

BUSINESS CASE	
Proposed Project	Online Student Planner
Date Produced	20 October 2020
Background	<p>The current experience of student life is a complex one, riddled with tasks and deadlines on top of already busy schedules. Professors give students a class related schedule for lecture times, office hours, and deadlines for assignments. Lab instructors often have their own set of similar information specific to the lab section. Taking the example of a student with 5 classes, most with their own labs, it is easy to see how all these tasks and deadlines can sometimes get confused or forgotten about especially when all the information is coming from different places and is usually subject to many changes of the course of a semester. The current solution for many students consists of scattered information on various apps across multiple devices. For example, using the Notes app on their iPhone and some variant of a Calendar app on their PC. Some students have multiple devices of the same brand, and in that case have a better opportunity to more seamlessly synchronize all the information they receive - but even so, they are mostly subjected to rigid and boring Calendar or Day Planner type app variants. The typical calendar applications don't cater for a student specific user experience and often lack functionality that would be more useful to students. For example, a typical calendar doesn't allow students to display all their upcoming activities by a specific course - a feature that would undoubtedly enrich any student's user experience.</p>
Business Need/ Opportunity	<p>Students currently miss deadlines, feel overwhelmed and mismanage the important information pertaining to their daily coursework responsibilities and activities. This adds unnecessary stress and anxiety over schedules and deadlines, and the burden is not lessened by currently available applications.</p> <p>They need a simple yet effective task manager/planner that tracks every aspect of their course workloads (schedules, deadlines, extensions/changes, progress). Furthermore, this solution needs to be easily accessible on any device from anywhere with internet access.</p> <p>We envision a beautiful and easy-to-use, cross-platform Online Student Planner that is interactive and inspires students to better manage their complex workloads. All the relevant information will be conveniently aggregated in one place that offers the option to easily and intuitively view, manage and manipulate a student's schedule, upcoming deadlines, potential conflicts, changes or extensions, and progress.</p>
Options	<p>Along with all the other goals intended to satisfy the overall user experience, one of the fundamental goals is based on convenience and ease of access to the user. This means having a cross platform solution accessible via any device, regardless of the user's operating system. Our options for achieving the above are as follows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OPTION 1: Implement the solution through a combination of desktop and mobile apps (would require support for at least macOS/iOS and Windows/Android respectively). This option presents a considerably larger

undertaking and project scope overall is much larger. We run the risk of complicating the solution by taking on too much work to achieve goals we consider fundamental to this project's success.

- **OPTION 2:** Implement the solution through a web-based application accessible from any device (and any operating system) with a browser and an Internet connection. This is option will be much easier to implement, result in a solution more closely aligned with our goals and require less work overall.

Cost-Benefit Analysis

This in relation to users using our intended product. Benefits of actually using app to stakeholders

Option 1:

Costs:

- Considerably more time will be required in this approach. This option requires the development and implementation of our intended solution across more than one operating system (macOS/Windows/iOS/Android) and requires the solution application be tailored to suit more than one type of device (mobile and desktop).
- Although a traditional financial budget is not considered in this class project, this solution option would require a much larger project budget since the time required for development alone would be much more. Also there would likely be additional financial costs incurred on various tools and resources required to assist building out the solution across multiple platforms.

Benefits:

- This option could result in a slightly better overall user experience just based on people's affinity for using mobile apps. For example, having a native application on their mobile device vs accessing the Student Planner through their browser could allow for the user to receive notifications directly from the application itself vs an email notification. Also having a native app makes opening/accessing user information just that much quicker and more convenient.
- The Student Planner can be designed in ways that make it immediately easier to interact with by adopting OS specific design patterns commonly understood among users of a given operating system.

Option 2:

Costs:

- Much less time would be required to implement this solution since the design and implementation of only one web based application would be required.
- Fewer resources would be required to complete the project through this option. In terms of a traditional budget, it would also be cheaper overall.

Benefits:

- The team will be more likely to achieve the goals and objectives for this project within the given deadline.
- Despite maybe feeling slightly less like a fully integrated user experience to our student users, they will still be able to quickly and easily access their Student Planner across any device with a browser and an Internet connection.
- The web based application implementation of this project will allow user information to be tied to their account and stored online. This means their information is accessible and always 'backed up' even if they lose their device or get a new one.

Recommendation

The recommendation is to move forward and proceed with the project by means of **OPTION 1**, the option most likely to be achievable within our deadline and most likely to satisfy the fundamental user experience goals for the project.