

Manifesto of the Notre Dame Computer Engineer

The first year starts, majors undecided...

The first year ends, majors day passed...

Some have found a home, halfway in between...

Others come and join, they dislike one or the other...

Normal track, all Computer Science Sophomore year...

Skipped ahead, see some EE instead...

Junior year, everyone has seen it...

The EE that is all math, and no computers...

Suffer through it all, bound to learn hardware soon...

Senior year, Signals instills fear...

Second semester, some are still here...

Capstone project, stands before your degree...

We are the few. We are the proud. We are the Computer Engineers. We sit in silence (or not so silence) and continually take the unenjoyable electrical engineering classes. None of us really want to be there. We continue to suffer through.

We started with far more than the number we have now. We watched as our peers, our study buddies, our *friends* decided to leave us and pursue the path of Computer Science instead. Yet we persevered.

We made it through the laser pointer obsessed cat stories of Huang, the country boy draw of Clint, and the never ceasing confusion of Gupta. Did I mention we had to take signals and systems? But we continued to push through.

We never really knew what we were getting ourselves into. We never really knew what our career options were. Well not until we had finished of junior year. Most of us didn't realize the mistake we'd made until it was too late. Yet we still stayed.

We continued to learn about transistors and circuits when we saw no real application in our desired career paths. We suffered through all of the hard Computer Science classes while still wrestling with the Electrical Engineering trials. No matter, we pushed on.

We didn't know if there was a light at the end of the tunnel. In fact, for most of us, when we found that light, it wasn't even in Computer Engineering, but rather in coding. Hardware was not where we wanted to end up. Software and app development, debugging and design was what we wanted. However, we remained.

In the end, was it worth it? Yes. We are different. We approach things from a different angle. We solve problems in a different manner. But we are still just as skilled as our science counterparts. Although most of us will choose to leave the world of hardware, we have skills that they don't have. We have knowledge to leverage that they don't know about. Was it worth it? Well, we stayed.

College comes to an end, we stand among the few...

We work in the same fields as them, albeit with more background...

Did we make the right choice, well we stayed...

</college>

-Cobra & W.C.

A Portrait of a Notre Dame Computer Science and Engineering Student

What is our descendency?

We are predominantly white, with some Asian and Latino. There are very few African Americans but a touch more students claiming to be descendants of India. Among the white population, it's pretty common for students to be of Irish descent (as would be expected at Notre Dame), but Europe as a whole is our ancestors primary stomping grounds. Generally we are all proud of where our families came from. Many of us have made the effort, if the opportunity was presented, to study abroad and visit the homes of our ancestors.

Where are we from?

There isn't one real description to narrow us down to. Going to Notre Dame means we are a national (and even international) community. And the Computer Science and Engineering population is no exception. We are from all over the country, easily from 35+ states, and it's certainly not uncommon for us to be from another county (mostly Asia, but with a handful from Europe). Like many other aspects of the Notre Dame Computer Scientist, where we call home is another description of our extreme diversity.

Are we guys or girls?

Unlike a majority of other engineering schools, and even unlike other engineering disciplines, Notre Dame's Computer Science and Engineering population is much more evenly balanced between guys and girls. While a majority is still on the side of the male, females make up a decent chunk. I would estimate that it is close to a 60/40 split.

What do we look like?

The stereotypical coder is a nerdy usually white or Asian male. He wears an ironic t-shirt or a button down with a pocket protector. His glasses might even have tape over the nose. His hair is disheveled, and his all-around appearance says he does not really care what he looks like. This could not be more of an inaccuracy when describing the Notre Dame coder. The standard appearance is well kept, hair combed and taken care of. In the case of the girls, it's uncommon for them to show up to class without putting on at least a little bit of make-up. Nicer button downs and polos are common to be seen on guys, while sweaters and dresses are common among the girls. On the average, people care about the way they look, and the disheveled, nerdy coder the world seems to identify us with, would be an anomaly at Notre Dame.

What are our plans for post-graduation?

Most of the class plans to graduate this May. Some may even be fifth year students finishing up a transfer program from another school such as Stonehill College, Elon University, or even Saint Mary's College. After school a significant portion of the class looks to industry or government jobs in order to make money. Research isn't really a plan for most, though it is for some as they move into Master's and maybe even Doctorate programs eventually. Those pursuing research may also be hoping to move into teaching even more so than doing independent research. Non-profit work also seems to be an option for a few, but a majority look to places like Silicon Valley to find high paying jobs that will complete their four year long quest through Notre Dame. Government work is varied, some joining the military right after completing the ROTC program, others looking to civilian positions that operate in a Computer Science role. Regardless of our next stop in our career, the vast majority of us have been instilled with the same value of community consciousness. Whether we will be with a company that directly gives back to their community, or if we do it on a more individual basis, Notre Dame has passed that value onto most of us.

What do we study?

Most of us are single major students (Computer Science has the vast majority, although a shockingly low sixteen of us have toughed out the Computer Engineering degree). However some are double majors studying degrees in History, English, or Math. Minors are also incredibly common, with a large number of Business minors floating around the class. A not so surprising large number of us actually have a double major, supplemental major, or minor in Theology. Extra degrees focusing in other engineering disciplines or science disciplines are extraordinarily uncommon.

Do we play sports or exercise?

Most of the class is in good physical condition, although the method of doing this is varying. Some get very active in team intramural sports, while others prefer to lift weights or go running in a more solitary environment. Although I would say the vast majority actually meets somewhere in the middle. They are runners by trade, but actively seek out pick up soccer games, or they swam in high school but now are part of interdorm basketball and lacrosse teams.

What is our social inclination?

While, Most of us prefer to keep a small group of incredibly close friends around us, there are just as many of us who have a plethora of side friend groups we love to socialize with. We all have our favorite people to be with, many of which are actually out of our major. We are not concerned with what anyone studies to be our friend, we are more interested in the conversation that we can have with someone. We flock to people who have similar hobbies but think differently and approach things differently than we do. Just like in many other aspects of our lives, we actively seek out diversity.

What do we like to do?

Without exception, this is where the Notre Dame Computer Scientist is the most diverse. No two students have the exact same passions and hobbies as the next. Although we all share an interest in developing interesting code or solving problems with technology, these are nobody's sole passions. There are those among us who are avid video gamers, photographers, social activists, beer enthusiasts, travelers, or sports fans. Some of us love to party and have a good time; others prefer a good chill night in. Some live and breathe by Notre Dame Football while some have never even attended a game. There is no way to say that Notre Dame Computer Scientists all share the same outside of school interests, everyone has their side hobbies, and are incredibly passionate about whatever they are. And this makes them, and in turn Notre Dame as a whole, so very individual.