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Professor Morgan Benton

ISAT 252

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**End of the Year Narrative**

**What were your expectations coming into this class?**

Coming into ISAT252, I thought it was going to be some introductory class that walked us through some of the many programming languages, teaching what things are done and how they are done. Right off the bat I found this to not be the case. It seemed like everyone was miles ahead of me whether they believed so or not.

**What learning goals did you set for yourself?**

I tried to be loose with my goals because I did have other classes I needed to focus on. My main goal was just to learn something new that had to do with programming. And I didn’t limit myself to it having to only involve this class. My main accomplishment was when I was able to write some code that was able to create circuits for one of my engineering classes, complete with power supplies, resistors, capacitors, and inductors. I surprised myself with what I was able to do.

**What did you actually do? List the tutorials and websites you used/visited. Estimate the amount of time you spent outside of class.**

As previously mentioned, I did some coding stuff for an assignment for one of my engineering class’s project assignments. I was able to create three circuits that had battery supplies, resistors, capacitors, and inductors. This took a good deal of time because it was entirely new, and the professor gave no kind of guidance. For two weeks I probably spent about a total of ten hours looking at tutorials, practicing, and then attempting the assignment.

With the other time, I mostly just read some tutorial books that my mom has. She works in IT and still has some of the books she read for some of her certifications. The main one I looked at was a Teach Yourself C++ textbook. The first 5 chapters took about two and a half weeks for me. These chapters topics included C++ basics, C++ extensions to C, C++ memory allocation, overloaded functions, and C++ structures. Then it took me a week and a half to do Chapter 6 which had to do with references. Reading through these chapters also included doing the exercises that were in each chapter.

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

As the semester progressed, my goals got more and more loose, until it got to what I put above. My professors began assigning so many assignments, more than what they were doing before classes got moved online. This made it more and more difficult to focus on my non-major classes.

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

I feel I was successful because I did not stop working. Do I think I did as much as I would have done if we were still having classes in-person? No. But I could have just as easily stopped working at all. But I kept doing some kind of work.

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

I definitely did less than I would have in-person. But it’s difficult to stay motivated when you have no sleep schedule and are trying to stay from going insane staying with you parents all this time.

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

I have learned I cannot control everything, but I am in control of my own success.

**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?**

I feel less educated and less enlightened. Mainly by my other classes that need that face-to-face instruction. Online is not the way I want to learn. If that were the case, I would not be going to JMU. I need that face-to-face time where I can ask questions and interact with others. I really hope that next semester, we will be able to go back to normal.

**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?**

While I didn’t like being online, I feel this semester contributed to knowing myself better, but detracted on knowing what I want to do in the future. It is the face-to-face interactions with professors and other students that get me interested in things. With it being online, I can’t have those lab experiments or in-class examples.

**What grade would you like for me to report to the registrar for you, and why?**

I would like an A but I’d be happy with a B. I say an A because if we were still in-person, I would still have those people I could talk to and get help from. Mark, from the section before mine who is also an engineering student, was a great help for me. And I know there were also some other engineering students taking this class or have taken something similar to that class. I also have the worth ethic, now more than ever, to be my best self and be a self-learner while not being afraid to ask for help. This is something I believe you were heavily emphasizing in person, especially which the creation of the groups. But I’d be happy with a B because I feel that that is the amount of work that I put in while classes were online.