General Education Reflection

My goals go far beyond simply getting a first job; in fact, I have already a first job so that step has been taken care of. Short term I would like to take and pass my FE exam so that in the future I can obtain my PE. In addition to that I would like to show that I am a capable leader in the company that I work for so that I can quickly be promoted to opportunities that require more responsibility and communication. I think that one area that I excel at compared to a lot of people in my major is in the area of communication- that does not mean I am satisfied with myself though, I always want to better myself. In the long term, I would like to start a family and be able to live comfortably without the financial stresses of my life.

The general education courses that I have taken at Iowa State have been some of the most relevant and thought provoking classes I have taken. They have given me opportunities to relate to the real world in ways that my technical classes never could. They have given me an opportunity to interact with non-engineering students which has helped me understand the ways they approach problems differently from me. By understanding the way they think, I can be a more effective communicator when talking to a client or boss who may not be as technically inclined as I am. In addition, I have had the chance to see how economics plays a pivotal role in our world, and how not everyone is treated equally. It is important to recognize that there is still discrimination in the workplace, and Econ 321 did a wonderful job at explaining that to me. The other general education course that I took here was French 320. It was a class about French culture and it was one of the most interesting classes that I have taken at this university. There was a lot of great insight into how the French people see their country, and I think that as the world continues to globalize, this will give me knowledge that most other people I am working with do not have.

One thing that I wish I would have done differently in my four years here is to have taken more classes outside of the College of Engineering. I think that the most successful people are those that have a broad knowledge and can interface with many different groups of people. It also allows a break in a very technical schedule where I can use different parts of my brain, and express myself in different ways.

Overall, general education classes are essential to the college experience as well as developing me as a person and a leader. Technical classes alone are not enough to prepare you for the challenging tasks of the real world. I just wish our curriculum gave us more of an opportunity to explore ourselves and develop other non-technical skills as those tend to be the things that differentiate us as we go into industry.