

Personal Statement

I have always been fascinated by human behavior. My passion for the humanities has given me the opportunity to pursue academic and career paths related to people: literature helped me better understand and interpret people's thoughts within a certain context, sociology allowed me to study human behavior, and digital marketing and product management gave me the means to analyze consumer thoughts and behaviors in a commercial setting. I learned that despite our cultural and social differences, we have many similarities that can be predicted and analyzed into providing better insight into these behaviors and ultimately helping to provide for people's needs. It is for this reason I became interested in machine learning, as it would allow me to learn new ways of analyzing, predicting, and even imitating human behavior. I believe that the MCIT online program is the perfect program to help me achieve my goal.

Why the MCIT Online Program?

Comprehensive curriculum: The MCIT online program curriculum focuses on the fundamental theories of computer science, which makes it easier for students from non-CS backgrounds to catch up on the basic concepts of programming. Students have the opportunity to learn machine learning languages, such as C++, Java, and Python. I would also like to take advantage of elective courses related to machine learning, such as linear algebra, case studies, and hands-on exercises. I believe these skills are essential in helping me build a solid foundation, be more connected to the latest market trends, and explore the possibilities of machine learning.

UPenn community values: UPenn encourages and fosters a community of openness in its student body, which lets students engage in helpful, productive dialogues. As a queer Asian member of the LGBTQ+ community, I see the importance of having a community that not only supports diversity but also addresses the many issues faced by minorities. I also saw that a case study was conducted for the "Computational Thinking for Problem Solving" course in which the UPenn LGBT Center used Python to optimize meeting schedules. While it did not address LGBTQ topics directly, it made me see how open the UPenn community was to giving visibility to the LGBTQ+ community as well as investing resources into giving all their students equal footing. I know that at UPenn, I will be able to use the power from the UPenn/MCIT community to fight against gender and race discrimination and speak out for more disadvantaged groups.

How Will I Succeed in the Program?

Previous experience with online programs: I have experience with achieving online certification. For example, I received the PMP certification using only online lessons and learning materials on my first attempt in two months, while the success rate on the first attempt is about 50 percent. It was important to me to study strategically, so I researched how students had passed it in the past and what resources were most helpful to them. By mapping out the contents and resources I wanted to study, I was able to create a study plan combining my resources and content from the official guidebook. I believe my success with passing the PMP certification was due to my time management, organization skills, and ability to flexibly work with and adapt to different kinds of material.

Previous experience with self-organized projects: As a senior marketing planner at So-net Entertainment, I was responsible for marketing projects for mobile games and was in charge of installing apps. My former supervisor had provided me with a budget, but I was left to organize the rest of the project myself. This required exploring different possibilities, such as exchanging resources for free impressions with other media, as well as careful planning. By thoroughly calculating costs, such as conversion rate, daily active users, and cost per click, I successfully reached the project KPI within the original budget.

Awareness of my strengths and setting a clear career goal: My goal is to join the machine learning team in streaming or digital media companies. To achieve that, I have to accomplish two things: sharpen my machine learning skills and integrate my strengths into my experiences.

To strengthen my machine learning skills, I have set the goal of catching up on basic Java before the fall semester. I will also find learning resources and discuss topics with my engineer friends outside of the MCIT program.

I was accountable for digital marketing and product development, and my daily work included profiling the target audience's preferences using statistics, developing functions via data analysis, and writing ad copies by observing the people and culture. These areas are where machine learning can be applied, and I look forward to combining these experiences with my programming knowledge and passion for people, to provide more valuable and comprehensive insights—including business and humanities—to the community and companies I will join.

What Can I Contribute to the MCIT Community?

Promote the MCIT program: I would like to participate in MCIT Online webinars, such as the Alumni Spotlight on Women in Tech, and share my experiences with more people. I will use my digital marketing knowledge to promote this program as well, help the program grow its brand awareness, and make a profit. The more students join this program, the more the MCIT community will grow. Eventually, it will become a positive cycle.

Take part in the LGBT Center: In addition, I also want to contribute to the UPenn LGBT Center. I used to volunteer for an LGBTQ non-government organization in Taiwan. I volunteered for the AIDS Life/Cycle event, which is an annual cycling event held in California to fundraise for AIDS in the summer of 2019. By combining my identities, life experiences, and work experiences in LGBTQ organizations, I believe that I can do a lot for the UPenn LGBT Center.

Why Me?

I believe my abilities, work experience, motivation, and character can lead me to succeed both academically and professionally. My intercultural and diverse background is also my motivation to think about how I can make a positive impact on people's lives. As a Taiwanese immigrant who lives in the U.S., I want to use the skills I will gain from the MCIT online program to eliminate language barriers and create spaces for people with different backgrounds, reducing miscommunication and encouraging dialogue across cultures.

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