



Total Building Design

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Reflection

Participating in the integrated team option of senior project was one of the most rewarding experiences of my college career. To say it was easy would be a lie, there were points when I was extremely frustrated, but that did not take away from the experience. My dad, who is a Penn State graduate in engineering, once asked, "Why doesn't everyone in the major have to do the team option for senior project? Isn't that what the real world will be like for you?" After experiencing the team environment and looking back as to where things can be improved, I cannot imagine going into industry without the knowledge I gained from participating in a team environment. One of the most important lessons is in communication. Not everyone thinks like you and will sometimes interpret what you say differently than what you meant. This was the biggest obstacle for me to overcome. Sometimes discussions felt as if they were going nowhere. However what was really happening was we all agreed on the matter, but no one was interpreting what the other person was saying correctly and we thought no one could agree on the matter. Understanding that miscommunication, such as this, happens more often than not will help me interact with other disciplines far better in the industry than I could previously.

Since I did not participate in the BIM studio during the fourth year, this was the first time I was put into an environment where everyone was brought on board for their knowledge in their given discipline. Another rewarding aspect of the project was the ability to further my knowledge with the other disciplines. By working with each set of partners in a team manner, I was able to gain insights as to the cutting edge ideas that were in each field. The biggest one that comes to mind was the use of the integrated project delivery method and the use of the Last Planner System[®]. Grasping the process was difficult at first, but through the aid of my fellow teammates the process became almost second nature. The change in mental thought process required to utilize these tools will be essential in moving the industry forward.

The knowledge gained through the participation in the integrated team option of senior project, both communication and technical, will help me excel as a structural engineer in the industry. The unforgettable lessons learned through the process will stick with me forever. I want to thank my team for an excellent year. I could not have asked for a better team. We helped each other through thick and thin and made each other smile even when the stress was the highest. I hope someday we will see each other in industry, because it would be my honor to work with all of you again.