

Dear Incoming Students,

First and foremost, congratulations! Just getting into this program is an incredible feat. You are currently surrounded by some of the finest high school students in the world, which by association places you in that group as well. Take a moment to be proud of your achievements, your intelligence, everything that makes you stand out. Savor the feeling of confidence, and prepare to throw it out the window for the next couple of weeks.

In his first lecture, Nick described his class to us as an exploration and a journey. He told us that he would be our guide, not our teacher, and ultimately we would be tasked with finding our own truth. He held fast to his statement, and the gratification of learning, without being spoon-fed the knowledge, was incredible. However, if I was asked to describe Nick's class in my own words, I would describe it as more of a puzzle you are tasked with solving. All of the pieces you are given are initially invisible, and the task of putting them together is incredibly daunting and frustrating. I remember sitting in class the first day and having absolutely no clue what was on the screen in front of me. I felt utterly hopeless about the outcome of the class, and was completely lost for the first time in my memory. However, as I progressed through the weeks, the individual pieces gradually became more visible. Through teamwork, and Nick's guiding questions, all of us were able to start fitting together our pieces, and the puzzle started to make more and more sense. By the end of the class, we all had our final products as well as an immense sense of pride. I learned so much about engineering from being in Nick's class, and all my expectations were fulfilled. However, now as I return home, I will probably put the puzzle back in its box, and not take it out until I am well into my college career. The engineering content of Nick's curriculum is so advanced that I will not be able to use it for several years to come, and most likely will have to relearn a good portion of it.

Yet, to me, this program was still incredibly invaluable. While I may forget some of the math or the science, I will never forget everything else I never expected to come from these past few weeks. The experience taught me to think like an engineer, to prosper in the face of a challenge, to never yawn in front of a yoga-enthusiast teacher, and really to define my beliefs and my purpose in this world. Nick will challenge you, make you feel incredibly uncomfortable, and absolutely guide you to wherever it is you want to go.

Taking his class was the most challenging thing I have ever done. It pushed me in ways I have never been pushed, and it was exactly what you should expect from a Stanford course. The class is extremely rigorous, and equally stressful, especially for those who are unaccustomed to academic struggling. However, this caused us students to bond more than any other group I saw at this camp (more out of necessity than want). I have no doubt that I gained some great friends, and had an absolutely amazing experience, and I am sure you will as well. Good luck and best wishes.

From, Jake Miller