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CPRE 494

21 March 2025

### My Cumulative Experience at Iowa State University

I have learned a lot at Iowa State University. I have solved difficult problems, been exposed to new ideas, and been given responsibility. My experience at ISU has been fulfilling and exciting, and it has prepared me to have a fulfilling and exciting career.

ISU has prepared me to take the initiative and solve problems. Whether it's a homework assignment, exam, or group project; I have developed the skills to meet the requirements efficiently. I came into college with an ability to problem solve, but that skill had not been practiced. I didn't know what to prioritize, what to start with, and how to plan my approach to a problem nearly as well as I do now. Spending years as a full-time student – juggling multiple projects, learning new challenging concepts, and still attempting to excel – has prepared me to efficiently solve any problem. Specifically, I am confident in my ability to solve a problem within my field. It now feels like second-nature to thoroughly think through many solutions and their consequences. I used to focus on just finding a solution, but now I strive to find the best solution. This means finding a solution that is possible, practical, ethical, and meets the requirements of the project. I may not know every language or subject matter that I will encounter in the future, but I have practiced learning problem-solving with a variety of different topics in computer engineering. I have also been prepared to work in a workplace by collaborating with assigned group project partners and solving problems where collaboration was

necessary. This has required clear communication – a skill I'm still working on. I've also had to improve my communication to solve many non-engineering problems. Working with advisors to get my classes scheduled, talking to professors to ensure my grade is accurate, and plenty of other tasks that pop up in everyday life. Many of these aren't necessary conversations, but can still be beneficial to have. Talking to advisors to find an interesting class and discussing class topics with professors have helped me get the most out of my time at Iowa State.

The curriculum at Iowa State demands problem solving skills. Part of this skill is finding and using resources. Navigating the credibility and usefulness of sources was a challenge I initially faced, but I now feel comfortable with. Everyone has different approaches to problems, so it took time to develop my toolbox of research skills. I believe I have developed an ability to quickly deem something worth my time or not. For some classes, this meant collaborating with others. However, a lot more classes showed that some work is better done by myself. I also found the textbook to be helpful (although this was a lesson I learned embarrassingly far into my college experience). In general, I learned the most when I stopped looking for just one answer. Looking at a problem with the lens of interest and a desire for comprehension allowed me to excel in my coursework. This sometimes meant reading more than necessary about the topic, thinking about possible uses of an idea, or even just talking about a class with friends.

Iowa State's classes have taught me a lot, but a lot of my experience has come from non-classroom learning. Enrolling at ISU has put me in a position to join clubs, do internships, and collaborate with my peers. These experiences have shown me how exciting and fulfilling a life in engineering can be. I have never had as much responsibility as I did in my internship or in the clubs I attend. Being in a position to make decisions, think creatively, and contribute to

significant projects has been extremely exciting. I intend to work towards a future where I get the same fulfillment from my work.

I have greatly enjoyed college, and I wouldn't change much if I were to do it over again. I am grateful for the experiences I have had because they have allowed me to be where I am today. I am excited to bring this same passion to whatever I decide to do after I graduate.