Each role in the Scrum team played a key part in the success of the SNHU Travel project.

As the Scrum Master, I created the team charter for the project. With this charter I established the rules for behavior and communication, identified the key risks of the project, and formalized the key objective and vision for the project.

As the Product Owner of the SNHU Travel project, my task was to take feedback from the stakeholders, and turned it into information a format for the development team to use, in the forms of things like user stories. Using the format of the user story, I created the product backlog and created several detailed user stories for the project.

As a Developer and Tester for the SNHU Travel Project I created test cases for the project, and implemented some of the user stories that resulted from feedback from the stakeholders via communication from the product owner. I also engaged in communication with the product owner.

The Scrum-agile approach uses user stories to maintain direction and flexibility. This approach guides these features by allowing changing priority for the good of the project, rather than holding specific features as the end-all be-all focus. One example of this from the SNHU Travel project is the content pivot that the project took, which resulted in mid-project feedback from the project stakeholders. In a traditional development process, the customer would not have had the same avenues for feedback as in Scrum. The Scrum-agile process also helps facilitate this change beyond the communication of feedback in the way the product backlog is maintained. The process of maintaining the product backlog also allows the product owner to make certain stories more important or devalued based on feedback.

With the Scrum-agile approach, the SNHU Travel project was able to change content direction that resulted from feedback from the stakeholders. The first part of this was the product owner meeting with the stakeholder to gather feedback on the progress of the project. This feedback allowed the stakeholder to share a change in customers trends that directly affected how success the product would be post-completion of the project. Following this feedback, the product owner was able to share it with the development team as part of a daily meeting, and followed up with changes to the product backlog, deprioritizing some additional features. This allowed the development team to change focus, making the necessary changes to the project. Had this project been following a traditional waterfall approach, the feedback may not have happened at all, or far too late to change the development teams efforts on the project.

During several weeks of the project, I created email communications with the team product owner, and tester on different occasions. One email I wrote was following the content pivot of week 5. In this email I stated my understanding of the changes, and stated that I had some clarifying questions concerning the changes. I then separated my questions via bullet listing, with each point focusing around a specific line of questions. During the same week, I also sent an email to the tester, detailing some of the focus change, informing them of my request for clarification and specifically making both some suggestions for their work and request some collaboration on what needed to be done for the focus change.

These emails represent two different types of communication. Whereas the email to the product owner was primary one of gathering information and clarifying questions, the email with the tester was more sharing information and interacting with them for potential collaboration. As the developer in both these emails, each interaction took place to help me fulfill my tasks and role. The product owner had information I needed, or could at least gather that information, and the tester was an additional set of eyes of the challenge, albeit from a slightly different perspective.

Scrum-agile has a variety of tools and principles that help the success of the projects they are used for. Sprints allow for teams to focus on smaller more manageable milestones in the product, that regular milestones allow the stakeholder to both see regular progress and give feedback during the Sprint review. The daily scrum allows frequent communication between members of the development, highlighting progress and challenges. The team charter establishes project rules and behaviors so the entire team can understand the projects processes. User stories give focus to individual project features, and allow progress to be made more frequently shown. Alongside user stories, the product backlog allows the stakeholders feedback and the business needs of the project to be shown to the development team in an informative and efficient manner. The refinement of the backlog allows the product owner and scrum master to collaborate both the business and development needs of the project to ensure smooth transitions between sprints and to apply feedback from sprint reviews. The Sprint retrospective allows the development to analyze its actions during the Sprint and adjust rules, behaviors, and processes based on the teams and the project's needs.

Scrum had an interesting effect on the SNHU Travel project. It highlighted how in the accelerated pace of the modern development world needs to be flexible, while also having delineated areas of responsibility. It also showed how chaotic development can be. The feedback from the stakeholder halfway through the project shows how the flexibility and transparency of agile can be a double-edged sword. On one hand, flexibility, transparency, and more immediate feedback can help guide to a project that needs to fit a changing consumer need.

However, this flexibility comes with some cost. It can be more difficult to predict the length of a scrum project, and it requires a team that at minimum is responsible, and is difficult for teams to adopt properly. The development team holds more authority in agile, but is also responsible should progress not be efficient. There isn’t typically a “management” role in agile teams, but this requires the team to listen to mentor and business roles and take their words into account. There is less top-down authority, but that is tempered by the spread of responsibility.

In the context of the SNHU Travel project, Scrum-agile was the right choice for project methodology. While the team was inexperienced with this type of project methodology, the needs of the project fit a more agile approach. The focus change halfway through the project could not have happened in a similar way under a traditional waterfall methodology. The stakeholder would not have been able to provide early feedback, and an earlier planning process would have prevented the team pivoting with a new feature and content focus as quickly. In a traditional methodology the project planning process would have happened at the beginning of the project, rather than adjusting with the stakeholders needs.