

## **Individual Capstone Assessment**

**Trung Nguyen**

From a personal academic perspective, I see the capstone project as a summation and a display of both skills and knowledge acquired throughout my college career. From the very beginning, each course had built upon another, preparing me for the ultimate goal – becoming a professional in my field of choice. I was allowed to explore a broad spectrum of career paths that will be available to me once I graduate and was equipped with knowledge and skills required to be proficient in whatever path I might take. During this time, there have been people that I met and interacted with that have been integral to my learning experience, some of whom will be joining me in this project. I was also given the opportunity to acquire real world experience via my co-ops, which I believe will give valuable insight into working as a team on a project of this scope. Now that I have built a good foundation and have solid grasp of what I want to accomplish upon joining the work force, the capstone project can act as a transitional achievement.

I do believe that my interest in becoming a software developer started budding when I took Programming Languages (CS3003). Having a great professor like William Hawkins made the content easy to engage with, and the material itself is diverse, giving me the opportunity to step out of my comfort zone and try out languages I have never heard of before. Following this, Design and Analysis of Algorithms (CS4071) was also fundamental to my development as a CS professional. It set the tone for the majority of classes following it, acting as a more in-depth look into the field while being broad enough to be applicable to various paths. Finally, I was getting to try programming concepts that were still foreign to me with Computer Networks (CS4065). Up until that point, I had no experience working with networking in my code. This class allowed me to take a deeper dive into the potential of networking in programming, something I believe we will employ extensively during our project.

As mentioned above, my goal once I graduated is to go into software development and a major formative part of this goal was the experience I gained during my co-ops. I feel as though my first two co-op experiences, which were EEPs, were not very fruitful. Thankfully, I was offered a position working at FOX Sports once the pandemic was over and enjoyed three wonderful semesters there. It was the first time that I got the opportunity to work in a professional setting, learning a completely new language and programming convention, as well as getting used to the office life flow. It was this change of pace that really established a clear vision for myself, and I hope to continue my journey at FOX Sports after graduation. Overall, I believe my insight and first-hand experience on software development will be beneficial in this project and the soft skills I picked up will make me a better teammate.

What makes me excited about the capstone project is the potential for collaboration and showcasing of abilities. I understand that a career in software development is intrinsically linked to other CS disciplines. Most of the time, one developer is working with a team, with some specialized in different areas, to finish and maintain a project or application. This was highlighted during my co-op, with the ability to delegate responsibilities and updating individual progress with the team being emphasized. The capstone project is the perfect mixture of both, working in a team of three with both software developers and machine learning engineers. It is also a display of technical skills for future employers, displaying various programming principles and potentially a new language in my repertoire.

My approach to the project is also what I mentioned briefly before: responsibility delegation. Breaking the project into small chunks and assigning them to appropriate team members according to

their specialties is the right approach for me. My focus is one front end development, and I hope to be proficient enough in CSS/HTML to create the face of our webapp. I wish that this application could be something that I can use in everyday life, apart from it just being a capstone project. The criteria for self-evaluation would be setting multiple benchmarks depending on our timeline and comparing my progress to those benchmarks. If I am behind, a revision of goals would be required and maybe a workload revision with the team will be called if we think we might have better ways of tackling the project.