Picture yourself at graduation. Describe how you spent your two years as a Texas MBA student, and how that experience helped to prepare you for the post-MBA world. (500 words)

It’s graduation day, May 23, 2020. Usually 21 months go by quickly, but these past 21 months feel like a lifetime, because they are so filled with meaningful memories. I’m sad to part ways with my classmates of 2020. I remember back in Aug of 2018, we all bonded through the McCombs Adventure Program, a small group but close-knit, diverse and passionate. It was fun to lend my travel club experience to our program leader when she needed it.

Just as before, I still have an adventurous heart, excited to try new things. The past two years have prepared me well for my next adventure; join Google Hong Kong as they deploy their implementation of People Analytics. Currently in China, this is an untapped strategic tool. I’m excited to start a boutique consultancy in a few years, helping Chinese startups implement People Analytics. Having this information, I hope, will lead to decisions that make them more successful.

I see Professor Burris sitting not far away from me. I remember how excited I was to read that he was a Visiting Professor at Google to teach People Analytics. When I emailed him the month I applied, he replied right away mentioning that most McCombs management faculty do research on People Analytics, and even sent me a detailed list of People Analytics courses.

In my two years here, I’ve learned how to mine data and design models to identify leadership characteristics. We have objective criteria for attracting and retaining key employees, as opposed to the Chinese way of making HR decisions purely on experience and relationship. I’ve also used People Analytics to help with workforce planning. In one of my MBA+ Leadership Programs, I identified the new kind of talent a business needed after competitive dynamics shifted.

The MBA+ consulting projects I did for local Austin startups built up my consulting skills. I speak their language now – and understand and can add value to all the business functions, beyond human resources, with People Analytics. I love that Texas afforded me a communication coach who helped me with my accent, learn body language used in the US, I feel very comfortable walking into a consulting project now. In a few years, I will be fully prepared to deploy my own startup, to create an off-the-shelf People Analytics solution.

“Texas Venture Labs” was a great experience getting my hands dirty in startups, a dress rehearsal before I embark upon my own and a platform for me to brew my startup idea into a detailed roadmap to follow when the time comes. It seems like so long ago when I worked for BMW, a big company with a famous brand and abundant resources. Now, my world is about ambiguity and adversity. Everything is new and challenging.

When I felt tired and nothing inspired me, I remember heading to the Blanton Museum with some people from my learning team. Renaissance and Baroque paintings gave us a moment of respite from our hectic schedule. I will miss attending live concerts every week, feeling wired and tired the crazy week of SXSW. Austin has been a great place to become close with my classmates who will undoubtedly be part of my life for the rest of my life.