Individual Critical Reflection

Desenvolvimento de Software de Larga Escala (DS) | FEUP | M.EIC 2021/2022

Diogo André Barbosa Nunes | up201808546 | ds-meic5

What?

At this course, we developed a real software system of medium-large complexity and scale, applying agile practices. In my class (ds-meic5), we designed a web and a mobile app where users can read a simplified version of the Scrum book.

Basically, our app allows users to:

- read the essential information about a pattern;
- search for a pattern (or any text inside it);
- visit related patterns inside a pattern;
- mark patterns to read later and mark as favorites (there is a page where we can see our own marked patterns);
- ask to contribute to the book.

So What?

At the end, we got a product that has all the features we planned to do. However, in my opinion, the objective of this course was not only to develop a good product, but also following the best practices and tools of a large scale project, so that we can be more aware about what we will find in our future.

For that, all our Scrum book materials were shared and stored on the GitHub of the project (softeng-feup/ds-meic5 (github.com)), and the essential informations that had to be passed through the groups and all the communication between Developers, Scrum Masters and Product Owners was made by Discord.

To be honest, DS was a course that I wouldn't mind repeating, because I really liked the way it was teached, the way every team (at least in my class…!) was co-committed to each item assigned to them, all the workflow we followed made this course really interesting. Sometimes we got doubts about what we needed to do on some items, and the communication between Developers and Scrum Master, between Scrum Master and Product Owner and between Product Owners (of each team) delayed some mornings/afternoons that our team planned to work on this, but with time, this communications started to work better and better.

One aspect that I really liked was the way we estimate the PBIs and allocate each one to each team, because every team chose his own PBIs to implement and I think all teams ended to work on their preferences, which makes every “effort” easier.

Now What?

Since we joined MIEIC/L.EIC/M.EIC, almost every project we made was done individually or in groups of 4 maximum. In this course, it was done by more than 25! So, of course it was different and had some pros and cons.

This course emphasizes that a project is not only: “read the rules” and “code”. When we are not working alone, there are techniques and methods that make it easier to work as a team. And that was exactly what I learned the most from this course. Working as a (big) team adds new “challenges” to the final product, like synchronization between teams, but principally the way the product is planned from the very beginning.

Sprint 0 is probably the most important one, because it’s where we start to understand deeply what our product will look like, and what are the features we (really) want to implement. The other sprints were just an “ordered” list of features to implement, ordered taking into account the balance between the most essential, the easier ones to implement and the faster ones.

To conclude, I don’t think this course was to focus on the code programming skills in general, but in all the rest of it, when we are developing a project. And the fact that our project was made by more than 25 students, it’s mandatory the need of organization between us, and that was what we just accomplished. I really believe this course was the most similar to the future work of the majority of us. I really hope that what I learned here, I can apply in the future in an “automatic” mode, so all the team around the work can maximize the potential of the final product every time!