

Overall, I thought our course was a very good experience for me. The activities were similar to what I expected and, even though some were designed for children, I thought they were all interesting respectively. Programming in Logo was a refreshing experience because it did not demand extensive coding and compiling like Java (my first programming language). I was particularly interested by the possibilities for recursively drawing geometric shapes and simulating real life (in Starlogo which I heard about in this class). Our Icons simulation was interesting because I learned about the process for developing a forum for discussion about a serious topic. Robotics was extremely fun though, at times, frustrating. Ever since I was given the original Lego Mindstorms I longed for the day when I would have enough pieces to create anything. During this course, I was nearly able to do anything—there are never enough pieces no matter what one does. Interestingly, I never thought that I would prefer written code to graphic programming, but, the lack of options for “if” statements and “for” loops made Robolabs a considerable pain to use. Except for our robotics unit, I think we met all of the course description with respect to education, problem-solving, programming, and technology.

The field trips (which first attracted my attention in the course description) were hastier than I expected but I always enjoyed them. Before, I did not even know that the Applied Physics Lab and the campus wind tunnel existed. Now, I know much more about my future options for internships and research. I also never even thought about trying to visit the Center for Missing and Exploited Children—but, I had a lot of fun meeting graphic artists and programmers (and their workstations) at NetSmartz and giving them feedback about their work. I would have preferred that we did not take so many field trips at the end of the course when people were trying to work on their robotics projects and the final project.

On the content of the course, I found the education topics much more interesting than I ever thought they could be. My main recommendation for anyone considering taking this course is that he be willing to learn about education theory (which I found very interesting—I always like to think about how I think) and read more articles than is common in high school. I wish that I could have avoided a constant feeling that we should have had much less difficulty with programs and software for children. On the issue of college life, I think that I will have to learn to read quicker and that I will have to learn to adapt to computer lab closing times. Ultimately I truly liked my experience of college life though it was, in some ways, fairly different from my usual life. I especially learned about finishing work in populated settings with quickly approaching deadlines. I want to introduce many of the features of our class to classes at my school.