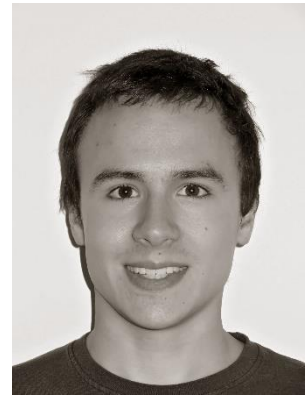


Dear Mr Yien, Dear Mr Fleming,

From the first time I have read the PDF describing your capstone on, I have considered it as the perfect fit for me this year. Let me first introduce myself. I did my undergraduate in France, where my curriculum has slowly deviated from pure mathematics to computer science. Last year, I became eager to specialize in data sciences, which led me to take two courses on Coursera: “Computing for Data Analysis” (Johns Hopkins U.) and “Machine Learning” (Stanford). I also became more and more attracted to start-ups and willing to make a career in small tech companies. With these background and interests, it was only natural for me to apply for a Master’s degree in IEOR at Berkeley, next to Silicon Valley.



Last year, I also took part in two five-month-long computer science projects that involved four other students from my university. I enjoyed a lot taking part in these projects, both because I liked the everyday challenge of coding, and because they gave me valuable insights about how to work in a team on a long-term project. At the beginning of the second one, I realized how much the first had already taught me in terms of coding and group organization.

I am sure that these two experiences will help me cope better with the capstone project. I have now a pretty clear view of how to decompose a long-term computer science project into several sub-tasks. I think that this skill is key to the success of the project, since a group can lose a lot of time and energy because of a lack of organization.

What these projects brought to me enticed me to look forward to the capstone project I will take part in this year. In particular, the one you propose would be a great opportunity to have a more project-oriented approach to data sciences. I would also like to seize this opportunity to work with EECS students and learn from them. Apart from data analysis, I am equally interested in how to display the information we found in a beautiful and effective manner. In general, I believe that UI is as important as the service you provide. The skills I have in JavaScript, which I acquired through the development of a Chrome extension and through general website development, should prove useful for this part of the project.

Beyond the technical aspects, this project aims at answering a question that I couldn’t be more interested in finding the answer: “What makes a startup succeed or fail?” Even though I would enjoy working on any data mining project, it is much more motivating to work on one where every insight you get is valuable. Moreover, as the general startup ecosystem appeals to me, I would be happy to provide startups with information that helps them succeed.

More generally, I am eager to learn more about the Lean Launch method in general, because I think its focus on customer is key to a start-up’s success. Your positioning is also one of the things I appreciate. A lot of people are willing to create start-ups, and leveraging this environment rather than creating a consumer product is an astute idea.

In summary, my skills in data analysis, in the programming language R, in coding in general, and in how to conduct a long-term project with other students make me a likely candidate for this project. Moreover, I am more motivated than ever in working hard on the project you propose and doing my best to make this capstone project a success. I sincerely hope to work with you this year, and I look forward to hearing from you.