

September 25, 2002

Dear Seniors,

For those of you that don't know me, I graduated last June from Santa Clara University with a Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering. Currently, I am a CS graduate student at University of California Santa Cruz in the PhD program. I am working with Professor Scott Brandt on soft real-time scheduling in the Computer Systems Research Group.

Senior projects are a very important part of the curriculum at Santa Clara. Not only is it a requirement to graduate, it is also an opportunity to distinguish yourself and show others your capabilities. My senior project was the design and implementation of a soft real-time scheduler in the Linux Kernel. In hindsight, I can't tell you how important my senior project was in my acceptance to Santa Cruz. While waiting for my admission status, I received an e-mail from Scott Brandt mentioning that Santa Cruz had accepted me, providing me with a Regents Fellowship, and he would like me to join his research group because of my interest in real time systems. The point I am trying to make is that when applying to grad school, you never know why you might get into a particular graduate school. It just might be that Senior Project that gets you accepted.

Getting into grad school is not the only reason to take senior projects seriously. They can help you get job interviews which I am sure you all know is difficult in the current economy. Just last August, I received a call from General Dynamics looking to hire a full-time systems engineer. They were looking over applications and found mine (from the fall-career fair). They were interested in my application because of my senior project.

Good luck,

Tim Bisson
Class of 2002