of the class will get their articles submitted by the end of the summer. The fact that people would want to carry on their work after the school year ended shows how much people care about the class.

Overall you are the best professor I have ever taken in my two years of being here. JMU needs more professors like you, especially the CS department. It was really a pleasure taking your class this year and I will be on the lookout for any class that you or Professor Radizwell will be teaching. Hopefully we will stay in touch through the years. Thank you for a great semester and I hope you have a great summer!

Austin Vershel
Final Narrative Essay
CS 330
MWF 11:15

Reflections on the Semester

Coming into this class, I had no expectations. I had never considered the ethical implications of computing as well as the ethical implications of practically everything. When I saw that an ISAT teacher was teaching this course, I almost considered dropping it. Luckily, I stayed. I quickly understood that over the semester I would become familiarized with the societal reciprocation of upcoming robotic inventions, technology in general, and certain aspects of economic and educational reformation.

What I truly found fascinatingly complex was the negative aspects of an increasingly technology-infused world. Before taking this class, programming was nothing more than coding. Now, I understand that creating a program that acts as an electronic cashier will put several thousands of working people out of jobs. While I understand that this is part of the natural progression of the industrial world, it certainly puts a lot of pressure and stress on the programmer. Coding and programming are no longer coding and programming. They are tools that can potentially destroy the lives of many people all for the sake of efficiency and technology. I learned that a piece of technology must be examined from every angle to determine the societal implications, positive or negative, that it may have. For example, the Google Glass is seemingly a harmful efficient piece of technology that offers many positive benefits to many different people. However, the production of Google Glass has been temporarily suspended because people have discovered unethical ways of using the product, such as video-taping without permission. My favorite part of the semester was the project where we went without technology for a few days and logged our results. I was unable to go completely about technology for the time period, but I learned many things about how technology affects many aspects of our lives. It was truly appalling to see the grip that technology has over us. Everything that we do involves technology. It won't be long until our society turns into the first "Black Mirror" episode that we watched.

My biggest goal of the semester was to have our article become published. I stressed out over the article and put many hours into working on it. Unfortunately, the article also became my biggest failure of the semester. While some of our group was passionate about our topic, others simply did not care and put in minimal effort. This discouraged me from doing the work the best that I could. I hope to continue to progress on our scholarly article and hopefully finish it in time to be accepted by the journal.

From failing to complete my essay, I learned a valuable lesson. When working as a team, it is important to be an active and enthusiastic member. If not everybody pulls their own weight, the group as a whole will suffer. I think a potential change to this structure might be to assign people into groups for the essays. As a proactive, take-charge group member, I was disappointed by the quality of work put in by my teammates. As the self-appointed leader, I should take responsibility for the incompleteness of our article. In the future, I will attempt to be more flexible with the responsibilities of group members.

I also found it enthralling to take point with my article-writing group. However, I learned a lot about myself through this task. I learned that I have what it takes to be a leader. People listened to me when I talked and really heard what I had to say. I was efficient and fair when delegating work and I

think my partners appreciated that. One change I should have made was to preach accountability to each of my partners.

Overall, I would say that this course has contributed to my knowledge of a future career. It has influenced me to consider all aspects of design and implementation and how they affect society as a whole. I have learned about the positive and negative consequences of an advanced program and how quickly something can go from being considered good to being considered evil. Instead of focusing on small, time-saving applications I am now interested in pursuing a career working with items that require calculated, precise code. An ideal job would be working for the department of defense of one of its subsidiaries. I plan to use the knowledge I gained over this course to be smart about what I create and to consider its consequences.

After this semester, I certainly feel enlightened and more educated than I was prior. Sacred Economics changed the way that I will view the world forever. The way things are now are the way they are because we accept them. Even if a system is corrupt or stupid, it lives on because we let it. There are many harmful aspects of our economy that hurt more people than they help and should be dealt with. For example, the top 1% of people in our economy control the vast majority of all money. With that money, they influence politicians and elected officials to enact legislature than helps improve the 1% even more. I truly believe that wealth needs to be re-distributed or possibly even introduce negative interest. I think the biggest sham in our country is the amount of money spent on political campaigns. Because big companies donate a substantial amount of money, politicians reward them once they have been elected to office. Small business or organizations or even just regular people don't have the opportunity to influence the outcome of an election. How is this a democratic system? Each person and/or business should have equal opportunity to sway an election or have their legislature acted on.

Overall, this has been one of my favorite courses I have taken. We were placed in a constructive, comfortable environment that allowed us to get to know our peers on an intellectual level as well as hear different opinions about hot technological issues. I gained different viewpoints about different topics and networked with my fellow peers and created long-lasting friendships. I believe that a discussion based course like this one promotes conversation and debate which expands our intellects and creates solutions. It seemed as though most students were comfortable sharing their thoughts during class and even engaged in their own debates. This class certainly required a lot of deeper thinking and application to real-world scenarios. I was truly enamored with Eisenstien's "Sacred Economics" and wish we could have read and discussed the entire textbook over the course of our semester.

I thoroughly believe that I deserve an A in this course. I was a fixture in classroom debates and constantly raised my opinion and challenged the opinions of others. I was always involved and focused on lectures and reviewed every piece of information objectively. Not only did I complete assignments to the best of my ability, but I spearheaded and took charge of our article-writing group. While others slacked off, I picked up their load of the work and was responsible for scheduling meetings and coordinating responsibilities. I will continue to take charge of our group over the summer and hopefully complete our scholarly article before the deadline. Finally, I learned and retained a lot of useful information from this class. I plan to finish "Sacred Economics" over the summer and I am looking forward to reading much more of Eisenstien's work.

(Show The Football Database App!)



CS 330 Meeting

Eric Hoang

To be completely frank I have no idea what my expectations were coming into this class. I signed up for the class after getting an email about the course being offered once again and Austin told me he was taking it. Because of this I did not set that many specific learning goals besides giving my all to absorb any material and complete all the assignments. That being said, I was completely surprised by this class. For starters, I have always been interested in the social implications of technology and how it changed our society and how we act so this class was somewhat right up my alley. Hell it was to the point where I would spend more time on this class than my required CS course. My goals quickly changed from that vague goal I have listed above to further investigating on my own the social impacts of technology. I used the three days with no technology as an aid in my goal. During that period I observed people around me and was able to see just how altering technology is. Gone was the time of face to face talk, I even saw two people unable to keep a steady eye contact while keeping a conversation because of "awkwardness". So in that area I feel like I have succeeded. Another one of my successes within this class was with the book Sacred Economics. Being completely honest, I have very little understanding of economics and generally how finance works in the real world. So I actually learned quite a lot from the book even though some of it might have been what some consider common knowledge.

I think my greatest failure in this class was not utilizing the academic journal opportunity. I was hoping to write something along the lines of my goal, being the change of society caused by technology. However I have strayed from that goal and am writing on internships. I am passionate about the current subject I am writing on but not as intrigued as I am with society and technology so in that aspect I have failed. Another part of the paper I failed at is writing style. In high school, I was a writer and editor for my school newspaper and I like to think I was somewhat decent and I thoroughly enjoyed the informal style. But when it comes to writing papers such as academic and official papers, I find myself lost and end up losing a lot of my personal voice and writing style.

JMU's mission statement is to produce "educated and enlightened citizens who lead meaningful and productive lives." I remember you telling us, you loved this statement because JMU focused not just on academics but also about bettering themselves. I loved that and without even thinking about it, this was one of the reasons I stayed at JMU. I was going to transfer after my first year to Virginia Tech. I changed my mind after spending a semester here. The people I met here whether it was classmates

or professors all seemed to go out of their way for me and that was simply amazing. Of course some people may argue that Virginia Tech has better academics in terms of my major but at the end of the day academics is only so much (my hiring manager and my mentor at Northrop are both Radford graduates.) I think the me that will graduate out of JMU would trounce the me that would have graduated out of Tech. As for this class following the mission statement, yes it does especially as a computer science elective. As a computer science major having to take ungodly hours of programming and sitting in front of that lonely computer monitor, it is important not to mention refreshing to think about the societal impacts that our major holds. That's what I think enlightened means in our major. You can be a kick ass programmer and come up with fantastic ideas but knowing how your program can change the world, that is what takes your program one step further and that is what this class taught me. I do also feel more educated because I am not really sure if I would have opened my eyes to technology and society. Of course I noticed the subtle changes before but nothing to the magnitude of what I notice now.

The activities this semester have definitely given me an idea of what I want to focus on. I wish to focus on social networks specifically. As for knowing what I want to do in the near or distance future, I am not sure. There are so many ways to go, so many paths to choose that it's hard to zone in on what I want to do. However finding a job by trial and error doesn't sound plausible either. I think that is college's biggest shortcoming. Sure they teach you the basics but I think they should be focusing on application and requiring students to take on internships or apprenticeships so that they can be better prepared for life after college and that they can decide on a path they would like to take. Right now nothing sounds more terrifying than graduating and having absolutely no idea where to take the knowledge I've accumulated at JMU.

I think this style of course is preferable. Like my writing style, I thrive when the format is less formal. It seems to relieve pressure and the work no longer seems tedious or something that I'm being forced to do. One thing I would change though, was to start the paper a little earlier. Although that is partially our group's fault since we changed our topic approximately 1,812 times. Other than that I feel like the format of the class is simple and refreshing. Refreshing meaning I actually looked forward to Monday, Wednesday and Friday classes.

I would like an A in this class. I do actually think I believe I did work worthy of the grade. I tried to actively participate in the group discussions with honest answers and I completed the three days without technology (though I failed on the third day). As for the paper, I believe Austin, Blake, Kevin, and I have finally found a topic that all four of us agree on (finally) and we have made significant progress.



Blake Mabe
May 3rd, 2015

Reflection of Ego and CS 330

Of 330

My expectations for CS 330 were on par with the class. I expected a discussion based, ethical reasoning class, and I received just that. One thing I did not expect, however, was the medium Professor Benton used to ignite discussion. Through relevant clips and entertaining videos, our discussions kept me engaged and interested throughout the semester.

Unfortunately, I am student that is always stressing about his grade point average. Therefore, one of my main goals for the class was to receive an "A." While it is a materialistic goal, it keeps me motivated through courses, and I usually end up learning a great deal(while greatly increasing my stress.) However, I soon realized Professor Benton's class was unlike the others I have taken at James Madison University. At first, my focus was on the "A", but with his grading system, there was no need for that. Instead, I was able to focus on the content of the course instead of the letter on my transcript. I learned and read the class book not to pass quizzes and tests, but because I wanted to learn more, engage in discussion, and I was interested. My goals shifted almost immediately, and it was beneficial to my learning experience.

James Madison University's mission statement is to produce "educated and enlightened citizens who lead meaningful and productive lives, and Professor Benton's course upholds and promotes this idea. I feel more enlightened, not necessarily in book knowledge, but in decision making and moral reasoning. For example, I am developing a social media application. During the creation process, I always imagine the future of the application. Because of this course, an avenue I imagined is the possible evil and immoral ways people could use my application. I had never considered this when making an app before, and it proved to not only be interesting, but useful as well.

Professor Benton's course style complimented my own work preference beautifully. I prefer critical thinking and analyzation, and he focuses on just that. While this style may not work for some, I find it to be fantastic. I never felt bored, disinterested, or unmotivated. Professor Benton's course is a chance at exploration. Exploration of not only your mind, but of your classmates and professors mind as well. Never in a computer science class have I gotten to know my classmates quite like how I did in CS 330. This interaction was both important and refreshing. With the constant loss of genuine interaction in this world, Professor Benton's class gave me a chance to pick the brains of those around me. CS 330 is an adventure, and it's from adventure and hands-on activity that we learn the most.

If I were to make a recommendation on a class change for CS 330, it would have to be centered around the book, "Sacred Economics." While this book was informative and thought-provoking, something with a stronger focus on computer science would compliment the class more. At points in the discussion, 330 seemed more like an ethical

business class than computer science, due to the nature of the book. On the opposite side of the spectrum, one of my favorite parts of the class was the three days without technology project. Never in my life have I disconnected like that, and it was an awesome experience. I learned a lot about myself and the world around me, simply by turning off my gadgets. Time is important to me, and I was able to analyze my time management throughout the day.

During this course, I was engaged in discussion, kept-up to date on the reading, and completed my assignments, while only missing a couple of classes. Because of the reasons above, I feel I deserve an "A" in this class. While grades are important to me, this grade feels different due to the fact I can request it. I didn't request an "A" to increase my GPA. I requested an "A" because I genuinely feel that is a fair reflection of my work in this class.

Of Ego and Economics

This semester has been one of the most stressful in my life. I was in a constant struggle for success, and that struggle depleted my energy early on. Although it was hard, I feel this semester was successful, in a variety of ways. To begin with, I am going to finish up my classes this semester with good grades once again. This is particularly satisfying because I had calculus 232, and I tend to struggle in math courses. I was successful in my on-campus job this year as well. Being a resident advisor has been an interesting experience, but I am glad it is over. Before going into the job, I feared living where I work, and working where I live. Unfortunately, my fears were valid. and I struggled between fighting for my residents, and fighting ORL. My boss and I hardly ever saw eye to eye, and during the year I felt her attitude towards me was different than with my co-workers. I wanted to quit many times, but I did not. I made it to the end of the year and completed my task, and in my book, that was a great success.

Finally, I was successful this year by completing my first freelance work as a mobile applications developer. I worked with a local auction company here in Harrisonburg to take the auction registration process to mobile devices. It was a great experience and I made real money doing it. I feel this is the beginning of a prosperous business endeavor for me, so with that, I feel successful.

Alas, what is success without failure? I had a good share of mine this year. First and foremost, I let the stresses of this year take its toll on my mental and physical health. I have noticed I have become more irritable and exhausted. I sometimes lash out at those around me, and I am not proud of this. The people in my life have shown me nothing but kindness and support, and even though I treated them poorly this year, they are still there for me. Every mistake is a learning opportunity, and I will take advantage of it. I have learned the true strength of friendship and family, and I promise myself I will treat them better in the future

My activities this semester have without a doubt helped me understand myself. I undertook freelance development on my own, without advice or guidance. It was challenging, frustrating, stressful, and rewarding. I have made an whole array of mistakes, but I have also gained a plethora of knowledge. By giving myself the hardest challenge of my life this year, I have learned my limits, my drive, and my future plan. I

have discovered a love for application development, and I will pursue that love with all the strength that I have. Before entering this year, I felt unstoppable; I could do anything or be anyone I wanted to be. I felt I was not bound to roles or lives like so many people are. I felt I was different. This year crushed that momentum I built in high school and freshmen year, and for awhile, I stopped believing those things. But with the end of the semester approaching, I have realized I made it. I conquered the hardest year of my life. I have fought through parental divorce, a long distance relationship, retaining my 3.7 GPA, being a resident advisor, and starting a business with my app development. My motivation and drive are reignited. Not only do I believe I can do anything, I proved it through my accomplishments this year. I am graduating next year, and I am only 19 years old currently. The world is mine for the taking, and I will do just that..

With all the essential questions addressed, I would like to use the rest of the paper to reflect on life, my mental state, and my future. I feel constantly in motion, and have not taken an opportunity to analyze myself. I have accomplished and failed a great deal this year, but I have only looked at the accomplishments and failures themselves, and not at the man behind them. Actions speak louder than words, yet motivation drowns out action. What was my motivation for my actions this year? As much as I hate to admit it, it was rooted in money. This has been a recurring theme in my life, and it's by no coincidence my computer science course revolved around a book titled "Sacred Economics." To me, the term sacred economics means something unique. I crave money to provide for my friends and family. For too long, I have seen my mother and I struggle, and I fight for our safety and comfort in this world. To me, economics is not sacred, but what it provides is. I must acquire material items for unmaterialistic reasons. Unfortunately, this is a common paradox in the world today, and one I imagine many people struggle with. I have become too obsessed in this paradox. I am enthralled and consumed by it. But this year has shown me the dangers of that. Water is essential to life, yet too much of it can take that life away. This year I was drowning in my own motives. Next year, I plan to swim with the current instead of fighting the undertow. I will find proper balance, and with it, equilibrium.

This year has been a whirlwind for me. I dove headfirst into trial by fire, and I came out on the otherside. Usually, I come out unscathed, but this year was different. I come out with burns, scars, and lacerations. But they are more than just flesh wounds and injuries; They are learning experiences. I became too cocky and I tried to take on more than I can handle. Every year I discover more about myself: senior year of highschool, I learned about social interaction. last year, I learned of the power I possess, and this year, I discovered my limits. Each of these years were crucial for me to be the person I am today. A rule of thumb I follow is that I like to leave a place in a better condition than when I found it, and I hope I am doing just that in the world. Some voice inside my head tells me I am destined for greatness, yet I have not discovered what will make me great. Until then, I will absorb knowledge endlessly, leading to a limitless potential. I am eager for the future, and to reveal what challenges and opportunities I will face.

Norwood Burdett

I didn't know what too expect when I came into this class. I signed up for it to satisfy an elective credit, and because it sounded like it might be an interesting topic. I was intrigued. It seemed like it would be cool to have a class where I could learn about another side of computer science, rather than just more coding. But coming into the class at the beginning of the semester, all I really knew about the class was the course description. I had no idea what exactly we would be doing in class, or what material we would be covering. While I was unsure what I would be doing in the class or what exactly I would get out of it, I did know that I wanted to learn about ethical and societal issues related to technology, although I had next to no idea what that really meant. I wanted to gain a new understanding of issues, and to see a new way of looking at technology and how it affects people and society.

Besides having a general idea of what the subject material was supposed to be, I had no idea what this class would be like. I assumed it would function like pretty much any other class I had ever taken over the course of my academic career. I expected the usual mainstays of a college course – daily lectures where a professor would speak to a class full of students frantically scribbling down notes, a few papers or reports, and a handful of tests (which I thought were some sort of institutional requirement). Instead, I got a completely different experience. The class was centered on discussion, and there were many times that the students spoke more than the professor. In addition to being the first class I've had that was focused on discussion, it was also the first one where we as students actively shared our opinions and ideas about the topic at hand. This was the first class I have been in where there has been practically no structure to how a day's class goes. Instead of being bound to a course plan and being forced to cover a predefined list, we talked about what we felt was important, and we spent as long talking about it as we felt we needed to. This was also the first class I have had where there were no regular assignments. Besides the occasional reading from Sacred Economics or working on our articles, there was no real work we had to do for the class. Instead, we got to focus our efforts on discussion and actually learning on what we were talking about.

This unique approach that the class took left me a little confused. I admit that I spent a lot of time in the first few weeks of class wondering what I was going to get tested on, or what I was going to have to write about. This threw me off, because I spent a lot of time worrying about what I was going to need to retain from class in order to get a good grade on an assignment. In addition, the unique environment of the class threw me off. I wasn't used to speaking so much in a class or having a free-flowing discussion in a lecture. I have to admit, I was a little uncomfortable speaking in class some times, just because I wasn't used to it. This ended up preventing me from really reaching my goals for the class. I wish I had

participated a little more in the class discussions. But I feel like I didn't participate that much in the class because I felt like a lot of what we were talking about was a bit over my head. Although I am studying computer science, I am not really that familiar with a lot of the technology we talked about in class, so I didn't feel that comfortable joining in on some of the discussions. But because I didn't know a lot about some of the things we were talking about, I ended up learning a lot. Through this class, I was exposed to some really interesting new technologies and ideas, such as mesh networking.

This class exposed me to a lot of new things that I had never thought about. Although I expected to learn about technology, I ended up learning more about new economic and social ideas. Before this class, I had heard of the idea of a basic income, but I had never really learned about it or thought about it in depth, and I seriously enjoyed learning about it. This class showed me how interconnected technology and economic issues were, and I had never really considered that. I really enjoyed learning about all of the new things we talked about in class.

By not being worried about grades, I was able to focus my efforts on actually understanding the material we covered. Instead of always having to worry about whether I would have to remember something for the next test or if I should be taking notes on something, I could actually focus on understanding what we were talking about. I really enjoyed the format of this class. It took some getting used to, but I feel like I ended up getting a better grasp on the material than I would in a class with a traditional lecture format, or one where I had to worry about getting graded.

A

Kevin Tripp
May 1, 2015
Final Essay

Societal and Ethical Issues in Computing

I went into this semester with an open mind about taking societal and ethical issues in computing. I knew that this would be a very important course to take, seeing as to how any work I do in the future may very well have a greater impact on society. Needless to say, I got a lot more out of this course than I ever expected. This essay is an account of my personal experience with this course, and how I will go forward and apply what I learned to not only the field of computer science, but also to my own life and the lives of others.

Coming into this course, I wanted to keep a very open mind. I had no expectations on how this course might impact my learning, and I wanted to be a sponge and absorb everything I could. Professor Benton made this open minded expectation possible, in fact that was basically the only thing he ever asked of us, to have an open mind. This is the exact reason that the course was so successful. It eliminated the stress of an average college course and allowed for us as students to bloom into better thinkers and better academics.

In a typical elective, I generally set myself a list of learning objectives. This class was no different in that sense. I went into the course with a specific set of goals. I wanted primarily to further my education and absorb the knowledge and understanding of the professor. After this, I wanted to be an active participant, and let my opinion be known on topics that interested me. In this sense, my goal was to engage with my classmates, as well as the professor, in order to create an environment of debate and discussion. There were many occasions throughout the semester that I left the class and continued debating and discussing the topic of that specific class with my friends and classmates. Finally, I wanted to establish myself as a good student, and complete any and all assignments that were scheduled throughout the course.

Over the course of the semester, these goals pretty much remained the same. They evolved in the sense that as the course progressed, my goals became more specific. I wanted to contribute to my group's academic paper, as well as engage more in the research involved with my group's topic. The assignment of the academic paper really helped to evolve my course goals to more specific ones that helped me progress throughout the semester. This course really taught me how to be a meaningful group member and how to relay my personal agenda and still be in line with the other people I was working with.

There were many occasions where I felt that I had succeeded towards my goals. Specifically, I was an engaged member in my groups work. We achieved this success through multiple meetings inside and out of class. We took time out of our busy schedules to get together and get a lot of work done. Whether it was from the initial mash up of ideas from each member, to the rough draft that we formulated, there is a lot of concrete evidence of our success on our

Google Drive. On top of this, the essay that I wrote at the beginning of the semester about my technology experiment definitely serves as concrete evidence of my success with this course.

Like in any endeavor, there are successes and there are failures. Some of the failures of my course objectives include the fact that I did miss a few classes. Besides the few sick days and sporting obligations, there were a few classes that I just chose to skip as a result of sleep deprivation and lack of motivation. Looking back, I regret those classes that I missed and regret letting my group members and classmates down in those days of absence. Besides this occasional slip up of attendance, I also believe that my group could have been more productive in the paper writing process. There were many occasions where we could not find any motivation to research and implement our findings. Besides these slip ups, I believe that my overall successes from this course outweigh the failures.

In the future, I will use my failures as a beacon of learning. I will try not to miss class for arbitrary reasons, and more importantly, I will at all times strive to be a better student, group member, and citizen. I have learned that the lack of sleep is not really ever an excuse to miss obligations or classes. I will go forward with a more dedicated attitude towards learning and achieving my course objectives. I learn something new about myself every semester, and I try to take what I learned and use that in a positive manner going forward.

James Madison University's mission statement is to produce "educated and enlightened citizens who lead meaningful and productive lives." Societal and Ethical Issues in Computing provided an excellent pathway for the purpose of this mission. In fact, I do not think that there has been another course at this school that I have taken that remains so closely in tune with this statement. I definitely believe that I have become a more enlightened and educated student due to this course. The issues that were raised inside and out of class really pushed me to become a better person not just a better student. A lot of what I learned in this class will be applicable in the future and I hope that it will help me lead a more meaningful and productive life.

There were many occasions during this semester where I was able to formulate a better understanding of myself. The first half of the semester was spent reading and learning the philosophy of Charles Eisenstein, a renowned author, thinker, and economist. His book, "Sacred Economics", completely shifted my perspective on the current state of America. Each and every chapter of this book, uncovered a highly studied way of thinking and offered a course of action. The study of this book has definitely helped to shape my thinking on various topics, and it provided a great source of discussion and debate in the classroom setting. Beyond Eisenstein, I believe that the "Black Mirror" episodes had a very strong impact on my self-analysis. Each episode presented a believable, dystopia like world, brought on by the over-prevalence of certain technologies. This really made me think in terms of how much I use technology. Whether it is from the internet, to the television, to social media and so on, technology is a vital part of the current generation and takes up a good amount of our attention. This idea lead us to participate in an anti-technology experiment. For an entire weekend, we chose to eliminate all

technology out of our lives. This experiment taught me a lot about myself. I learned that without technology, I am a very irritable and bored person. I also found out that life does go on without it. This was the more important lesson I got out of the assignment. Finally, the academic research paper was an excellent project that helped advance my self-understanding. Like in any group project or dynamic, you learn how you interact with others. This specifically, being a computer science related assignment, allowed me to know what it is like to work with others in the same field of study, much along the lines of what I will be doing in my future endeavors. This assignment provided me with the most important academic and professional experience. In all, this class has allowed me to better understand myself in many ways. I definitely plan to use what I learned about myself in the future, whether it be in the workforce, or in my life in general.

In reflection, this course style definitely had a positive ripple effect in my life this semester. The stress free element of the course really allowed for me to excel in my other classes. I was able to enter a comfortable, open classroom environment at every meeting. The professor's neo-teaching methods really changed my perspective on the educational system and how it exploits students and us as undergraduates. His knowledge and experience really resonated and I felt that I gained a lot of incredibly useful information. This course structure really helped me thrive as a student and I met a lot of great similar minded people along the way.

In the event that I were to take this course again, I would offer Professor Benton a few suggestions. Primarily, it would be very helpful as a student to have some sort of syllabus on the first day of class. This is something that helps us organize our schedules and understand our obligations. The absence of a syllabus for the first half of the semester created a bit of confusion amongst my classmates and me. Besides this, I would say that the class, although having little structure, did have a solid direction to it. There were a number of very interesting topics covered from class to class. I would definitely recommend that Professor Benton shares more of his personal experiences in the field of computer science. This could generate a good amount of valuable discussion, and allow for my fellow students and I to learn and relate. The liberated structure of this course was a very positive aspect of it. There are not many things that I would change if I were to take it again, and that says something about the great teaching methods of Professor Benton. I was very satisfied with the course and would recommend it to any student at JMU, not just computer science majors. The lessons and knowledge passed through this course are valuable and relatable to every young adult here in the James Madison University community.

Since this course has a choose-your-own grade policy, I would like to request an 'A' to be reported to the registrar. I believe that through this essay, and my actions in and out of class, that this grade is deserved and acceptable. Professor Benton wanted us to create our own experience with this class. By maintaining an open minded attitude, as well as completing any and all assignments that were administered, I have created my own, genuine, valuable experience. The things I learned about myself, my classmates, society, and the world in general,

are things that I will carry with me into all of my future endeavors. This is the way a course should be. I am very happy with the way this course was structured, and I would like to thank Professor Benton for a great semester. I hope that our paths cross in the future.

Peter Dingilian
Professor Benton
CS 330 Narrative

I didn't really have many expectations coming into this class. I guess based on the fact that it is a CS class, I thought it would be needlessly difficult. My only learning goal was to keep an open mind with regard to my world view. I would say I was successful. I would point to my newfound interest in politics and current events (not exactly concrete, sorry). This class definitely made me less apathetic about current events, and current issues our society faces (in computing or otherwise).

My failure in this class would probably be failing to participate in discussions. I have a bad habit of consistently not participating in class discussions. I'm definitely engaged, I just usually fail to participate. If I remember correctly I only participated two or three times throughout the course of the semester. I'm not sure how to address this in the future other than to force myself to talk, which would be effective. I'm not a particularly shy person, so I'm not sure where this problem comes from. Perhaps I'm slightly introverted.

I do indeed feel more enlightened and educated now that I've finished this course. Much more enlightening than my other CS courses, which tend to be soulless and dull. I took an ethics class my freshman year, and I feel more enlightened after this compared to that as well. The ethics class was mainly high context philosophy, so it was a lot harder for me to relate and get engaged, personally. Whereas in this class, all the discussions we had were really relevant, so it was easy to get engaged. Specifically, this class really made inform myself about the environment. I think (most) everyone would make right choices environmentally, if they knew what they were doing. My problem was that I never really thought about it. I would use cardboard cups for my water(idiotic), styrofoam boxes for my food, etc. Things like these are readily available at any place that offers food, but if really makes much more sense to just bring your own water bottle. Makes no sense to drink out of a cup then just throw it away. So environmentalism, sustainability, etc, really jumped up on my list of priorities, mainly because of this class. Starting biking rather than driving as well. Small things that add up. However, hopefully Elon Musk will save us all.

My activities this semester, mainly thinking and article reading, have greatly helped me get to know myself. Before this semester, my views, of which I had few, were mainly inherited from my family. I'm not sure if it was directly this class, my age,

or a combination of the two that made me interested in finding my values, where I stand on issues, etc, but it happened. I'm still fuzzy about what I want to do post graduation, so I can't say this course has helped me there. Also, almost forgot to mention the no technology challenge, which helped (forced) me to get to know myself as well. I realized I could be using my time much more efficiently, seeing as I waste most of it. However, this part adds to my failures as well. Once the technology challenge was over, not much changed unfortunately. I'm not an 'always looking at phone' type of person, my problem is mainly when I get back from class, I pretty much always get on Reddit, Facebook, whatever, and waste most of my day. Then scramble to get my work done at night. This is a terrible system, and I really do need to change it. Writing this paper reminded me that I need to have a better work ethic. Especially now that my CS courses are speeding up. I could get left behind pretty easily next semester. So I'll add that to my failures, though not specifically for this class.

This style of course worked surprisingly well for me. I'm a bit lazy so originally I was worried I would end up doing nothing, however the course material was interesting so I had no problem doing it. This class didn't feel like a chore, I looked forward to it. If I were to take this course again I would recommend you do the same thing. It was great how the discussions we had would wander into new topics and ideas, and we would go with it. I can't see this working in a traditional, tightly structured class, but I enjoyed it greatly which is why I think you should keep it the same. This class was very refreshing, and I think I needed it. I was beginning to burn out a bit, CS-wise. So it was nice to come to this class Monday, Wednesday, Friday to relax, talk about interesting things, watch interesting things, etc. By the way, Black Mirror is a crazy show. It takes issues that you are uncomfortable thinking about, and throws them right in your face. Very well done.

I personally think I am far more likely to get something out of a course that is taught this way. In my other courses I basically cram a bunch of information into my head, and spew it out onto an exam. A couple weeks later, I have nothing to show for it because I wasn't truly engaged, I was just jumping through the hoops to get an A. This definitely takes the fun out of learning. I do realize that learning can't always be fun and games, but I think this class was well done, and the curriculum fit the style of the course perfectly.

I am going to request an A. Even though I didn't talk much, I was engaged in the conversations(in my head), and would often times do some research on the topics after class. Sometimes I feel like I didn't do much for this class, but I realize

that I did do a decent amount, it was just fun, so it didn't feel like work. I think I made it to every class as well.

Brandon Vidra
ISAT 252
Dr. Morgan Benton
5/5/15

Before I took this class, I thought I was extremely interested in possibly sectoring in IKM. My expectations when coming into this class were somewhat low, just because I didn't know what to expect of it since it was a required class and because I didn't know much about coding. I expected to come in everyday and to be taught the basics of coding for each language – kind of like what you did for the first few classes when you taught us the basics of the terminal and some basic commands. The learning goals I set for myself when coming into the class were that I was going to complete at least 2 programs per week, that I was going to use code academy and other online sites to help me learn the basics of each language, and that I was going to study the languages so that I could write my own code. Before we really got into the heart of the class and the coding, I really was interested in learning about the different languages. After we got into the heart of the actual coding though, I found it to be kind of annoying. Coding is just trial and error over and over and over again until you finally fix the one thing that was wrong and then it turns out that something else is wrong after you already spent 20 minutes learning how to fix the other thing. I just got frustrated throughout the semester and got completely turned off of coding. I did feel some sort of success whenever I would complete a new hello-world or hello-variables program for the different languages. I think that hardest one for me to understand was JavaScript; I'm not really sure why but that one language was extremely difficult for me to understand. I also went through on code academy and did several of the basic tutorials for different languages. Once I got fed up with coding I stopped coming to class so I think that was where I most failed to achieve my goals. I didn't work on anything outside of the classroom after I decided I didn't like coding, and I never really studied at all. I feel bad about the way I handled the class when I got frustrated with coding, and I think I could have handled it a lot better. I know that Dr. Benton was available to speak with for help during class and through email, so I could have reached out and gotten some help. In the future if I am ever in the same situation where I am having difficulty in a class such as this I will definitely reach out to the professor or other students in the class. In terms of if I feel "more educated and enlightened", the answer would be yes. Throughout ISAT 252 I did learn a handful of useful things such as how to use terminal and some basic coding operations for different languages. I also think I gained a better understanding of what the IKM sector would be like, and was able to decide not to pursue that path with my career. This class definitely helped me decided that I didn't want to take any more information knowledge management classes and also helped me decide that there was no way I would be able to have a job as a computer programmer. I hate

sitting still for long periods of time and there is no way I could have a job that requires me to sit inside all day. I really want to pursue a career in the environment sector, and I want something that is going to get me outside doing conservation work hopefully. Personally for me, this style of work wasn't very beneficial to my learning experience. I'm used to going to class, sitting down, and having a teacher lecture for however long while I take notes like a madman. This class *was* a breath of fresh air in the sense that it wasn't like that, but I also would have liked for there to be some sense of drive to motivate me to want to do work. I was taking ISAT 253 and ISAT 212 this semester, and those two classes basically consumed my workload. Once I learned that we would get to choose our own grade at the end of the semester, I kind of saw this class as one that I could put on the back burner if I needed to. I also would have liked if at least the first part of each class was somewhat structured. I usually would just jump randomly from language to language based on what everyone around me was doing around me. If I were to take the class again, I would recommend that you do the same thing because I know for a fact that this style of teaching did work with some people, just not with me. I would maybe try to send out emails to the people taking your class before it starts however, just because I feel like someone who is actually interested in learning about coding and that has no previous knowledge of it could be very intimidated by this style of learning. It might be more beneficial to someone like this to take another professors class for 252 because it would force them to learn the material for tests and such. I would like an A for this class. Also, I just want to thank you for a great semester and I hope you have a great summer!

When I signed up for Computer Science 330, Societal and Ethical Issues, I expected this class to be about learning material specifically relating to computer science. I was expecting that the class would have programming assignments and labs while explaining ethical reasoning skills such as not stealing another person's code or how to properly cite the code that you used. I also expected topics about computer security to be discussed. I thought the class would spend most of the time comparing the right and wrong ways to present code and to use it. I was pleasantly surprised that it wasn't focused primarily on programming and computer science related issues and the course covered more of an array of ethical and social issues. We talked about the problems with society's unfair distribution of money and about the social impacts technology has created. We discussed the impacts technology would have on the job market with machines being able to do more 'trivial' work such as factory work or self-driving cars. I was also shocked at having the opportunity to research a computer science related issue and to have a chance to get it published.

One of my goals over the semester for all of my courses was to have all the homework and readings done a head of time. I am a procrastinator and end up doing a lot of the required work right before it is due at the very last minute. A majority of the class time was spent on discussions relating to chapters out Charles Eisenstein's book Sacred Economics which covers issues involving society and mainly economic issue with the money system we have today. Once the class started with reading Sacred Economics one of my goals was to read the chapters assigned before class so I could participate in discussions during class. I found the discussion fascinating and was always surprised at the different opinions people brought up and wanted to participate as well. The points Charles Eisenstein discussed in his book were so outside the box of the way people think it brought to mind on how society can even function on the money economic system. One of the most interesting conversations we had was discussing on how money can be tied to the environment. For example, those living along the coast of Virginia, their money would be backed by the Chesapeake Bay. This system who ideal help create a healthier environment while having the money created off a certain standard not just created out of thin air and the creators expecting more money back in return. This discussion lead to a debate on how people could spend money in Virginia along the coast if they live in New Jersey or what other environmental concepts could money be connected to. I believe I meet my goal for this course by reading the chapters beforehand and being prepared for discussions.

I do think I have failed this objective by not having my paper done a head of time and find myself writing this last minute the night before it is due. I have learned that in not just this class but any class, having things done a head of time makes one not just prepare but it makes them feel more prepared. By not just being prepared by having the work done but having a sense of completion boost a person's self-esteem and they are more likely to be involved in future discussions or just boost moral about learning for a class. Even though this paper is a reflective narrative about the course, it creates a sense of unease and rushed by finishing last minute. This issue of finishing work at the last minute is an issue I have been trying to address for a while now. Even though it's partially successful due to being prepared for reading, I still will work towards my goal of being better prepared by having work done before. I plan to work towards my goal by doing assignments the day it is given. This would greatly help by not rushing to complete all of an assignment last minute. This would be especially helpful by giving me more time to edit papers and programs before it is due, giving me a chance to fix grammatical and

spelling errors that could lose me points on graded assignments. It would also give me a chance to add more thoughtful and critical thinking into a paper or assignment. It would also give me opportunities to improve my coding by shortening code and optimizing the time and space the code may need. By starting projects, papers, programs and other assignments the day it was giving it would give me time to finish the work to the best of my abilities.

The reason I choose to attend James Madison University was due to the liberal arts and general education program. I wanted to gain a variety of knowledge on many different subjects not just in classes for my major. Even though Computer Science 330 is an elective major class, I feel that it went outside the boundaries of computer science. In my psychology class this semester, we discussed the differences between learning oriented behavior and grade oriented behavior. I am more learning oriented behavior which focus more on learning the material than focusing on meeting expectations of a professor on assignments. I found this class fits learning oriented behaviors perfectly due to reading chapters then discussing it the next class. I find that these types of class help you learn material and then during discussions you get to critically think about the material you just learned. It also helps you learn by having different ideas and concepts introduced by other people which expands one's knowledge about the topic. I enjoyed getting the whole class to participate in discussing, bring to light many different opinions and ideas that I never thought of. During class we discussed economic and social issues that were not just relevant to computer science but for all society. We discussed how society changed due to the creation of the dollar bill. Society changed from a gift giving society that is always in debt by having a system that creates money but expects more money in return. I tend to think that discussion classes tend to get more people involved with the class and creates a social environment that people feel like they can add to the discussion without being denied input. I like how in discussions we would be discussing a certain topic and one solution would create a new issue which we would then debate one. By having classes with discussion building off input from the class, I believe it creates a more educated class by having so much input with ideas from others which may have differed from your own.

One way to maybe improve discussions would be to have the general topic be given the class before so not only would people read the required chapter, they would ten research related ideas and be able to add more real world issues to the discussions. Some of these discussions would be a bit more relevant with connecting the issues and topics discussed with these real life scenarios such as what jobs are being taken away with the creation of technology and if any country have or are putting policies in place to ensure their citizens can still have jobs. With Charles Eisenstein's book created general grounds for discussions but with outside research on this topics, it would create a discussion that would go into more depth about what is going on in the world around us.

Another way to improve the class is after watching the Black Mirror episodes is to have a discussion about it. Some relevant questions to ask during discussion is in what extent are those concepts real today or what policies could be put into place so this couldn't happen. This type of discussions directly impact the computer and even integrated science major due to the fact that we would be creating such systems. It shows the possibilities that systems could go too far and the consequences of creating certain technologies could create on society. This type of

discussions I believe will have big impacts on those types of people and would be especially important to create the type of critical thinking into future inventors.

I know that I am majoring in computer science but honestly I have no idea what I want to do later in life. When I applied to college, I figured that by starting a degree in computer science, it would help for many different fields due to the growing need for computer scientists. If I decided to switch to another major and keeping computer science as a minor since I already took the beginning classes would give me a boost in applying to jobs later in life. That was another reason I choose a liberal arts school due all the different degrees that I could switch into if I was interested. Sadly as my sophomore year comes to a close I still have no idea what I want to be.

For the past year I have been a teaching assistant for computer science classes. Last fall I was a lab helper for the entre level computer science course. This semester I was a teaching assistant for discrete structures where I actually got up in front of a class room and did problems with the class for extra practice. I have found that I love being able to help other students learn and get excited once I see the lightbulb switch on in their eyes once they understand the material. It wasn't till Jessica and I started writing on our paper "Should hacking be taught in the Universities?" did I start to think about become a professor. When researching, some articles talked about how when professor caught students hacking they congratulated them for being able to access the system or how professor created clubs to help students expand their studies. It made me start to think about what I would do if I was a professor. It made me think about if I taught a computer science class how would I teach it? I then started to reflect about the different styles of teaching and about my current and previous instructors. It was then I really realized how much I enjoyed being a teaching assistant. When I was elementary school and when the teachers used to do the assignment "what do you want to be when you grow up" with draw a picture about it or write a paper about it, I always used to say what I wanted to be was a teacher. Once I reached high school I decided against it since I didn't want to an elementary teacher with having to teach all the subjects. I did not want to teach middle or high school where I could focus on one subject since I didn't want to deal with that age group. After that I stopped thinking about being a teacher and focused on what I enjoyed doing which was band and computer science.

When I thought about jobs with a computer science major, becoming a professor was a job that I never realized I could have. I've thought about being a programmer with focus on computer security or going into forensics. I thought about computer graphics jobs that I could join if I add graphic design as a double major. Through this reflection I came to realize that being a professor would mean that I would have to go to graduate school which I realized would be an option if I didn't go straight to a job after I finish my undergraduate degree and masters. If I choose to go on to graduate school, it will open up even more jobs within the computer science field.

For Computer Science 330, Societal and Ethical Issues in Computer Science I would like an A. I came to all the classes this semester except for two and did all the assigned readings. I also participated in discussions during class adding insightful input into the issue we were discussing.

Jessica Romano
Morgan Benton
Final Reflection

CS330: Societal and Ethical Issues in Computing

When I first enrolled in this class, I wasn't really sure what I was planning to get out of it. I had talked to a professor in the computer science department about the class, and they informed me that it was a class that would probably become part of the major curriculum, so I figured it was an important course worth taking. I had never taken an ethics course before in high school or at JMU. I think I expected to learn about ethical and professional behaviors that are good practice in the professional computing world. I thought the class was going to be more of "your boss tells you to do this, do you do it even though you know it's unethical?" kind of thing. While I feel the class definitely took a different direction, I definitely still learned a lot about ethics and the consequences of lack thereof.

Originally I planned on learning about how to make better professional and ethical decisions within the workplace and computing environment when faced with situations that heavily rely on ethics. However, as the class progressed I focused more on learning about ethical practices within life in general. I was actually able to relate topics we talked about in class to other courses I was taking at the time dealing with ethics and vice versa. For example, in one of my other courses we read a piece called "The Ethics of Expediency". In the article, it discussed Adolf Hitler and how he was extremely efficient at what he did. It even included letters sent amongst him and his officers explaining how they would put Jews in vans and gas them. The letters referred to the people as if they were cargo, never even giving any mention that they were actually human beings, and wrote about how they could improve the process of killing them faster and for less money.

I am not exactly comparing technological advances to the Holocaust, but this piece brought up an important point. Just because something is efficient, does not mean that it should be done. I felt that I was able to see the bigger picture that this article was bringing to light because of the discussions that we had in this class. As a society, we are obsessed with time and money. So anything that allows us to save time and money (usually technology) is favored, and therefore, along the way ethics may be compromised for efficiency. This is an ethical dilemma that we will definitely be seeing in the future, and have seen in the past, due to advances in technology. Technology is usually created in order to replace a previous way of doing something and make it faster or more efficient. This class has definitely aided me in thinking more critically about ethics and the ethical implications that my actions can have, especially being in the technology field. I don't think that I would have been so quick to draw conclusions and make these connections if I hadn't taken this class, and I consider these to be successes.

As for failures, I don't really feel as if I had many failures in this class relating to my goals since I didn't have many expectations when I came into the class. I also feel that my goals morphed to the class as it progressed. However, I did feel like I

didn't get as much out of Sacred Economics as I should have. I don't really know much about business or economics, so when we read this book anytime it made reference to economic terms it kind of just went over my head. Unfortunately, I felt that this hindered my ability to participate in some of the class discussions that dealt with having some knowledge about economics. I wish that I had more knowledge about the economy and business so that I could have gotten a lot more out of the text and expanded my knowledge in those areas. My lack of business knowledge has actually been hindering me a lot recently, so this isn't something new. As a junior going into my senior year, I have been going on a lot of interviews for internships, and it has forced me to think about what I actually want to do for a career and with my future. I know that I don't want to code because I truly do not enjoy it. I actually kind of hate it most of the time, and I can't imagine doing something that makes me that stressed for the rest of my life. What I realized is that I want to take on a less technical role within the technology field, such as a business analyst. However, since I have no business experience or knowledge it makes it difficult for me to get positions within that field. I realize now after being in the computer science major for two years that what I should have majored in was computer information systems, but alas I only have one year left and three more computer science classes to take. Between going on these interviews and the experiences that I have had in class, I have decided that I need to make time to include at least one business class in economics before I graduate in order to pursue the career I want.

I definitely feel more enlightened and knowledgeable after taking this class. I learned a lot not only about ethics and morality but about recent advances in technology that are occurring right now that are having or will have a significant ethical impact on society. I obtained knowledge about key issues that are prevalent in the computing world right now such as intellectual property and security. Intellectual property wasn't something that I ever really thought too much about, but as technology advances and less and less things remain private it will definitely remain a key ethical issue. I also learned a lot about ethical computing issues from listening to my classmates talk about the papers they were writing. I thought it was really interesting learning about all the change (good and bad) that technology is bringing around the world. For example, the influence cell phones are having in Africa and how they are affecting their culture right now is extremely interesting. I would have never thought about all the implications introducing cell phones in the African culture could have. Through my own paper, I was able to learn a lot about cyber security and the issues and ethical implications and benefits that teaching students to hack can have.

I actually really enjoyed the way that the class was set up. The environment was super informal, and I feel that it allowed for good and open class discussions with very little pressure about being judged on what you were saying. I think that this type of environment works really well in a class like this and that it is almost necessary. In order to understand ethics, I think that it is important to discuss and debate key issues to better understand the issue and see different sides of viewing the situation. My favorite days were when we would start talking about a topic and it would roll into several other topics. You could tell that the way the class was

designed really helped us to expand our knowledge and think about ethics and how they relate to us in new ways.

I also really liked the use of the videos we watched in class. The video about how robots and technology will be replacing most of our jobs in the next however many years was kind of terrifying for the economy and something that I think will become prevalent within our life time. The black mirror episodes helped to bring reality to the ethical implications that new technologies can have. I know that the show is fiction, but it demonstrates, in a somewhat more radical way, just how prevalent advertisements and new technologies are in our lives and the effects they can have on us.

As I said, I thought the way the class was set up was definitely optimal for this course. In the future, I would suggest teaching it in a very similar way, perhaps maybe using a different text other than Sacred Economics. I think that finding articles that relate to ethics in computing and having the class read those as well would be helpful. I know that the papers we wrote for the journal was a one time thing, but I think it would be useful for you to have the class write a paper and do a presentation on their technological issue. I thought it was useful to not only write about an issue in technology, but also hear what everyone else was finding as well. Overall, I liked the class and enjoyed taking it.

As for my grade, I would like to receive an A for this class. I came to every single class, and almost always did the reading before hand, even though some of it went over my head. I also always paid attention to what you and other students were saying in class and was respectful when they were speaking and always contributed when I could. I also worked really hard with Diane on the paper we wrote for the journal. I was also always prepared to share new information and research that I had found whenever we had to present on our progress. I think that I got a lot out of this class and put a lot of time into my work in it. Therefore, I feel that this is a reflection of the grade that I asked for. Thanks for a great semester!

JOE CUMINS

330 Reflection

I wasn't really sure what to expect. I had, the previous semester, signed up for the 330 class were the teacher left the week before it started. I attended the first week of the class but decided to drop because the class seemed disorganized. I honestly expected our class to be a more organized form of the Fall 2015 one. I expected to learn the Madison Collaborative and learn stuff that revolved around that. I think that stuff's valid, but it's dry, boring, and honestly seems kind of redundant. I was happy to find out the course was structured different. I had another class structured like this, GWRTC 103, my freshman year. It was one of my favorite classes, and I felt like I actually learned a lot of applicable stuff from it (we studied how we write now, and didn't have grades or write essays). I hoped that this class would be like that.

I think my main goals for the semester were to try to be more open-minded (I knew this would be discussion-based and people would be expressing their opinions) and to learn about different ethical problems we face.

I think I was successful mostly because I followed my goals first, and second because I wasn't static with my opinions. The course got me thinking. I considered the different things we talked about and compared them with my own views. I think that's probably the most important thing I've got from this class – it's opened my mind up to other people's views and the problems that we experience in the world. I'm glad that our ethical discussions weren't limited to computer stuff. We're going out into a world where computers aren't the only thing we interact with. Overall, I feel more enlightened and educated. I think also this has contributed to me knowing myself, because I'm more self aware of the role I play in the world. I don't think it's detracted in anyway.

I probably could have said more stuff during class. It's hard though because you have to consider the back and forth conversation that will ensue. It's difficult, too, discussing things with other people. I think most people have pretty strong opinions about a lot of stuff, that won't be easily swayed.

I thought the course was laid out pretty well. The structure is more relaxing. I'm here to learn so I should be focused on that. I think most other classes make the same mistake and put too much emphasize on useless, impractical projects and grades.

I would like you to report an A to the registrar. I think I made personal progress, by actively thinking and evaluating my views, which I think is fundamentally important.

Andrew Klenk

A Reflection on CS 330

In many ways, my current situation sums up this year pretty well. It's the weekend before finals week, or weeks, due to the poorly thought out scheduling system of the administration, and I'm repeatedly, obsessively calculating my grades in several classes, to best determine just how horribly I have to bomb my finals for the worst case to happen and I end up failing. This essay is open on my second monitor, and despite the plethora of useful, constructive things I could do, including studying for my finals, writing this essay, updating my resume, etc., instead, I'm shuffling feverishly through video games, movies, and books in a desperate attempt to distract myself from the reckoning that is sure to come.

I took CS 330 initially without any idea what the class was going to be like. My decision was primarily motivated by the search for more CS credits, and a class on ethics seemed interesting after having taken a class on AI that only lightly brushing over the social issues inherent in that specific branch of computer science. I expected some pretty standard discussion about putting people out of jobs, and whether or not creating certain things is moral, but I definitely did not expect to go as in depth into economics and real world answers as we did. I enjoyed that portion a surprising amount.

I started this semester as optimistic as ever, taking several conceptual classes I'd been excited to take for a while, including this class, sociology, and an art history class. In a general sense, I wanted to experience the more social science aspect of computer science while finishing a bottleneck of required classes, and I think I succeeded. CS 330 introduced me to a new author, and a lot of new concepts I'd been aware of, but had never studied or experienced in depth. My art history class turned out significantly better than I'd hoped, but alternatively my sociology class turned out to be less exciting than expected.

Ultimately, my expectations dropped as the semester went on. My CS 354 autonomous robotics course ended up being more work than I'd ever experienced before, and the majority of it was group work, further ruining any hopes I'd had of having a consistent sleep schedule. I managed to keep up with my 330 reading, my art studies, and my 350 projects, but everything started coalescing towards the end of the semester, and the combination of several classes all requiring several papers at generally the same time led to one of my greatest failings, the 330 Journal Submission.

I can't see my classes getting any easier, although I doubt any will be quite the caliber 354 was, so the only real improvement area is, of course, time management. I'm sure, if I'd organized my schedule right and correctly allotted time for work, I wouldn't have had nearly as much of an issue with projects as I did this year, but at the same time, I don't think I've ever experienced as much group work. A fair strategy for the future would definitely arrange itself around asking friends about the courses I sign up for. I know several seniors, graduates now, so there's no excuse for going into things unaware.

JMU's mission statement always struck me as intentionally vague. Do I feel more educated? I think almost anyone would have a hard time saying no to that. At a minimum, this semester I learned an entirely new language, assembly, learned about a subject I had almost no prior knowledge of, art history, specifically the 1500s to modern day, and feel significantly more comfortable in my ethical standards of practice, no small part in due to CS 330. Whether I'm enlightened or not is another matter. When I hear the term enlightenment I can't help but think back to the Buddha Siddhartha sitting under a fig tree for weeks on end to achieve understanding of life, and I think my own experiences fall a little short. I don't think I'll achieve enlightenment anytime soon, much less have stressful, expensive college classes be the triggering agent.

Surprisingly, this semester has helped me narrow down my field of interests significantly. After spending time learning about computer hardware and Assembly I've doubled down on my desire to continue onto the field of software engineering. The more I learn about computers, the more I realize the entire field is standing on the shoulders of giants, and it really merges my desire to create something with my actual abilities which tend towards the logical. Another class, robotics 354, helped me realize how absolutely I do not want to go into robotics. Not only am I lacking in the technical skill required, but the programming is less personally enjoyable than I expected.

The style of CS 330 didn't work especially well for me. I'm not a very personally motivated person, and I think the lack of punishment ended up being a contributing factor to me not satisfactorily completing my paper on Google's data collection and privacy. I do, however, think the style of the course helped me retain some of my sanity throughout the school year, allowing me to slack in one class when the others got too busy or difficult, and in that way it was a success. I kept up with the readings well, mostly due to personal interest, but my focus in the class fell apart during the final third of the semester when the structure was looser, the work more rigorous, and there was less of the reading. I also don't believe that my lack of success was necessarily a failing of the course style itself, but was primarily due to my heavy course load and lack of intrinsic motivation.

If I were to take the course again, I think a more structured second half would help. I'm sure I'm not the only student lacking in motivation, and the consistent schedule helped keep me honest. Besides that, I thoroughly enjoyed the class as a whole, and the freely available textbook made it more accessible than a lot of classes I've taken. I thought the format of the class was good, especially the occasional Black Mirror episode, but spreading them throughout the semester might serve better to maintain interest in the class.

For my final grade, I'd like to request a B. If I honestly had to rate my actual fulfillment of the assigned goals, I'd pick a C, or even a D, but a certain amount of self-interest and pragmatism weigh into my decision. I took a lot out of the class, and I enjoyed and participated in the in-class discussions, but my work was less than satisfactory. In retrospect I wish I'd spent more time on the classes I enjoyed, 330 included, and less on those I wasn't getting anything out of, but when it comes down to the wire oftentimes the classes that are prerequisites come out ahead by necessity. I know the email you sent asked for 3-5 pages, but I've come to the end of the prompts and feel adding fluff would be disingenuous. Thanks, Professor Benton, for an awesome class. I hope to have you as a professor again.

CS330 Narrative Essay

Takaki Akiyama

05/02/2015

This semester is last semester in JMU for me and I picked this CS course because I expected this class would be a discussion based and focus about modern computer science nature in economic view. Also, I thought I could write some essay about experience of class and research about what I interested in. I set my learning goal as understand how the computer science influences the economic before class start. I set this goal because I have not understood fully about how my major is affecting the world right now.

This class is more interested than what I expected. Professor Benton prepare one book titled Sacred Economy which focus on “traces the history of money from ancient gift economies to modern capitalism, revealing how the money system has contributed to alienation, competition, and scarcity, destroyed community, and necessitated endless growth” (Charles Einstien). Most of class time focused on discussion of each chapter in this book. I had hard time to communicate my thought during class but I had learned lot of what I did not know in discussion between student and professor.

The one interesting experience I had during this class is that three days that use without any technological device to live. This experience gave me that human need technology too much and one day if all technology lost from our nature human cannot do anything with it. The way of communication, cook, playing game, etc., which means human will back to thousand years ago. I learned that we need to train this ‘if’ otherwise once it happens people cannot do anything with it.

I feel less successful than class I took with Professor Benton previously. The first specific reason for this is that this CS course has only one big team writing project. Unlike ISAT course it is not programming but research writing which I have difficulty to make high quality paper. Second reason is that I am going to graduate and was trying to find a job after graduate so there is less time I can spend on writing the paper. Finally, our group finished decent amount of writing but it did not completed as what we

expected. On the other hand, the discussion part, was more successful to me because it is more easy to understand what everybody and professor thinks about. The discussion helped me to understand content better.

As I mentioned in previous paragraph, I feel I failed to achieve goals that I did not complete writing project enough. I spend too much time on research and could not reached to complete writing essay. Also the hardness of communication and check improvement of teammate because one of team mate never respond to my email. To improve this problem, I have to manage my time well and try not to stuck with one problem for extremely long. I realized again that writing research paper, as team is not the easy thing. It requires many practice and experience. It is easy to research and read the article, but it is hard to share all of what I read to teammate and write a paper without communication. So if I have chance next time, I want find more smart way of manage the time and make more team meeting to share our knowledge.

I feel more educated after this class. I think most important class rule in this class is that oneself have to control own self and give own learning material. So if one self is educated person, I am pretty sure that he or she will focus on learning rather than wasting expensive tuition. Usually I am very lazy person and always putting own homework before due dates. But this class, does not have any due days so I have think it and make it by own. This helped me on train how to managing the schedule: Design phase, meeting with team member, coding, testing, and debugging. I understand that big project will not be completed in one dates only if he or she is super genius and able to code anything. However, if there is no experience, it is very hard to start because most people will not know what he or she should start. I had same problem on beginning of this semester. It was tough at first time, but I am sure that I will remember this experience and able to do well on next research essay if I have in future.

My activities this semester contributed better grasp on what I want to do in distant future. After graduation, I will be amateur system engineer. But after I took this course I have more interest on studying new robotic and artificial intelligence because our group paper focused on uncanny valley which is one of problem that use robot as same place with human.

In overall, same as I mentioned before, I love this style of course. I am worst

test taker, so I really want just focus on learning, experiencing, and developing. That is how I memorize the material and most effective for me. Training and experience, I believe this is how social formed. Of course, for certification or entrance exam, we have to take because there are too many people and company has to select them in limited time. But discussion and research paper, I believe there should be skill and experience are more important than your test taking skill. If I take this class again, I would recommend do same way. However, I will happier to hear some comments about project and your advice.

Takaki Akiyama

Final Grade

In overall, I would like to give B+ to myself for focusing on class and had effort on learning the material.

Hung Do
5/4/2015
CS 330
Professor Benton

Reflection Paper

Before the semester starts, my expectation were that we would be deal with group work as well as learning about the ethics and the impact technology has in our social life. Throughout my year here as a computer science, we were just focused on different key concept and hands-on experience in computer science. As the semester progress, I felt that a lot of the discussion in class applies to myself in everyday life, and I never realized that the impact begins the moment I begin using any technology. A lot of what we talked about in class, I felt that a lot of it is true. I began to think about what if our society is like what we talked in class. I felt like we were talking about a perfect society where everyone is doing the right thing. As I wondered, I felt like it is almost impossible to implement that into our society. The reason I think that is because this society has been the way it is for the past 2000 years. Every decade, we have people who were trying to accomplish what we talked in class. I remembered when we discuss about money and where it came from. We talked about money is a mean to replace different aspect of our life such as spiritual or physical.

Throughout this semester, I felt that I was more successful in that I became more aware of the impact technology has whether it be positive or negative. What I failed to achieve was that I was helpless in trying to change it. The reason I felt helpless was not because I neglected it but due to the fact that this is the way I've grown up for the past 22 years. It takes patience and change of habit and 3 months of discussion maybe is not enough. We had a project where we don't use technology for 3 days. I felt the difference, and I still remembered how different I am during the process. But after the process, I turned back to my usual self. Thinking back, I see that the area I failed in is my mentality. I did not have a strong mentality to actually try and change.

I have to say this class is the most meaningful that I have taken. Most of my classes, we were mostly focus on what the professor want to teach, which is mostly from the book. I felt like a robot just learning what we were told to learn. What is different with this class is that it doesn't tell you what to do. It gives you the information, and you get to use that information to help better yourself in any way you like. After taking this class, I started to be a bit lost in what I want to do in the future. At first, all I want is find a job with a stable income. I wanted to join the government because it has the most benefits. And that's also everyone else who is about to graduate. Now, I started paying more attention to how a business or technology could affect our life. I get a lot of email about job search by the school, and instead of looking at the job description, I try to learn why they are looking for new people and what do they hope to achieve with the new hires. After watching videos about how technology will replace most workforce and put a majority of people in unemployment. I was really surprised. I would never thought that technology would do that. And with the pace it is growing, I honestly think that it will be true in the near future.

I learned a lot this semester, and if I were to take it again, I would suggest we had more activities like the no technology for 3 days assignment. We talked and discussed a lot of ideas over the course, but I felt that we are lacking the initiative. There's a lot of videos and articles talking about the impact of the technology, but what I understand is that it is hard to start something new, especially changing our life. Human tend to feel shy when it comes to trying something that's not in their comfort zone. That's why a push is necessary to get them do something uncomfortable. We will only understand after experience it first-hand. It will makes us think more seriously about the change that need to be done.

A

CS 330
Ethics for Computer Science
Exit Interview Essay

Zack Herbert

When I first signed up for this class I really did not know what to expect. I chose to take the course because it sounded like a nice break from coding constantly. There is only so much coding you can handle in a semester before you begin to feel like your brain is overheating. I figured it would involve a large amount of reading an ethics textbook and writing several short essays and possibly a number of class presentations. To my surprise this class was totally different.

Walking into this class after a couple of sessions was like walking outside and taking a breath of fresh air after being stuck in a stuffy house all day. I would walk in sit down and know that I was not going to have to sit there and listen to another boring lecture where I would only retain about half of the information. Instead we got to sit there and have constructive discussions about important topics, that to be honest I never really gave much consideration to.

My main goal for this semester was to pay attention and listen to what people had to say, to take into consideration all the viewpoints that my classmates would present on a specific topic. I was raised a super conservative, and for the most part I still align with a lot of conservative ideals. When we started reading "Sacred Economics" in class it started to get me thinking a lot about the economic situation of our nation. There were a lot of ideas that didn't exactly align with my typical way of thinking which was good because it challenged me to look at situations in a different light. For instance, I never really thought about the fact that our nation's wealth, or lack thereof in a sense, is all based on this notion of never ending debt. I think this has to do with the fact that I grew up in a family that wasn't necessarily rich, but also didn't have to worry a lot about money. There was always food on the table, there was money for vacation, we owned nice things etc. Now that I am in college and paying for my education on my own through student loans, it has become a little more apparent that debt is a part of everyone's life, and it is pretty much unavoidable. The average person has to take out a loan to buy a house, to buy a car, to attend university etc. This is just one of the many topics that got me thinking a lot about how I live and how the nation lives. I also have realized that this is not the fault of Democrats or Republicans but rather the greed of politicians and corporations no matter what party they belong to. Overall I can successfully say that I achieved my goal of staying open minded and listening to what other people had to say in class.

Even though I really enjoyed the class it was hard to focus on the work the same as my other classes. Since there were no programming assignments, tests, quizzes etc. I put the reading and paper on the back burner sometimes. I have a really hard time with balancing school work, work and a social life, so it's easy to put the easy class work to the side. Part of this is attributed to the fact that I have become burnt out with school. I am going on my 6th year of college next year and it's hard to stay

focused and motivated, especially when you are 23 and haven't received your bachelor's degree.

Next school year I want to change my mentality about my school status. It will be my last year and I need to step it up and do the best that I can even if that means working less and struggling to pay my bills. I need to make sure that I maintain my time better and make a schedule that I can follow. I want to push myself to learn more about computer science, whether that be by messing with a new technology, building a computer or learning a new programming language.

My favorite part of this class is that I learned a lot. Now, I will be honest, I didn't learn things that I thought I was going to learn, like social issues with computing and technology or the ethics of the technology industry, but none the less I still learned. I learned how to listen to other peoples ideas. I learned how to think outside of the box when it came to my normal ideas on things related to *Sacred Economics*. I learned that some professors care more about their students than others. I will say you by far care more about your students, than any other professor I have encountered during my time as a college student. You took the time to listen to us, and to make friends with us. I know some professor frown upon making friends with their students, but in reality the closer you are with your students, to a certain degree, the more your students will learn because you can relate to them and them to you. So yes, I will say that this class has enlightened me to listen to other people and question everything that I think about. I questioned myself a lot during this class especially in relation to the technology purge we did. It is crazy how much modern day societies, especially in developed countries, rely on the use of technology. I almost went insane not being able to use my phone all the time. I think that says a lot about me and how caught up I am in social media and the Internet. This is something I would like to continue to work on over the next year. I want to be able to distance myself from some forms of technology when I can. This will be hard considering the industry that I will be working in upon graduating, but there is also a difference between constructive use of technology and the use of technology to just keep you busy and not appreciate the real things in life around us. I would like to spend more time doing outdoor activities and enjoying nature.

I do feel that if I were to take this class again that I would like that we do a little more with ethics of computing. Don't get me wrong I loved reading *Sacred Economics*, but I had trouble relating it to the ethics of computing in today's society. I feel like there is probably a book on the market that would be just as insightful but more on point with that topic instead. Watching *Black Mirror* was wonderful though. That show really showed us the power that technology has and can have in the future. Out of

all the things we did in class those episode that we watch as well as the ones that I decided to watch outside of class really depicted what the class was about.

Now comes the grade part. In all honesty being able to pick your own grade is intimidating, and a little weird. I think most of us have never had the opportunity to do such a thing in our classes. My biggest struggle with doing this is, having to ask myself "do I deserve the grade that I am asking for?". I know a lot of people are going to ask for an "A" for the sake of just getting an "A". I personally have had to reflect within about how I treated this class and what I contributed to it to deserve the grade that I will ask for. I know I read the book most of the time and contributed to in class discussions a lot and I barely missed class, but in the end I know I barely focused on the paper for SQP. I had so much going on this semester that I just pushed it to the side. So honestly I don't know what grade I deserve to receive in the class. In the end I can say that I learned a lot and that I took the class more seriously than some other people, so Professor Benton, I would like to receive an "A" for this semester. I would also like to talk to you about getting this paper finished even if I have to do it on my own for the next month. Thank you for all you have done this semester and taking the time to get to know me. I can truly say that you are now a friend and I look forward to seeing you over the summer and taking more classes with you in the future if my schedule allows.

Kevin Amrein

CS 330 Class Reflection

Before writing this reflection I have deeply reflected on the class, what I was hoping to achieve in the activities we did and what I got from them. I also pondered the questions you asked that I answer. Originally, when I began reading the email with the questions I thought I would write a page or two and be nice and tell you what you wanted to hear but I decided against that. It would be a waste of my time and an insult to you for me to lie or suppress what I actually want to say. With that in mind I will be as forthright as I am in class (probably more) but I will be constructive, fair, objective, honest, and above all give you the respect you deserve.

I will start from the beginning. Last semester when I enrolled in CS330 I had some expectations on what the class would be like. However, I had never taken a class that's goal was to discuss ethics in Computer Science so I was really not sure how the class would run. My expectations came from these couple sentences from the course catalog: "Overview of philosophical and professional ethics, and a survey of societal and ethical issues in computing such as privacy, intellectual property, computer security, computer crime, product liability, and the societal, environmental, and economic impact of computers. Students develop skills in assuming and defending positions on societal and ethical issues through oral presentations and written reports." I expected that there would be assigned readings and case studies to take us through the ethical decisions we may be required to make as Computer Scientists. I thought this would be a discussion-based class, that description did not scream lecture class to me. Based on every class I have ever taken, I assumed there would be tests, assignments, and presentations. However, I was correct in some of the broad expectations but incorrect in others.

If you were to delve into the details of my expectations, you would find that I was completely wrong. I would never have expected my teacher would put on a Netflix show and lay on the ground during the first week of classes. Nor would I have expected that we would talk the whole class, there would be no grade, no returned assignments, and no real structure to class discussions. I also found the one major reading, Sacred Economics, was worthless and unrelated to the description of the class. Any attempt to relate Sacred Economics to our future careers and ethics issues in computing by you was a stretch at best. Next, our first real assignment, the no technology weekend experiment, was interesting but once again a stretch to relate to computing ethics although it did relate to societal issues so it was a fair assignment. However, you had us write a daily journal and a reflection that you never returned or even gave an indication that you read. I do not appreciate that. If it was going to be a low priority for you to read them and never return them we could have just done the experiment and spoke about it during class.

Finally, we have the publication. I will speak slightly on the grading policy while I discuss the publication. I tend to be optimistic and search for good in people and ideas (I will get there with the things mentioned above). Specifically, when you mentioned that we had the opportunity to get a piece of our writing published in a respected journal I was very surprised and thought that if I got nothing else from the class being published would be a huge win. You may be thinking to yourself at this point, "then Kevin why have I not seen any of your work?" If you can recall to when it was my group's turn to give an update on our research no one in my group

besides me said anything. That same level of interest and work carried through to the writing portion of the article. If everyone in my group wrote 666.6 words we would have hit the minimum word requirement. You know as well as I do that writing that amount of words is a joke or at least should be for any college student. However, Christian, one of my group members expressed his disinterest in writing the paper and said he didn't want to write it. I even said it would be good to be published and he agreed but said he would not put in the work for no grade. I felt like saying, "you idiot that is why we should write it, no grade to worry about and we get published and instead of seeing the teacher is an enemy in terms of grading us he would be helping us because he wants to see us get published!" Back to my work, I wrote 1,118 words (you can check Google docs) and I also found all the articles and outlined most of them to the best of my ability with the time I had. Neither one of my group members touched the Google Drive folder. Personally, I am quite surprised he did not write it. To be blunt, I didn't think he had the balls to look you in the face and tell you he didn't write anything but I stand corrected. I am usually a good judge of character. Therefore, my group will not be turning in a paper to be reviewed by you and the journal. That is not to say I did not encourage them to write the paper and push for it, I did but they had nothing to lose.

That brings me to the grading system for the class. As you can see above with how I handled the article I do not need a grade to motivate me and I do see where you are coming from in your arguments against grading. However, someone like me ends up losing in the long run if everything in the class is not individual. Because it only takes one person in a group to not care and the whole group suffers. People in the class have even said if he wanted us to truly put a lot of effort into it he should have graded us. In my mind that reflects poorly on them, as students, and that attitude will most likely hold them back at some point in their life. I see the need for a grade as a way to motivate students (in a kind of sick way) and also quantify (whether correctly or incorrectly) how much a student learned in a class. I see that grades can also be a real hindrance too. It is quite common, especially in college where there are not as many tests as in high school for student's grade to rest solely on two or three tests. The worst part of the whole process is usually these tests all fall in the same week which then leads to the argument that are you testing a student's knowledge or their time management skills in balancing multiple tests in a two day period. I will not say that this grading method did not affect me. It did, if I had a big assignment or something else I was working on and it got too late I would not read. Because there was no grade and I did not have any real interest in the material we were reading. The readings for this class were always at the bottom of my to-do list. Personally knowing most of the students in that class I can tell you as you probably figured out that you were dealing with some of the smartest students in the Computer Science program. I believe that we think differently than other students. We are very technical in our approach to problems and we think about things in a very binary quantifiable way. Which basically means that we, as you have heard us speak about frequently, have a ton of work that requires hours upon hours to complete. In a grading system like yours, where the students have no real "skin in the game" your class can sink off the to-do list very quickly. In conclusion, I felt for the way the class was run a choose-your-own-grade system is what was appropriate.

There were things I did enjoy about the class. I will start with my take on you as a professor. I respected and enjoyed your blunt responses to thoughts and actions in class. I also

enjoyed how you encouraged discussion. I usually raise my hand quite a bit in other classes but only to answer the question posed by the teacher, which is a right or wrong type of question. However, that really is not who I am. I read and listen to a lot of very smart people and I have learned how to pose arguments and how to convey my ideas. One of the people I listen to always says to never go into a debate with the goal of changing your opponents mind, instead aim to walk away knowing that you helped them understand your position. I have a lot of goals and dreams and I try to follow and learn from people who are already successful whether in personal development, technology, business, or any other topic. I thoroughly enjoy learning, questioning and developing opinions on anything I have the chance to. Having read that you can probably see why I participated so much in class discussions. I did thoroughly enjoy that aspect of class. I also enjoyed some of the knowledge and personal experiences you shared with the class. Some have the technology and innovations that you told us about I did not know existed and I really enjoyed learning about new technology.

Therefore, I did enjoy the general class structure, in terms of the discussions and talking about different ideas and technology. The part I did not like was that I do not feel that I got what I signed up for in terms of the specific topics discussed. However, I gave you the benefit of the doubt and stuck with class and did my best to participate and do the required work whether it was being graded or not.

With all of this in mind, I put the same amount of effort and time into this paper as I did the class. I sought to learn, share, and contribute in the class setting. I did the best work I could even when my group did not. I did what was asked of me and participated even when I may not have agreed with the assignment or the discussion in class. Therefore, because of these reasons, I am requesting an 'A' in the class.

Have a great summer,
Kevin Amrein

Coming into the semester, I did not know what to expect from this class. I thought there were hidden morals and ethics to coding since my whole career in computer science so far has been heavily coding based. I know that sounds a little ridiculous, but I guess that is why I'm in college; to learn new things that I never knew existed. I remember the first class we talked about things that we may discuss that had to do with ethics and morals in computing such as working on projects that could be used to incite violence. Afterwards, I knew that this class was going to be more of a critical thinking/discussion type class so I had an idea of what the class would involve.

This class reminded me of one that I took last semester called History of Sport in America (HIST 315). Much like this class we read books and discussed the ethics and morals of the actions and events in the sports world. Although I didn't know what exactly we were going to do in this class, my goals were based off the experience I had with my history class. Those goals were to simply come to every class and participate in the discussions as much as I can. I tried to come to every class and although I missed just one class, I think I achieved this goal. I tried to participate in every discussion but I think that's the area that I most needed to work on. I discussed but when I did, but when I did, it was on rare occasions. I think the reason behind that was due to the topic of the discussions.

Economics is not my best subject. I try to understand the concept behind it but it's just one of those subjects that flies right over my head. As much as I try to understand the subject I only get more confused. I read as much as I could, but I knew I wasn't going to achieve the goal that I had set myself. Towards the middle of the semester I decided that if I am not able to discuss what we read before class, then I should make a goal to at least pay attention and listen to everything that everyone is saying and maybe have some kind of input. That alone was hard enough, because the only way for me to read the book was to read it online. Reading the book online in class as well as at home meant that I could easily get distracted. The fact that it was online meant that I could easily browse the internet and not read the book at all. That is why in most of my classes I defer to the notebook and pen when taking notes instead of typing everything on my laptop. In the end, I believe I achieved that goal, however I still do not understand the nature of economics. All I know is that economics has something to do with money and how it pertains to wealth of countries. To be completely honest, I don't know how Sacred Economics or Charles Eisenstein relates to social and ethical issues in computing.

Before we started reading Sacred Economics, I thought that the Netflix show, Black Mirror was pretty relevant to our class. I thought that the two episodes that we watched were pretty insightful. The talent show episode helped me realize how technology can corrupt the minds of men and women and then the grain episode helped me realize that sometimes technology should not be part of our lives 24/7 like it is now. Sometimes its better to take a break and appreciate the world more. That brings me to the no technology weekend experiment, which I thought was very insightful too. That experiment was easily one of the hardest things that I have done. I actually learned a lot from that experiment it especially made

me think about myself as well as what my generation is coming to. What I found was pretty sad. I observed that most of the time people are on their phones either texting away or looking at social networks even when they are having conversations with other people, and I will be the first to admit that I have done this before and it has happened to me. Sometimes it's not just our cell phones, but just technology in general. When I was a kid all I wanted to do was play outside with friends. I didn't get a cell phone until I was a freshman high school. Nowadays, kids are getting cell phones at such young ages and often staying in playing video games. I know one kid that got his first cell phone in the 6th grade. Sure, there are merits to giving cell phones to kids at younger ages, but in my opinion that seems a little ridiculous. This experiment helped me realize how technology has killed the physically social aspect of our society.

Now when it comes to the JMU's mission statement of producing "educated and enlightened citizens who lead meaningful and productive lives," I must say that unfortunately I do not feel more educated. However, I feel like I made up for that in being more enlightened. I never thought I could go more than a day of technology but I did. As a computer science major, it is one of the hardest things to do when technology is the backbone of the program. Just watching Black Mirror was enlightening even if it is some tv show that was made for the sole purpose of entertainment. Although, I say that I do not feel more educated, I do not think it isn't necessarily a bad thing when it comes to ethical and social issues. Of course I learned some things, but just not anything important that I will absolutely need in the future. With that being said, I don't feel like this class is was meant to educate students on what ethical and social issues are. I feel like this class is meant to make you think. Think about what we do and what we will do in the future. Like I had written above, this class is just like my history class last semester. I don't think I learned anything new in that class but I was refreshed and I definitely had deeper thoughts about what happens in the world of sports. Just like that class, I feel the same way about this one.

This semester was by far the hardest one that I have had so far, I am constantly busy with programming assignments, homework, essays, and studying for tests. This class was nice in the fact that it was more laid back than all of my other classes. I thoroughly enjoyed going to class everyday just because I knew I was amongst my new friends and that it was a comfortable environment. I didn't have to worry about anything. However, I think that was one of the reasons why I was not motivated to do any work in this class. When it came to the academic journal essay that I am supposed to write, I had no motivation. I didn't see a purpose to it. Also, I am not the best writer. I am more caught up on school work now, worrying about my grades, and the expectations that are thrust upon my by my whole family that I put the article at the bottom of my priorities, but once this school year is over I will have more time to work on it. Having said that, I don't think that base on the activities in this class as well as my other classes have given me better grasp on what I want to do in the future. I don't think I will know until I determine what aspect of computer science I am best at by getting experience in the real

world. I don't know if I know myself any better but I think I will eventually as I get more experience under my belt.

The course work in this class overall wasn't too bad. At most it was just reading a chapter of Sacred Economics or working on the academic journal article. It wasn't too stressful or too hard. At the very least we watched a video then discussed it which I didn't mind. A couple of my favorite videos that really caught my attention were the ones on the distribution of wealth, the value of the penny, and the coming age of automation. That's what I liked the most about this class. We watched educational videos that genuinely had me interested. I like learning new things that not everyone necessarily knows. If not that, I like the concept behind the videos of them trying to educate the general population. To sum up the course work, I would say that it wasn't bad because nothing was too challenging but more hands on and laid back. There were goals to everything, some of which went right over my head, but the work was straight forward and interesting.

Now, if I were to take this class again, and I would, there are some things that I think should be changed and some things that should stay the same. I actually didn't mind that there wasn't a syllabus from the beginning of the semester and honestly I think you should keep it that way depending on what grading style you use. I don't know if you stick with the choose your own grade all the time, but if you do for this class I don't think you should mention in it or give the syllabus with grading at all. I think that people will stop coming to class if there is no motivation (i.e. graded assignments) and you can just straight up choose a grade at the end of the semester. I also think that we should not read a book about economics but that's just me. I don't understand economics and if I did, maybe I would be a business major. Also, I think that there should be a schedule of work in the class. I actually think there was but I never really looked at the syllabus when it was sent. If there was, then I think we should stick with the schedule. I also think we should have more relevant discussions on some issues in computing. One thing that I wouldn't change would be the environment that we were in. I like the less stressful, laid back, open environment where anyone could talk and just have insightful, non-judgemental discussions. With all that being said, I would like an A for this class.

I entered this course with a large amount of uncertainty. I took this class on a recommendation of a former coworker who described it as intriguing. Other than his recommendation I had no idea what to expect from this course. I have taken ethics and critical thinking courses before in high school and here at JMU I have always found them interesting. Therefore I thought this would be a good class for me to take. Initially I did not have any specific goals for this class. My only goal was to expand my knowledge further about philosophical topics. As I continued on with this course I did have more specific goals especially when Professor Radziwill told us we get chose our own grade. Initially I was worried about my grade I wanted to know what the assignments would be so I could do well on them. When I learned this class would have less structure than I am used to I did become more relaxed and interested in learning the material. Usually learning in my courses is not a primary concern my grades are.

My goals in this class were I wanted to read Charles Eisenstein's entire book, become published in the is software quality professional journal and just learn more about societal ethics and myself in general.. This class has inspired me to become more engaged in the world. I do feel, as though I was successful in achieving some of my goals however there were some failures. Unfortunately I did not finish Charles Eisenstein book nor did I actually come close a lot it seemed to just go over my head. But I will continue to read especially during the summer when I have more free time because I find the book interesting and I have not previously exposed to his way of thinking. However I was successful becoming more engaged in the world around me I watch the news a lot more watched some more inspirational ted talks.

Some of the things as a result of this class that led to my successes about learning more about myself are the technology holiday, our discussions and the black mirror episodes. One of our in class discussions that really resonated with me was our in class discussion about education and the Ken Robinson video of 'How schools kill creativity'. I am no longer a computer science major like the rest of the class and I struggled switching majors for a while. This class has made me realize I am going to be as ok as a SMAD major. I know computer science is an extremely lucrative major and many people told me not to switch. But now I know I shouldn't listen to others critiques and I should do what is right for me. A simple concept that I should have known but this class helped me come to this realization I do not regret at all switching majors to SMAD I'm happier now and that's what is most important to me. I consider this to be one of



greatest my successes because I learned about my-self. A failure of mine in the course was I did not participate in discussions as much as I would have like to. I enjoyed listening to other thoughts and opinions on topics in class. Everyone who shared had such an interesting perspective. From this failure I learned I need to become more vocal and sharing is just as important as listening. I always get a little uncomfortable in discussion-based classes but those are the classes I take away the most from. Failing to share my opinions is failure to grow and evolve because I could have learned more about my views. Getting through the technology holiday was a big success. It is still unbelievable to me that I was to go three days without the use of technology. I always knew I had problem with technology along with most of my generation. But I did not realize how much of a problem it actually was. I realized during this holiday I had more free time than I previously thought and I am dependent on technology for most forms of entertainment. I view this as success because it was breakthrough for me because I realized I needed to do more creating and making my own forms of entertainment. During one of the days of the technology holiday the weather was nice and I did not go outside I just took a long a nap before I had to go to work. This is when I realized I had a serious problem and though I cannot say I am less attached to my cell-phone I am more self-aware. I know now I need to be out and about in the world more, and doing other things more useful with my time.

I already knew that a lot of societal standards and values were made up. However the book Sacred Economics made me realize just how true this was. I typically do not think about the state of world's economy. Now I think about how different the world would be if we were more collaborative or if society could just decide to forgive all debt and start new if we really wanted to. Sacred economics has made me more curious and a little more aware of the economy.

As a result of this course I do feel more educated and enlightened. I explored topics that I had not previously thought about. I believe I came out from this course more self-aware and more knowledgeable about the world around me. I am prepared to take what I learned from this course and apply it to the rest of my college career and my life after college. The activities in this course confirmed that I made the right decision-switching majors. I am still not one hundred percent sure about what I want to do after college. But I know want to do something I enjoy and settle for nothing less. Also I will use ethical practices learned in this course in any field I choose. I enjoyed the style of the course although it is not something that I am use too. In fact I wish more professors would adapt this teaching style. I

do feel as though it enhanced my desire to actually learn. When there is no grading involved I was less stressed out and this allowed me to actually enjoy the class. However I do wish at the beginning of the course that we were told more about the set up of the course. I do wish for more of a plan so we could know more about what to expect from the course. However if we were to retake I would keep the majority of it the same. Finally I would like to request an B+ because I did learn quite a lot I came to every class except for one and I participated in a few discussions.

CS 330 Narrative Essay

When I originally enrolled in CS330, I imagined it to be a lot like the last class I had in my Artificial Intelligence class, CS444. We talked about the pros and cons of AI, and whether or not we should implement them, and whether or not it would actually help humanity. I was thinking it would be like a philosophy class, where there's some discussion, but a lot of the class is focused on writing papers about your opinions about certain events and topics, and reading about new information that's come into the AI world. I was quite surprised to find that the class was indeed reading heavy at the beginning, but it was centered around discussion, something I didn't really expect. It made me more nervous for the class, because I'm not a huge fan of debate and discussion, but the atmosphere itself made me relax and enjoy class time and discussion even though I rarely participated. To hear other people's ideas, which brought up new ideas, and the cycle to continue bringing up new topics of discussion made the class interesting and entertaining. It would bring up topics I never thought about, as well as spawn new ideas about why I do the things I do in the computing world.

The learning goals I had were to simply learn more about the different ethical issues about creating programs, and who is affected. After the first week, after getting my feet wet, that changed a little. We started off the class by talking about ethics in computing, but after a while it just turned into ethics and how it related to the computing world. So my goals changed a little. I still wanted to learn about ethics and how it affected computing, but it kinda turned into how my ethical actions can affect the world. I started to really understand how, to put it nicely, messed up our country is. So instead of just how my ethical actions in computing effects people, I wanted to learn about how I can fix this country with my computing. Our government is messed up and corrupt, how can computing and machines fix that? Our crime rate is just stupid, how can my computing fix that? Instead of finding out how ethical machines are, I started to think about how machines can make the world more ethical. A strange turn of events, I will admit.

Its hard to actually describe my success for this class. By definition, success would mean that I have achieved my goals. My goals were to learn more about ethics in computing, as well as how to make computing help our world morally and ethically. By definition then, I was successful. I was able to learn more about these topics, as well as opening my mind to the different ethical issues around us, and how to fix that with computing. The hard part is actually giving concrete artifacts about my success. In this class we didn't really submit any assignments, we only did two. The first one wasn't even about ethics, it was about living without technology for a day. The second, the research paper, is actually about computing and ethics and is an acceptable example. However, since it is one sided, it doesn't truly show the broad range of things that I've learned from this class. I feel like providing concrete artifacts as evidence isn't possible for the goals I had for this class. What I sought was knowledge and ideas, something that can't be placed on a table and held. I can briefly explain the ideas that I have formed, and hopefully that counts as evidence.

The first main idea that I have formed in this class is that it is ethical to use a machine for human related activities, as long as it is using acceptable human ethics, and that it does not hinder or harm the human race. This means that if a machine replaces a doctor, it must be as good as the doctor, and must practice medical ethics. There should also not be a huge amount of robotic doctors, as that decreases the job force, causing unemployment. If this happens, then machine use should be limited. Secondly, I feel that the world is becoming more unethical and corrupt, and the best way to fix this is with machines. I say this because machines don't have bias, emotions, or personal interest. They examine the data, and choose the best input for the best output in general, not for the machine. By implementing machines in more important positions, such as major corporations and governmental decisions, I feel

that this technology can benefit humanity in the long run. These are the two main ideas I formed in this class, however I cannot put the implementation on the table, as that will take years of effort alone to present. However, it is now my goal not simply to create programs to make a lot of money, but rather to create programs that will help the citizens of this collapsing country. It may not be a solid, concrete artifact, but these are the main ideas I learned from this class, where I feel like I succeeded in accomplishing my goal.

What I consider to be a failure of achieving my goals is actually more of a regret, which is my lack of vocal participation in this class. As I've explained before, I'm terribly shy and the one thing I hate most is trying to talk in front of a group of people. I'll sweat profusely, my body shakes slightly, and I feel extremely uncomfortable. There were many discussions where I wanted to pitch in or say something, but I just didn't have the courage to raise my hand or my voice. There was only once I believe I said something and I couldn't even say it correctly because I was too nervous. I feel like this hindered my goals of learning about ethics in computing, and how to use computing to fix human morals and using it ethically. By asking questions and participating, I could have explored the topics that I found interesting more and developed new ideas about the things I wanted to learn more about.

I understand that my extreme shyness is an issue. I want to work in the software industry, where everyone is put onto large teams where it's essential to communicate to one another. Granted, the experience I've had I've been on teams of no more than 5, with many different teams of 5, but you don't necessarily communicate with those other teams except for when you all come together to share what progress you've made. Even then, it was never my position to share the results. I'm worried about when I have to present my work to a large group of people in the future. In my most recent interview, one of the people asked me what I considered to be what I considered to be my greatest weakness, where responded with the fact I can't communicate effectively in group settings. He did give me encouragement, saying that he was, and still is for a good part, like me. He said he considered himself an extreme introvert, and hated communicating to people unless he had to. However, he was able to overcome that with a few classes and practice so he was able to communicate in front of large groups for his career. I've decided it would be best to try and do the same thing. In order to make sure this failure never happens again, I've decided to take some free, online classes, as well as seek free help in JMU, where I'm sure there is some around after I do more searching. I've realized now that I can't always be super introverted, and I have to work to get over this. Not only does this hold me back educationally at times, but it could hold my back in my career as well. Since I'm graduating in a year, it's something I want to fix well before then.

I've been at JMU for three years now, and unfortunately, I'm about to enter my fourth and final year. College has been the best time of my life so far. I've learned many things while I've been here, not just facts and information, but morals and ideas as well. JMU says that they want to make me "educated and enlightened", and so far I feel like they've met the mark. When they say educated, I think of information. I think of all the things I've learned in class, the skills, the facts and information that every class has given to me. I've learned how to code, how to make basic AI, how to make structures, how to effectively work in a software team, about databases and computer structures. I've learned so much about computing and programming compared to when I've entered JMU its ridiculous. And that's just Computer Science. I've taken many Gen Eds, where I've learned basic physics, environmental science, writing, literature, culture, health, the human psyche, and, my favorite so far, ancient anthropology. I still have at least 10 classes left to take, and only 3 of them are computer science. That leaves 7 classes for me to explore things that I've wanted to learn and explore, such as American military history, Japanese, and possibly video editing and creation. The amount I've learned in just three years of college is insane and it's only going to grow. For that reason, I would say that JMU has made me more educated.

I can also agree that JMU has made me more enlightened. I'm more aware of different views and cultures, and I've become more open minded and accepting of people and different views. I've also

formed new ideas, morals, and opinions in college. I've also learned a few life lessons I will always remember and take away, such as sometimes the present and the experiences you have are more important than money, and that worrying constantly about the future and to appease others will only give you a short and unfulfilled life. Living in the present while casually thinking and making sure you're set for the future is the way to go to have a happy and satisfying life. This was something I've honestly just learned, and something that JMU has taught me. It sounds strange, but these new ideas and morals have made me feel like an enlightened person. I totally agree that JMU has made me a more enlightened and educated person, and I hope other people have taken away a similar experience that I have received.

To be honest, this has been a very confusing semester. A dark year in general. I've had 2 home invasions, I've been attacked by a stranger high on drugs with a knife, I've lost a father figure, and that's just scratching the surface. Activity wise, I've participated in school and joined 3 clubs, one I dropped because I was sick for so long it was impossible for me to keep up with practices. However, with the mix of all these events and activities, I feel like I'm closer to myself and I know more of what I want to do. I've always knew I wanted to be a programmer, but I've always just thought that I would work for whoever would pay me the most. That's recently changed. Ever since the person I considered my father died, I've decided to use my skills for the benefit of the military. My "father" was a first lieutenant in the army, a man who died because some guy blew the car he was in to pieces. I want to use my abilities, my skills, to make sure that no one else becomes like that. I want to help the military retrieve information and data quickly and reliably, as well as to help them make programs that will help keep casualties to a minimum. I don't mind helping to create weapons, in fact I love guns and other weaponry, so I have no problem getting my hands dirty to help create such things. My main priority is to help our military become strong and better, to protect our soldiers as well as our civilians. This is what I discovered this semester, and what I plan to do after college. However, the clubs I joined and the activities I've done in them have helped me to learn to enjoy the moment. This was something I desperately needed to learn, and something that this class, as well as these clubs and organizations, have taught me. I've learned that if I can't enjoy the moment, then I'm not really living. The future eventually becomes the moment, and a new future arises. So if I don't stop and enjoy the present, I'll eventually die without having any fun. I'm glad I learned this when I did, because I plan to enjoy my last year of college to the fullest extent.

I liked the way the course was. It was peaceful, liberating, and very relaxing. When you walk in the first day of classes, they hand you a syllabus, tell you that only a few of us will receive A's, and show us how much our exams and projects are worth for our grade. This class didn't do that. Without having the pressures of grades, I was able to do what I wanted to do for this class, not what I had to. This instantly made going to class and doing readings and other work for it more enjoyable. Being told you have to work hard, being told to slave hours away for something you might not even get is a very stressful, terribly way to do things. To be honest, it's also hard to learn things as well. Sometimes, you just learn for the grade and that information goes away after the class ends. However, this class didn't do that. It didn't force me to work hard for a grade, it didn't tell me what to do. I did the readings, the no technology assignment, and the research paper because I wanted to do them, because they sounded interesting and fun. Because of that, i honestly feel like I've learned many things I will remember not only after this class, but for many years after. Without the stress of trying to appease the system, it was a very enjoyable and relaxing way to learn things, and I would love to learn in such an environment again.

However, even though there were many things I enjoyed about this class, I do have some complaints. The class started off with ethics in computing, but then it eventually turned into just ethics. A few weeks later, we then used the ethics we were talking about and then started seeing how it related to computing it felt like, which is better, but it wasn't what I was expecting when reading the description for the class I signed up for. Personally, I feel like it was because of the reading we were doing. The

reading was interesting, brought up valid points, and made me think about corrupt things are and how we, as a nation and as a world, need to fix these things. However, I feel like it distracted the main focus of the class in my honest opinion. When we first started off with the readings, we talking about ethics and how it related to computing from topics brought up from the book. After a while, we would then read the book, talk about some of its important points, then talking about other relevant topics, which may or may not have been computing. It honestly felt that the book made the class strafe away from the main point of the class in a sense. I'm not saying that the book was a bad read, I simply believe it was just not fit for the overall purpose of the class. Yes, it does relate to ethics, but not necessarily computing, which is half the class, if not the most important part of the class. If I were to take the class again, I would honestly recommend a different book, something that fits the topic of computing better. If that's impossible, then I would take the topics from the book and directly relate them to computing, not just overall topics, which is what it felt like we did at times. The format should stay the same, as that's what made it enjoyable. However, if there was a stronger focus on computing, this class would have been perfect.

I've been thinking about what grade I want in this class, and surprisingly it was a hard decision. To be blunt, I do honestly feel like I deserve the A. I say this because I accomplished my goal for this class, by learning about the ethics in computing. Not only did I learn this in class, but I learned this with the research paper that I've been working on. I've learned about ethics and societal issues in general due to the reading we have done in the class. I've learned and accomplished my goals as a student of your class. I've done all of the readings (except one, due to the fact I was deathly ill the class before and didn't know) on time, and did the two projects you assigned (the no tech and the research paper) diligently. I was in every class except for 4, where one was due to an illness, and the other 3 were due to job interviews. I never skipped a class without a legitimate reason, and was never late to one. For the longest time though, I thought I deserved a B, or even lower though. I thought this way because of my lack to speak up in class, to participate in the discussions. This changed after I talked to you about my terrible social anxiety, and you said that I should only do what I was comfortable with. It was only after I was in a job interview and the interviewer talked about his social anxiety, that I understood that it was a problem I shouldn't really be judged for. Of course, it was urged by everyone that it was something I should work on, and it's something that I have been researching to try and get fixed and sorted. When I look at my other classes, I've noticed that this may have been the class I've done the least work in, but it was definitely the class I learned the most in. Not necessarily with the topics discussed in class, but with the life lessons I was able to gain from this class, that will help me become a better person that will be able to enjoy and live life a little bit fuller then I was able to a few months ago. Because of that, I truly do feel that I deserve the A for this class, and it's definitely a class I will remember and recommend for people to take while under your instruction. Not because it was easy or that you can choose your grade, but it was definitely one of the classes I learned some of the more valuable lessons in. If I had to choose a class that I felt the most enlightened in, it was definitely this one. This was a class I won't forget, and I hope that I will be able to take another class similar to this under your instruction in the future.

A handwritten grade 'A' in black ink, centered at the bottom of the page.

Narrative Essay

CS 330

When I signed up for CS 330 I had no idea what I was signing up for. I came with no expectations just the fact that this class was going to be an elective for the CS major. Over the progression of the class, I figured out what this class was meant to be. What I found out was that the class was heavily based on discussion. From all of the classes that I have taken in the past, the discussion paradigm is one of the most unique learning styles that I have been exposed to. Why is it you may ask? Well, JMU courses are mostly based on lectures and out of class assignments. As a student, I feel that the majority of the information that I've learned from the class was done outside the classroom. As a college student, the majority of the information that I retained was from textbooks, online assignments, and other impersonal mediums of accessing information. This impersonal nature, generally, is what makes students very aloof about their education and retain less content on their minds.

Regarding the discussion teaching paradigm, I have noticed that I have retained more information from CS 330 than any other class in the past. Having students express their thoughts makes a class engaging, and exciting to partake in. This also adds a sociological meaning to the importance of the class. When students feel that they make an effort in their education they will find the classroom more satisfying. When they are satisfied, they are more likely to be attentive to what the professor has to say.

This is how I have felt, throughout the few months that I have attended CS 330. I have enjoyed attending CS 330. At certain moments the class got challenging, because we were constantly challenged to think about different abstract topics such as economics. I'm minoring in Economics at the moment so I would consider myself somewhat proficient in the topic. Many ideas discussed by Charles Einstein would be outcasted in the economic community such as

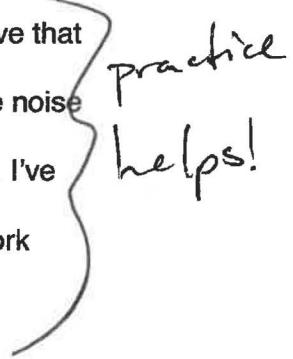
· Wilson Perdomo

CS 330

the isolation of money for the purchase of homogeneous goods. However, many topics have sound reasoning backing them such as the idea of negative interest but just like every giant has his own fault, negative interest has a couple of complications. That being said, I'd like to summarize that this class has made me think critically of everything being said around me. It's a great trait that many deep thinkers have, which over the time I've been developing in CS 330. I've learned to "trust but verify" many facts that are said by professors and the media. Overall, I'm quite happy that I took the class.

Personal Self Growth Goals

In the beginning of the semester, I set aside various self growth goals that were an attempt to improve my academic cognitive abilities. I've been attempting to develop a sense of concentration and focus. In the past, I would have trouble reading a book in the public. The problem wasn't concerned with my reading abilities. Paying attention to external stimuli distracted me from ever fully reaching a full sense of peace and concentration. To resolve that this problem, I've been reading more books near loud places to build a resistance of the noise around me. Ever since, I've noticed a substantial improvement in my academic abilities. I've also taken my time to do habitual work outside such as writing, and completing homework assignments.



JMU Mission Statement

JMU's mission statement to produce "educated and enlightened citizens" isn't fully embraced by the JMU educational community. With GENEDs, I've felt that in the past many course curriculums were "watered down" to make content much easier to retain. They rarely felt challenging and because of this I feel that JMU, like many other schools, send young adults who are massively underprepared for life to the work force. This massive under preparation of the labor is what lead to economical inefficiencies such as unemployment. New hires need to be trained at their jobs, despite them receiving an "academic education" at JMU. A proposition, but

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controversial, to this could be that students would be required to intern at least once in their academic involvement with JMU. If such a solution were implemented, students would receive the skills necessary to work and connections to working opportunities. It would only benefit students. I have noticed that JMU, like many other universities throughout the United States, is caught in a massive bureaucratization that leads to the inefficient management of resources. Many schools are concerned with improving their appearances on the outside, especially on providing amenities to the students. They allocate so much money to building new "health centers" or football stadiums that they neglect to compensate professors fairly. More money should be invested to improve the educational departments of the universities considering that is what the majority of the students come for. To get an actual education, not a lacking education that is wrapped by pretty paper and a degree.

Recommendations for the Class

There are very few things that could have been improved in that class. Having taken CS 330 was a great experience to partake in. Perhaps, inviting guest speakers to the class would make the class more exciting than what it already was to me. Bringing other professors from the CS department to talk about their experiences within the industry would give us a better understanding of the ethical dilemmas that we would be put against as people practicing our profession. Inviting entrepreneurs, people that you have met would be great as well.

My Self Recommendation

I feel that I've invested as much time in this class as others. I've completed the few assignments to the best of my ability because I stand behind the value of demonstrating my work ethic. I put a lot of thought into the reflection on the technology-free holiday that we had during the beginning of the semester. I've made a solid attempt to participate in class discussions and have attempted to have an open mind to various thoughts talked in class and thus I deserve an A.





James Taylor

Narrative essay

CS330

5/5/2015

I did not know what to expect when I first signed up for this class. I'm still new to the major and figured this would be a good class to start it with. The first day when I walked in and we watched "Black Mirror" I knew that it was going to be a little different than most the classes I had taken before. Once we got to discussing things the next class in the circle I knew that I was going to like it a lot. This style was different, it reminded me of a political science class I had taken in high school where we would sit in 'Socratic circles' and discuss different political topics. Except here we got to do it every day, it really make you think about things differently by getting to know different sides of the story that other people could offer.

My main learning goal this semester was to listen to discussion as much as possible. My idea was to come to class and absorb as much of the conversations as I could. I caught myself talking to my friends outside of class about the topics we'd discuss. The future of automation especially so. I even showed a couple of them the video off of CCP Grey. Futurology has always been a cool topic I liked to read up on and for once I got to listen to my peers take on it as well.

Eventually I started looking these things up all the time outside of class. The Eisenstein book's views on society really had me thinking about the future of things. No one had ever told us about these things before, and for once there was a class where we addressed them openly. I come from a pretty conservative, extremely poor small town. People there never talk about the things addressed in this book; they, for the most part, could care less about the big world around them.

I do not necessarily feel like I failed any of my learning goals, but I am disappointed in myself for a few things. The first one being that I wouldn't read the Eisenstein book in time before class. Sometimes I just didn't have the time. What kills me is that I honestly love to read and found the book really fascinating but ever since the semester started my reading has plunged. I used to try to read a good book once a week, but because of my other classes I never had the time to just read/learn for fun. I always made sure I would catch up when I got the chance though and that's why I feel like I did not fail in that category.

My other main goal was to attend all the classes. And for the most part I did. Up until the end of the semester I think I had missed only one or two classes. At the end though I got really sick for about three weeks and am just now getting better. It all started with me getting strep. I had gone to UVA for the weekend, came back, and that Monday I felt like shit. I went to the health center and two doctors and every single last one of them told me I did not have it. So for about a week I was walking around in zombie mode until it finally went away. Then as soon as it did about 3 days later my throat got really swollen again but I could tell it wasn't strep. So I went

back to the quack of a doctor I saw and he had no clue what it was. I couldn't talk or eat, it hurt too badly, and so they just decided to put me on a regimen of steroids. Low and behold that didn't work either. So for about another two weeks I was constantly in pain because of my throat. They drew blood eventually to send to the lab and even tested me for strep again but that came back negative once again. Finally my mom, who is a nurse, did some research and came to the conclusion that I had an abscess on my tonsil. So I go back to the doctor. Nope, he says, it can't be that. We'll give you some antibiotics in case it is strep and see what happens from there. Three days later I had enough and scheduled an appointment with a throat specialist ASAP. On the Tuesday of the last week of classes I had a PA due but I had to drive all the way to Richmond to get this thing checked out. Turns out my mom was right, it was an abscess. So they stuck a needle in my tonsil, pulled out the bad stuff, and said I was good to go. The main kicker is that while I was in the waiting room of the specialist the doctor from Harrisonburg called to tell me that the lab report came in from them drawing my blood and it turns out I did have strep in the beginning. So I left Richmond that night and drove back to Harrisonburg and still didn't get the PA in. Haha I didn't even mean to go on a rant there, it just really pissed me off how basically the entire last month of the semester I was sick as a dog and no one could help me. I hope that justifies some of my absences because I felt really bad about missing that much class, especially in one that I really enjoyed.

After taking this class I definitely feel more educated. I guess I viewed the economy in a more conservative light than what I do now. I saw the failures in the economy such as the latest financial crisis and recession as government caused. Because of their misconstrued policies businesses had incentives to actually fail, causing a ripple effect that led to where we are now. And I still do believe this to a certain extent, but I realize now that people from both the private sector and the government have got to work together in order for the system to work. Before I was against lots of government regulation in the economy but after learning about just how huge the wage gap is in this country, and the automation of jobs I realized that there needs to be something done before it's too late. I guess this has led to me being more enlightened about the world around me as well.

The main thing I feel more enlightened about however is the effect of technology (especially cell phones and computers) on society around me. That project was actually one of my favorite parts of the class. I had already gone a week without mine so when you assigned the project I was already ready. I had no clue just how much EVERYBODY stays on their cell phones. It's ridiculous actually. People literally check their phones for ten seconds for every minute. That's a sixth of their lives staring at a small screen that doesn't actually produce or do anything that's of significant importance. That project actually got me angry. At the end of the week you just wanted to go up to people that were looking down at there's, grab their phones, and wake up to look at the world around them. It was also great seeing my fellow classmate's reactions as well, because it was like we were all thinking the same thing.

This semester was honestly a little rough for me. I had a lot of personal things going on and combined with school I felt like honestly dropping out. It was during the cell phone project that I decided not too though. I don't know if it was because of the project, but I do know that during that time I thought long and hard about everything and decided that I had come this far and that I wasn't going to let any of the bullshit stop me. From that point on I stopped letting a lot of the shit get to me and decided that I was going to work my ass off and do as well as I could. Without a cell phone I was disconnected and I could focus on just me. After that I decided that it was time to stop focusing on others every day and time to start focusing on me all the time. So yeah I guess you could say I definitely learned a lot about myself this semester, and the activities may have helped with that.

This style of course is the best I had taken. I could tell for once that a professor actually cared and was enthusiastic about the material. So when we had discussions your enthusiasm transferred over to the class and made us want to learn about the topics and material as well. These open discussions are what really made this class great for me. If I could recommend something different however it would be to discuss more books. I know that you wanted us to really absorb what Eisenstein was saying but I felt like it would definitely have been more fun to read more books and to discuss a deeper variety of things. It was still great though and I would take this class again in a heartbeat.

I would like for you to report an A to the registrar. Your class really had an impact on me. On Monday Wednesday and Friday I had three classes back to back to back with yours being the last, and on those days I would just think about that and it would help me get through those other stereotypical dull lectures that almost ruin the experience of learning for me. For once I looked forward to a class. I learned a lot from you and my classmates, and it didn't feel like a chore doing it. It was fun and it meant a lot to have a professor ask our opinions for a change instead of talking about their own for 55 minutes straight. I actually talked about this class outside of it to friends that aren't even in the major. I can't name one other class that I have ever done that with. This class changed my perspective on things and I feel like that's what good class is supposed to do.

CS 330
Tim Kaetzel

Coming into this class, I really didn't know what to expect. I knew that the class would most likely be discussion based and not be focused around coding, and thus it would be quite different from the other courses I took this semester. Because of this, my goals were to embrace that aspect - to let myself grow through this different type of course, focused purely on developing myself and my ideals. Further, I aimed to have the course help to "decompress" me, as I found that it was refreshing to sit and talk about things like Sacred Economics after being burnt out with discussing technical details of Computer Science.

As the semester continued, these goals developed further. Much of Eisenstein's writing seemed perfectly logical, while other parts initially struck me as overly idealistic. This led to the realization that, while in any other Computer Science course, there is a right answer and a wrong answer, there's a gray area in this course, which every student must find for themselves. My main goal became figuring out what my ideals are, and how they fit into a realistic grasp of the world around me, both in terms of the present and the future. This became the primary thought process that drove me through reading Sacred Economics. With each passing chapter, I felt as though my ideals were being flushed out more heavily.

I believe these goals were successful in many ways. Prior to this semester, I honestly never considered my role in Computer Science in regards to ethics. It was more along the lines of... these companies are doing these things with or without me - what I personally do is insignificant. Through readings, discussions, and Professor Benton leading by example, I have learned that this is not the case. I realized that ultimately, the individual is incredibly significant, as change is truly precipitated by individuals with strong visions of the world around them, who inspire other individuals to pursue the vision as well.

I never considered the idea of starting my own company as feasible or realistic. Now, I have been brainstorming heavily and would love to do so. I have some strong visions of how music software could be used in education, and nothing currently exists along with what my vision is, so I believe it could be useful. This vision would not be in place were it not for my development through this course.

Later in the semester, however, I briefly failed at my goals. I succumbed to personal issues and began to lose motivation to pursue success in my own life. Soon enough, I wasn't attending class or doing anything productive for myself, for the most part. I had given up on those strong visions that I had mentioned. However, eventually I just needed to find the strength to get back on my feet and pick the pieces back up.

Since then, I've realized that it was all part of learning. Failing in this helped me reassess what is truly important in my life, and what I wish to contribute to the world.

In the future, I will be more proactive in addressing these personal issues as they come along, rather than ignoring them until they fester up to an overwhelming degree. This is a flaw in many areas of my life, may it be procrastination on school work or cleaning my room; I tend to wait to do something until I really have to. However, all that leads to is "getting by", rather than being the best you can be. It's difficult to innovate or do something truly meaningful by waiting until the last minute with everything. I hope to learn from this and continue to improve on my skills of pursuing things in a timely, proactive manner.

I absolutely believe that this course has helped to develop "educated and enlightened citizens who lead meaningful and productive lives." In regards to educated, most of this comes from Eisenstein and the associated discussions. To be enlightened, you must first be educated and understand the issues at hand to a deeper extent. I believe that Eisenstein is very talented at this, and even more talented at breaking the issues down to a more digestible form that is easy to understand, even when dealing with complex issues. Through this and discussing his writing, I believe I'm much more firmly educated on the big picture of the world currently.

Off of that, I believe I am much more enlightened. Google defines enlightened as "having or showing a rational, modern, and well-informed outlook." Rationality has been developed by discussing Eisenstein and questioning it for myself, finding what I believe to be the most rational view of the problem and solution. It has become increasingly modern as Eisenstein laid out what these issues have evolved into with modern day, and predicting what problems these issues will bring in the future. Well-informed has been developed simply by coming to class and being made aware of all the topics in the class. So at the end of the day, I do feel much more educated and enlightened.

This growth would be almost inconsequential without applying it to our own lives, which would be the "leading meaningful and productive lives" part. Often times, I believe we must fail at something to truly understand it. I did fall down this semester, and lose all sight of meaningful contributions and productivity. Without this, I felt like I lost a feeling of meaning in my life, which led to frustration. Further, I began to see and think about issues going on around me, and realized I could be doing something about them. Finally, it all clicked and I had the strength to keep going and do something with my life again, and so I feel as though I understand this much better now.

As far as activities go, going without my cell phone and technology was great. I realized that my reliance on technology really does hinder my life and social interactions in many ways. This helps me shape what I want to do with my Computer Science career - I don't want to develop technologies designed to "connect people" that will ultimately hinder human communication, and I don't want to develop technologies that will further

push people out of the real world and prevent them from leading “meaningful and productive lives.” I only wish to develop technology that would supplement the real world and help people with their goals, rather than to become their goals.

I thoroughly enjoyed this style of course, and have explained it to many of my friends and why I believe it works so well. I am a very goal oriented person, and unfortunately, I’ve become very efficient at doing the least amount possible to succeed at a goal. This certainly has upsides and ways that it is beneficial, but in school, it directly interferes with the point of learning and shows the brokenness of the current grading system. However, the only goal in this class was to learn - I wasn’t doing it to beat a deadline, I wasn’t doing it to keep a certain grade, and ironically, this led to me being infinitely more motivated to pursue learning. I wanted to read Eisenstein for the next class. I wanted to be ready for the discussions.

Taking out the motivation of pursuing the course through fear of a bad grade leaves only the intrinsic motivation of learning for yourself, which means you must trust in human nature, which is something few people venture to do. However, I think this was necessary for me to realize how poorly the current system works for me and how well this worked for me. I can’t remember the last time I pursued assigned school work with such an attitude. If this could be managed and applied to other classes, I think it could be incredibly effective.

If I were to take this class again, there is little that I would recommend differently - part of the reason I enjoyed it so much is that it is so drastically different from anything I’ve done in the past, and so I didn’t have much criteria or expectations to judge against. The only thing that comes to mind would be having a more laid out structure from an earlier point, understanding in advance what is coming up, but once again, that could be a positive thing as well. I feel as though this style of class has much more arbitrary aspects that are based on preference. As a whole, I don’t think there were any glaringly obvious flaws in the course.

I have thought long and hard about the “pick your own grade” thing for the past month, especially when I was first coming out from my slump. Ultimately, the grade that I ask for depends on your definition of success in the course. If you define success as embracing the course material and gaining a lot out of it, shaping your personal views and leaving a meaningful impact on your life beyond the course, then I believe I deserve an A, and have succeeded greatly in the course. If you define success as consistent habits and putting in a large amount of work throughout the semester to earn the grade, I believe I deserve a B-, as I succeeded for most of the semester, but severely slipped near the end. Regardless, I feel a sense of success leaving the course, and I thank you for everything this semester.

Angela Huynh

Computer Science 330

Morgan Benton

Narrative Essay

When this semester started I honestly did not know what to expect from this class, the only information I knew about this class was the information I read from the course description. I expected that we were going to have many oral presentations and I was really nervous about speaking in front of everyone, I just thought to myself that “It’ll be okay.. whatever happens, happens.” After coming to class for a few weeks I really enjoyed coming to this specific class because I felt really good about the conversations that we would have in class, the topics that we talked about would make me feel good about life. My learning goal I wanted to set for myself was to find a purpose with the computer science degree that I wanted to pursue in. I believe the first couple of days in class you told us that we were going to figure who we really are and our contribution to society as a computer scientist. As I came to class I thought about what I am supposed to contribute to society after I was done with school and have gotten my computer science degree from James Madison University. Weeks go by, and the thoughts were still unclear about my purpose. Until one day in class Jessica, one of the four girls from our class spoke up and stated that she didn’t like programming, after class that day everything all of a sudden started to make sense to me and I knew what I was supposed to do with computer science.. I finally came to the conclusion that I didn’t want to major in computer science anymore. It took me a quite a while to finally realize that I didn’t want to be a programmer, to be exact with the time, it took me two years to finally admit that I didn’t want to find a job in the Computer Science field. I kept telling myself that I would learn to love programming and be happy, but that connection did not click. I switched my major to business-management, I realize all this time that I was more of a “people” person; I would rather deal with other people problems than the problems on my program I was writing, or if I had written a line of

bad code my program would have crashed. I want to use my business degree in human resource, which would be a great accomplishment for me, I would be set! The success I feel from coming taking this class is when I came to realization that I needed to switch majors and I took action in switching. Honestly in my opinion I don't think I have failed to achieve my goals because starting this coming up fall semester I will be taking my COB classes, I am actually really excited to be starting those classes. If I had to think of a failure, I would say one of my failures was dropping my CS major; I did not go through with my plans to receive a CS degree. I conquered this failure by switching majors; I switched to better myself and that makes me happier than where I was; even if that switch pushed me back a year, I am okay to except that. I really liked coming to class because all of our conversations were really interesting, and I would tell my friends about our class discussions that we would have in class. The book that we were assigned to read in class, Sacred Economics, had help contribute to my knowledge, I feel like with the help of that book I was leaning to wanting to go into the business field, I don't think that the activities had distant my future. I have a better grasp now on what my academic career. In this class there was a "choose you own grade policy" and the style of this course was that you would come to class and discuss what we have read and also about life, I thought this style of this course was great because I didn't feel pressured to come to class, I was willing and determined to make it to every class meeting. If I were to take this class again, I feel like this class shouldn't be taught any differently than how it was taught this semester, maybe I am just saying that because I have never been taught in a class that had choose your own grade policy and looked forward to coming to class. The only advice I would suggest is that if there were to be another article section that was going to be published to a magazine, I would say that we should have started on it earlier. Starting on my research paper with my classmates I know I didn't start on my part until the very last minute and we didn't really have much time towards the end of the semester to get our sections critique. The grade that I think I deserve in this class is probably an A because although I came to every class meeting except for one, I found out that I didn't want to do computer science

anymore and admitting that took me a while. I am glad I came to realize what I want to contribute to society. I am really thankful to have had the opportunity to have taken this class, I have met many nice people in this field also I feel like I have a better sense of what I want to pursue in; I also feel like I have found myself and be the person I want to be, little by little.

Thought and Reflection

First walking into the class I did not know what to expect. I knew nothing about the class going in and only knew the name was about ethics. I thought that maybe it would include a lot of extensive research on statistics of ethical issues in computing across the world or maybe just a lot of book work. However, it was something quite different. It was not about answer hunting through some book or just googling around until you find the answer like many classes are built upon, it was something more. It was built around self-thought and asking questions. It was about really forming thoughts and opinions on a matter and deep reflection which I really enjoyed and believe that is how you truly learn.

At first my learning goals were to learn whatever it took to earn a good grade (like most classes) but just after the first class I knew this one would be different. I wanted to really learn why this class would even be offered. There must be underlying ethical issues in this field and I need to really look at and understand them. I did not even think about any social or ethical issues that computing could have before this class. My goal became to really ask questions and find out the issues that my potential future job could have and how it would affect the world. My goal only evolved into an even stronger urge to find the answers to these questions throughout the semester. I asked myself questions like: "How will my job help people? How will it affect them and their lives? What will the long term effects be? What are all of the negatives of this developing technology? Does it out weigh the good? Is it worth it?"

I feel like I was successful in answering these questions and fulfilling my goals. Since my goals were more internal self-goals and more of a mindset for me there is not much for concrete artifacts to support them. This paper here and the technology free project as well as the article I did on self-driving cars are the only real world evidences I have to show that I learned to ask questions and weigh the good and bad of a developing technology and technology as a whole. I can tell you that it is important for any technology developer to really look deep before they release or help build something to see all of its potential effects. I bet when cell phones were first released the early developers had no idea the controversy they would have today. They were too eager to release something new and innovating just for the fame and money rather than waiting and really thinking about what it could do in the future. I think cell phones is the best example for what this course is all about. Cell phones have helped make communication so much easier as well as an all on the fly tool that can be used for so many different things. However, while all of this is good and cell phones help people stay connected, many families and friends feel even more disconnected. Cell phones have become a huge distraction for people and now are a big controversy for causing driving accidents. If people could have self-control and know when and where it is appropriate to use a cell phone and have the discipline to limit and moderate themselves then it would not be as big as a problem. Unfortunately not everybody can do that or knows how to do that. This is what this class is all about. It is important for future workers in this field to look at and understand

examples like this and learn to ask questions and really dig deep and see how their technology can affect people in every way and how to minimize the risks of the negative.

The only areas I feel like I failed in achieving my goals is not looking deeper. I would have liked to have asked more questions and participated better in the class. I think for the future it would be important for me to raise my hand and ask the questions I have or express my opinions to not only help myself but also help others in their own thought development. I wish this class was longer and we could have looked at other examples and tried more real world scenarios like the technology free project we did. Perhaps I could have spent more time outside of class looking at different controversial technologies. Even if it is not required or graded it would still have helped me in attaining my goal more so and given me a better picture of what the goal of this class is.

I definitely feel more educated and enlightened from this course. As I stated earlier, before this class I never even thought to ask questions or weigh the good and bad of technology. I cannot express enough how important asking questions is. I believe that the core goal of this course is to help enlighten students to asking questions and truly looking at if what they do as a job is ethically and socially okay. As hard as we can try to look for potential problems a piece of technology could have we will never fully know all of its effects until it is out and being used by the real world. This is an unfortunate problem because then sometimes it is too late. Still, it is the responsibility of technology developers to ask every question and look at every issue revolving around their development before releasing it and then addressing any issues that arise later that they missed. After taking this class I truly believe that it should become a required course for the Computer Science degree and not just some elective. It opened my eyes to see a whole other side to technology development. Computer Science is not just about learning the integral parts of computers and trying to innovate the next best thing but also seeing how it will affect the world. That last part was always invisible to me until this class and that last part is a big part of computer science.

The activities we did throughout the semester were very helpful. I really enjoyed both projects (technology free and the article) as well as the discussions we had throughout. One big activity that was enjoyable and I thought really expressed the point of this class was watching Black Mirror. It shows where technology could go and how bad it could become. It kind of shows a more extreme version of where we are today. The episode where the characters can get a chip installed to record their every move and how it can be used as evidence and how it tears people apart is sort of like where we are with cell phones. People are always recording and watching things on it and going back through text messages to prove a point and getting in fights about it. The technology free weekend really opened my eyes to how hooked on technology we are. I found it extremely difficult to go three days without technology and even messed up a few times but also I found more time to myself and felt less stressed not being on some device all day long. It was a fantastic idea to do that project because it goes to show how we need technology and how the world functions because of it but how it is important to

moderate your use. The research article we did was a perfect wrap up for the course. You get to pick a controversial subject in the technology field and dive in and look at where it is and where it is going and how it will help/hurt people in the future. We got to research and weigh the good and bad ourselves as well as post our own opinions on the matter and ask our own questions. I do not know exactly what I will be doing in the future but I do know it will work with technology in some way or another. No matter what I am doing this class has helped me to take a step back and have an open mind when looking at what I am doing and to see how it is affecting the world. It will help me to determine if what I am doing is truly worth it or if it is more destructive in the long run and that I should do what I can to help fix it or stop all together. This course was amazing and the style definitely worked for me. It was a very relaxed environment and welcoming to everyone. I like how we had open discussions almost every day which gave people the chance to express their feelings. You did an awesome job at taking in the opinions and suggestions of the students. Obviously I am not a teacher so I cannot confidently suggest or recommend what to do differently or the same but I can simply express my ideas on the matter. I think you should do everything the same but perhaps add in some sort of activity or thought provoking work along with the period of time in the beginning as we read through the book and talked about ethics and economics. Watching Black Mirror was a big help and maybe taking time to watch through a few more episodes and have a fun worksheet with it or something that helps some students pay attention but grade more on an effort rather than exact answers. Each class you have will be different so suggesting ideas to the class of what they think would help them learn and listening to their feedback would be good. Something fun to do would be to make a survey based on our feedback and hand it out to the next class section you teach on this subject and have them vote on what they would want to do and how they would want to learn. All in all I definitely think the technology free project should stay, the Black Mirror discussion, and the end of the semester technology article.

Professor Benton, I would like an A in this course because I truly put forth an effort to do well in this class. I always paid close attention to the class discussions and never lost focus throughout the exchange of dialog. I completed every reading assignment on time and participated in the technology free project (which was surprisingly a fun experiment). I took the article presentations seriously and put forth a lot of personal time and hard work into steering my thoughts in the right direction. I discussed my ideas with my group and tried to carry not only my own weight but also help those in the group who seemed to get lost along the way. I missed more classes than I wanted to from a combination of sickness, weather related issues, and exams (skipping class for extra study time) but given that I have to commute 30 minutes from Waynesboro every day I am content with the amount I did attend. The only other down fall that may have had an effect on my performance in this class was my lack of participation in the class discussions. I would always listen in and formulate my own opinions according to the flow of conversation and the different matters discussed, but rarely would I speak out due to my own insecurities and fear of negative judgment amongst my peers. I really hope my lack of courage is not enough to bump me down letter grade. I for one agree that grades are stupid

and actually take away from learning. Many of the things I have learned best have been from me truly being interested in a subject and researching and learning it on my own with no constraints or fear of meeting a deadline or trying to get a certain grade. Grades only add worry and stress to a student and can even turn them away from a subject by making them feel inferior to the topic or “too stupid” for it. The point of a classroom is to teach students, but with grades such a priority for students we end up doing everything we can in hopes of that perfect grade rather than actually learning something that will stick with us for the rest of our lives. I can’t tell you how many tests I’ve gotten an A on simply by memorizing everything right before hand and forgetting it all right after. Learning and creativity is best expressed through unconstrained thought and discussion in my opinion. If you were to give me an A in this class I would be truly grateful and appreciative. While there was not any required graded work in this class to show of my knowledge, I learned more in this class this semester than I have in any other class since I can remember. It truly opened me up to a new way of thinking and viewing things. This is something I can take away that will stay with me for the rest of my life. If grades are supposed to rate how much one student learned then I definitely stand by feeling that I learned an A’s amount worth. Thank you for being such a cool professor and perhaps our paths might cross once again in the future.

CS 330 Narrative Essay

What were your expectations coming into this class?

First entering this class I came with the mindset that there was going to be a lot of reports and essays. To be honest I don't mind writing; it's just that I wasn't as skilled of a writer as someone like Stephen King and I thought this class would fulfill my 300 level and above requirements for my CS major. I recently switched majors and wanted to progress as quickly as possible in my new major after saying farewell to the business school. But going back to the topic, I was reading the description of CS 330 from the 2014-215 CS catalog, which reads "Students develop skills in assuming and defending positions on societal and ethical issues through oral presentations and written reports." I thought to myself that this shouldn't be so bad. This reminded me of COB 202, Interpersonal Skills, but with a curriculum that is geared more towards Computer Science instead of Business. Going on, I will never forget the first day of class when we watched an episode of Black Cloud called "Fifteen Million Dollars Merits." At first, I thought our professor, Morgan Benton, was just trying to find a way for us to feel comfortable about the class. Yet, I thought it was too good to be true that we would watch videos everyday but I guess I was wrong. In general I feel like the class was really engaging and the workload was fair (not sarcastically speaking). I expected a more time-consuming type of class.

What learning goals did you set for yourself?

I didn't know what to expect from this class. There were no set goals for me in this class just because the class was an elective course. However, as time went by, I had a change of thought. During the course of this class we had to write a paper that we had the opportunity of having it published in the JMU newspaper. Wilson, Drew, and I partnered up to write about "Everyday Technology in Africa." We actually had a really good approach for this paper. We wanted to talk about how technologies have helped shaped African countries. Our whole idea was to raise awareness and expose the implications of technology, which we split into three parts. First, Drew will talk about the impacts of society and the negative effects of technology. Second, Wilson will talk about the rise of technological crimes in Africa. Finally, I will finish the paper off talking about conflict minerals and their effects on technology. I believe that the effort that we have put into our paper will be evident in the quality of the paper to even be considered for publication. I would have to say that that has been my main goal for this course.

How did your goals evolve over the course of the semester?

Professor Benton did a really good job with motivating students for the group paper. Although my group had tedious schedules, we always found a way to work on the paper. We made it a priority to meet at least once a week to get a lot of work on the paper completed. I really enjoyed presenting our progress of our paper during class times. We've gotten a lot of feedback on our

paper which enhanced our paper even more. In my opinion, we all contributed equally to the paper and we have all slowly evolved during the semester.

In what ways did you feel you were successful? Please refer to specific, concrete artifacts that would serve as evidence of your successes.

My main goal for this class is to have my group paper published. At first, I didn't have any realistic goals until we started on the paper. I think it would be awesome to raise awareness on things society doesn't really know about. The title of this course is "Societal and Ethical Issues in Computing." I think it's fair that we all at least make an effort to finish this group paper.

In what areas do you feel you failed to achieve your goals?

Midway during the semester we had a 3-day no technology use project. The rules were simple: We weren't allowed to use our phones, social media, or laptops. We were only allowed to use our phones for emergencies. For the first day of the project, I laid in my bed all day because of a big hangover. It wasn't intentional: I just had too much to drink from a party the day before the project started. On the second day of the project, I actually kind of struggled just because of the fact that I caught myself going on social media websites a lot. What I also learned about myself from this is that I'm much more productive when my phone is off. However, I was a lot more anxious not knowing who was texting or calling me. I didn't really plan for this 3-day technology trip due to the fact that I didn't notify anyone about it. Finally, on the third day, I literally spent all day in Carrier Library. I have to say I was more productive on this last day than the first two days combined.

Please reflect on what you think you've learned from your failures, and what, if any, plans you have to address those issues in the future.

I really learned a lot from myself in the 3-day technology project. This summer I'm planning on adjusting how I use my everyday technology. I know the summer break is a time when I relax, but planning early for the fall semester won't hurt me. In addition, I'm taking 3 classes during the summer and I'm trying to do an observation on how I study and what I can do to improve it. Summer classes haven't started yet but I know that one thing I should do is take effective breaks in between. This spring semester I didn't bother to go to the gym once. I'm really out of shape and I know working out not only has physical health benefits but it also serves as a stress reliever.

JMU's Mission Statement is to produce "educated and enlightened citizens who lead meaningful and productive lives." Do you feel more educated? More enlightened? Less so?

Before I answer this question I would have to say James Madison University is such a great school. I'm proud to say that I'm a Duke Dog and soon, if God grants it, I can call myself a graduate from this university. Now going back to JMU's mission statement, I believe it's a little bit farfetched. Personally, I feel more enlightened but realistically, the part where it mentions "meaningful and productive lives" is slightly misleading. There is no guarantee that all of us will graduate and live productive lives. This sounds harsh, but if this mission statement were true, we all would graduate and have productive lives. However, I feel like I approached this topic in a realistic manner.

How have your activities this semester contributed or detracted from your knowing yourself better and having a better grasp on what you want to do in the near or distant future?

There are a lot of sacrifices I have to make. I know classes will be getting harder and if I want to make the grades, I have to put in the time and effort. I know I have been doing a lot of partying ever since I came to this school and slowly I'm wearing away from it. I need to start setting realistic goals for myself and cut off the distractions. My worst fear as of now is not graduating. The amount of people that will be disappointed in me will be too much.

How did this style of course work for you?

I can't really complain about the style of this course. I actually wish more of my courses are like this. I feel like each project class should have a large continuous project.

if you were to take it again what would you recommend that I do it the same or differently?

I believe the class was superb; I wouldn't change anything about it. I can't imagine how CS330 will be next semester.

What grade would you like for me to report to the registrar for you, and why? As per our agreement, please remember that you can ask me to report any grade that you would like and I will honor that request.

I have never been in this position where I was asked what grade I would like. Then again, I wish more professors could do this. If this is possible I would like to receive an A for this course. I believe I came to class every day and participated in class discussions. Second, I feel like I've put in large amount of effort in our group paper, which I hope gets published