COLLEGE LOOPS

Spring 2023 College Loops Challenge - *Student Guide*

This guide will help keep you on track to your College Loops Challenge submission! It may look like a lot, but we hope you'll revisit this document when you have questions about the Challenge.

Included in this guide you will find:

- **FAQs**
- **Evaluation Criteria**
- **Roadmap and Key Milestones**
- **Project Management Tips**
- **Submission Form**
- **Appendix (Getting Started with Pluralsight, Course List, & more)**

FAQs

- **What is the College Loops Challenge?**
  - The College Loops Challenge is an opportunity to get together with a team of Loop members and strengthen your bond by working on a project with shared goals and possibly winning some cool prizes.
  - There is a different theme and prompt each semester. For Spring 2023, we have partnered with Pluralsight to bring you *Beyond the Classroom.*
  - The *Beyond the Classroom* challenge will center around our GWC core value of bravery and the prompt is:
    - *Create a product or technical solution that showcases the GWC value of **bravery** by addressing a need in your community or solving a problem you care about.*
- **What does the 'Beyond the Classroom' Challenge entail?**
  - **There are 3 steps:**

    1. Participants will sign up for a Pluralsight account following these directions and complete the 1 hour Keeping Up With Technology course.

    2. Students will use what they learned in the Keeping Up With Technology course to select a follow-up course from this curated list. Note: these

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courses range from 1-2 hours. Students can choose follow-up courses from **5 main topics**:

1. Management
2. Software Development
3. Data
4. User Experience & Accessibility
5. Networking, Security, & IT operations

3. Use learnings from your follow-up course to create a product or technical solution that highlights our GWC core value of ***bravery*** by addressing a need in your community or solving a problem they care about.

Please Note: All students in a group that submits a project should take the same follow up course.

➔ **What are the prizes?**

- 1st place - **each** team member will receive:
  - A **$500** Visa gift card
  - A meet & greet with Dr. Tarika Barrett, our CEO
  - A feature on the GWC Official Instagram account
- 2nd place - **each** team member will receive:
  - A **$150** Visa gift card
  - A GWC water bottle
- 3rd place - **each** team member will receive:
  - A **$75** Visa gift card
  - A GWC water bottle

➔ **Who can participate?**

- Project submissions must come from a group of 2 (min) -10 (max) students at a college with a College Loop.
  - A Loop can submit more than one project (for example if your Loop has 30 people in it, you could cluster in three teams of ten, six teams of five, etc). However, one student cannot participate in multiple projects.
  - There may be more than one winning team selected from one Loop.

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- Students may start a Loop chapter at their college if there isn't one already.
- At least one member of the team needs to be registered on HQ.

➔ **What kind of project can I submit?**

- Your project can be a website, an app, a bot, a data visualization tool & more! Really, it can be any technical solution that highlights our GWC value of bravery.
  - ***Example 1: Product:*** *You and your team design a website for all GWC students and alumni across all programs to connect.* ***Example deliverable:*** *You upload a link to the website you and your team worked on.*
  - ***Example 2: Product:*** *You want to create an app for students in CS and CS-related fields to connect with potential mentors, folks who are early professionals and want to give back.* ***Example deliverable:*** *You upload a Google slides presentation including wireframes and mockups showing the planned features and design of the app, a description for the functionality and expected behavior, and other technical details and considerations.*
- **Please note**: Kindly refrain from using any GWC-provided examples in your project submission.

➔ **What if my team is new to coding?**

- That is totally fine! You can submit a technical solution that comes in whatever form you feel most comfortable with, for example, a Google slides presentation or process document explaining your project, its functions and why we need it, a portfolio of wireframes and mockups for your app, or something else entirely!

➔ **What if we have more questions?**

- We are hosting a College Loops Challenge Kickoff Event to do a Challenge overview and answer preliminary questions.
  - The Kickoff Event will take place Thursday, February 9th from 5:45-6:15pm EST (after the Palentine's Event!)
- Additionally, 1-1 time slots will be available between February 10th-March 8th:

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- For general questions, book with Janill (Feb 10-Mar 8)
- For technical questions, book with Jocelyn (Feb 21-Mar 1)
    - Please be sure to come with specific questions! Questions like “How can I incorporate what I learned from the follow-up course in my project?” or “How do I get started with my technical product?” are welcome; specific questions on debugging a certain part of your project may be out of scope. If you’re not sure, please email jocelyn.tang@girlswhocode.com with some context and I will let you know if it’s something I can help with!

➔ **How do we submit our project?**
- ◆ To submit your project, complete the Submission Form.
- ◆ The submission period starts **Feb 9th** and ends **April 10th (2 months).**

➔ **How are winners selected?**
- ◆ Girls Who Code, including staff, partner volunteers and/or tech-employed alumni will select 1 winning team and 2 finalist teams using this Evaluation Criteria.

➔ **When do we hear back?**
- ◆ The winner and finalists will be announced **May 9th.**
- ◆ Prizes will be awarded by late May.

➔ **Who do I email if I have specific questions?**
- ◆ You can email us with any questions at **CollegeLoops@girlswhocode.com**
- ◆ Or feel free book time with College Loops Program Manager, Janill Marquez!

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Evaluation Criteria

To determine our Spring 2023 College Loops Challenge winners, we will evaluate each project submission using the criteria outlined below.

➔ **Criteria 1: Integration of Theme and Prompt**

- Show us how bravery is embodied in both the product you submit *and* the process by which you got there!
- **Bravery Checklist:**
  - ☐ In what ways is bravery embodied in your product/technical solution?

    Reminder: Bravery can look like many different things, including going out of your comfort zone, advocating for yourself, being vulnerable, embracing mistakes, asking for help, or more!
  - ☐ In what ways did you practice bravery with one another while working on your project?
  - ☐ How does the product address a need in the community or solve a problem you care about?

➔ **Criteria 2: Collaboration**

- Your project is the product of the collaboration between individuals with different life experiences, perspectives, and interests, with community at its center. Show us!
- **Collaboration Checklist:**
  - ☐ How did you collaborate with and share expertise with your College Loop teammates to create this product?
  - ☐ How did you work together to overcome challenges that arose while working on the Challenge?

➔ **Criteria 3: Evidence of Learning**

- Your project should demonstrate what you've learned in the first Keeping Up With Technology Pluralsight course, plus a follow-up course. This is a chance to show how you've applied what you've learned!

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- **Evidence of Learning Checklist:**
  - [ ] As you look to the future and think about what you want to learn next, in school or out of school, what considerations will you take into account? How did you use these considerations to help you choose the follow up course?
  - [ ] What skills/knowledge did you practice in the follow up course in this challenge?
  - [ ] How did your team go the extra mile to integrate a technical concept you learned from the Pluralsight courses into your project?

➔ **Criteria 4: Originality and Innovation**

- You may have added a new spin on an existing idea, or created something entirely new! Show us how your product is unique and addresses an issue in a way not previously done before.
- **Originality Checklist:**
  - [ ] How does your project provide a new perspective on something or reframe an existing issue?
  - [ ] What makes your product different from what already exists?

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Roadmap and Key Milestones

Want a look ahead? Here is a general roadmap of key milestones:

February 9 - Challenge Kickoff (after Palentine's Event). Project submission window opens.

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February 10 - Janill's 1-1 General Sessions begin

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February 20 - Jocelyn's 1-1 Tech Sessions begin

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March 1 - All 1-1 support sessions end. PRO TIP: By this date, we recommend having a team and topic selected to stay on track!

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March 9 - Midway through Challenge. PRO TIP: By this date, we recommend meeting with your team at least once to stay on track!

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March 27 - Two weeks left until the deadline. PRO TIP: We recommend testing your project (app/website/code) to see if you need to course correct.

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April 3 - One week until the deadline. PRO TIP: We recommend uploading your project to the Submission Form to see if the files are compatible.

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April 10 - Project submission window closes. Complete the Submission Form by 11:59pm local time.

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May 9th - Winners announced via email!

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Project Management Tips

Let's start with a working definition. **Project management** is the process of leading the work of a team to achieve all project goals within the given constraints. Moving a project along requires collaboration, for example, working off of a common timeline, dividing responsibilities and meeting with team members to assess progress and identify/work through challenges.

Below are resources for different aspects of project management that can support you in meeting your goals:

- **Project Timelines**
  - Creating a project timeline *(see: How to create a project timeline)*
    - Timelines using: Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint
    - Free online resources, like TeamGantt
- **Meetings**
  - Creating a meeting agenda
    - Meeting agenda templates
    - Managing time during meetings
  - Brainstorming in a meeting
    - More brainstorming ideas
- **Time management**
  - Time management is the process of planning and exercising conscious control of time spent on specific activities, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity.
  - Below are a few resources that can help you manage time effectively while working on your project:
    - General time management tips for college students
    - Monthly, weekly, semesterly approach

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Submission Form

Once you're ready to submit, head to the Spring College Loops Challenge Submission Form!

If you have any questions, please feel free to email Janill at CollegeLoops@girlswhocode.com.

Appendix

Getting Started with Pluralsight

For this Challenge, you will be completing courses on the Pluralsight platform. First, you will need to sign up:

- **Signing Up**
  - 1. Go to this link.
  - 2. Enter your email address and submit.
  - 3. Check your email for an invite with the subject line "GWC invited you to join Pluralsight!". If you don't see it in your inbox, check in your Spam or Junk folder.
  - 4. Accept the invite in the email.
  - 5. Either sign in (if you already have an account) or create an account on the page.

- **Using Pluralsight for the Challenge**
  - The first course you will need to complete as part of this challenge is Keeping Up With Technology.
  - After you complete this course, choose one of the follow up courses from our Pluralsight Course List (below). If you're not sure which course to choose, we recommend watching the first video, usually titled "Course Overview" or "Introduction", which is usually 2 - 5 minutes long. This will usually include an overview of the concepts of the course as well as prior knowledge needed and can give you a good idea of what to expect.

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Pluralsight Course List

Topic	Courses
Management	• Introducing Scrum* • Intro to Leadership and Management for Developers* • Agile Transformation: The Big Picture • Agile Fundamentals • Scrum Master Fundamentals • Product Management • Project Management
Software Development	• Functional Programming: The Big Picture • Git: The Big Picture • Building Web Applications with Node.js and Express • Front End Web Development • Understanding Android Application Basics
Data	• Artificial Intelligence: The Big Picture of AI* • Deep Learning: The Big Picture* • Understanding Machine Learning* • Understanding Machine Learning with Python 3 • Data Science with R • Big Data: The Big Picture • Introduction to SQL
User Experience and Accessibility	• User Experience: The Big Picture* • UX Accessibility* • Developing Websites for Accessibility: Getting Started • Responsive Design with Bootstrap 5 • Creating User Experiences: Fundamental Design Principles
Networking, Security, and IT Operations	• Penetration Testing: The Big Picture* • Security Architecture and Design: The Big Picture • DevOps: The Big Picture* • Site Reliability Engineering (SRE): The Big Picture*

PLEASE NOTE: Courses marked with an asterisk (*) have no prerequisite knowledge required.

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➔ General Pluralsight Tips

- What is Pluralsight?
  - Pluralsight is a tech workforce development platform. Pluralsight provides resources like online courses that fuel skill development among organizations, teams and individuals.
- Each course has multiple tabs with information that can assist your learning as you progress:
  - **Table of Contents**: displays each section in the course and a link to each video in each section
  - **Description**: a summary of the course and its content
  - **Transcription**: text that aligns with the audio of the course. Note that you can click the text and it will link to the section of the video with the corresponding audio.
  - **Exercise Files**: resources including slides, sample code, etc, may be found here
  - **Discussion**: questions asked to the course instructor, along with responses, are displayed here
  - **Learning Check**: a series of questions that assesses your understanding of the course material and provides real time feedback
  - **Related Courses**: recommended courses for further study.
  - These tabs can be found below the “Set a learning goal” section:

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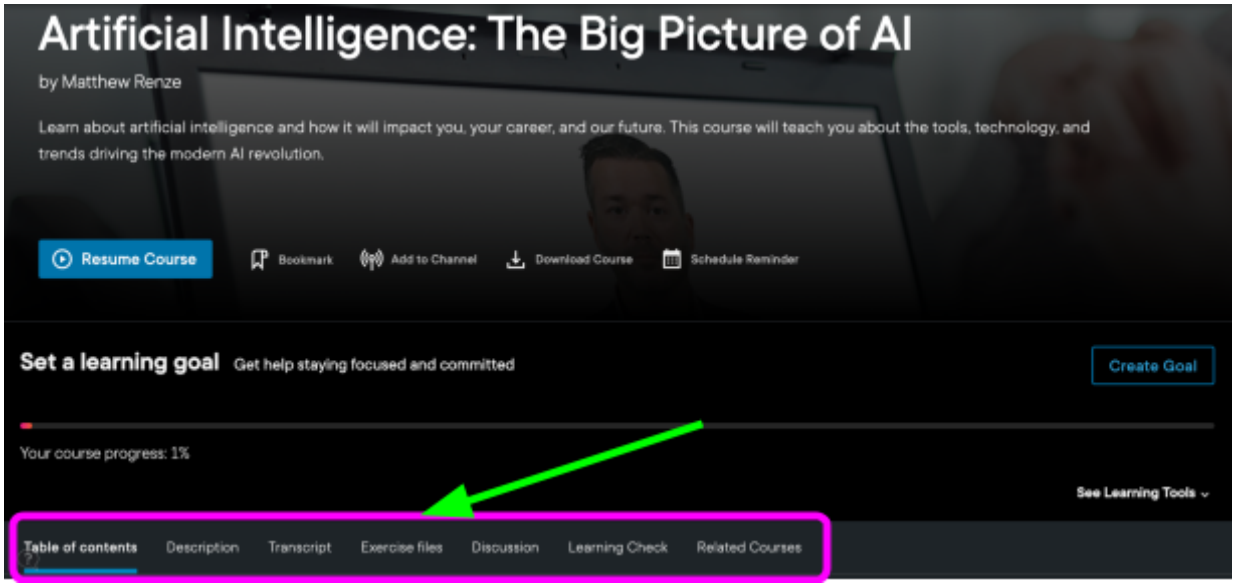
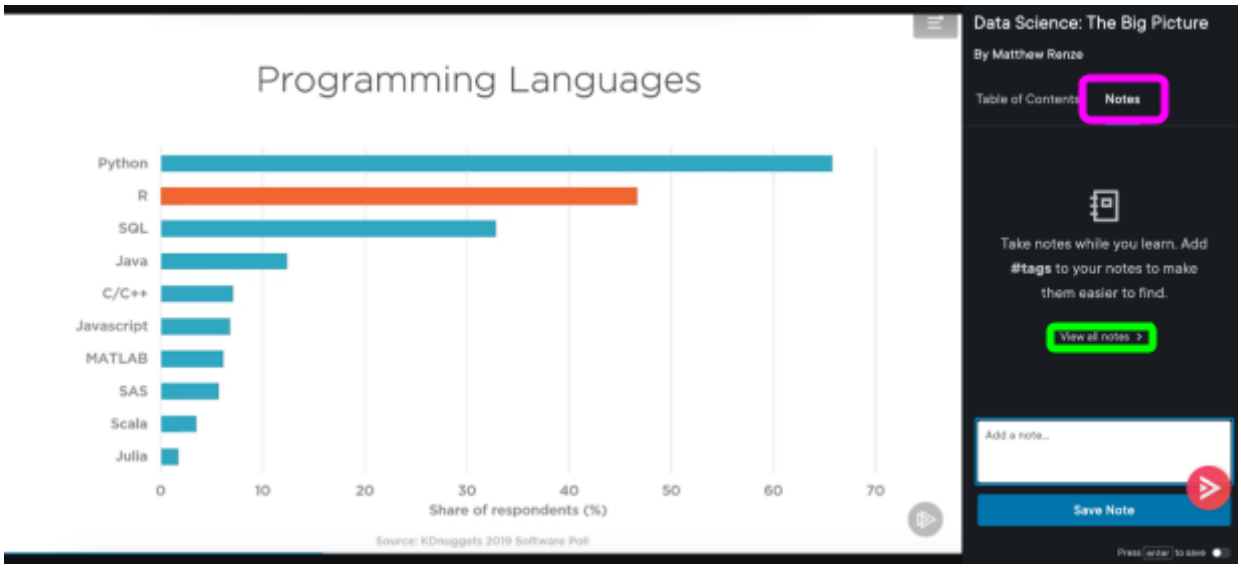


➔ **Note Taking**

- You can take notes by selecting the “Notes” tab (circled in pink below) writing your notes, and pressing “Save Note.” You can also view all your notes at once by selecting “View all notes” (circled in green below).



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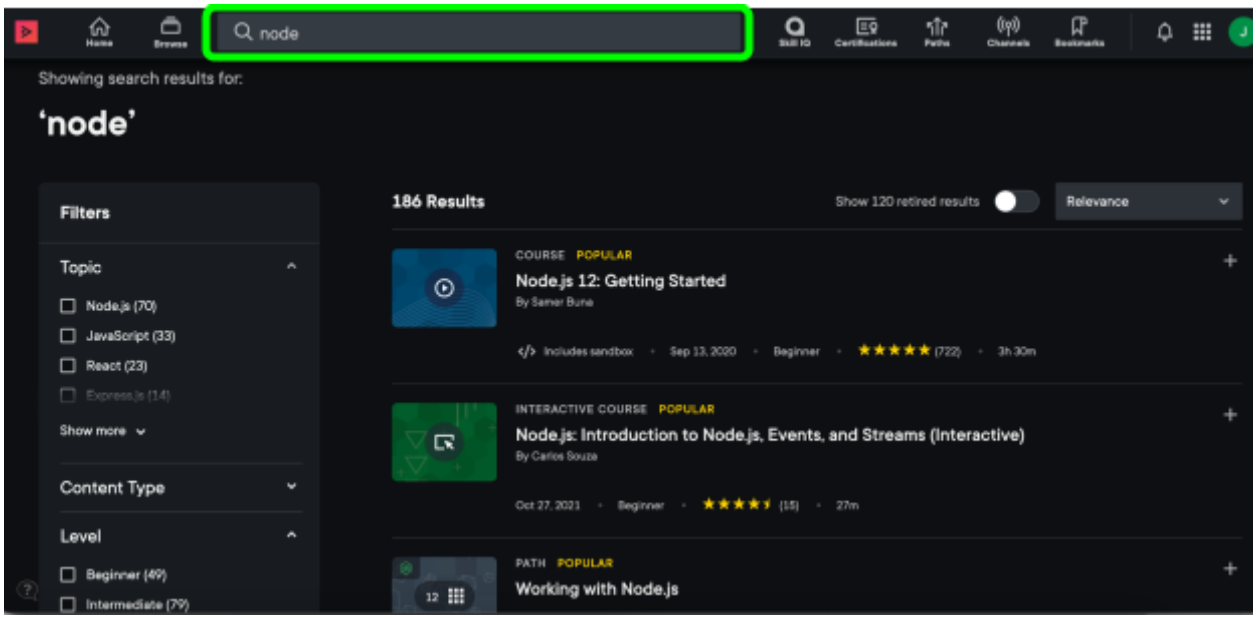
➔ Pluralsight for Further Exploration

◆ Search

- If you'd like to continue using Pluralsight after this Challenge, there are many ways to find new courses. First, you can use the search bar at the top of the screen (circled in the screenshot below) to find courses by keyword.



- When the search results populate, you can filter by topic, content type, level, publish date range, duration, and ratings in the left topic. In the results, **</> Includes sandbox** indicates an interactive coding portion where you can try out the code on your own.
- **Paths**
  - If you are particularly interested in developing certain skills, select "Skill IQ" to the right of the search bar (circled in green in the screenshot below). Then, you can either browse the skills listed by topic (highlighted in pink in the screenshot below), or enter a keyword in the search bar that says "Filter Skill Assessments".

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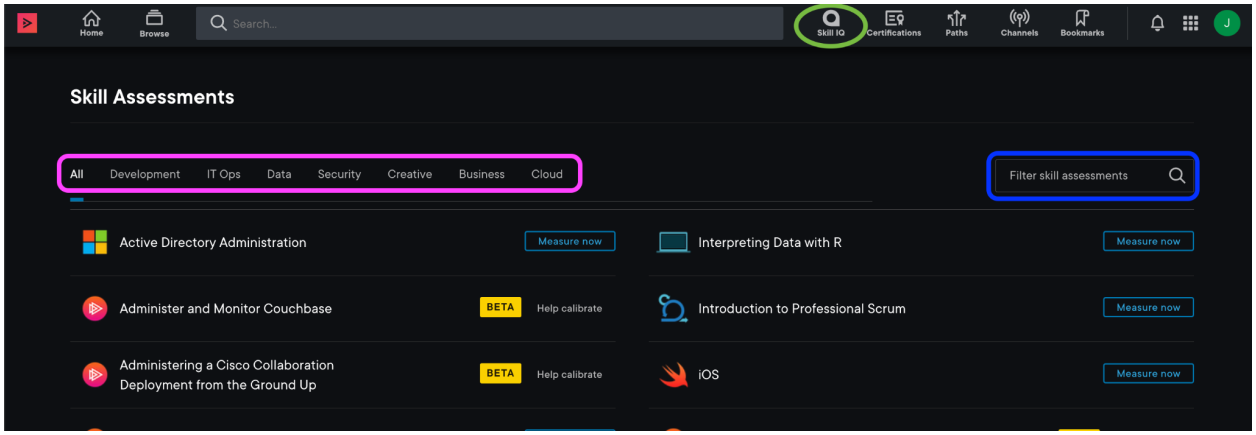

- When you find a skill you would like to develop, click the "Measure Now" button, which will take you to an assessment.

- This assessment of approximately 20 questions will assess your skill level, give you feedback, and recommend paths, which are a series of courses to complete in order to develop a skill. You can take a reassessment of that skill as many times as you'd like to check your progress. Note: since the assessment is adaptive to how many questions you've answered correctly, you will not get the same questions upon reassessment.

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