IT 697 SQL Module Two Reflection Journal

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1) Learning Experiences This Week

The second week of this experiential learning course provided me the chance to learn about many of SQL’s basic functions and capabilities from both an extensive Youtube tutorial and practicing on my own for our course discussion page. Additionally, I utilized some of this time to consider types of tasks and projects that might help me develop my skills and knowledge with the language.

I spent four hours of this past week watching and taking notes on a Youtube tutorial from freeCodeCamp.org. The video went in depth on familiar topics such as creating complex tables and relationships with a database schema and using standard queries and joins. It also touched on topics that were new to me including nested queries, on delete, and triggers. This tutorial will be helpful in building up the foundations of my SQL skills. It was the first time I watched examples of someone using SQL to interact with a database to retrieve information, and I feel much more prepared to practice writing queries. One last result of watching this video was getting an idea for work that demonstrates a typical use of SQL. I hope at some point to use an example of company database requirements to design an entity-relationship model and build a database schema using SQL that would meet their data needs. I am beginning to keep track of my project ideas and their present status at the end of my reflection. I would like to get 5-10 ideas that could eventually turn into 3-4 complex projects that demonstrate various SQL abilities.

There was also the opportunity to participate in the course discussion board about the SELECT clause. My work for this discussion was the first time that I wrote and executed my own queries. I read through the threads of my peers that had been posted when I first began, which gave me an idea of the content of the tables with which we are working. I had the goal of creating a list of animals that combined information from a separate table. After looking through the various tables and working through a couple errors in the code, I successfully executed a complex SELECT clause that included JOIN and ORDER BY. I was thrilled to have been able to accomplish what I had hoped, and I am looking forward to using the discussion boards to get some hands-on practice with SQL in a peer-to-peer learning environment.

2) Follow Up on Last Week’s Reflection Thoughts/Ideas

There are two parts of my reflection from last week which bear additional consideration after another week of experience. The first is my plan to reference my previous reflection before writing the new one each week. I believe this will remain a good strategy going forward, and on top of that, I chose to write this week’s reflection in this numbered format. I think the four sections I have identified are a good framework for me to reflect on each week, to put what I have learned and experienced into a larger perspective, and to keep a consistent path throughout the semester.

In my first reflection, I also brought up the benefits of participating in the discussion board early in the week, and my intention to do so as often as possible throughout the course. I posted to this week’s discussion at around 10 pm on Thursday evening, which is later than I had hoped. Since I am taking two courses while working full time, it is challenging to accomplish enough schoolwork early in the week to be able to post a discussion thread before Thursday. In order to stick to my original plan and to maximize the benefits of my work in the discussion, I am committing to putting in at least two hours to each course between Monday and Tuesday, which would theoretically leave me no excuse not to post my initial discussion thread on Wednesday. We will see how this works out, especially this week since I am not even finishing my reflection until Monday.

3) New Thoughts/Ideas from This Week

When I was learning more about SQL this week, I noticed a connection to work I have done in the past with the Tidyverse of the R statistical programming language. There are many similar functions between the languages such as SELECT, filter/WHERE, GROUP BY, ORDER BY, and others. I believe that my limited understanding and experience with the Tidyverse functions has already helped me comprehend the common uses of SQL, and I hope that I can build on that fact throughout this course.

Another semi-related thing on which I wish to reflect that happened this past week occurred at work during my department’s monthly meeting. Our director brought up some opportunities that the company offers to develop professionally and use those skills to help the department. One of those opportunities is a SQL course on my company’s learning platform, SovosU. I have not yet been able to look into the course, but I am hoping that I will be able intertwine it with this learning experience to build my skills and potentially incorporate SQL into my every day job.

4) Record of Project/Work Ideas and Their Current Status

* Company requirements -> database schema
  + Not started