

17 March 2009

Learning Plan: Update 1

Dear Dr. Whitney,

Thank you for agreeing to be my faculty mentor on the UROP project, I am very excited to learn more about the electronic recycling industry and make a real impact on a current company. I agree, before going to RECYCLA, I will have to learn a lot. I have tried to be realistic about the amount I can accomplish each week given my course load and work schedule. Thus, I will not be doing any work on this project during the week before finals and finals week. To compensate, I have assigned extra hours to spring break. When I began making a learning plan week by week, it began to seem a little ridiculous to plan out the readings and schedule when I am not even sure what will be relevant. Therefore, I have made a list of major learning topics that I believe will be necessary to have a grasp of before going to Chile. Obviously, as time goes on and I see what is relevant, this list will change.

1. Model factories as linear graphs: 15.066J - Networks Lecture
2. Queuing theory
3. Case studies of factory modeling
4. Personally disassemble a cell phone and other electronic equipment
5. Unsoldering process
6. Safety while disassembling electronic equipment
7. Tooling used in the recycling process
8. The layout of other electronics recycling facilities

In addition, I made a calendar highlighting important dates in the next few weeks for funding options (just in case the UROP office does not pull through) and I have marked the weeks in which I will send you an update on my progress. I expect to fill out this calendar with the tasks that I have accomplished during the week.

Today, I after browsing through the OCW notes by Professor Gershwin, I emailed him for more information about a specific lecture topic. He has introduced me to Professor Gutowski who is involved in a recycling project with the Environmentally Benign Manufacturing group at MIT. I hope to meet with him before spring break to learn more about his research. In addition, I have asked Mr. Nilo (CEO of RECYCLA) for photos and video of the recycling plant. I have received confirmation from Com-Cycle that I can tour their plant in Melbourne, FL and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection has offered to speak with me over the phone and they have sent me a list of recycling companies in Florida.

I have several leads to follow up on and a lot to do over the break.

Thank you,

Liz Theurer

Beginning of the Project: Massachusetts

March 2

- Contacted Mr. Nilo
- Contacted the PSC about funding

March 9

- Searched for a professor to supervise my UROP
- Contacted several recycling plants in Florida and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection

March 16

- Confirmation of a tour of a recycling facility
- Phone conference scheduled
- Dr. Whitney has agreed to be my UROP supervisor
- Contacted Environmentally Benign Manufacturing group
- Conducted brief background research on electronic recycling

Spring Break to Finals Week: Massachusetts

March 23

- Spring Break

March 30

- Eleoranta Fellowship Application due (April 3)

April 6

- Update

April 13

- Turn in UROP Proposal (April 17)

April 20

April 27

- Update

May 4

May 11

- Week before Finals

May 18

- Week of Finals

Summer Break: Germany

May 25	•Update
June 1	
June 8	
June 15	•Update
June 22	
June 29	
July 6	•Update
July 13	
July 20*	•Update

* I plan to take a tour of a German electronic waste recycling company while I am in Germany. Germans are famous for their dedication for recycling, so I imagine their facilities will be heavily used. I have not determined which company yet.

Plan of Action: Chile

July 27	•Update
August 3	•Update
August 10	•Update