Project Description:

SYNCO is a group collaboration app designed specifically for university students engaged in academic group work. It addresses common challenges in coordinating tasks, tracking progress, and managing communication among team members, especially in a busy post-pandemic academic environment. SYNCO will support tasks such as setting deadlines, sharing files, and maintaining focused group communication. The primary users of the app are college students involved in group assignments, research teams, thesis projects, and organization type academic events who need a centralized, student-friendly platform to work more efficiently and collaboratively.

Requirements Summary:

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	Processor Cores	Dual Core
	OS	iOS 12
	RAM	2 GB
RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS	Processor Cores	Hexa Core
	OS	iOS 15
	RAM	4 GB
OTHER REQUIREMENTS	Permissions	Notifications, Photos, Files

Table 1. System Requirements

To cater to low-end apple models, the application will have at most a minimum of 2 Cores, 2 GB worth or RAM, and Android version iOS 12 as its OS. The app itself is not at all demanding, but we settled on these specs so that it will for sure run smoothly.

Prototype Description:

The Prototype was created with the use of Figma. This is because Figma is an interactive Prototyping Software/Website that can easily be distributed to testers with the use of links sent by the developers.

SYNCO Prototype Figma Link:
https://www.figma.com/design/BVQnwYa2KgL432S1E089hU/SYNCO?node-id=0-1&t=vxwz1I6Co87ZqfMX-1

User Scenario:

Emma, a university student, uses SYNCO with her group to manage a marketing project. They assign tasks, set deadlines, and share files—all in one place. Instead of messy group chats, they use SYNCO's organized threads to stay focused. With real-time progress tracking and clear communication, the team works efficiently and submits their project on time.

SYNCO Prototype:

<table>
<tr>
<td>


Splash Screen

The Splash Screen contains the app's logo
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Navigation Drawer

The Navigation Drawer lets users navigate through the app's other features.
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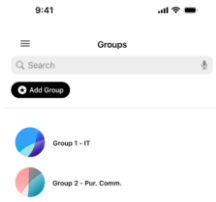
<tr>
<td>


Groups Tab

This is where the user accesses the different group chats and can even add more.
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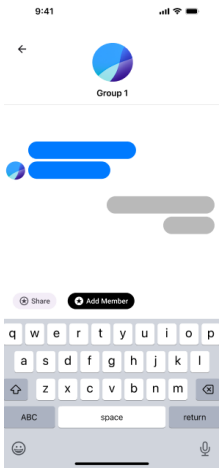

Group Chat View
This is what the chat will look like. You can send files and add members.
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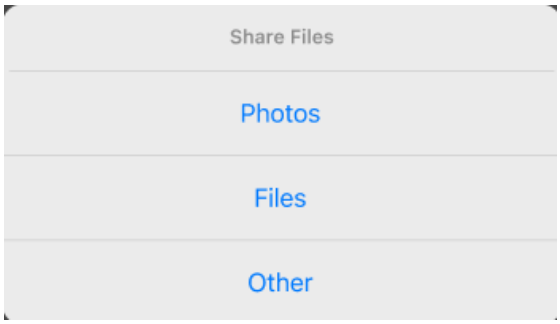
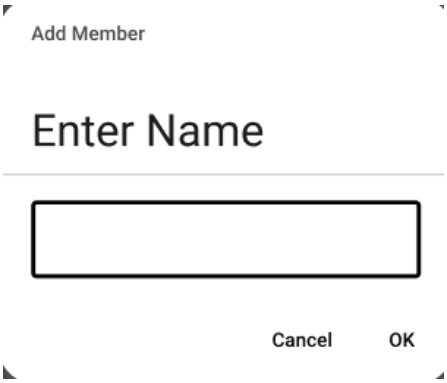


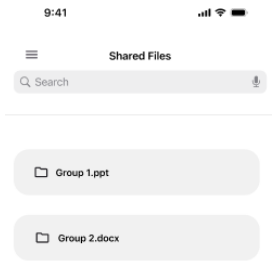
Share Files Pop up

This is the pop up when you press the Share button. You can share photos, files and other.



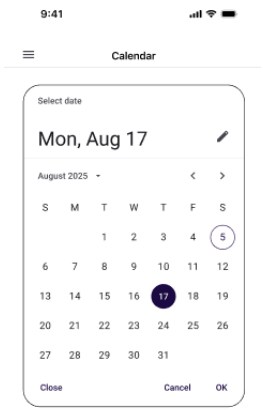
Add Member Pop up

This is the pop up when you press the Add Member button. You can Add members to the group here.



Shared Files Tab

This is where all the shared files from all across the groups are gathered.



Calendar Tab

This is where you set reminders of deadlines or other academic related events.

Rationale:

The team chose Figma to create the prototype because it's a free, interactive platform that both members can access and edit collaboratively. It also allows them to present the app's final design effectively. Figma is especially useful for sharing and presenting to remote users and makes incorporating feedback easy. However, one drawback is that it requires an internet connection to save changes, which can be limiting if the user is offline.

Changes to the Requirements:

There are multiple changes to the design of the app. The changes are:

- Used the iOS's font instead of the proposed "Inter" font.
- Slight tweak in the design of the group chat.
- Big change in how the files are managed.

Initial Evaluation Plan:

The evaluation will take place through Discord or Microsoft Teams, where participants will share their screens and complete assigned tasks while team members observe in real time.

With that said, the Evaluation plan is split into three separate parts: Usability Specifications, Heuristics Evaluation, and Participant Survey and Feedback.

Usability Specifications

The creation of this prototype will aim to achieve the following measures when it appeals to the use:

(Other features stated are to be added)

- **Learnability:** New users can create an account, join or start a group, and begin adding tasks within 5 minutes.
- **Efficiency:** Users can assign tasks, upload files, or start a focused chat in under 3 minutes.
- **Clarity:** All project updates and notifications are clearly timestamped and organized by thread or task.
- **Accessibility:** The platform is fully functional across iOS devices, with a responsive interface for varied student devices.

Population

Around 10-15 selected College participants will be using the prototype. They will be required to do certain tasks which were outlined for the Prototype and accomplish them. A prime example is Creating a group chat. The SYNCO prototype must perform the tasks that were outlined for it to be considered accomplished.

Prototype Tasks

The tasks for this Prototype are:

- Create a Group
- Log oout
- How easy will the user be able to navigate while using the Prototype.
- Sharing files and folders
- Setting deadlines

Roles

The team has will gather at the very least 10 participants when conducting this evaluation. With this is mind, team will split the population and have similar roles in this evaluation.

Developer / UI Designer Member	**Task(s)**
Gian Edward Sambas	Will be recording time users interact with a task section, taking notes of the user's experience, and relay the task that the participant will do.
Joshua Salinas	Will be recording time users interact with a task section, taking notes of the user's experience, and relay the task that the participant will do.
Vince Libranza	Will be recording time users interact with a task section, taking notes of the user's experience, and relay the task that the participant will do.

Creating a group	Within 1 to 2 minutes or Below	Highly Acceptable	Successful
	Above 2 minutes	Not Acceptable	Unsuccessful
Sharing Files	Within 5 minutes or Below	Highly Acceptable	Successful
	Above 5 minutes	Not Acceptable	Unsuccessful
Logging Out	Within 1 minute	Highly Acceptable	Successful
	Above 1 minute	Not Acceptable	Unsuccessful
Setting deadlines	Within 5 minutes or Below	Highly Acceptable	Successful
	Above 5 minutes	Not Acceptable	Unsuccessful

Heuristic Evaluation

Evaluation of SYNCO will also use the 10 Usability Heuristic method of Evaluation.

Visibility of System Status
The prototype keeps users updated on ongoing actions and current system activity.

Match Between System and Real World
The prototype uses familiar language, phrases, and concepts, aligning with real-world logic instead of technical jargon.

User Control and Freedom
Users can easily recover from mistakes using clearly labeled "Emergency Exit" options, with support for undoing or redoing actions without going through lengthy steps.

Consistency and Standards
The prototype maintains uniform language and behaviors, so users aren't confused by inconsistent terms or actions.

Error Prevention
The design minimizes the chance of errors through thoughtful interface choices, reducing the need for error messages.

Recognition Rather Than Recall
All necessary options and instructions are clearly visible, so users don't need to remember steps from earlier interactions.

Flexibility and Efficiency of Use
Both novice and experienced users can use the system efficiently, with shortcuts available for frequent tasks.

Aesthetic and Minimalist Design
The interface shows only essential information, avoiding clutter that could distract from important content.

Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors
Errors are described in simple terms, clearly stating the issue and offering helpful solutions.

Help and Documentation
Support materials are easy to locate and search, helping when users need help navigating the prototype.

Participant Survey and Feedback

After conducting the online test,

DATA GATHRERING METHOD	DESCRIPTION
Survey (Quantitative)	After the Online Testing, the team will be handing out a survey to the participants to gather data for the user's experience with the prototype which the team will be interpreting in a 5-point Likert scale (**Refer to Table 5**. **5-Point Likert Scale Interpretation**).
Feedback (Qualitative)	The survey that the team provided will support a Feedback section to help users/participants speak out concerns or issues with the prototype that needs to be addressed.

Table 2. Data Gathering Methods

Question	Method of Answer
Section 1	
Participant Number	Short Answer
On a scale of 1 to 5 how would you rate your experience with the SYNCO Prototype	5-Point Scale
On a scale of 1 to 5 how was the UI design of the prototype	
How easily were you able to follow the tasks provided	
Section 2: Features of the Prototype	
Navigation Drawer	5-Point Scale
Accessing Files	
Importing PDF or IMG files	
Creating or Adding Groups, Members	
Setting deadlines	
Section 3: Feedback Section	
Your Feedback	Short Answer

Table 4. Survey Questionnaire

Task	Time to Accomplish Tasks	Interpretation	Classification

Scale	Range Value	Interpretation	Classification
5	4.50-5.00	Highly Acceptable	Successful
4	3.50-4.49	Acceptable	
3	2.50-3.49	Moderately Acceptable	Neutral
2	1.50-2.49	Fairly Acceptable	Unsuccessful
1	1.00-1.49	Not Acceptable	

Table 5. 5-Point Likert Scale Survey Interpretation

Implementation Challenges and Justification:

A key challenge in developing SYNCO is implementing core features such as creating new groups, adding group members, setting deadlines, and sharing files. These functions require a well-structured backend to manage user roles, data flow, and real-time updates. Ensuring that these features work smoothly and intuitively is essential, as they form the foundation of effective group collaboration. Their successful implementation directly supports SYNCO's goal of providing a seamless and user-friendly experience for students.