This week, I began my studies by reading through the learning guide, slides, and case studies. I was surprised to see an explicit, specified set of ways to get a set of system requirements illuminated. Naively, I thought that simply communicating with the customer and keeping dialogue open would be enough to plan out and build a system. I see now that projects are likely to fail with this approach. Instead, having multiple layers and methods to get at the customer’s needs will help the project to succeed. Another aspect that I would not have considered before it was mentioned was that often these requirement documents act as contracts between the developer and the customer. It makes sense and considering this, it would be unwise to not be as thorough as possible in stating all the requirements at the outset of the project. I also realize that any changes to the requirements add costs to the project. I am curious as to how this is normally handled. At least in home renovation, customers usually assume there will be unexpected complications that increase the cost of the project. A rule of thumb is to expect 10-25% of the estimated cost to be added to the final bill. Also, negotiations are ongoing throughout a project as things come up.

After the readings, I worked on and posted to the discussion forum. The first notable thing about the discussion post question was that there did not seem to be much information in the slides about what the so-called “hidden” requirements are. After reviewing the slides several times over, I found the section that discussed ambiguities, lack of understanding, and implicitness. I thought that I had found the correct answer. The discussion showed me otherwise. It had not dawned on me that the non-functional requirements are the “hidden” ones. Several of the other students’ posts gave me new insight.

I truly enjoyed the written assignment this week. I doubt that I found all of the automated ticketing system use cases, but it was fun to mull the topic over and look for the holes. I am not certain that the Use cases that I described are complete enough or exactly what was needed. I felt that there might be other uses that I haven’t considered. As for the diagrams, I found this fun to do. And so, I created both a Use case diagram showing all of the users I had mentioned earlier as well as a sequence diagram based on just the account holder’s point of view. I can imagine that neither of these diagrams is complete, as I am sure there are aspects that I didn’t think about. Also, I wished there was a guide to how to diagram in the standard format. I followed the sparse samples in the slides, but think that having a better understanding of all the possible ways to diagram might have given me ideas for what else to include. This notwithstanding, I enjoyed “doing” this assignment as opposed to just writing about it. I also believe that the class will be more likely to learn from case studies and applied projects like this one.

Word count = 528