CPEN321: Software Engineering

Reflection Statement

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This course has taught me a lot about the process of software development. Software engineering is much more than blindly writing code, it is more about documentation and team management, and these are the two things that I lack. One thing I really like about this course is it is trying to simulate an actual project development environment with weekly scrum meeting and the use of github. It gave me valuable hands on team work experience by using github to properly open issues and pull request, and it is something I wouldn't be able to acquire from other courses. In retrospect, there are two things that I think I could have done better. One is to write useful comments on my code because sometime I struggle to understand the code I wrote a month ago. The other is team communication because it is always important to keep the members of my team updated with the latest progress.

-Howard Zhou

For an engineer in training, it is one thing to talk and learn about the concepts of software developing and engineering. It is a whole other thing to actually perform one step by step. The most significant experience I was able to gain from this course is the importance of the architecture design of a software. I used to think a simplified skeleton version of the implementation would make little impact on the result. Now I understand that a complete design and a thorough decision making prior to the implementation often defines the final accomplishment.

-Yufei Qiao

The main learning experience for me in this course was gained from working on the term project in a group of 6 people. Being able to work in a team has allowed me to appreciate the software development process & also understand why following proven development methodologies (eg. Agile) used by the industry would be a better choice than to come up with our own way of doing things. Testing was a big problem when developing our API service as we initially wrote our tests using POSTMAN & whole testing process was tedious as it had to be done manually (we shifted to automated testing with Mocha later on). Therefore, some things that I would like to do differently in retrospect is to narrow down our project scope & use the extra time to carry out TDD from day 1 so that we can focus on software quality over quantity.

-Justin Toh

This course taught me that being a software engineer not only means programing, but also collaborating in a team toward a common goal. And team communication and corperation is the key to success. This course gives me a general idea of how a project was produced from conception to end-of-life. In retrospect, I probably should have a better time management for the project. And also I should make my code more readable and flexible and extensible. For this project, the code smells causes me a lot of trouble to debug and maintain and that's why we still need to working on refactoring our code.

-Luvian Wang

Agile development is an entirely new methodology for me and I rarely worked in a team environment before, and this course provides me with opportunity to work in a team. I gained lots of hands-on experience on web development especially frontend development over this term. In order to drive our project forward, I had to force myself to learn new programming languages and developing tools, which enriches my skill set. Learning a new language isn't easy, and this experiences reminds me that I will have to spend more of my free time on acquiring new knowledge so in the future I will always be ready for challenges.

- Xi Chu

This course gave me a unique experience in solving a real-world problem. It was the first time I truly felt that teamwork and project management were essential to complete a project. Adopting a software development lifecycle model (in our case, SCRUM) was painful in the beginning, but later I realized that it really make us more efficient and organized. Before this course, I thought getting the implementation correct was the most important and difficult task for software engineering. Fortunately, now I believe that being clear about what to do and how to do a project in the first place is more crucial than implementing the ideas. Because our uncertainties about the scope and features of our app, we made many changes in the midst of our implementation. A lot of time could have been saved if we were more focused on major features. However, these mistakes are an important learning experience from this course. Nevertheless, I am proud of being part of this team and this project, which motivates me to be a better computer engineer in the future.

- Chen Chen