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### General Education Reflection

During my years at Iowa State University, I took a variety of interesting general education courses. Like many of my peers, I initially had a few of the same questions. Why is this necessary? Do I really need courses like this for my major? Reflecting on my previous experiences in these courses, I have found my answers. The general education courses I have taken that stood out most to me are Soc 134 (Introduction to Sociology), HD FS 276 (Human Sexuality), and SP CM 323 (Gender and Communication).

I have found these courses to be beneficial in a variety of ways. As engineers, we often tend to focus primarily on problem solving, as well as the technical aspects to everything. Human Sexuality was an interesting course for me because it allowed me to learn more about not only different things regarding gender but also more about the LGBTQ community. As a gay male, I often considered myself well-educated on LGBTQ topics. However, this course, as well as Gender and Communication, allowed me to learn more about different gender roles, as well as more gender-neutral terms that allow for individuals to be more comfortable as themselves. This is useful because it allows me to see problems from other perspectives, as well as identify potential topics that may make some people feel uncomfortable or may come off as offensive. It has become quite easy for me to speak using the pronouns “they/them/their”, and to ensure I am using someone’s preferred pronouns when meeting them for the first time. This is very important in today’s world, where more and more people are becoming comfortable in being themselves,

and I will most likely need to ensure not to unintentionally cause offense to people I may encounter in the workplace.

In conclusion, I now have answers to the questions that many of the incoming students in my field may begin their college experience with. I believe that as engineers we *do* need to take courses like this for our degree. It is necessary because, without them, we would stay secluded in our field, stuck in our old ways. With these courses, we are able to branch out, learn new things about others that we may not have known, and be able to eliminate potential miscommunication that may cause unintentional harm and interfere with our work. Being able to see from other peoples' perspectives is very important, and I am grateful for having taken these courses.