Throughout this course, I have played the role of several members in a Scrum team. I have learned more about the intricacies and responsibilities that each team member must play, especially when cooperating with others. While the SNHU travel project was done entirely by me, which limits my experience, I was given the insight as to the responsibilities of each role. Starting at the top, the product owner is the communication channel between the customer and the team, making sure the team has clear goals that work towards what is requested by the customer. In this course specifically, I have made user stories based on the requirements of the customer towards SNHU Travel. Moving down, the scrum master’s responsibility is to act as the arbiter of a scrum team, ensuring everyone is working together and the structure stays strong. They would work on the Agile Team Charter and Daily Scrum Agendas, such as earlier in this course. The next level includes both developers and testers – both communicate and work with each other closely to develop and test the product with the specifications set out by the product owner. I have developed code and written test cases from user stories earlier in the course.

Before this course, I did not know about the Scrum Software Development Lifecycle. It was an interesting experience playing the roles and learning how to apply it to my project, SNHU Travel. Regarding how I used the Scrum-agile approach to help each of the user stories come to completion, while I did not work on each user story individually but instead the ones required by the course material, I would have been able to complete a full user story from start-to-finish, starting at the top. The Product Owner met with the customer to define the user stories. Those were then passed down to the developers and testers, who made test cases and developed the features. When questions needed to be asked, an email was sent to the Product Owner for clarification on aspects of the product.

With the Scrum-agile approach to SDLC, any changes of direction and interruptions would not be as devastating on the tea, as time would not have been wasted with pre-planning and instead spent working on the feature in case it would have come to fruition. After changes of direction, the team would adapt to said changes and continue full steam ahead working on the product.

Throughout this course, I have communicated with several people in two ways. The first of which is via an email to the Product Owner in Module Four, asking her for clarification on three separate user stories. Regarding the first user story, “If the user has no prior travel profile, should there be a recommendation setting at all, or should it mention that the user needs to express interest in some form towards other travel packages before that can be determined?” Regarding the second, “Should the option for the user to customize their destination list only be on the profile, or should there be an option on the destination list search settings?” Lastly, with the third user story, “Should the upper limit of the price slider option be set to the highest pricing travel package or another value, such as $500,000?” The second method of communication was in Module Six when I played the role as a developer and asked questions to my other group members regarding the product and clarifications. For example, I asked the following questions: “Should there be divisions within an agile environment for the development team and testing team, and designated people from that team who work closely with the Product Owner? Or should it stay open so that any one of the team members can ask the Product Owner questions at any point about the work?” I received responses from the Product Owner and other team members, but I did not get answers to my specific questions. My rationale behind said questions is that if the team were large enough, the Product Owner might be overwhelmed, but then I remembered our work in prior modules and the two-pizza method where there should at most be enough people to eat two pizzas in a meeting.

Some organizational tools and principles that I am a fan of are the daily Scrum stand-up meetings and use of Jira, by Atlassian, to allow bug tracking and agile project management. In daily standups, there might be a Kanban board involved, which Jira is able to faithfully re-create. A Kanban board, in essence, holds tasks and the team members assigned to work on them, as well as information on whether it is progressing, slow, or halted. It would have been nice to work with other team members in a Jira environment to get more hands-on experience in a Scrum-agile environment, but the rest of the course was able to faithfully represent what that workflow might be like.

Regarding the effectiveness of the Scrum-agile approach for the SNHU Travel project, I will be detailing this in two sections. Firstly, regarding the pros and cons that the Scrum-agile approach presented during the project, a straight-forward pro is that the team members had their roles clearly defined because the Scrum-agile approach is a framework. It is only a framework, and not meant to serve as a be-all end-all solution to teamwork – those can only be handled on a per-team basis, worked to fit in whatever environment is required of it. A potential con of trying to apply the framework at face-value is that it might not scale up easily for larger teams. For example, there could be more than one Product Owner, Scrum Master, and too many developers and testers to keep a handle on and give direction to. Stand-up meetings would be out of the question, as with too many members, it might result in said meetings lasting a lot longer than originally anticipated. A solution to this would be to limit the number of members in a team and divvy them into smaller teams, such as development teams, testing teams, Scrum teams, and product owner teams. Or, if necessary, cut out certain roles in teams so that it makes more sense. For example, if the team were to exist purely for developers, it wouldn’t make sense to have a Product Owner on that team.

Lastly, regarding whether a Scrum-agile approach was the best approach for the SNHU Travel development project, I believe if it were a single person working on the project, it would have been fine without the Scrum-agile approach, but the beauty of it being a framework is that you can take on multiple roles. When working with other people, however, it makes sense to employ the Scrum-agile approach as people would have their clearly-defined roles and can work on the product within their respective bounds and tasks.