The past several weeks gave my team the task of completing the SNHU Travel project. Success for this project meant delivering a user-friendly program, that allowed SNHU customers to easily interact with available resources. This within a 5-week time frame. The team consisted of a product manager, scrum master, developer, and a tester. Everyone played their pivotal role very well. The product Owner ensured that the user and stakeholders were happy. When engaging with the user, the product owner needs to keep in mind the user experience. If the user experience is through the roof, the product will be successful. If the user does not enjoy interacting with the product, the product will decline. No matter how groundbreaking the product. A great way to ensure the user is having a positive experience with the product, is to engage with the user or even with the client, for they may already have product feedback. This feedback can be related to improvements on capabilities of the product, or ideas of what the user thinks they would like to see added to the product. If the product is being developed around the user experience, you will rarely have to worry about the user enjoying your delivered product. When it comes to dealing with the stakeholders, it is all about how well the development process is going, and the marketability of the product. When you engage with the stakeholders, you trim away the excess fluff. You show what has come about since the last sprint(s), and what is to come. This information is all gathered from the daily scrum meetings, and the constant iterations with our team. Constant iterating and learning have allowed quick and easy conveyance of information. This is because there was no confusion across the team due to constant communication. An example of this communication in action was the interaction between our tester and product manager. The process of developing the initial tests cases seemed slightly confusing at first with the explanation, but the excel example provided by the product manager really helped the process. Another contributor that helped the process along was the user stories provided by the product manager, that were put together in week 3. The use of the user stories allowed the tester to better choose what steps to include in the test case. Without the user stories, the tester would have to make things up on the go, and hope the user likes what was chosen.

The user stories however did not have every single visual and pass criteria for what the user needs. For example, the user wants the option to sort their results the way they see fit, but the specific sorting criteria was not given. A few were mentioned by the user, but the product manager didn’t give the specific “this is what we’ll have”. Something else that may have been helpful is how the content should appear to the user. Should the content be in a slideshow format, should there be tabs at the top of the screen or below, what are the left and right limits when it comes to trip customization. This was easily remedied through email traffic between the product manager and the tester. The best way we have found to get information is to first consult the team to ensure you are not missing anything. This could be at the scrum meeting or right then and there to get the work done. If talking to the team doesn’t fix the issue, the product manager can be contacted for clarification. The product manager will either have the information the team needs or get that information from higher. Once that information is received, it will be passed down for action. Our developer designed code based on strong software engineering practices. This was able to be done by participating in scrum events that allowed collaboration between team members. The focus was producing code that was stable and able to be iterated.

Our use of the agile methodology had its pros and cons. Pros included adaptability, collaboration, transparency, and quick problem finding. There is not a set way set forth to achieve the end goal, this allows the team to make quick required changes to meet new requirements that may arise. The pros of collaboration and quick problem finding work hand in hand. The team meets frequently to ensure sprints are going as expected. This allows all individuals to collaborate and bring ideas and help to the table if needed. Because of these frequent meetings, issues are quickly brought up to the entire team. This allows the entire team to now address the issue. There is also much transparency, due to the openness of the team sharing information. This may be during scrum meetings or through the use of effective communication tools such as an information radiator like a white board.

However, some of these pros can often also be the cons of agile. Because of the ability to be able the change to different circumstances, this may cause the projected end date or even the cost of the project to be uncertain. Another con can be with the constant collaboration. During the meeting, ideas a constantly thrown around. This can sway the minds of individuals. Without a strong scrum master or project manager to keep the team focused, the team may fall off track in relation to the plan.

The use of the agile process worked extremely well for the team in regard to communication. One example is from above with the tester and project manager resolving an issue that came up with the test cases. They were able to quickly fix that issue a move the project forward. This is because there was an early testable product. Following the agile principle of delivering working product frequently. The scrum-agile process allowed the team to deliver a successful product.