Auburn Renaissance Capstone Project Descriptions 2015-16

Project 1:
I am making a video game that incorporates myths from different cultures to show how the hero's journey can be applied to any story. The game will target elementary kids (4-5) and will help develop their problem solving and critical thinking skills through the puzzles within the game.

Needs:
- Access to a laptop with enough processing power to quickly compile and run code, as a lot of testing is required;
- Someone familiar with music creation programs who could create sound effects and/or background music;
- A computer programmer, preferably one who is familiar with Gamemaker Studio (the game engine I am using), who could help me with any problems I encounter while making my game;
- More generally, a game designer who could give me tips as to how to design the story/plot part of my game.

Project 2:
I am creating a program/website for people to learn Laotian language and culture. I am doing this because the Lao community in Rockford is large and most people my age are Americanized and ashamed that they cannot communicate with their elders. Hopefully my program can help people get back in touch with their roots.

Needs:
- Help creating a computer program for my project—something similar to Rosetta Stone—if I choose to go that route;
- Books on Lao language and culture;
- Lao spelling/language for beginners;
- English-Lao dictionary.

Project 3:
I intend to write a full-length novel and get it published within the year. I have been working on it for a long time but have never had the time to buckle down and really invest myself in it. This class has provided me the opportunity to do so.

Needs:
- I really need help finding a publisher who is interested in publishing a fictional novel by a 17 year old;
- At the very least I need an editor.

Project 4:
My capstone project is to research the merits of introducing microgreens (young seedlings of herbs, vegetables, beans, seeds, and grains that are very dense in nutrients and sprout anywhere from 6-10 days) into our diets and then to implement a program in a school setting that introduces students to microgreens in food. My objective is to increase nutrition in students. Looking at the lack of variety in the vegetarian options at school, as well as the predominant exposure of students to unhealthy snacks, I believe this project could positively impact the way students make individual choices.

Needs:
- A mentor who either has the ability to help me with implementing my program into schools or a community member who can help me with catering these microgreens into a food-centered educational program;
- Contact with a nutritionist would be valuable;
- A scientist who could help me to calculate the nutritional value of the microgreens in a laboratory setting.

Project 5:
I am doing a project that studies the importance of creativity and creative expression. I will be putting on a show that displays creative expression. The funds raised would go back to Auburn's CAPA program or to the Rockford Art Museum.
- I will need a place for the show.

Project 6:
I plan on creating a series of video essays, five-to-ten minutes in length, each analyzing and dissecting a different aspect of film production and theory.

Needs:
- Regular and relatively easy access to a high power desktop computer;
- Regular and easy access to Adobe Premiere Pro or other quality video editing software;
- Access to Storybooth or other recording studio.
    - **NOTE:** The local art gallery CNVR/Conveyer allows hourly $5 rental for their production space, which includes all the above mentioned supplies. If I go this route, I hope to make the process simpler by using donated time in the studio, and I'd be willing to try to bargain a discount on hourly rental fees (since I'll be spending many hours editing my video essays) in exchange for advertising for them in my videos.

Project 7:
My project is to write an academic paper on the state of African film and have that article published in a prominent black studies journal.

Needs:
- Access to academic texts on African film (for research) and copies of the actual films for me to view and review. Undoubtedly, the best resource for me would be access to a research university's library.

Project 8:
I am doing a research project on learning theory and the philosophy of education.

Needs:
- People to consult with (experience with education theory and organization, social sciences, experimental design, etc.);
- Possibly a teacher who would be willing to have his/her students participate in a lesson and be questioned on that lesson;
- A venue in which to present my findings to the educational community.

Project 9:
My capstone project is a comparative religions study. I will study Buddhism, Christianity, -Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism. After studying all of these religions, I will as authentically as possible practice each of them for a week. I would like to make a presentation that can effectively convey the data I collect. I am doing this in order to teach others that religion doesn't need to be binary (either right or wrong), and the benefits of open mindedness.

Needs:
- Access to professionals who have studied comparative religions in depth;
- Access to local religious heads and people of different religions who I could interview.

Project 10:

I want to hold a fundraising event in order to raise $6,400 for the organization Hope for Haitians. I am going to use that money to buy a house for a Haitian family. If it proves to be too difficult or expensive, I might change my theme, but I am currently hoping to hold a "food fair" where local restaurants donate food and people come to eat, have fun, and, hopefully, donate their money.

Needs:
- Advice or help from an event planner;
- A donated space to hold an event;
- Help in securing food donations from local restaurants;
- (Possibly) help in securing donated goods or services from local businesses for a raffle or auction-type activity.

Project 11:

I intend to write an open source research analysis report with a built in briefing on the subject of the current state of Turkey and its relations with its geographical neighbors and groups, primarily Syria and ISIL, as well as its relationship with the United States. The main purpose of this project is to plot four potential positive and negative futures for Turkey, based on the interaction of the two drivers of the Refugee Crisis and Turkey's Economic Stability. Under these drivers will be lesser subfactors in the areas of economics, society, politics, and history.

Needs:
- Mentor- Preferably person with experience in either open source research or the Middle East (specifically the area around Turkey);
- Access to Stratfor, an internet database that covers political/economic/military developments around the world, and includes current intelligence analysis;
- Sponsorship for travel, as this project entails interaction with various government and non-government entities, one of the most effective ways to obtain information is with face to face contact. This face-to-face contact would likely require travel to and from Chicago. As such, funds to aid in this travel would be very helpful in facilitating these interactions.

Project 12:

My project consists of two parts. The first part is a research paper analyzing the varieties of folk music. The second portion is the creation of an album based on definitions of the structure and themes of traditional folk songs that I will have studied in the research paper. As such, I plan to write about personal and social issues and to use of a variety of styles and instruments.

Needs:
- A mentor who specializes in either cultural research or in the history of music;
- A musician to aid in production and recording of the album;
- Studio space (although I have my own rudimentary studio);
- Access to better hardware to use for the production of my album, such as microphones, cables, etc.;
- Access to additional instruments to learn (with instruction).

Project 13:

My project is based on the different aspects of architecture and how they intersect with environmentalism. I would like to learn the basics of architecture and then apply them by rethinking and redesigning a component of the design in order to make it more environmentally friendly.

Needs:
- A mentor who is willing to teach me about architecture and/or structural design;
- An opportunity to shadow or work alongside an architect, preferably with Habitat for Humanity or Rockford Housing Authority.

Project 14:
For my project I am working in a research lab at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Rockford to study lung cancer. My research involves looking at the expression of proteins in cells and observing how increased or decreased levels of certain proteins cause cancer.

Needs:
- The most helpful aid I could receive is contact with someone at Thermofisher Scientific who would be willing and able to help sponsor my project, especially through small donations of proteins, antibodies, and cell lines, all of which they currently sell.

Project 15:
My goal is to spread a positive message about Rockford to the community through photography. I wish to capture details about the beauty around us and to make the community proud of our city.

Needs:
- Mentorship from a local photographer who would be willing to help me with my photography skills and photo-editing skills;
- Outreach to the community: I want to hear the opinions and voices of the community; additionally, I want a way to be able to tell the community about my project. If a platform can be provided for me to reach out to the community, then that can allow for better work from me;
- Resources: I don't have a studio or any photography equipment, so if a photographer or local artist would let me borrow their resources, that would be much appreciated;
- Display location: I want these photographs to be available to the community, so I want to display them in a public place.

Project 16:
My goal is to create a formal paper detailing the issues of corruption in Sierra Leone in relation to the creation of a more successful health care system. This is in an effort to understand the intersection of public health and policy. Hopefully, this proposal will either detail the complexity of foreign policy and development or will offer a potential proposal to address pressing issues in the region.

Needs:
- Mentor specializing in public health and policy in Western Africa;
- Access to resources focusing on west African culture, such as a college's academic database;
- Access to information from organizations who provide aid to foreign countries.