

# Personal Statement

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The theory courses I took during my last year of undergrad were mainly small, graduate-level courses and it was in these classes that I began to see the importance of not just technical ability but of having a *personality* that lends itself well to studying theory. In addition to having a strong technical grasp of the subject, the professors in these courses also were clearly still amazed and surprised by the material, and their enthusiasm imbued something similar in their students. When I met with Euiwoong Lee to speak about our research problem, I usually had at least one other unrelated theory question for him, and he always took the time to answer them. I look forward to making the department at Northwestern a place where the academic ecosystem is at its best; a place where the mentor and teacher can transfer to the mentee and student not just technical knowledge, but an appreciation for theory and a recognition of its beauty and importance.

I also believe that academia at its best is collaborative and interdisciplinary. The emphasis within the Northwestern theory department on collaboration with other departments would also allow me to encounter new problems and to approach them from the algorithmic lens that I have come to love and appreciate.