Part 1: Reading

Living Proof (https://www.maa.org/sites/default/files/pdf/ebooks/pdf/LivingProof_WEB.pdf) is a beautiful collection of (true) stories from professional mathematicians about adversity they've faced in mathematics. Each story is just 3 pages long.

From the preface:
“Somehow, when we encounter difficulties in mathematics, our natural tendency is to retreat, to think it’s too hard, we’re not smart enough, or we’re not “math people.’’ We allow ourselves to be defeated by the difficulty. We understand that learning to play the violin requires making many, many hours of horrible screeching sounds, that learning to speak Chinese means making error after error and not being understood. But, somehow, when it comes to mathematics, we fear making mistakes. We imagine that there are “math people’’ to whom it is all transparent and, if it doesn’t come to us immediately, we must not be one of them. [...] If you are a mathematics student reading this book, my hope for you is that you find yourself somewhere in these pages and you are inspired to persist.”

For this assignment, **please select 2 chapters to read**. Here are some of our suggestions:

Chapter 8: If you find UW (CSE) way harder than what came before, you'll empathize with Laura Taalman
Chapter 16: If you're frustrated by unsupportive professors or unclear lectures, read Jennifer Brown's chapter
Chapter 21: Rachel Weir gives an engaging discussion of representation and pedagogy
Chapter 23: For an endearing story about persevering through mathematics in the presence of racism, check out the chapter by Donald Cole
Chapter 33: Victor Piercey recounts how he was stunned by the idea that mathematics might be creative and beautiful
Chapter 38: For a humorous account of struggling to do research as a new faculty member, read Robert Vallin's chapter

Part 2: Written Reflection

Write a reflection essay of 3 or more paragraphs that answers the following questions.

- What stood out to you from the readings you selected? How does that relate to your experience?
- In 390Z and 311, what risks have you taken, what mistakes have you made, and what have you learned as a result?
- How have you supported your peers in 311/390Z (including actions taken outside of class)?
- What have you learned about your relationship to proofs and theoretical computer science?

Your reflection should satisfy the following criteria:

- All reflection questions answered (two sentences minimum)
- Clear examples are given from the reading
- Clear examples are given from your own experience
- You elaborate on and give meaning to your experience with 311/390Z
- Reactions are open and honest and indicate your self-understanding
- At least 3 paragraphs

Part 3

How many hours did you spend on this Living Proof assignment, in total?