This course has contributed greatly to my understanding of personal strengths and areas for improvement. The opportunity to enhance my research capabilities by learning about databases and the critical analysis of source materials was invaluable. I have grown to appreciate my analytical skills and the importance of conducting thorough research. Most critically, I was able to leverage my adaptable nature in order to explore options and make adjustments to initial concepts for both the flex assignment and our group pitch project. Despite my desire for performance driven results, I learnt to be more pragmatic in regards to viability of implementation in consideration of external stakeholder’s agendas. It furthered my resolve that change is most impactful with committed individuals acting locally. The complexity of the global challenge requires that projects are well researched, and executed with excellence, to ensure maximum impact.

This semester has furthered my skills as a discussion moderator and consensus maker. I find that I am able to take into account the positions of discussion leaders, and then propose reasonable solutions. I have found that I can accomplish this by being honest about my own strengths and weaknesses, and encouraging others to do the same. In order to bring solutions to the global challenge, it will be necessary for people from separate disciplines to come to consensus. Mediators will be essential for facilitating discussion and allowing the most viable solution to be put forward.

My experience with Global Challenges has helped solidify my understanding of who I am and how I can make an impact on my community – both locally and globally. I have strived, and will continue to strive to make a sincere contribution to improve the world around me by being an engaged and active global citizen.

The global challenge of feeding nine billion people intrigues me because it is a highly complicated issue that cannot be solved in isolation. The complex interaction of social, political, economic, and scientific forces appeals to my passion for discussing current issues and debating the best way to address them. The concept that our collective proposal could directly impact our local community or the broader world is highly enticing. I feel very strongly that we all have an obligation to leverage the opportunities given to us to help others that are not as fortunate. I am eager to be a trailblazer in the unique approach to student driven learning and incorporating the multiple research methods that this inaugural course offers. The opportunity to work with people with a wide range of perspectives and abilities holds great interest to me, especially to offset the more analytical approach that is required from my primary discipline, Engineering. I am excited to actively engage in this course to gain knowledge and wisdom that will impact my future endeavors.

I have always been performance driven and strive to set high standards in all aspects of my life. Although this skill is critical to success, I am often challenged to maintain balance between my academic and social commitments. In order to overcome fixating on a single issue and feeling overwhelmed, I am trying to improve the way that I handle my workload by creating a plan for the entire project and allocating time to complete each section. Secondly, I believe that my skills as a consensus maker will contribute to group discussions. I tend to be inherently quiet and prefer not to take the centre stage, but through purposeful exploration, I can find I can impact and influence others. Many times within a group, a single opinion can sway the outcome, but by engaging and respecting each other, individuals can explore a more encompassing solution. The last skill that I can bring to the table is my experience with adaptability. My visual impairment has challenged me throughout the years to explore alternative methods to pursue my goals. With my unrelenting commitment to push myself outside of my comfort zone, I have also built up my resiliency, as things are never foolproof. I always focus on what is possible and never am limited by other’s perceptions. I hope that these skills and experiences will positively contribute to the group dynamics and the outcomes of the course.