

Benjamin Hall

CPRE 494

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General Education Reflection

As a cybersecurity engineer, keeping a broad view on history, culture, and people is important to consider when making decisions. I believe that having a broadened world view gives you better decision-making processes by being able to understand other people's thoughts and opinions better. Additionally, being able to effectively communicate to people that may not share these views is important in not just businesses, but in everyday life as well. I believe the general education courses I took over my time as a student at Iowa State helped me develop in these areas.

Before I graduated high school, I was able to take a World Religions class in my high school that was able to be counted towards my credits as RELIG 205 at Iowa State. I very much remember this class because of the wide array of not just religions, but also culture in other places around the world and even near me. We got to not only learn about religions around the world, but got to visit local places of worship to learn more about their religion. What impacted me the most was learning how these religions shape the way of living and culture of the people. It helped me understand where people are coming from and also communicate to them more effectively with this gained knowledge and respect.

One course I was able to take at Iowa State was HD FS 276, Human Sexuality. This class taught similar lessons as RELIG 205. Honestly, I took the class initially hearing rumors of it being an easy class to meet for general education classes. However, I found myself learning how much people vary from person-to-person, and especially myself. It went to further the idea of

how different people were across cultures and regions, and that it was critical to understand them to better communicate with people.

One major goal of mine at Iowa State was to improve my communication skills. Throughout my years at Iowa State, I was able to take the following classes: SP CM 212 (Public Speaking), SP CM 214 (Professional Communication), SP CM 312 (Business and Professional Speaking). One large part of my job as a cybersecurity engineer is communication; from discussing solutions, mediating conflicts, to writing documentation and security standards. Good communication is essential towards being successful in cybersecurity. SP CM 212 first helped me understand the basics of public speaking and learning about the many different types of speeches throughout our life. SP CM 214 brought a more business focused side to speech, describing the methods of communication in a professional environment. Finally, SP CM 312 focused more on the writing side of this, teaching me how to better write documentation, standards, processes, and formal writings. Overall, these classes greatly improved my communication skills both in speech and writing.

Finally, I also got the opportunity to take ARTIS 308 (Computer Modeling, Rendering, and Virtual Photography). While different from my other general education classes, I learned many skills and lessons as much as any other class. Beyond the knowledge of the technologies used for 3D art, I also came to understand and appreciate the process of developing art or even projects in general. Before taking this class, I often took a lackadaisical approach to projects just doing whatever was needed or what I felt like doing. However, working on art almost taught me or helped me use an approach of developing rough ideas for subsections of my project to shoot for, rather than just aim for the end goal.

Overall, my general education courses I have taken in my undergraduate years at Iowa State have vastly broadened my world views, as well as teach and develop my communication, writing, and project management skills.