

OSCAR SURA: Class of 2021

South Fork High School

Stanford University: Computer Science, Electrical Engineering



How would you describe your freshman year and what were your take-aways that may be applicable to other students following your path of studies?

In the fall, I took two computer science courses, a mathematics course, and a general education requirement in the space of philosophy / rational thinking. During this time I was adjusting to college life away from home, exploring new social situations, and learning about the resources available to me on campus. I learned better time management skills and realized that I needed to make many changes to my schedule (mainly consistency). I took my academic performance as a platform for development and made sure that I would realize better skills in the winter.

In the winter quarter, I continued in the space of computer science, as well as an introductory economics course. I focused on my academics more than before, making efforts to reach out to faculty (professors, lecturers, undergraduate and graduate teaching assistants, and other students). I benefited from having exposure to others who were knowledgeable and passionate about my interests. I built a close relationship with some of the faculty, namely my computer science professor, and discussed my future career at Stanford with him.

Spring quarter was arguably my favorite - I enjoyed working close with faculty (I took a freshman seminar with an EE/CS associate professor) and strengthening my relationships within the computer science department at Stanford. Overall, my freshman year served as a foundation for my future at Stanford - I acknowledge that I have the potential to do well, but also need to make sure that I have structure and effective time management.

With your freshman year behind you, what does the near future look like?

For the next academic year, I plan to continue and finish the computer science core at Stanford and start the electrical engineering core. I am unsure whether I will declare EE / CS at Stanford and will decide as a sophomore.

Additionally, regarding the summer: I am working for a technical consulting firm in Chicago. I hope to gain valuable experience while I am here and look forward to exploring a new city!