

Nathan Shek
Letter to Next Cohort

Hello creative coders!

I'll be upfront and honest – this isn't an easy class, especially if you haven't coded before. We've learned a LOT of concepts and at a very fast pace, and while the weekly challenges and sketches are good for checking to make sure you're at a good place understanding-wise, falling behind in this class will make it incredibly difficult to catch up. I personally had not coded before this class, so all of this material was new to me, and it took me a long time to fully grasp and apply the concepts that we were learning.

With this being said though, this doesn't mean that there's no hope! (I mentioned that I had never coded before, but I was also able to get pretty good grades and apply/understand most of the concepts we learned). It's so generic to say this, but my biggest piece of advice would be to not procrastinate – if you give yourself enough time to learn more and to understand what's going on, you'll be able to solve problems even if you come across them and you feel like you're at a roadblock. Considering the size of these sketches/assignments/projects, all procrastination will do is force you to get through everything – drafting up an idea, planning, actually writing the code, and debugging – within a very short amount of time, and it just doesn't work well, especially if you happen to stumble upon a problem. Make sure you're spending enough time outside of class working – whether that means reviewing the textbook, re-watching lectures, or even just coding for fun – it may take up a lot of time, but I promise it'll be worth it in the end.

Speaking of coding for fun, take advantage of the fact that this is “creative” coding! You can create anything you want in this class, so don't underestimate your ability to create spectacular and unique things. If you make something that feels more important to you (or something that's “fun” to make), it'll feel so much easier and less stressful to create the code and finish the process.

I genuinely hope you have a fun time this semester – it won't be easy, but make the most of it and I promise you'll do really well!

-Nathan