

General Education Reflection

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Coming into my college career I was fortunate in being able to transfer a large number of credits towards my degree, many of which counted towards my general education electives. As such, the number of general education credits I have taken here at Iowa State is relatively small. Despite having a lower number of classes to take here at Iowa State, I really focused on choosing electives that I was interested in and could get the most out of.

The most important skill I have learned in my general education electives has been that of being able to solve problems not only on the level of basic technical solutions, but being able to work towards a solution that integrates with the unspoken needs of a client and maximizes productivity of the whole organization I'm working at as one part of a whole.

The first example of this is MGMT 370, Managing Organizations, which I took because of my extensive leadership experience in and out of the classroom. In this class I learned different ways to manage both individually and at the organizational level as well as different organization types and how they are structured. Understanding how my decisions affect not only myself but my coworkers and the entire organization have modified my thinking when solving problems. Sometimes when solving an engineering problem it is better to optimize for something not technically driven such as speed of approval, supply chain restrictions, or impact on other persons in the organization, even if that results in the technical solution not being "ideal".

The second example of this was when I took AESHM 342, Aesthetics of Consumer Experience. This class was by far the farthest out from any engineering course I have ever been, I very well may have been the only engineer in a classroom of over 100 students. This class taught me how the world is viewed from the perspective of an average consumer instead of a hardened engineer. I gained new perspectives such as how characteristics of a product or presentation I would find inconsequential could have a huge impact on how that product or presentation performed out in the wild. This course helped me grow as an engineer that is able to see how their work will be used in a greater product design and think like a designer, not just an engineer.