Dear Prospective Students,

You are about to embark on an exciting and invigorating journey through python coding and matrix-matrix multiplication. It will be demanding and stressful, but remember that you are here because you can handle the challenge and have the potential to expand your knowledge into uncharted territory. Nick's class is a truly unique experience that will confuse and perplex you, but unlike the courses you take in high school or other summer programs, this is completely normal.

When I was first assigned to Nick's class, I didn't know what to expect. I have received multiple warnings of the infamous chaturanga and unrelated arm circles that add physical exhaustion to the strenuous mental workout that comes from both class periods and problem sets. About halfway into the first day, I began to understand why some people considered switching out. Stuck in the arduous chair pose and struggling to comprehend why the L2 Norm of Ax-b was so pertinent to everything, I questioned whether or not I would have the wherewithal to stick it out for the remainder of my time at Stanford. I can honestly say that staying with Nick was the best decision I could have ever made at SPCS Engineering. During the three weeks with Nick as my guide, I was granted the opportunity to finally understand what it meant to be an engineer. Lectures were intriguing, projects were thought-provoking, and Nick himself was inspiring. I have never met someone so zealous about his study, especially when one of the biggest take-aways I had from his class was to never follow your passions.

My advice to those of you that choose to embark on this adventure is the really enjoy your time at Stanford and make the most of your three weeks here. In the wise works of Nick himself, really think about how excited you were to hear that you got accepted into Stanford for the summer and focus on your present, once-in-a-lifetime experience. While you are here, take advantage of the resources you have available to you. Don't be afraid to ask for help from your TA's or other peers. Talk to Nick about your interests and your ideas both about college and just about life in general, for he has a relationship with his students that I guarantee you won't build with any other teacher. I have had the pleasure of spending several hours of one on one time with him, meeting some of his colleagues and learning about his own personal work. He has given me new things to consider when trying to settle on a specific focus or path for my future, and I am truly grateful for every minute I have spent with him.

As I have said before, Nick's class will be challenging and demanding, but also extremely rewarding. If you are lucky enough to be assigned to his class, never give up no matter how hard or stressful it may seem at some times. It will all be worth it in the end. If you ever get stuck, talk to Nick, ask other students and TAs for help, and, if all else fails, the answer is Ax=b.

Good Luck,
Taylor Iantosca