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Final Reflections

This semester I took CIS102T which is a service-learning course. This service-learning course fulfills the Area of Knowledge 1 – Civic Engagement and Public Values requirement. It is designed to introduce students to the fundamental principles / concepts of information technology with its applications. For CIS 102T, we went to the United Hebrew Geriatric Center to teach the residents how to use computers. By going to the nursing home and teaching the elderly we got hands on experience. I liked it a lot better than any other class because we got to experience what we studied rather than just read and outline textbooks. This was a very valuable experience for me because I learned how to help an elderly student and I also learned a lot about me.

 Other the past few months I helped out several different people at United Hebrew Geriatric Center. The first lady I helped was Betty. Betty knew a lot about computers from the start. She already had an email address but was having trouble receiving and emailing her family. After one lesson she learned how to send and receive emails. Receiving emails and sending emails to her relatives (brothers, sisters, cousins, and grandsons) was very important to her. I remember one session she told me her cousin just put up a website for her new baby. She was so excited to see the website. She didn’t know how to do so she had to wait a few days and was eager to see it. When she opened the website there were tons of pictures of the new baby and blogs about the baby. She was so happy to see her family and pictures of the new baby. When Betty received email from her family she was so happy. I am happy I helped her learn how to do so.

I also taught Madeline a couple of times. Madeline knew a lot about computers from the start. She had her own laptop. Madeline loved baseball and wanted to look up the Met’s schedule. She can’t go to the games anymore so she wanted to see the schedule so she can watch the games on television. Baseball is very important to her.

 I also showed her how to go to her favorite radio stations website. She was happy to see all the radio stations workers. She had been listening to the same show for years and never knew what the hosts looked like.

I also taught her how to look up her favorite singers and see pictures of them on Google. On some of the websites I showed her she was even able to listen to their music. I just recently found out that Madeline is my boyfriend’s cousin. My boyfriend and his father are going to start sending Madeline emails. They didn’t know she had an email address.

 I learned a lot from teaching the elderly students. I learned that it is very important to have patients and be very understanding. One day in CIS102T class Dr. Coppola made us do a valuable exercise that I will never forget. She made us put cotton balls in our ears, tap our fingers together, and wear goggles that impaired our vision. We than had to teach each other. This helped me understand how to relate and teach my elderly student better. I knew I had to speak load and clear. I also knew that I might have to customize the computer for the elderly student to see. I also learned that I had to be patient. If my student didn’t understand something I was usually the one not explaining it clear enough or moving too fast.

 I also taught the elderly how to play the Wii at United Hebrew Geriatric Center for my term project. This was also a valuable experience. When I first did a survey I asked why did you sign up to play the Wii. Mr. Clark said I signed up to play the Wii so I don’t just sit in my room and watch television all day. All of the people in the Wii group enjoyed playing the Wii and are going to continue playing the Wii on game nights at United Hebrew Geriatric Center. Both my group members and the elderly students had lots of fun playing the Wii together.

 Clearly I learned just as much as I taught. I enjoyed this class a lot because it never got boring. In the future I am going to take another Area of Knowledge 1 class because I enjoyed it so much.