

Dear incoming students,

While I'm sure someone else has already said it to you by the time you're reading this, let me start off by saying that you have an incredible opportunity to learn and grow here - take advantage of it.

Less than a week after having completed the very same course that you're just beginning, I can remember being both excited and nervous. I couldn't wait to begin a course in computer engineering while delving deeper into mathematics and programming than I ever had before (in addition to being introduced to intriguingly complex concepts like computer vision and machine learning). At the same time, I was nervous to being a course at the campus of an institution as prestigious as Stanford University. The atmosphere of the campus, the courses taught there, the other students surrounding you, and, most of all, the instructor that you'll have all reflect the top-tier education that you'll receive during your brief time there.

At the start of the course, you'll also be introduced to a daunting amount of coursework to immerse you in the subject matter and challenge you not only to learn, but to think critically (a skill that, throughout this course, I've learned is essential to engineering of any kind). I'll be the first to admit that I was hesitant about the coursework at the beginning. However, after having completed the course, I would consider every assignment that we completed during our time there to be essential (and most certainly worth it) as these very same assignments built up the fundamentals that would allow us to create our final projects and leave Stanford with the skills to practically apply our knowledge of computer engineering.

So, when you're first allowed to attempt Nick's critical thinking puzzle, keep in mind that be it as the challenges of this course may seem daunting in the beginning, they will prove worthwhile. They most certainly did for me. Take advantage of each and every challenge, learn to work with the others in the course (as very little of the work in engineering is individual), and think critically. If you ever do get stuck, look forward to having awesome TAs and an absolutely amazing instructor to help you out.

Sincerely,

Christopher Turner, 16turnerc@prepstudents.org

Student - Stanford Pre-collegiate Summer Institutes 2015