

I think the final draft of this essay is on my computer at home, but it similar to this. I may have moved parts around though, but this is the gist of it. [bracketed] parts I wasn't sure about.

Last time I applied to this program I wrote about writing software, but I did it in a roundabout way that involved a discussion of my analogous passions for baking cookies and sailing boats. Mostly that's because, while I quite like writing software, it's not my only interest. In the months since writing that essay computer science has remained my core interest, despite using my freshman year to explore a variety of fields and taking elective classes in Computer-Aided Design, photography, accounting and Informatics. I also continued to pursue my interests in sailing and cooking, and started an internship at LightRiver Technologies, a mid-sized fiber optic networking company. Through these experiences that are tangentially related (if that!) to computer science, I've crystallized why it's so important to me to have such a breadth of knowledge: a worldly focus stops computer science from falling too far into the abstract.

For example, in my accounting class last quarter we had a 10 minute visit from [John Cena], the head of the sales program here at UW. He talked briefly about the lean business cycle, and the importance of delivering the minimum viable product as quickly as possible in an attempt to recruit students for his program. I found his advice especially timely because, at the time, I was worried about how I might implement multi-attribute sorting on the members list of the new Washington Yacht Club database, forgetting that I had yet to implement simple sorting, much less write the CSS styling for the page.

Similarly, I started my internship at LightRiver a few weeks ago, and quickly realized that I was mistaken in thinking that it would be outside the scope of the computer science industry. After all, even the routing software doesn't know what kind of transport hardware is being used to send their signals. However, the parameters that define how each network is built are defined by the software that needs to run on them, and the different requirements change the cost to our customers drastically. For example, if a company like Facebook can keep user data in smaller datacenters that are closer to each user, they save millions in transport costs and free up their long-haul routes for other traffic.

The diversity of ideas presented in my various classes and experiences throughout my freshman year will serve to add to the diversity of ideas available in the computer science community. [Too often, CS students are seen as the type to hole up in the CSE labs and avoid interactions with business students at all costs, which is something that I don't believe in.]

In the time since I last applied to the computer science program I've had the opportunity to further build my non-technical skills that I believe are important for any CS major. During my internship search process I improved my business communication skills and that luckily paid off. After starting, I've been continuously working with my coworkers and the other interns as part of my daily job.

In studying computer science I hope to have the chance to marry a diverse set of fields and skillsets in my future work. I'm hoping that I could start my career in software engineering, and progress to the role of project manager or team lead. Such roles require a strong basis in the fundamentals of computer science because

Now I've improved as an applicant because I: have taken time to build up interpersonal and intangible skills that aren't easy to pick up from a classroom, have better knowledge of how I can leverage other fields to help solve CS problems (linear algebra, lean business cycle)