

End of course reflection

Woohyuk Yang

yangwo@oregonstate.edu

I used to write a program using C language before taking CS161. Since C language has its own features which are good for procedural programming, I had only experienced procedural programming. I had heard of the concepts of Object-Oriented Programming but didn't know the concepts related to that style of software engineering.

At First, writing a program in OOP was really confusing. However, I feel like I'm learning more concretely about the concept as I take this class. The most important concept I have learnt from the class is definitely OOP related programming knowledges and skills. Even though people can write the programs using different languages or styles, OOP allows people to co-operate more easily when the project should be done by a team. OOP allows us to use abstraction in software development, which provides various advantages to programmers can use when they develop a program. That's why many tech companies hire people who know at least one language for OOP. I also think I need to be prepared to work with other programmers. While individuals are also able to make good programs, working with other people can lead to greater achievements. Working with other programmers is very important which is why I think learning about OOP programming is my most valuable achievement this quarter.

Starting to learn about C++ this quarter for the first time and adopting the concept of classes and objects has made me lose the flow of my logic at times. Continuing to write code with several classes and objects has helped me understand the concepts more clearly. Practice makes perfect. I learned the basic notions and concepts of specific C++ language features. I had to write a code and compile it to run it. In order to get out of bad coding habits, I referenced many codes which are already written by other good programmers from Bjarne Stroustrup to some bloggers wandering "stackoverflow.com".

At first, I had doubts about taking classes online. In my country, it is still rare to take some classes online. I have never studied online before like many other people around me. I could not get any advice from anybody. I was so eager to learn about computer science so I started the course despite my doubts. I worried about a lot of things at first such as administrative aspects. I was surprised that I could adapt so easily to an e-learning environment. I could talk to other people who thought differently from me and who were willing to teach me about so many things using state of the art IT technology. I had quite a lot of communications with other students who are in the same shoes as mine. I could spend my time on studying instead of just killing time on my way to school. Doing service in the military full time, I could discipline myself and adjust my time to maximize the efficiency of studying too. I could study early in the morning and late at night whenever I wanted to and could.

Being satisfied with my first online class, I can adopt some lessons and tips I got from my own experiences to the next classes I would take in the future. At first I only read the textbook but I wanted to learn more and read other various codes written by various programmers. Of course, the text book is the most important material to study from first but when the textbook is done with, getting used to other codes will help me a lot when I need to maintain codes written by other people. Some clumsy codes could be found but reading it is helpful when it comes to raising abilities to debug the codes made by other coders. Submitting assignments by deadline each week made me more disciplined in my study. I could go a little bit slowly but could not stop studying at all. My mind was all obsessed with codes which I had written but did not work well. I had fun solving problems and reducing errors. The abilities I can focus on are writing, analyzing, and debugging codes which will help me a lot for studying future classes further.

I had to talk to other students from time to time to solve my problems. Mostly other people had similar problems like I do. I loved talking and discussing to solve problems related to technological issues with other people. I could not go to bed till late because of my assignment but it was really fun. I willingly gave up going to bed to finish the assignment and see my code work well. Careers involving programming must be like that. I have to work on some tech issues but I am not alone. Not only having my compiler which is always ready to print out some statements for me but also other people working with me. I should not give up on problems tackling the quality of my system, service, or product. The tech team itself is valuable as it makes something which looks impossible possible. Arguing to get the best way to help other people with technology itself is really valuable. Computer programming is the best tool to make changes happen more easily. So learning it itself is truly meaningful.

As I finish the first quarter, I feel there are a lot more subjects and concepts I have to learn, and I want to learn all of them. I want to learn about more computer related subjects provided by the post-bacc CS degree.