Critical essay

As a team we started by arranging a group meeting and going through the requirements by highlighting key words and selecting potential class names. Then, before the second group meeting we agreed to split up all of the work into smaller sections that we could all work on. Each group member created two different use case diagrams. This resulted in us creating a maximum of 8 use case diagrams and then arranging another group meeting. In this group meeting we discussed and compared our individual work and ideas then out of our 8 findings we chose the best 4 together. Another task we decided to do in our second meeting was to create assumptions that would help us understand and clarify any possible problems we may run into in the future.

We found that doing it this way was taking up a lot of our time and leading nowhere so we decided to take another approach and instead of doing individual research we would come together and spend more time sharing ideas and inspiring different ideas for the end project. A few of these ideas where:

1. Name clarity for classes was a main focus as it would make it more understandable for the whole group.
2. There were so many different possible relations/operations/attributes working as a group we came up with more effective class names for our diagram with fewer errors.
3. The sequence diagrams and state diagrams resulted nearly impossible to do individually since there were so many timelines to discuss. Working together made this process faster and more effective.

Discussion allowed us to only choose the most appropriate factors. However, with discussion we were also able to tell other team members if what they found would result in an error. Addressing these errors when we were together helped us fix the problems in the diagrams that were causing problems there and then rather than trying to fix errors individually as this would make things very confusing for other team members. In ways it would use a lot more of each member’s time and give us less time to work on the final system design.

Although teamwork was extremely effective it was very hard to schedule a specific date each team member was available. And if we could find a date that suited us all to meet there was a limited time together due to members having personal duties and other assignments all due around the same time in the semester. Another issue we came across was communication through emails since this is a very slow process forwarding messages to each team member. So we decided to use social media as a communication tool. After finding out some members who did not use Facebook messenger our next option was a WhatsApp group chat. Since everyone had WhatsApp this worked and we could now communicate effectively in real time. For example we booked a class for the meeting and in the last minute the class was re-scheduled to a different place. This would have been very hard through email as not everyone checks their email every hour but a notification will come through when using WhatsApp. Each team member will be notified simultaneously about the relocation and time.

To overcome this problem that we couldn’t all be together after the discussions we thought using a web based solution called LucidChart. Although that the university provided us with Together, using this for the diagrams made thing extremely confusing for everyone. Using Lucidchart was very effective and we found each member was more motivated and productive as everything was less confusing and the usability of the website was quick and easy. The most effective feature was the sharing option in which every team member can work on the one document while all the others can see the live edits from home or wherever and whenever they want to have access to the document.