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As the Scrum Master for our simulated SNHU Travel development sprint, I had the opportunity to guide a project through each phase of the Scrum process – while also rotating through the other core roles of Product Owner, Developer, and Tester. This Sprint Review and Retrospective summarizes the work completed, examines how the Scrum-Agile framework supported project progressed, and reflects on the lessons learned throughout the sprint. Though the team experience was simulated through individual assignments, each stage of the process reflected key Agile principles such as collaboration, iteration, adaptability, and user-centered design.

One of the clearest advantages of adopting Scrum was the way it provided structure to each team role while promoting continuous collaboration and transparency. My experience across different responsibilities helped reinforce how essential each role is to the success of a Scrum team. Early in the sprint, I served as Product Owner, defining the product vision and translating stakeholder feedback into actionable user stories. This process was based on a focus group animation, which featured SNHU Travel users discussing their experiences and needs. From that input, I identified patterns and crafted high-level stories that prioritized user value and clarity. Later in the project, while acting as part of the development team, I observed how our Product Owner responded decisively after a simulated client meeting. Following that interaction, the team pivoted to focus on detox and wellness destinations – an updated direction that better reflected the client’s evolving goals. This demonstrated the importance of a Product Owner who can remain responsive to feedback and continuously reprioritize the backlog.

I next transitioned into the role of Tester, focusing on validating user stories and ensuring that features could be tested reliably and accurately. I refined three earlier stories into detailed test cases, identifying appropriate inputs, defining expected outcomes, and considering how a user would interact with the application. A key aspect during this portion of the project was composing an email to the Product Owner requesting clarification on specific scenarios and UI behavior. This exercise emphasized how early communication helps surface gaps in understanding and ensures alignment on user expectations – core elements of effective Agile testing.

Later in the sprint, I took on the role of Developer, implementing updates based on evolving priorities. As the project shifted to highlight wellness and detox travel, I modified the Java slideshow application to reflect the new theme. The scope of the change was modest – replacing general travel content with wellness-focused slides – but it showed how easily Scrum accommodates rapid changes. I collaborated with both the Product Owner and Tester to clarify requirements and ensure that transitions and text met accessibility and functionality expectations. This iterative back-and-forth, albeit simulated, reinforces the Agile principle that development and testing are not isolated phases but overlapping efforts that thrive on continuous feedback.

I began the sprint in the role of Scrum Master, where I focused on learning how to support a team’s effectiveness within the Scrum framework. While I didn’t work with a live team, I explored the role through written reflections. A key moment came while observing an animated Daily Scrum, where I saw how Scrum Masters facilitate communication, remove impediments, and help teams stay focused and self-organizing. Now, returning to the Scrum Master role for this Sprint Review and Retrospective, I can see how the structure of Scrum supported each role I stepped into – and how those principles helped shape my understanding of Agile as a whole.

Scrum also helped support the progression and completion of user stories. While serving as Product Owner, I created initial stories based on user feedback. Later, in the Tester role, I returned to those same stories to refine them into test cases. Identifying gaps and seeking clarification from the Product Owner showed how Agile’s emphasis on iteration and collaboration allows stories to evolve and improve over time. This structure ensured that stories were aligned with user value and ready for implementation.

Another advantage of Scrum became clear during the pivot to wellness travel. Rather than halting progress or discarding previous work, I was able to respond immediately by updating the existing application to reflect the new focus. Because Scrum encourages short iterations and frequent inspection, the team (even in simulation) was prepared to adapt to change without resetting the entire project. This flexibility demonstrated one of the framework’s greatest strengths: its ability to accommodate evolving goals and deliver value continuously, even when priorities shift.

Effective communication was central to that success. While I did not participate in live team discussions, the course emphasized communication practices such as Daily Scrums, Backlog Refinement, and clarification exchanges. Writing a structured email to the Product Owner as a Tester helped demonstrate how even asynchronous communication can improve clarity and reduce rework. Additionally, simulations of Scrum ceremonies showed how consistent communication creates transparency and accountability across the team. These practices underscored the value of staying aligned through brief, targeted conversations – whether face-to-face or virtual.

Supporting this communication were the organizational tools that Agile teams rely on to stay focused and connected. Although I did not use Jira or physical task boards directly, I researched their use extensively during the sprint. These tools support Scrum events such as Sprint Planning, where they help teams visualize and prioritize the backlog, and Daily Scrums, where they provide a shared snapshot of work in progress. Even in a simulated sprint, understanding how these tools promote transparency, reduce ambiguity, and reinforce self-organization helped me appreciate the structure they offer in a real-world Agile environment.

Reflecting on the overall development process, I found the Scrum-Agile approach to be highly effective for the SNHU Travel project. The ability to respond to changes, maintain clarity across roles, and continuously refine the product contributed to a more adaptable and focused workflow. At the same time, the sprint presented a few challenges that deepened my appreciation for the discipline Scrum requires. Maintaining consistency and focus while shifting between roles required careful organization, and ensuring that user stories were clear, testable, and properly scoped demanded close attention throughout the sprint. These experiences highlighted how essential it is for Scrum teams to communicate openly, refine the backlog continuously, and remain adaptable in the face of changing goals.

Still, the benefits of Scrum far outweighed the limitations. The framework provided clear guidance, promoted consistent feedback, and helped me stay aligned with evolving goals. It encouraged accountability, adaptability, and user focus—all essential qualities in modern software development. Based on this experience, I believe Scrum is well-suited for projects like SNHU Travel, and I would support its broader adoption at ChadaTech as a foundation for future Agile work.