For week 6-12 (Week 5 is the same content with week 4 which is covered from last reflection) on my journey of studying PMGT 1850, I have learned about

Week 6 focused on project scheduling and resourcing, there is a shift from the theory covered in Week 1-4 to more of execution aspect of project management. I learned how to distinguish between defining activities, how to sequence the, and estimate the effort versus duration. Before I thought project scheduling is just making a timeline. However, learning about the critical path method (CPM) and Activity-On-Node diagrams taught me how sequencing and dependencies determines the total duration. A major learning point is the difference between duration and effort, where effort Id the person hours and duration is the calendar time, under effort driven project logic, the effort is fixed, but when there are more resources, the duration could be shortened. In a past group projects, we ran into delays because we didn’t account for task dependencies, now I realize a critical path analysis could have prevented this from happening.. In data science, I can this applying directly: for example, training a machine learning model may only take two hour of setup, but twelve hours to run for the duration, so misunderstanding the concept of effort and duration can lead to false project timelines, and with the help of RACI matrix or Gantt Chart, the project can be allocated well, so as to lead to a success outcome of the project. This week’s content has deepened my understanding of how important it is to plan realistically.

In Week 7, I developed my understanding of how project managers maintain control over a project’s performance by ongoing monitoring and risk management. I previously assumed that once the project plan was created, execution would mostly follow without much adjustment. This week’s content showed me how proactive monitoring by using metrics like variance, steering controls and status dates are essential for keeping the project aligned with its objectives. I found the distinction between monitoring (data gathering) and control (acting on the data) are useful. In group work, I used to overcook changes in scope, but now I see the value of having structured tools like traffic light reports and issue logs. I also learned the concept that risk can also be an opportunity, not just a threat. Using frameworks like the risk assessment matrix taught me how to identify and prioritize risks based on likelihood and impact. This is applicable in data science projects too, where uncertainty around data quality and stakeholder requirements can derail progress. I plan to apply risk identification every time when I have a project, and I will update the risk registers regularly and involve stakeholders in assessing potential consequences.