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LIS4934

BSIS Program Review

My name is Jacob Studstill, and I am graduating this semester with my Bachelor of Science in Information Systems with a focus on Data Science and Analytics. During this college career, I have taken many courses. From history to physics to programming to English and the list goes on. But a few classes have stuck out the most that I really valued and they prepared me more for my current job and any career that I will have in the field of data science. Those classes are discrete mathematics (COT3100 at UCF), intro to data/text mining (LIS4761), and predictive analysis (LIS4805). These courses taught me fundamentals of data science as well as important skills that will be useful to my everyday work life.

First, I want to start by discussing discrete mathematics. This class sucked. But it was the best math class I ever took. Confusing I know but let me explain. Discrete math is all about logic and proof. So, if you hate numbers and consider yourself more of a lawyer type this class would be perfect for you. But programming in general has so much logic baked into it. All the Boolean expressions and conditional statements really make coding flourish. This is what discrete taught me. How to take complicated conditional statements and break them down into chewable sections. It was extremely tedious and I have never erased and restarted my work as much as in this class. But, if you can take this course even if it's not required, I can't recommend it enough.

The other two courses I mentioned, intro to data/text mining and predictive analysis were almost one in the same. These two courses are what really taught me what data science was all about. Intro to data/text mining taught me how to get, clean, and process data. This class started

to build my knowledge of models and graphs. The predictive analysis course just took the foundation of the intro class and built a skyscraper on top of it. I also had the same professor (Loni Hagen, Ph.D.) for both courses and that really helped tie it all together well for me. She did a terrific job transitioning the information seamlessly from the intro class into the predictive analysis course.

The coursework in discrete math was pretty much the same each week. You would be given a list of conditional statements that you had to work through to prove the statement either true or false using proofs and theorems. Usually, the class would work on these together with the TA because 85% of the students would get stuck on at least one of the statements. Then the class had exams that would be given over a span of 3 hours. The auditorium was packed full and every minute of the 3 hours would be taken to finish the exam. Multiple teacher assistants would walk around to prevent cheating; it was an intense course. I really enjoyed this style of class though. You study hard through the assignments and take the exams to see if you know the material or not. Straight forward pass or fail type stuff.

The coursework for intro to data/text mining and predictive analysis were again similar. I imagine this being because the professor was the same for both courses and had a good system of doing things. She would teach the material and give the students book content to read for the week. We would have weekly labs to do which helped me better understand the material and would test my ability to put the book content to practical use. This class also incorporated Data Camp Learn, which is a very useful tool. Even outside of this class I have started using this website to learn additional skills that I want to grow in.

College has been an experience. So many good and bad memories wrapped up over the years. There were some classes I just turned in the assignment for the grade and to check the box

but there were also courses that really elevated who I was as a student and professional. Discrete mathematics, intro to data/text mining, and predictive analysis were some of the best three courses I could recommend to anyone in the BSIS program. You will gain skills that will continue to grow and help in this field of data science.