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**Project Reflection Paper**

During INFS:347, I was able to put many skills into practice as well as learn new ones. As an Information Technology major and Information System minor I was exposed to both sides of technology, the heavy back-end coding and the front-end client facing business side. I can say that both these skills came in handy when working with others in my group project. I was able to contribute a technical programmer perspective while my other team members contributed an economic and organizational perspective as accounting and business majors. Although, we all came in with strengths in different disciplinarians, INFS 347 was able to unite us as we worked together to achieve our final project. I was able to learn how to communicate effectively in a team, how deliverables interconnect with one another, and the importance of revising work after each phase.

Communication is a key component to any project or relationship so, needless to say this skill was practiced in hopes to keep the team working together and successful. As we learned how to communicate we had the opportunity to practice verbally and written communication. We would briefly discuss after class on Tuesday and Thursdays next steps but the majority of our communication was done remotely via a group text message. We decided to use group text message because we all use the same carrier (Apple) which allowed for easy syncing of messages, images, and links. In addition, by having communication over the phone we had the benefit to be readily available. In the earlier stages of the project, known as the planning phase, we spend great time talking over the phone and sending possible ideas of projects in the group message. Once we had an established project we moved over to Google Drive as our cloud storage and communication tool. By using the drive, we were able to work simultaneously on project parts as well as allow for transparency as other team members can see exactly who worked on what and when they worked on a given task. Through tools like Microsoft Project I was able to create a GANTT chart which allowed us to understand who was in charge of a given task and whose work is a successor or dependable on others. When a task is dependable on someone else’s task then the communication between those two individuals would extend as they needed to make sure they are on time according to deadlines established and that the work is corresponding.

Deliverables are dependent on each other and phases are highly dependent on predecessor phases. With that being said, it was important to understand how each deliverable related to the next to insure we had a project that corresponded and had adequate information. For example, in the planning phase we had the opportunity to work on the feasibility study that allowed us to analysis technical, economic, and organizational feasibility which shaped how we structured our system proposal in the analysis phase and later our alternative matrix in the design phase. Other deliverables took a more obvious switch for example the logical process model in the analysis phase transformed into the physical process model in the design phase. In addition, by using use cases from an early stage in the project, it facilitated the way I thought about case scenarios and building a persona when it came to the interaction of the user with the interface in the interface design deliverable.

It is very important to revise work when done and to go back to the old phases even if it is months old. Luckily for us, our professor gave feedback and it was easy to revise our work. However, it is necessary to do revision as a team even before turning in the work because as we work remotely new ideas to better the project might arise and is worth considering. For example, in our analysis phase we decided to add two users to our information system which were professors, and advisors. We decided this as those staff members are pivotal to student’s academic success. Due to this change, not only were future phases going to be changed from the original plan but we also had to go back and change the previous deliverables that only mentioned students to ensure a smooth flow between stages.

Besides working on our project, we gained the opportunity to learn about other information system projects, that were done in parallel to ours for the class. Some systems include a security enhancement for DIVVY bike transportation, Clothing System, and UPCO’s Upgrade. The DIVVY enhancement system was unique as it strived to fix the problem related to thefts. To fix this problem the team proposed to add a GPS system to the bikes. This GPS would act as a live map of the bike’s location. The benefits of this addition are both at the individual level as people feel more secure while on the bikes and at the company level as they can track each bike and not need to replace them. This was a great idea, as seen in the feasibility study and diagrams they had a well-established analysis of the current situation. They also included, survey results on what members of the community who ride DIVVY bikes would rate the added feature. This system was similar to my group’s system as it was an enhancement to a system already in place. DIVVY bikes have been in Chicago for some time now and based on the negative outcomes of the bikes they decided to focus on security and how to better the circumstances just like we focused on a student class selection problems and proposed a solution to better the situation.

The second system was a clothing system for a group member’s sister. The individual’s sister runs a small clothing business but is currently registering/ keeping track of transactions on post-it-notes then stores them in a box underneath her bed. Although, the business owner did not see anything bad with the system in place, the student thought that an information system could have much benefit to the business. As of now, the only employee is the member’s sister; so it is easy to keep track of all interactions but as the business grows and more employees are added, this computer system will be of much benefit to her sister. The team members struggled when entering the analysis and design phase as they had to build the system from scratch because there was not a computer system in place right now. This struggle is unique to our system as we already had a system with information such as student and courses already stored in a database.

The UPCO’s Upgrade information system was one dedicated to help the community of Dansoman, Ghana have a map system to facilitate travel and reduce potential student lost. Currently they describe locations based on what they see around the area such as landmarks. Their project also aimed to better the student record system which is currently nonexistent in Dansoman. The system centers around 3 essential documents: New Student Form, UPCO Success Form, and the Community Map. There is currently no document registration of students enrolled in school so, the risk of incorporating this system is low. However, there is still some risk such as children lying about where they live. This system is one that I was personally fascinated by because it was not concentrated in adding a technology system to Dansoman but actually bringing a system that would be used and beneficial to their way of living. In addition, this system differed from our group system as it was one based on printed paper and stored in a physical folder in a cabinet.

A technique I knew little about is estimating the worth of actually doing a project from a business perspective. As a technology major, most of the time I am assigned a project from the design or implementation phase to code. With that being said, I haven’t gotten the chance to explore the phases that come before such as, the analysis and planning phase which are just or even more important than the implementation phase as it acts like a base and reference throughout the project. By analyzing a project from all 3 components: technical, economic, and organizational I was able to learn when a project is worth completing. I had the opportunity to compare cost and duration to see when cost out weights risk keeping in mind data storage design goals such as efficient data retrieval, and optimization of storage efficiency. By participating in this class I gained a tremendous amount of knowledge that I am definitely going to use and expand to my future endeavors.