**SA Assignment 2**

**Architectural Degradation**

A large number of prescriptive and descriptive architectures are created during the lifespan of a typical software system. When a system is initially built or the already implemented system is evolved, its prescriptive architecture is modified appropriately followed by corresponding changes to its descriptive architecture. But, in practice, the system is often directly modified without taking into account the impact to the perspective architecture when it is not modified. The failure to update the prescriptive architecture results in potential dangers especially if the software systems are bound to contain many errors. The resulting discrepancy between a system’s prescriptive and descriptive architecture is referred to as **architectural degradation.**

Architectural degradation comprises of two related phenomena -

* **Architectural drift:** is introduction of principal design decisions into a system’s descriptive architecture that are not included in, encompassed by or implied by the prescriptive architecture, but which do not violate any of the prescriptive architecture design decisions.
* **Architectural erosion**: is the introduction of architectural design decisions into a system’s descriptive architecture that violates its prescriptive architecture.